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VOLUME I.

JULY—AUGUST,

No. 2.

BRILLIANT PHENOMENA IN THE HOME OF THE SCHNEIDERS *

BY HARRY PRICE.

Foreign Research Officer, American Society for Psychical Research.

Nearly four years ago, when Dr. A. Baron von Schrenck-Notzing kindly invited me to some experiments he was then making with Willy Schneider at Munich, I took the opportunity of going to Braünaü-am-Inn, about ninety miles from the Bavarian capital, in order to see the birthplace of the medium whose phenomena had so impressed me. We went by motor car, as the trains at that period were very infrequent. Another reason for our visit was to make the acquaintance of Kapitan

* Reprinted, by permission, from the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, January, 1926.

Kogelnik, a retired Austrian naval officer, who had taken such an interest in the boy, Willy. I was disappointed, as Kapitän Kogelnik was away and our time was too limited to hunt up Schneider, *père*. But my visit was productive of much good, as I commenced a correspondence with the Kapitän which has lasted to this day. He has frequently invited me to Braünaü (a small town on the Austrian side of the river Inn), and in the late autumn of 1925 I accepted his invitation to have some sittings with Rudi and Willy Schneider. Mr. Joseph De Wyckoff and Mr. Roy Holmyard, two members of the American Society for Psychical Research, had about this time planned a trip to Graz, to see Frau Silbert (whom they knew), and they invited me to join forces with them; to which I agreed.

We arrived at Braünaü on Wednesday, October 28th, 1925, and were disappointed to find that Rudi had poisoned his leg, was confined to his bed, and could not give any séances. On our way to Braünaü I had made an attempt to see Baron von Schrenck at Munich. But he was away for a short time, so I left my card and, for the second time in my existence, motored the ninety miles or so between Munich in Bavaria and Braünaü in Austria. As I have stated, Rudi was ill in bed, and Willy, we found, had signed a contract to sit again for Baron von Schrenck for a lengthy period.

I was delighted to hear that Willy was back again with the Baron. He knows the Baron and (what is just as important) the Baron knows him; he speaks his language; it was largely due to the Baron that Willy's powers became known in the psychic world; and it seemed fit and proper that the medium should go back to him. The reader will remember that I expressed a sincere hope that some rich scientist or society should take him under their care.¹

We did not want to leave Braünaü without having some sittings with one of the Schneider boys in his home environment, so we set about getting Willy to come to his father's flat for some séances. I wrote a letter to the Baron, asking him to release the boy for a few days in order that he could visit us at Braünaü. We sent the letter by special messenger to Munich and the Baron willingly released Willy, at the same time saying how sorry he was he missed me in Munich. Willy has again been apprenticed to a dentist at Munich and some little hitch occurred in this connection, so that Willy did not arrive home till Saturday afternoon, October 31st.

While we were awaiting Willy we made the acquaintance of the town and nearly all of its inhabitants, who did not have to guess twice

¹. See my report on Willy, *Journal*, A. S. P. R., August, 1925.

as to our business in their midst. Before we had been in the town many hours we were on such good terms with Herr Schneider and his family that we felt we had known them all our lives. Kapitän Kogelnik made the way easy for us.

Herr Josef Schneider, the father of the boys, is a very intelligent and interesting man, above medium height, 55 years of age. He is a *maschinensetzer*—or what we should call a linotype compositor or typesetter, and lives over the business where he has been employed continuously for forty-one years. His employer—Herr Leopold Höglinger—is the proprietor of the largest shop in the town, and has a large and flourishing book and printing business. We spent some hours with Herr Höglinger, who told us what an exceptionally fine man Herr Schneider was. He (Schneider) has had twelve children, nine boys and three girls, of whom six children only (all boys) are still living. Three of his sons are married, and each has a child. No signs of abnormality can be trace in his, or Frau Schneider's family, and his grandchildren have so far shown no psychic faculties. Frau Schneider is a gentle, unassuming woman.

Of the sons of Herr Schneider who are still living, Willy, Rudi, Hans, and Karl are all mediums in a greater or lesser degree. Karl, the eldest (aged 30), and Hans (a little younger) are merely auxiliary mediums: *i.e.*, they sometimes help Willy or Rudi to produce phenomena, but can obtain nothing independently—they merely go into a light trance. Rudi is the youngest (17 years), and Willy is 23 years of age. Herr Schneider considers that Rudi is a very powerful medium, and says his phenomena are inexhaustible. He is a jolly, "boyish" sort of youth, and he did not at all like being confined to his bed during our stay. The Schneider family are, of course, Catholics, which is rather curious when one comes to think of it, but I do not think they suffer on that account.

Willy's phenomena were first noticed about six years ago (1919), by accident, by the curious movements of a table when Willy was near it, but not touching it. Rudi's mediumship became apparent two years later (1921).

Braünaü itself is a very old (some 800 years) frontier town, very picturesque, on the banks of the Inn. Simbach, the German town which is at the other end of the bridge which connects the two countries, is not nearly so old or picturesque—but they are both flourishing communities, and everyone seems happy, and no signs of poverty are visible. I noticed an immense difference in the appearance of Braünaü and its 4,000 inhabitants since I last visited the place, which now looks much more prosperous.

Though naturally the fame of the Schneider boys has spread far and wide, very few of the Braünaü inhabitants seem to have had sittings with the boys. The reason is, I think, because their religion does not exactly encourage the individual to dabble in the occult. During the five days we were there, we met all sorts of people and asked all sorts of questions, and psychical research does not appear to interest the great majority of Willy's neighbours. But he gets many noted Continental professors and scientific men who are interested, and it would be interesting to discover what the Braünaüers think all these eminent people come for. But the fact remains that psychical research does not interest the people generally.

THE SEANCE ROOM.

The séance room used for the sittings with the brothers Schneider is really the principal living room of the Schneider family. It also serves as a bedroom for two of the boys. It is a long, narrow apartment, 30 feet, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 10 feet, $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The ceiling is rather low, the room being 8 feet, $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height. Looking on the street are two double windows which take up about two-thirds of one end of the room. The room has three doors, one leading to the landing by which entrance is made; one leading into a kitchen; and one leading into a small living room. From the windows of the room to the (main) street below is a sheer drop of 22 feet 5 inches, the apartment being on the second floor. From the nearest door to the back of the cabinet is 12 feet 3 inches.

The principal furniture consists of a cupboard; a couch, 5 feet 10 inches long by 26 inches wide, by 15 inches high, over which is spread a black cloth; two small beds; a wooden table; and several other small pieces of furniture, a stove, chairs, etc., at back of room.

For the cabinet, two black curtains were hung from the ceiling, suspended by means of hooks. The cabinet reached from top end of couch to right side of left window. It therefore enclosed one window. The span of the pair of curtains was 7 feet $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the depth of cabinet being 5 feet 1 inch, from angle of wall to aperture in curtain. On the floor, in front of the cabinet, are invariably placed two old black curtains, each 7 feet 4 inches by 2 feet 3 inches. The *engel* (angel) used to pin the cabinet together at the top is $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 10 inches.

The rough square wooden table, which is generally placed in front of centre aperture of curtains, is $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 17 inches, and $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height. The weight as far as I could judge (and I think it an under-estimate), is about nine pounds. On the table is

placed a nickel-plated electric table lamp,—estimated at 30 c.p.—red globe, with silk shade, which is covered with a square of muslin. The combined weight of table and lamp is about 12 pounds. I very carefully sounded all walls, ceiling, etc. They are of plaster, with a wooden floor—the boards of which are plainly visible. I was given *carte blanche* to do as I pleased, go where I liked, and make myself at home. I spent a considerable time on the (Sunday) morning of November 1st making measurements and investigating the structure and conformation of the room—nothing in any way suspicious was found. The cabinet is placed in the very best spot for convincing phenomena. The double windows looking out on the street were difficult to open, creaked when the fasteners were turned, and no entrance could be made from the street without a long ladder. The street is the main thoroughfare, well lighted and (Saturday night) was full of people.

SEANCE OF SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31st, 1925.

We arrived at the home of the Schneiders at 8.30, where we found the family and sitters assembled. Rudi Schneider, whose leg was still giving him trouble, lay in one of the beds in the room—and remained there during the whole of the sitting, being unable to rise without the assistance of two persons. The room was unbearably hot and I very carefully took the temperature of it at the time the séance commenced. Twenty-two minutes after we arrived the thermometer stood at 80.5° Fahr. Not a window was open and I could discover no ventilation. It was a cold, still night, outside. The thermometer is a new one, made by Negretti & Zambra for travelling purposes, and is contained in a wooden case. It has an ivory scale, is guaranteed to be correct to 1/10th of a degree, and cost 25/-. The barometric pressure was just over 29.8 inches, and slowly falling.

We carefully examined all the furniture, doors, windows, floor, under the beds, etc. Everything was correct. I then superintended the erecting of the "cabinet" (merely two curtains made of black material), across the top left corner of the room enclosing one window, and suspended from the ceiling by means of hooks.

The windows of the séance room were very carefully prepared to prevent any light or air from reaching the room. The two double windows were fastened on the insides by means of stiff catches. I superintended the closing and fastening. Over the inside (in the room) of each pair of windows were placed two thick blankets, suspended by means of hooks. Then came lace curtains over all. So that between the cabinet and the street were two separate windows, fastened on the insides, two thick blankets, and a lace curtain.

The cabinet took only a few minutes to erect, and was simplicity itself. We next prepared the necessary articles for the sitting. On each curtain we pinned lengthwise a strip of luminous ribbon, so that the slightest movement of the cabinet could be seen. Near the top of the cabinet, at the aperture between the curtains, was pinned the *engel*: an "angel" with wings, cut out of cardboard and made luminous.

On the floor in front of and under the cabinet were spread two large sheets of black material. The reason for this was that any light-coloured pseudopods or luminous hands, lights, etc., would have a good background and could easily be seen. The sheet precluded also the use of any trap-doors or wires, strings, etc., which the sceptical sitter might think were employed in the production of the phenomena.

In front of the cabinet, on the floor, was placed a rectangular wooden table, 19½ inches high, covered with a black cloth. On top of the table was placed a metal electric table lamp, the same height as the table, weighing about 3 pounds, connected to a wall rheostat which was not used at the first séance. The lamp had a red bulb and was shaded. The only other articles were a strip of luminous ribbon and a handkerchief. I had brought with me my long strip of radio-active silk ribbon,² three luminous fans, and a very brilliant luminous slate, or plaque. These were in readiness, but were not used.

It might be thought a suspicious circumstance that the cabinet enclosed one of the windows at the end of the room. But I can assure the reader that if there was one part of that room where no trickery could be employed, it was the end of the room where the windows were. The windows overlooked the street; were on the second floor; and were over 22 feet from the pavement. Further, it was Saturday night, and people were continuously passing to and fro under the windows, along the well-lighted main thoroughfare of the town, during the whole of the sitting. Besides all this, the windows could not have been tampered with without instant detection.

All being in readiness, Willy removed his coat and waistcoat and put on a pyjama or dressing jacket. He did not put on his usual pyjama suit; nor did he wear the one-piece tights he sometimes uses. This special clothing would not have added one iota to the effectiveness of the particular control I used at this séance.

When all was ready, we arranged the chairs and couch in a semi-circle in front of the cabinet. The sitters and the order of seating were as follows, commencing clockwise from the medium: Willy; Harry Price;

2. See *Journal*, A. S. P. R., August, 1925, p. 436.

Frau Lena Schneider, daughter-in-law of Herr Schneider; Mr. Roy Holmyard; Frau Kapitan Kogelnik; Herr Ramspacher; Frau Rosa Schneider, another daughter-in-law; Herr Josef Schneider, father of Willy; Frau Elise Schneider, mother of Willy; Frau Ramspacher; Mr. Joseph De Wyckoff. I was solely responsible for the control, and Mr. Holmyard, who has had many years' experience, took the notes, including times, pulse-rates, etc., etc. All the sitters linked hands, Mr. De Wyckoff's two hands being held by Frau Ramspacher, at what would have been otherwise a loose end of the circle. Frau Lena Schneider linked her right arm in my left, since I had no free hand to give her.

I will now describe my control. I placed Willy's hands upon his thighs and firmly gripped his wrists, where I could plainly count his pulse-beats. His legs I placed in front of my chair, and pressed them hard up against the wood with my legs. His legs and feet were in a vice-like grip. His back was to the cabinet, the nearest point to the curtain of any portion of his body being 39 inches. Just before we turned the white light out and switched on the red we carefully noted the thermometer, which read 80.5°. This reading was checked by Mr. Holmyard, and the instrument was placed on a cabinet at the back of the sitters, out of reach of the circle. The reader will realize that the heat was terrible, and, personally, I could hardly stand it. It was a very still night out of doors, and there was no ventilation in the séance room. At 8.52 we changed over from white to red light and the séance commenced. The red light gave enough illumination for me to see my neighbour and Willy plainly, (this visual control thus supplementing my tactual control), and I could also see Mr. De Wyckoff across the circle. In the immediate vicinity of the lamp there was enough light to see plainly any article placed on the table upon which the lamp stood, or on the floor. By my luminous wrist watch I timed the phenomena and took the pulse rate, which I called out to the note-taker. The record follows:

8.52. Séance commenced. Pulse 86 beats to the minute. I challenged all sitters as to the chain control. All answer satisfactorily, the tactual control being perfect.

9.01. Trance commences. Willy's head suddenly falls on my shoulder. Hands twitch violently, and breathing becomes spasmodic. Almost at the same moment Frau Lena Schneider, who is also mediumistic, falls into a semi-trance with violent twitching of the arms, which is, of course, communicated to me by means of her right arm, which is linked in my left.

9.05. Much agitation of the medium. Spasmodic shocks appeared to pass through his body. His breathing much laboured. Muscular

twitching very violent. Frau Lena Schneider nearly normal, the phase having almost passed. Answers normally when spoken to. "Otto," Willy's control, in a loud whisper: "I will try and show you some very good phenomena to-night."

9.08. Mr. De Wyckoff said he felt cold; his feet are much colder. Other sitters say they feel cooler. I feel a cool breeze round my head. Willy is resting his head on my shoulder, trance spasms still violent. Pulse 76.

9.10. I suggest that we sing, as the sitters were entering that tense state which is not good for the production of phenomena. I lead off with "Katharina." This is followed by an Austrian folk song with a good chorus. Pulse 76.

9.14. As the sitters were singing the chorus of last song, curtains of cabinet bulge out and are shaken violently. No one nearer to cabinet than 39 inches. All controls good. Curtains again bulged out as if someone in cabinet.

9.18. Very violent shaking and twisting of the curtains which appear to keep in time with the music. From my position in the circle I have a particularly good view of the aperture between the curtain and wall at right side of cabinet. Gradually a light forms high up at edge of curtain, and I see four semi-luminous "fingers" or rods pushing the curtain at top of cabinet. The other sitters, from their position, cannot see this. The fingers seem articulated and appear to bend. They are visible only for about 30 seconds, and look as if they are joined to a stump or pseudopod, but not like those I saw previously in Munich.⁸ Pulse variable and rises to 89.*

9.22. Strong, cool breeze appearing to come from cabinet. All the sitters declare that they feel the breeze and that it is much cooler. Again the hand creeps round top of curtain—between curtain and wall. Curtains shaken like a terrier shaking a rat. It is not the hand which is shaking the curtain. Suddenly one of the luminous ribbons appears to be jerked off the right curtain of cabinet. Ribbon falls to ground. Curtains still agitated. Several sitters declare that they are getting cold. Medium much agitated and lifts his (and my) hands off his thighs on to mine and digs his knuckles into my legs.

9.24. The semi-luminous "hand" behind curtain at top of cabinet reappears but now looks like a short, thick rod, about 8 inches long.

⁸. See *Psyche*, April, 1923.

It is much higher than could be reached by a person sitting down. It appeared to grow more luminous, then died away. Curtain moving incessantly as if someone in cabinet trying to tear it down. Willy very distressed.

9.26. We recommence singing, and the medium beats time to our music by banging his fists on my thighs. Curtains still agitated. Curtains twisted by some invisible agency. Luminous "angel" sways up and down and nearly falls. We cry out "Bravo! Otto," "Thank you! Otto," etc.

9.32. Table and lamp moved. They swayed for about a minute and were almost levitated: whatever the force, it is coming from out of cabinet, in aperture between the curtains, near the floor. A moment later a very strong breeze—really a powerful current of air—comes from aperture in curtains and the lamp-shade sways to and fro. Breeze ceases and table and contents are almost levitated. The table and contents move of their own volition (apparently), towards Mr. De Wyckoff. "Otto" then asked that a handkerchief be placed on the table at the base of the lamp. This is done by Frau Ramsbacher. She had hardly regained her seat before the handkerchief began to move and after a few seconds it glided off the stool on to the floor with a snake-like movement which was very curious to behold. Medium was at this time very agitated. The piece of luminous ribbon which had been pulled off curtain now began to move on the floor—a zig-zag motion. "Otto" then asked Mr. De Wyckoff to replace the handkerchief on table. This he did: immediately it gradually rose into the air to the height of about $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet. It was then thrown to the floor by the operating entity. It was again "handled" (to use an appropriate term) on the floor in various ways and I could distinctly see a semi-luminous, but incomplete "hand" or pseudopod again lift the handkerchief to about five feet from the floor, where it remained poised in the air for a few seconds and then fell. The "hand" appeared to have four long, articulated fingers. At the same time Mr. De Wyckoff saw three of the fingers grasping and fingering the handkerchief. He again put the handkerchief on the table. It was again lifted up, with a curious floating movement high above the lamp, and then fell. The "hand" was again plainly visible, fingering the handkerchief as it lay upon the floor. The table-cloth on table was now moved, a series of short tugs being given at one side of the cloth. Handkerchief was again put on table by Frau Ramsbacher, who then resumed her seat. The handkerchief immediately "dived" off the table on to the floor with a motion which reminded the writer of the movements of a seal when taking to the water. Table and lamp were moved again, the two objects swaying as

though about to fall. All these brilliant phenomena were productive of much "Bravo! Otto," and similar expressions, and the control then said "stop thanking me." Pulse 73.

9.40. Very cool breeze again, and curtains of cabinet expand with the movement reminiscent of the inflation of a balloon. A pale light was now visible at the top of curtain in the aperture between it and the wall, where previously the "hand" had been. It disappeared after a few seconds. "Otto" then asked for the luminous ribbon and a handkerchief to be placed on table under red lamp. Something appeared to be tugging the curtain, the pull coming from near the floor. Pulse 62.

9.44. "Otto" said that medium was very tired as he had given a long sitting the previous night with Baron von Schrenck-Notzing at Munich. "Otto" suggested that if we wanted good phenomena the following evening, we ought to terminate the séance. He said the next sitting would be better. "Otto" then said: "I want Mr. Price to control to-morrow." He was asked at what time and "Otto" said "nine." The medium now appeared to be coming out of trance, and relapsed again; but eventually, with a great deal of labouring, became normal once more. Trance ended at 9.45. Pulse 68. The white light was gradually introduced, and after a few seconds the main white light was switched on.

The first thing we did when white light was available was to examine the thermometer. It stood at 69.5 Fahr. *It had fallen eleven degrees during the sitting* which lasted under an hour. Five minutes after the sitting had ended the thermometer rose two degrees. At five minutes to ten the mercury had risen to 74.5. Several of the sitters, including all the visitors, stood and watched the mercury slowly rise. At ten o'clock (the hour we left) the thermometer stood at 77° Fahr.

I want the reader to understand clearly the conditions under which this test was made. It was a *special* test, and two sitters (Mr. Holmyard and myself) very carefully, and independently, took the reading of the instrument when the sitting commenced. The instrument was put on top of a cabinet (not outside wall), and left undisturbed. At the end of the sitting the thermometer had *fallen* eleven degrees, and several of the sitters, including myself, watched the mercury gradually rise in the tube, as conditions became normal. This is the second medium only through whom I have absolutely proved that the atmosphere surrounding the sitters gets cooler during the psychic manifestations. The first was, of course, Stella C.⁴ Professor Chr. Winther, of Copenhagen, has

⁴ See Stella C. *Some Original Experiments in Psychical Research*. London, Hurst and Blackett, 1925. 3/6 net.

also proved through Anna Rasmussen the truth of the hypothesis that the air of the séance room gets cooler during the sittings. There was no hallucination about the breezes at this sitting with Willy. The curtains were in an almost constant state of motion. The breeze rocked the lamp-shade for more than a minute. All the sitters felt cool, and some very cold. Mr. De Wyckoff's estimation of the temperature, *before we had examined the thermometer*, was that it had fallen fifteen degrees. It probably did, but by the time the trance was over and we had switched on the electric light, the mercury had risen somewhat.

This report of our first séance is almost a *verbatim* copy of the notes we made during the sitting. The complete report, as here published, was written immediately after the séance concluded, and took me till 4.30 in the morning to write it up. It is interesting to note that the name of "Otto" is supposed to be "Otto Bauer," who was of half German, half Italian extraction. At the conclusion of every séance, and as an indication that it is at an end, he says, "slomenkes!" which is similar to a Bohemian word, *slomac*, meaning "break up."

SEANCE OF SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST, 1925.

First Portion.

At the conclusion of our previous sitting with Willy, I learned that two sitters from Munich, Professors Gruber and Hildebrand, had telegraphed to say that they would attend Sunday's séance. Professor Karl Gruber, of Munich University, I knew well, as he attended the sittings I had with Willy some years ago when he was in the Bavarian capital. Baron von Schrenck-Notzing happened to mention to Dr. Gruber that I was in Braünaü, so the Professor kindly made the long journey from Munich to Braünaü in order to renew our acquaintance. His friend, Professor Hildebrand, is a doctor of literature and head of the famous Munich firm of publishers and booksellers of the same name. I had not previously met him. Their journey was not wasted, as they were participants in the most amazing, convincing and instructive séance with this medium that probably has ever been published; in fact, I believe it is the best sitting Willy has ever given under the same conditions of control. This is all the more remarkable as several sittings just previous to those I am now recording were negative. In compiling this protocol I am really concerned lest I understate the variety and magnificence of the phenomena, thus giving a false rendering of the séance.

The control was identical to that imposed on the previous evening, and I will not detail it. The reader will remember that "Otto" on the

previous night instructed me again to take charge of the control. Willy wore the same outdoor clothes and dressing jacket as previously. I thoroughly searched him, searched the room, superintended the erection of the cabinet, the blocking up of the windows, the arranging of the sitters, and fastening of the doors. The control of the hands and feet was exactly as described in the report of the last séance. The same red light was put on the same wooden table in the accustomed position—the usual curtains and floor-coverings being used. In fact, the conditions of the séance of October 31st were duplicated in our sitting of November 1st. Mr. Roy Holmyard again took all the notes (and he had barely a moment's respite from writing), and independently took the thermometer readings both before and after the séance. On comparison, our readings always tallied. As far as possible I took the times and pulse-rates, but Willy's body was in an almost constant state of motion—often violent motion—and my task was rendered difficult on this account, the movement of my wrist watch hindering me somewhat. So the reader will not find as many times and rates as I should have liked. The account of the phenomena is practically a *verbatim* copy of the notes, and this report was nearly completed in the Hotel Erzherzog Johann, Graz, the following day. Rudi Schneider was in the bed asleep when we started, asleep in the interval, and asleep at the conclusion of the séance. He has a very nasty wound in the leg (I examined it); cannot walk a step without assistance; and it will be probably three months before he can give another sitting. I understand that Baron von Schrenck has advised his removal to a sanatorium. In case any reader should think that Rudi (the only uncontrolled person in the room) could have interfered in any way, I must point out that his bed was on the far side of the sitters; he could not walk; the semi-circle of sitters, in close formation, reached from wall to wall; and that the red light was bright enough for us to see one another. *I could plainly see the outline of every sitter* and the other sitters made similar statements. I again brought with me my luminous ribbon (4½ yards long), three luminous fans, and a luminous slate, or plaque. The articles were *really* luminous (and not merely phosphorescent), the paint being made by myself out of zinc sulphide containing some radium bromide. The articles were thus very brilliant. The usual strips of luminous ribbon were pinned to the curtains, the luminous "angel" being attached to the top of the cabinet.

The sitters included some who had not attended Saturday's séance. Reading clockwise, commencing from the medium, they were as follows: Willy, Harry Price, Professor Karl Gruber, Frau Rosa Schneider, Mr. Roy Holmyard (taking all notes), Herr Ramspacher, Carl Schneider, Frau Schneider, Herr Josef Schneider, Frau Ramspacher, Professor Hilde-

brand, Mr. Joseph De Wyckoff. All hands were linked, both of Mr. De Wyckoff's hands being held by Professor Hildebrand. Mr. Holmyard's arms were linked (because he was writing) in those of his neighbours.

Just before (at 9.05) commencement of sitting the thermometer read 75° Fahr. At commencement of sitting (9.10), it read 76° Fahr. The night was cool; the barometer low, 29.3 inches, falling. The health of the medium and all the sitters was good. I particularly inquired about the health of the Schneider family. The fact that we had with us *four* mediums (Willy, Rudi, Carl and Rosa) of the Schneider family may have accounted for the magnificent and amazing phenomena we witnessed. All being ready, the white light was turned out and the red switched on. I challenged the control of all the sitters: All answered satisfactorily. To conserve space I will designate the sitters by their initials. The following is a *verbatim* copy of the notes, my interpolations being in square brackets:

9.10. Pulse of medium, 80 beats to the minute. The pulse is quite regular, but strong.

9.15. Trance commences, with the typical twitching of the hands and quickened respiration associated with this medium. Simultaneously with Willy, Carl falls into a trance which is much less agitated than that of his brother. Carl, in his trance, states that he can plainly see "Otto," Willy's control, standing by the side of the small table. Herr Ramsbacher reported this conversation.

9.17. Willy's trance very agitated, with violent spasmodic movements. [He digs his fists into my thighs.]

9.20. "Otto" said *fester*, i.e., "hold tighter," meaning he wants the sitters to clasp one another more tightly, in order [mentally] to stiffen up the circle. Willy's trance deepens.

9.22. Right curtain of cabinet bulges out as if filled with wind. Every movement of cabinet plainly visible on account of vertical luminous strips. Medium very agitated; respiration quicker.

9.24. Right curtain again sways to the right towards Willy, whose position is such that his back is practically towards the cabinet. Willy extremely agitated. H. P. feels on face slight breeze coming from cabinet. Both curtains sway towards table. "Otto" here says that he will awaken Carl from trance. Both curtains of cabinet bellow out again. Ramsbacher announces that Carl is normal again.

9.26. "Angel" on cabinet swings violently, then curtains swing out. H. P. reports short column [estimated at 12 inches] of light between the top of right side of right curtain and wall. (He is in a very advantageous position to see this.) "Otto" asks that handkerchief be placed over lamp. J. D. W. places his silk handkerchief in the

prescribed position. [This extra covering on the top of the lamp does not appreciably affect the illumination of the circle.] Circle commence to sing. Medium quieter. Pulse 74.

9.30. Curtains swing to right again, and right curtain is twisted by some invisible agency in an anti-clockwise direction; the curtain is twisted into a thick rope. "Otto" asks that handkerchief be taken off lamp and put on table, in full light of lamp. "Otto" asks that circle cease singing, but talk instead. Curtains flying in all directions. J. D. W. places handkerchief in prescribed position.

9.35. Handkerchief on table moves slightly. A very strong breeze, felt by all the sitters, sweeps the room. Handkerchief lifted up (as if by hand underneath), raised about one foot from table, danced about in air for about five seconds, and then fell on table. "Otto" then asked for a tambourine to be placed on table. He was told that no tambourine was available, but that a bell could be had. "Otto" replied that he would use the bell later. Curtains then bulged again as if by some being inside it. Handkerchief again lifted from table, and J. D. W. and H. P. simultaneously reported that they could distinguish from their viewpoints, a hand holding it. Handkerchief fell on floor. Prof. K. G. asked "Otto" to bring handkerchief to him, but this was not done. J. D. W. and H. P. reported simultaneously that they could see two pseudopods or hand-like terminals, with fingers, crawling over handkerchief. "Otto" then asked that some luminous object be put on the table. One of H. P.'s fans [lace, with red, yellow, and green luminous flowers painted on it] was then put on the table by J. D. W., together with a strip of luminous ribbon. [It will be understood that when a sitter leaves his seat or breaks the circle to place an object on table, his neighbours immediately connect up, re-admitting the sitter when his task is completed.] "Otto" requested that the handkerchief be lifted off floor and placed on table; this was done by J. D. W.

9.45. Curtains swung out, nearly touching lamp. J. D. W. and H. P. simultaneously reported fully-materialized hand [small, like a child's] fingering handkerchief. Handkerchief rises for a second and drops on table. Sitters commence singing, but "Otto" asks them to speak, not sing. Curtains twisted, and "hand" again lifted handkerchief clear of table for about five seconds and drops it on floor. All sitters see this phenomenon. Handkerchief glides about on floor with snake-like movements. "Otto" asked that handkerchief be again put on table. J. D. W. complies. Curtains dance up and down and expand as if filled with air. H. P. reported a pseudopod, stump-like, [of a grey, or dirty white colour] with two "fingers" sliding under handkerchief. At the same time, a semi-luminous "hand" is seen under the table.

crawling about. H. P. asks "Otto" that the fan (which is closed) be lifted. This is done, the "hand" clutching one side of fan, which it lifts, the fan opening owing to its weight. [Weight of fan, $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces.] Fan is waved about and falls behind table. "Otto" asks that the handkerchief be folded in two; J. D. W. does this, and handkerchief is then slowly slid off table on to floor, and is then thrown back on to table by entity, with one corner lapping over at side of table nearest cabinet. Handkerchief is again lifted in air about two feet above table and swayed about for about 10 seconds, it having the appearance of being suspended by means of a rod though no support is visible.

The handkerchief was then crumpled up and dropped on table. Handkerchief again lifted as if a hand were beneath it.

Again the handkerchief is lifted and waved about near the cabinet aperture, about 2 feet above table. After about 10 seconds it falls and J. D. W. replaces it on table. "Otto" volunteers the statement that he will allow J. D. W. to feel the "hand" a little later. Handkerchief again lifted about 12 inches and falls on table. Then a semi-materialized hand, visible to all sitters, handles the handkerchief, and lifts up the fan from floor. The pseudopod folds the handkerchief over the open fan, in the full light of the red lamp. All sitters observe this phenomenon. [I must point out that all phenomena which occur above or on the table, or on the floor at sides or front of table, and all movements of the cabinet, are visible to all the sitters. The movements of objects *behind* the table (i.e., between table and cabinet) are seen much better by J. D. W. and myself, owing to our positions at extremities of semi-circle.] Two "hands," not quite perfectly materialized, are now quite visibly assisting in the manipulations of handkerchief and fan. Medium calmer. Pulse 60. H. P. reports cool breeze on right side of face. Cabinet suddenly shoots out. H. P. reports that breeze has now shifted to his knees—very cold. Handkerchief and fan are now taken off table, and fall on floor, right of table. Fan is spread out and is lifted just above the floor—estimate two inches. Fan glides behind table and H. P. reports that a dark pseudopod, like a fist, is slowly passing and repassing over luminous fan. This is done 27 times, both H. P. and J. D. W. seeing this phenomenon. Lamp partially levitated and rocked to and fro. It quickens its pace and nearly overbalances. Frau R. S. exclaims: "Don't do that or the lamp will fall." Rockings cease, but lamp is violently shaken.

10.07. Pulse 54. "Otto" asked that handkerchief be placed on table. J. D. W. does this. Curtains bulge and luminous "angel" at top of cabinet swings to and fro like a pendulum. Very cold breeze felt by nearly all sitters. Handkerchief on table swells out like an air-ball,

as if some substance is materializing beneath it. Handkerchief "deflates" and then displays movement such as would happen if a snake were disporting itself beneath it. Curtains shaken violently, are twisted, and shoot out into the room. Circle commence singing "Katharina" [which has a fascinating lilt in it]. Handkerchief rises from table about two feet, and bobs up and down to tune of song, keeping perfect time; it drops back to table, where it remains motionless. Table, with lamp, is "shoved" a few inches away from cabinet: no propelling agency seen. Handkerchief is picked up by pale, semi-luminous stump and is thrown on top of lamp-shade. "Stump" vanishes in a flash. Pulse 55 [about 10.12 o'clock]. Handkerchief then jerked off lamp like a flash of lightning. Medium very agitated, digs his fists in H. P.'s thighs, laboured breathing. Sitters commence singing. Handkerchief reappears on table, and dances to the music. The contour of handkerchief suggests a pointed "terminal" supporting it. Handkerchief then becomes "lifeless" and sinks upon table. [A most interesting effect; it was really as if the piece of silk had suddenly become "dead."] "Otto" then announces that we should rest for twenty minutes, and that the white light at far end of room should be turned on. This is done by Herr Ramsbacher.

10.16. End of trance. H. P. speaks to medium, who answers normally. Willy is covered with perspiration, but otherwise no apparent effect of trance state. Pulse 52. Thermometer, 70° Fahrenheit. [H. P. at once examines cabinet, curtains, windows, articles used, table, lamp, etc., etc.—nothing abnormal.]

SEANCE OF SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST, 1925.

Second Portion.

During the interval three new sitters arrived, viz.: Kapitan and Frau Kapitan Kogelnik, who have watched the growth of Willy's mediumship with the keenest interest; and Frau Höglinger, wife of Herr Schneider's employer. No refreshments were taken during the intermission, but nearly everyone smoked. When time approached to resume, I again examined Willy, cabinet, curtains, windows, doors, etc.; all normal. Circle forms, and R. H. again consents to take notes, times, etc. He confirms that thermometer stands at 74° Fahr. Circle then complete, and Herr Schneider switches over from white to red light. Table, lamp, cabinet, etc., exactly as for first portion. Control identical to previous description. Circle is composed in following order, commencing clockwise from the medium: Willy, Harry Price, Professor

Karl Gruber, Frau Rosa Schneider, Mr. Roy Holmyard, Frau Kapitan Kogelnik, Frau Höglinger, Karl Schneider, Herr Ramspacher, Kapitan Kogelnik, Frau Schneider, Herr Josef Schneider, Frau Ramspacher, Professor Hildebrand, Mr. Joseph De Wyckoff. All is in readiness at:

10.36. Séance commences. H. P. challenges sitters as to control. All answer satisfactorily. Pulse 68.

10.38. Willy in trance. Usual symptoms. [As previously described.]

10.42. "Otto" cries out "hold tighter" [*fester*. The reader will, of course, realize that "Otto," the name of Willy's alleged "control" or operating entity, speaks through the medium's vocal organs in a hoarse whisper, not distinguishable from his normal voice.] Pulse 70. "Otto" calls for conversation [*sprechen*]. Medium very agitated. Curtains "tremble" and gradually expand. H. P. sings "Oh! Katharina," the medium beating time with his fists on his (H. P.'s) thighs. "Otto" calls for hand-bell [luminous], which was placed by J. D. W. on that side of table nearest the aperture between curtains. J. D. W. resumes his seat, and curtains at once bellow out. He then places H. P.'s luminous fan and the handkerchief on table, and resumes his seat. J. D. W. reports seeing hand come out at cabinet aperture and lift fan from table and slowly take it to floor. All see movement of fan. H. P., R. H., and several other sitters simultaneously report seeing luminous fan moving on floor, behind table. [The movements were as if being "nosed" by an animal.] "Hand" shoots out of cabinet, and rings bell, which is thrown over lamp, strikes H. P.'s foot and rolls under table. Fan then lifted about two feet from floor and tossed to other side of table, facing circle. The light then goes out and on again rapidly—several times. [I examined the lamp at termination of sitting and found that some portion of bulb-holder had been loosened during the séance, causing the light to go out if lamp were tilted. But, curiously enough, no one saw the *movement* of the lamp which caused the periods when circuit was broken.] Table then rocked and shook violently. Handkerchief moved several times, twice clear of the table. Once, it again appeared as if a finger were supporting it; it drops to table. Circle commences to sing. Curtains dance up and down in time with the singing. A very strong breeze. H. P. sings "Oh! Katharina." Handkerchief immediately "jumps up," [the exact effect] stands on end, and dances on the table to the tune of the song.

It is then thrown over to J. D. W., who replaced it on table. Handkerchief rises from table, held by a half-formed "hand" or pseudopod. [Distance from medium about 30 inches.] H. P. reports that from his position he can see the whole "hand," wrist and arm, all ill-shapen, rising

from the floor. [This materialization—estimated at 24 inches high—took place behind right corner of table—the corner nearest the cabinet. The “arm” reminded me of a swan’s neck and swayed with a peculiar motion like a pendulum].

The sitters see the “hand,” with apparently two fingers only, and a short stumpy thumb, rising and swaying above the table. The handkerchief is again thrown over to J. D. W. Carl Schneider reported to be in trance.

“Otto” called for “the luminous ribbon” [the famous “Mr. Price’s Paris ribbon” of the Vienna sittings;⁵ it is $4\frac{1}{2}$ yards long, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide.] J. D. W. placed it on table, with ends dangling. He resumed his seat and immediately two irregular-shaped “fists” pulled it off the table on to the floor, tossed it about, and eventually tied its centre into a somewhat complicated knot. H. P. asked that the ribbon be brought to him. Immediately the ribbon, held by a dark “fist” or pseudopod (the second one had disappeared), went over to him and tapped him about six times on the right knee. [It was a series of regular taps, quite hard, of, I estimate, about 8 ounces pressure. As the very luminous ribbon (and the fist) touched my knee, Willy spasmodically drew my hands nearer to him, as if to prevent my touching the materialization.] Ribbon travelled back to near table, and fell upon the floor.

“Otto” asked that the ribbon be again placed on table. J. D. W. does this. Circle commence to sing. Table moves slightly. H. P. reports that a “hand” is between table and cabinet aperture, and is touching ribbon. At the same moment, ribbon is pulled on to floor. J. D. W. takes one end of ribbon, the other end being on floor, at right of table. He pulled the ribbon taut, gradually increasing the pressure until it became so great that all his strength was exerted. He declared that the ribbon appeared nailed to the floor, and that he exerted enough strength to pull over a human being. [The ribbon is very strong, is made of silk, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide.] J. D. W. relaxes his hold and ribbon falls to floor. He again picks up the end of ribbon nearer to him, the other end being to the right of the table. J. D. W. pulls the ribbon taut, slowly, and about five feet from his end the ribbon is again gripped by a terminal or pseudopod, and “Otto” says “pull.” A most amusing tug-of-war then ensues between the sitter and the entity, the former not exerting all his strength, of course. Backwards and forwards they pulled for about thirty seconds. J. D. W. then exerts more strength,

⁵ See A. S. P. R. *Journal* for August, 1925, p. 436.

and finally the whole of his strength, but he cannot get possession of the whole of the ribbon. [These tug-of-war episodes were highly diverting to the circle, which roared with laughter.] The tug-of-war effects were repeated several times during about five minutes. Medium very agitated, and drops his head on H. P.'s shoulder. It was quite obvious to all the circle that the strength exerted by the sitter would have unbalanced an ordinary human being; and if the ribbon had not been made of strong silk, it would have snapped. H. P. then called out, "Bring me the ribbon, Otto," and immediately the ribbon travelled round the table and the "hand" which was visible, tapped him several times on the right knee. H. P. remarks that it feels like a steel ball tapping him. The medium instinctively draws H. P.'s hands towards himself, so that no contact should be made. Pseudopod then threw ribbon in air and dematerialized, ribbon falling on floor.

"Otto" then asked for H. P.'s luminous slate [the kindergarten variety, wooden frame, black fibre "slate," one side made luminous. Size of slate, $10\frac{1}{2}" \times 8"$; size of luminous portion, $8\frac{1}{2}" \times 6\frac{1}{4}"$; thickness, $5/16"$; weight, 5ozs.]; J. D. W. placed this on table. Immediately, the slate was thrown over lamp towards sitters. This was done over and over again, a "hand" shooting out of aperture between cabinet curtains and tossing the slate to the sitters. Slate finally left on table. Medium seems very exhausted and limp, reclining on H. P.'s shoulder. Pulse 55 [at about 11.20].

"Otto" calls for *spielzeug* (playthings), and the best that could be done was to throw on the table a bunch of keys [belonging, I think, to Prof. K. G.]. Circle commence singing, the table rocks and dances to the time of the music [combined weight of table and lamp, about 12 pounds]. Bunch of keys grasped by a "hand," creeping over edge of table, and thrown over lamp: they fell at feet of Herr J. S.

H. P. had a curtain-ring and loop of cord in his pocket. He asked Prof. K. G. to secure this and place on table—this was done. They were found eventually on the floor. Electric light goes out and relights three times. No normal explanation of this effect.

11.25. [It was impossible to take the times more frequently, as Willy's hands were in a constant state of motion, which made it difficult for me to take times and pulse-rates. In periods of comparative quiescence I accomplished this, however.] Strong cool breeze felt by all sitters. "Otto" calls to Karl, still in trance, to come over and help him. Karl leaves the circle, crosses very slowly [reminded me of a blind man feeling his way], and joins his brother. Karl grasps his brother's hands; H. P. grasps all four hands. All sitters move up one

seat, Karl taking the place of Professor K. G. Karl's hands still controlled by H. P., in whose lap they rest. Karl breathing very spasmodically and with apparent difficulty. Prof. K. G. adds his right hand to pile on H. P.'s lap. Willy's head sinks on H.P.'s shoulder. H. P. reports that his left leg is curled round those of Karl, his right leg still pressing Willy's legs to chair. [I had complete control of both Karl and Willy.]

A few minutes later "Otto" directs that Karl return to his old place. This he does, sitters resuming their former seats. Almost at the moment he sat down, Karl came out of trance. Willy very violent and agitated. J. D. W. reports cool breeze by his feet. Light in red lamp flickers on and off—no normal explanation. J. D. W. again reports very strong, cool, continuous breeze. H. P. expresses a doubt that flickering of lamp is normal or due to faulty construction of bulb-holder. J. D. W. asks "Otto" to switch off light for an appreciable period. Light immediately goes out for about half a minute. Sitters cry out "Bravo! Otto!" "Otto" then requests J. D. W. to tighten [by screwing] the lamp in the socket. This is done. "Otto" asks H. P. to sing "Katharina" again. This is done, the circle joining in the chorus, and the medium beating time with his fists on H. P.'s knees. [The reader will understand that every movement of Willy's hands was followed by my hands which were controlling the medium.] "Otto" requested that light of lamp be dimmed somewhat. This is effected by J. D. W. by placing a silk handkerchief over the shade. [As a matter of fact, it made no appreciable difference to the intensity of the light.] Lamp now oscillated violently, and flickered on and off. Lamp, with full light, now made four complete revolutions, anti-clockwise, on the table, twisting the cord. [An exceptionally brilliant item.] "Otto" now asked that lamp be revolved back again to normal. This was done by J. D. W. Luminous slate and the handkerchief were on the table during this phenomenon.

H. P. reports seeing a luminous mass on floor, between table and curtains, [roughly 2 feet square, like a semi-luminous deflated balloon]. Curtains swing out and are twisted. A "hand" darts out from luminous mass (which is now smaller), snatches handkerchief off slate; throws it down; picks it up again; and replaces it on table, carefully covering the slate again. Lamp again flickers. Handkerchief again snatched off table, and thrown on to top of lamp shade. Light flickers and handkerchief is removed from lamp by a pseudopod, in the shape of a half-formed "fist."

"Otto" now asked J. D. W. to remove luminous slate. This he does. "Otto" says he will have a game with him, and a "hand"

raises the handkerchief from floor and J. D. W. is invited by "Otto" to take it. He tries, but handkerchief is quickly taken into cabinet. This is done over and over again for seven or eight minutes. However quickly J. D. W. tries to take handkerchief, the entity is far quicker and the sitter is never able to touch it. Then, instead of disappearing into the cabinet, the handkerchief is slipped round to side of lamp farthest from the sitter, [i.e., opposite me]. This is done over and over again, the handkerchief jumping from one side of table to the other in a fraction of a second. [A most amazing phenomenon. The handkerchief "flew" round the lamp and table with lightning-like rapidity, and it was quite impossible for a human being to cope with the movements of the pseudopod. The flying handkerchief left a trail of light behind it (an illusion, of course), which reminded me of a piece of lighted rope being twirled round and round; or of the more familiar Catherine wheel, the effect of which is due to the sensation's persisting as an after-image for a comparatively lengthy period.]

"Otto" now asked J. D. W. to guess the whereabouts of the handkerchief. If the sitter said behind the table, it would appear from under the table; if J. D. W. hazarded a guess that the handkerchief was in the cabinet, it would reveal itself by falling on the table. This play with the handkerchief lasted for some minutes, [the circle rocking with laughter at the vain endeavours of the sitter to secure the handkerchief]. Medium's legs trembling violently. Pulse 52 [about 11.45]. "Otto" then waved handkerchief in the air, and threw it on J. D. W.'s lap. Once more the handkerchief was placed on the table, and once more it was picked up like a flash of lightning, waved in the air, and fell back on the table.

"Otto" now asked that lamp be taken off table, table removed, and lamp placed in centre of circle. This was done, the lamp being about two feet from R. H. (who was taking notes). J. D. W. reports a strong breeze on his left. Curtains of cabinet move as if by a sudden gust. Medium quiet. Pulse 55. [At about 11.50.]

"Otto" now asks J. D. W. to roll up his two handkerchiefs and place one near the base of the lamp, on the cabinet side, and one near aperture in curtain. This was done, and a moment later the one near curtain was moved towards J. D. W.'s feet. This effect was repeated. J. D. W. then spread one handkerchief out flat near the cabinet, and it was at once picked up and thrown back to him. No pseudopod visible.

"Otto" asked for a piece of pencil and a sheet of paper to be placed near lamp, on floor, and he would try to write a message. R. H. placed his pencil and a sheet from his pad in the prescribed position, but nothing happened and immediately after the medium cried

"slomenkes" and showed signs of returning to normal, exactly at midnight. Pulse about 58, irregular.

[The white light is gradually turned on; I speak to Willy, who answers normally; and I relinquish my control. Medium very hot, but not particularly exhausted. Temperature, carefully checked, 72° Fahr. I carefully go over the cabinet, windows, etc., etc., once more, but everything satisfactory. Professors Gruber and Hildebrand, with Willy and Karl and his wife, and J. D. W., R. H., and H. P. adjourn to a neighbouring café and discuss this most wonderful sitting (my tenth with this medium)—in all probability the most interesting sitting, held under rigid test conditions, that has ever been published.]

CONCLUSION.

I suppose the reader will expect me to say a few words in conclusion, but really there is little to be said. Need I reiterate that not one of the phenomena we saw during our stay could have been produced normally with the severe control I imposed? Maskelyne, with his proverbial "two tons of machinery"—or ten tons, come to that—could not have produced, under the same conditions, one single phenomenon without immediate detection. No machine is capable of imparting "life" to a handkerchief by means of which it will dart, with lightning-like rapidity, round and round an electric lamp like a moth round a candle. And machines do not possess intelligence. "Otto" obeyed our requests over and over again, and even entered into the fun of the thing. If the catch-as-catch-can, and the hide-and-seek, and the tug-of-war were superhuman, the operating entity possessed some very human attributes, and for the moment we forgot that we were playing with a discarnate intelligence—it was so very "lifelike."

The conditions under which we had our sittings were ideal. We were in the home of the medium whom I had known for years. By the time Willy arrived we were *persona grata* with the entire family—not only with the family, but the whole of Bräunaü! After we had been in the place two or three days we could hardly cross the road or enter a shop without someone saying "good-morning" or touching his hat. We photographed the school children (a proceeding so popular that we had "deputations" asking for pictures from those "unfortunates" who had been left out); we photographed the frontier officials; we photographed the "oldest inhabitant"; we bought out the local tobacconist; we made purchases at most of the shops; we spent an evening in the local hostelry with the *élite* of the place, laughing and joking and consuming some of the very excellent Pilsner available—in fact,

we freely fraternized with everyone in the town. The reader may regard all this as trivial, and that it has nothing to do with the phenomena; he will be sadly mistaken. We were creating an atmosphere of friendship, of trust, and of equality which reflected its beneficent influence on the medium's family and the medium himself—with what results the reader has seen.

Another factor which probably contributed to our brilliant success at Sunday's sitting is that the medium was then very fresh, having been with us for a long walk in the country, finishing up with lunch. It is doubtful if the assistance of Karl's power helped the phenomena to any extent.

The temperature of the séance room fell undoubtedly during our sittings, and I can think of no normal explanation of this phenomenon. With a number of people in a closed room, the mercury rises, of course. The pulse-rate is comparable to what we experienced in Vienna, and readers should consult ⁶ the chart I compiled on that occasion. The medium appears to lose a considerable amount of vitality during the trance state, but rapidly recovers when restored to normal. None of the sitters is apparently affected.

I have now arrived at those vital questions "How?" and "Why?" and it is here that I must take leave of my readers. Baron von Schrenck-Notzing favours the theory that Willy possesses a secondary personality, which is dissociated under certain conditions. It is a fact that Willy is cognizant of what is happening to "Otto"; what "Otto" is going to do; and what "Otto" has done—without the use of his normal senses. In fact, Willy is "Otto," and "Otto" is Willy—a oneness which is separable, yet not separated. Curiously enough, "Otto" differs in many respects from his predecessor, "Minna," an alleged entity whose acquaintance I made during my visit to Munich in 1922. "Otto," I think, is harder to please. The spiritistic theory is not easily applied to the Willy phenomena, which are purely physical. Now that Baron von Schrenck has recovered his *protégé*, it is hoped that by continuous and systematic experiment, some new light will be shed upon the dynamics of these most interesting manifestations.

⁶ See A. S. P. R. Journal, August, 1925, p. 424.

THE STATISTICS OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

BY F. E. LEANING.

Statistics, it has been said, never prove anything; because as the mass of mankind are, as Carlyle told an indignant generation, "mostly fools," the remainder, the clever people who understand figures, can make statistics prove or disprove whatever they please. It is a matter of manipulating them. Nevertheless there is a powerful logic in figures, and psychical science can no more exempt itself from the inductive method than any other science. "We cannot advance a step without statistics," said Gurney: "There is plenty of assertion, but no figures." I find a brief study of the purposes for which figures were required, and the way in which they were obtained, sufficiently interesting, and I hope instructive, to put on record here. They are among the milestones that mark out our track.

Sir Francis Galton seems to have been the pioneer of the questionnaire method as applied to psychological enquiries. In 1872 he published "Statistical Enquiries into the Efficacy of Prayer" (!) and in 1881 he wrote on the "Visions of Sane Persons." This was the result of classifying the answers of one hundred men of distinction (19 of them were F.R.S.) to his questions on the point. This was the year in which the Society for Psychical Research was founded, to take up in serious earnest work foreshadowed by the old Cambridge "Ghost" Society of 1860. That society began its list of queries with appearances of "Angels, good and bad," perhaps owing to the ecclesiastical members, who included the men afterwards famous in the Church as Bishops Westcott and Lightfoot, and Archbishop Benson. Unfortunately this ancestral society either got no results, or they were never published.* So the S.P.R. had no capital, so to speak, beyond its enthusiasm. Within four years it had created its first crop, of the very respectable size of 5,705 persons interrogated as to whether they had seen, heard, or been touched by a human presence when no one was there. There was a limit of time, some ten or twelve years, and of conditions; that is, the person was to have been completely awake, in good health, and free from mental stress. This group of five thousand were the affirmatives out of a total which Gurney computes at 300,000, and the work was undertaken chiefly to test the objection that impressions of this sort were not only "common," but common enough

* See *Journ. S.P.R.*, Ap., 1923.

to be ruled out as coincidences if they happened at the same time as the death of a person seen or heard.† The body of information thus collected was of course rich in other issues besides, and the value of such broadly-based results was acknowledged at the International Congress of Experimental Psychology held in Paris in 1889, under the presidency of Prof. Ribot. There Prof. Sidgwick was formally entrusted with a much vaster enquiry on similar lines, carried out over the next three years, and usually referred to as the Census of Hallucinations.

Four hundred and ten helpers collected between them 17,000 answers, of which 15,316 were in the negative. In Gurney's census, the ordinary press had been made use of, but in this one Prof. Sidgwick made an appeal through the pages of the recondite *Mind* to psychologists, and W. T. Stead used the *Review of Reviews* for the same purpose. A couple of big Government offices were "combed" by one industrious individual. The valuable "Report" on the results, and the analysis to which the whole was carefully subjected occupies nearly 400 pages of Volume X. of the S.P.R. *Proceedings*. The labour was enormous, and the report very reasonably remarks that it is very doubtful whether any equally extensive statistical enquiry of the same sort will ever again be undertaken.

Before it was actually completed, M. Flammarion had made an attempt in France, of the same kind, and using the same question. Within twelve months he had received from 4,280 persons interrogated, affirmative replies from 1,824. He embodied much of the matter so received in his book *L'Inconnu et les Problèmes Psychiques*, but the quality of the evidence was rather severely criticised by Podmore. The searching nature of our criteria was very well vindicated when Dr. Head in 1901 published his Goulstonian Lecture, on a special class of hallucination which he discovered to accompany certain visceral diseases. For seven or eight years he had observed nearly two hundred patients in all. Mr. Piddington thereupon went through the hundreds of cases by this time in the S.P.R. files, examining on each of thirty-five separate points the resemblances and differences, with the result that not a single case had to be rejected. This fine piece of analysis is given in full in Volume XIX. of the *Proceedings*.

The next case in which an appeal to numbers was made in connection with our subject was not with a view to establish the actual occurrence of psychic or supernormal experience, but on a very different count. The assumption had been made from the beginning that whether or not the soul survived the death of the body, a desire for such survival at least

† See *Phantasms*, vol. II, pp. 1-28. Abr. ed., chap. XIII.

was universal. But was it? To ascertain this, Dr. Richard Hodgson circulated a Questionnaire through the American Branch of the S.P.R. Ten thousand copies were circulated; the *Fortnightly Review* spoke to those on this side, and the quest was made known practically throughout the British Empire. Many spiritualist papers, but also many which were not, such as the *Jewish Quarterly*, the organ of the ethical societies, and various foreign papers joined in. Altogether 3,281 replies were received, including some in French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, and even Polish and Russian. Some thought the matter "too sacred," some "too silly," and some were entirely indifferent and had "never thought about it"! There was no overwhelming majority in favour of a passionate need for settled knowledge on the point, such as is sometimes taken for granted as forming the mainspring of the psychic researcher's zeal. "The returns," says Prof. Schiller, in his discussion of this rather surprising result, "show a hitherto hardly suspected *weakness* of this desire, and thereby answer the question into which it was necessary for the S.P.R. to enquire. . . . If anyone desires to contest this conclusion, it is incumbent on him to amass more numerous, exact and decisive data than those we have been able to obtain. I can only wish him God speed and joy of the labour." (*Proceedings S.P.R.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 439).

This was over twenty years ago, and sentiment ebbs and flows, and reflects the temper and habit of the time. Possibly therefore a comparison of results then and now, if it were possible to make it, would show in which direction we are moving; but in any case psychical research is not the only force which is exerting a steady pressure against sheer indifference to any but the present life. The incidence of that pressure may vary, but it is always there, and it is bound to tell.

It was shortly after this questionnaire of Hodgson's that the American S.P.R. began an independent existence of its own, and it was fortunate in possessing a medium and a student of mediumship worthy of each other. Out of this arose the next occasion for a broadcast enquiry, though of a different nature altogether from any of the previous ones. When Prof. J. H. Hyslop published the first report of his sittings with Mrs. Piper, two members of the English S.P.R. were so ill-advised as to express the view, the one in print and the other in a letter to Hodgson, that nearly all the facts in it could be explained by shrewd guessing and chance coincidence. For years Hyslop brooded wrathfully over this too light-hearted and irresponsible accusation, and then devised an experimental bomb, in which a questionnaire was the main ingredient, to explode about the ears of all the sceptic tribe. He analysed the evidential matter into 105 points, every one of which he could himself answer to, and put them as questions to 420 people. Among them were some so

general as: "Is your father dead?" to which 320 replied *yes*, 99 replied *no*, and one *I don't know*; but to No. 3, "Was your father's name Robert?" only six said *yes*, and 414 *no*. To question 62: "Did you have a cousin by the name of Robert H. McClellan?" all replied *no*, and in many other instances the same thing occurred. Judge whether the correct facts were the result of guessing or coincidence! To make more sure in respect of the giving of actual names, Hyslop took a count of the surnames in the Boston Directory, which gave 10,000 to "guess" from, and of the proportion in which the Christian names were found in it. "Robert" was found to be one in every hundred, "John" one in twenty-three, and so on. Of course when both christian and surname and relationship were found together and correct, the chances of a mere guess being right were proportionately less. Any one who likes to work out probabilities and is a lover of figures can wallow in them by following this lead; the data are given in full in the 13th volume of the American *Proceedings*, pp. 1—88. The principle of eliminating the chance element in this way is a perfectly sound one, and this example should be known to those who have to deal with the charge, since it must be admitted that it would be tiresome and laborious to apply a questionnaire test in every individual case. It has been done here once, and done in a thorough way.

We may observe at this point that by putting all the foregoing items into a series, a logical progression may be read in them. Thus the first census of Gurney's in 1885 answered the question, "Do psychical experiences really occur to the sane, the wide-awake, and the healthy?" The great Census of 1889-1892 further answered the question: "Do these experiences point to the continued activity of the dead?" and the re-examination in the light of Dr. Head's observations served to show that there were marked differences between the hallucinations of disease and those on which our conclusions had been based. The next enquiry as to interest in the survival of death did not affect the steady accumulation of evidence towards that end, and so we find that search into the quality and amount of that evidence is now the leading object.

Apart from these main lines, the principle of putting general assertions to the test of facts measurable in figures has been applied in several other directions. Space permits only of two being noticed. When thought-transference experiments were first in vogue, diagrams were made much use of. They have been frequently illustrated and the method need not be described. But it occurred to Prof. Minot, of the U.S.A., that people had a tendency to draw particular diagrams more frequently than others, and even to draw them in a series. He induced 510 people to draw ten diagrams each, on post-cards, giving him a series of 5,000 to

work from. Then he took the percentage of frequency with which triangles, animals, objects, and so on, appeared. This incited Lieut-Col. Taylor, of the English S.P.R., to do something similar. He got forty friends to draw twenty-five diagrams each, on paper which he ruled off in numbered squares for the purpose, and thus got 2,000 diagrams of his own. Regarding these as if they were so many experimental pairs, he found that in one case only were they identical, where two people had drawn plain squares, and in nineteen others there was a close resemblance in idea, with such objects as a key, or a dog. Apart from the actual purpose of the comparison, some rather curious facts emerge, such as that the ten most frequently repeated diagrams in England included men, "other animals," letters, birds, scrawls, flowers, hats, houses, landscapes, and trees, in that order; but the American series, beginning with circles, was almost exclusively geometrical, men and animals, etc., not coming into the first ten at all. Where animals were compared, cats were to dogs as 31 to 34, in the order of frequency in America; in England, cats were 27 to dogs' 17, only. Many deductions suggest themselves on a study of the tables, in fact, which are given in *Proceedings S.P.R.*, Vol. VI, pp. 398-405.

An even more interesting comparison was worked out many years later (in 1922) to test the element of coincidence in book-tests. Sixty persons were each given a sealed envelope, with instructions to look for the "messages" contained in it, in any ten books chosen at random from their shelves, and to report successes or otherwise; and the percentages of success so obtained were compared with a mass of 532 actual tests obtained through Mrs. Leonard. These had already been carefully analysed, and shown to have a percentage of 36 successes. The late Col. C. E. Baddeley undertook a similar analysis of the "sham" tests, and found only 4.7 successful. (See *Proceedings S.P.R.*, Vol. XXXI, p. 613.) A statistical basis of this sort, involving the co-operation of many, and the unthanked labour of one or two, may not be very showy, but is worth volumes of shouting assumption and assertion, either for or against any given statement.

The most recent, and in some respects, the most important questionnaire of all was that circulated among Continental investigators last year, of which the results were published in *Luce e Ombra*, and ably summarized in the January number (1926) of the *Journal of the American S.P.R.* (p. 62), which quotes fifteen or sixteen replies. In this case numbers had no weight at all, but the quality of those invited to reply was of the highest order. Every name of eminence is included, and one wishes that the death-toll had not excluded those of Lombroso, Flammarion, Grünwald, and Alritz, which would have stood well with the rest; Geley

we observe is fortunately included. The question was as to the reality of mediumistic phenomena, admitted on all hands; the source, on which of course there is some diversity of view; and the validity of the spirit hypothesis. As to the last, one may say that it has a fair field and no pronounced disfavour: at the worst it is not indispensable, but neither is it unscientific. Professor Parfumi of Catania, who conducted the inquiry, is to be congratulated on eliciting a consensus of opinion on these three pivotal points of psychic science.

THE STELLA C. SITTINGS

BY W. W. HARDWICK

Reference was made in the last number of the *British Journal of Psychical Research* to the original series of sittings held with Stella C. as medium in 1923, a series which terminated when she decided to take a business appointment which would occupy all her time.

Opportunity has now arisen to continue this series of experiments, and since February 10th of this year a weekly sitting has been held in the séance room of the Laboratory, at which further investigation has been made into the psychic powers of this young lady.

As stated in the previous account, it was learnt that sporadic phenomena occurred in Stella's presence, and the lines of investigation have been principally based on the original type of phenomena, certain "water-tight" tests being devised, and a careful diaphonic record being made of all the conditions and results at these sittings.

The two principal pieces of special apparatus now in use consist of an "isolation chamber," in the form of a totally enclosed cabinet of perforated metal, which is locked and sealed, and stands on four legs, at a height to bring the contents into full view of the sitters; also a light framework table, with an independent inner table, flush with the outer table, but standing on its own legs, and fitted with a lower platform which is entirely enclosed by a fine mesh cotton screen; access being given to the enclosed platform by a hinged flap in the top of the inner table, this flap being always closed by a sealed tape during a sitting.

Both enclosures are filled with small musical instruments, which provide both visible and oral evidence of their manipulation at the different sittings.

As a detailed account would take up too much space, a general summary of the sittings, from February 10th to April 28th, is here given; after which date Stella took a holiday, being in rather poor health, but, as she has now recovered the sittings have since been continued.

It has been the custom to retain certain permanent members of the circle as far as possible, the remaining seats being occupied by other members of the Society, in rotation, as applications are received.

On all occasions, a careful record of all conditions, temperature, etc., is made, the room is searched and the chamber containing the instruments, and the doors of the room are closed and sealed. All hands are joined, either on, or apart from, the table before the white light is switched off, and the red light adjusted for the sitting. Sitters are warned not to break this contact without first stating their intention to do so, and to state also when contact has been remade.

The medium is controlled, hands and feet, on both sides, and mention is made and recorded, of any movement on her part. Stella is however invariably quiescent, both when normal, and in trance, her only movement being a slight trembling of the body, which often takes place prior to more notable phenomena.

The red light is kept on throughout the sittings, the degree of light being controlled by a rheostat, the light being raised as circumstances allow, or to inspect the results, or the operation of a sustained phenomenon.

At the opening of each sitting, the gramophone is started, and the sitters are encouraged to engage in general talk, to relieve any tension, and after a varying period, the phenomena usually commence with raps in different parts of the room. Subsequently movements are heard in the sealed enclosure, and one or other of the musical instruments is sounded, often followed by movements of the "isolation chamber" and other kinds of phenomena.

It is a curious fact that one or two special objects seem to find favour during a sitting; thus, February 10th, tambourine and zither were used; February 24th, zither only; March 3rd, tambourine; March 10th, zither and mouth-organ; March 17th, zither and mouth-organ; March 24th, zither and mouth-organ; March 31st, tambourine and trumpet; April 7th, mouth-organ; April 21st, mouth-organ. At nearly every sitting, the hand-bell, to which is tied a piece of luminous ribbon, and which is sometimes hung and sometimes resting, is swung or knocked over and rung, and on April 14th it was distinctly picked up and rung for about a second.

When the "isolation chamber" was used, it occasionally rocked violently, sometimes moving towards the centre of the circle for a distance of 6 to 12 inches.

When the double table is in use, there appears to be no attempt to move the outer table, but the inner table has been raised with some force, and was only prevented from rising to any height by jamming in the

opening of the outer table; apparently this movement commences by rising on two legs, and the nature of the fitting would cause this movement to jamb the tops of the tables; but even then the continued struggling of the inner table has contained sufficient force to open the seams of the top of the outer table, which is of light build.

One of the most remarkable phenomena which appear in the presence of Stella, is the "light" or spark, which resembles the spark caused by the discharge of a Ruhmkorff coil. Varying from a steely blue to yellow, these have appeared at most of the sittings within two or three yards of the medium, and are usually accompanied by a light crackling sound, like the discharge of an electric condenser; but they are occasionally silent. Sometimes near the ground, at other times above the head of the medium, and at others inside the sealed enclosure, they appear suddenly, without warning, and give little radiance, so that unless a sitter is looking in their direction he fails to notice them. They vary in intensity, as well as colour, but as a rule are of the size of a good discharge spark, and have even responded, as to their position, to definite requests from members of the circle.

The rapping is, at times, almost continuous, and acts as if under intelligent control, responding to queries from the sitters, and obeying the signals offered by members of the circle.

Telekinetic movements take place, though seldom to any large degree, and the volume of power is not so marked as in the previous series of sittings in 1923; possibly because the same opportunity has not been given, the later tests being of a more delicate nature; but the amount of power shows a tendency to increase, and more substantial effects may be supplied in time.

Meanwhile it is hoped to obtain the "direct voice," and some form of "materialisation," slight signs of this latter having already appeared, though not of a sufficiently definite nature to do more than just note the occurrence.

One of the most remarkable sittings was that on April 14th, when the "isolation chamber" was put on the top of the double table and had to be hastily removed, as its movements were so violent that there was great danger of it falling on the sitters. After removal of the musical instruments to the table enclosure, these were ignored with the exception of the bell, which as previously stated was rung for about the space of a second, and subsequently "clicked" to the measure of a tune on the gramophone. It was on this occasion that the first attempt was made to lift the inner table, while the number of "lights" produced far exceeded those produced on other occasions, both in number and size, eleven being noted, most of which were in the sealed enclosure and one,

by request, was given within a few inches of the nose of one of the sitters.

The last sitting of the series included in this account was interesting for other reasons. The day was unsuitable, being extremely dark and heavy, and the medium did not appear to be in her normal spirits. Raps were heard as soon as she became entranced, feeble at first, then increasing in intensity, but when requests for other phenomena were made, they were met with a distinct negative, and although the sitting was prolonged to the usual period, no other phenomena took place, and every suggestion was met with this definite negative, in the form of a very marked single rap.

The present series of sittings will be continued till the end of June, when they will be suspended to allow the medium to take a holiday, and also to avoid the period of, to be hoped, hot summer weather.

Readers who are desirous of further studying the results of these sittings are reminded that a full, detailed record is kept in the office of the Laboratory, and perusal of these may be made by personal application to the Secretary.

THE EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Psychical Research and Spiritualism.

The National Laboratory of Psychical Research has now commenced its career in earnest. The months of preparation and thought which were necessary prior to its birth had been well spent, and when we came before the public everything was ready for a successful start. The necessary apparatus had been obtained beforehand, so that when we opened our door to members we were ready to commence. Investigations have been taking place under the energetic directorship of Mr. Harry Price for the past three months and a mass of valuable evidence is accumulating, which will be put before members as time goes on. We are pleased to see so many members coming to inspect the laboratory and séance room and they are all of unanimous opinion that it is the most perfectly finished and up-to-date establishment of its kind in England. The more this is realised the more new members will join, and the larger the membership the greater the work we can undertake. We wish to increase our membership, and the best way to accomplish this is by existing members

bringing friends to see the work that is being carried on. Everyone interested in psychic phenomena, from the simplest rap, to the materialisation of the human form, should support the work we are now doing. It should appeal to the spiritualist as well as to the scientific investigator, as both are vitally interested in the true interpretation of psychic phenomena in all its varied bearing.

We are all familiar with the often repeated utterances of certain spiritualists, that psychical researchers are wasting their time examining the lower forms of the phenomena, neglecting the higher and more spiritual side. This view was expressed the other day by one of the outstanding spiritualists in this country. The writer takes the view that such ideas are fundamentally wrong. We know from the writings and opinions of this same gentleman that he has never dissented but, on the other hand, has praised the work of those who, over the past hundred years, have spent their lives enquiring and examining the foundations on which the Christian religion rests. The stronger the belief in the strength of a religion's foundations the greater the power it exerts over its adherents. What would have been the position to-day of spiritualism had men of science, under test and scientific conditions, been unable to corroborate and confirm the claims made by spiritualists? Would spiritualism hold the position it has reached to-day? Most assuredly not; spiritualists would still have been wandering in the wilderness and would never have found their way out, until their claims had been established. We live in an age of reason and the sympathetic psychical researcher is the spiritualist's best friend. Doubtless they do not see eye to eye on certain points, but the scientist has put the reality of the phenomena on a sound basis, and the spiritualist has in consequence as much right to make his own deductions from the evidence as Professor Richet. The great and enduring names connected with the spiritualist movement have all belonged to men who have been sure of their foundations before drawing their conclusions, so that it is the height of folly for the spiritualist to decry psychical research, as he was a researcher himself before he became a spiritualist. The subject is so vast that what is wanted is more and more research work, more and more mediums and more and more financial help for this great movement, of which very few of us even now can grasp the meaning or the end.

Think of the money wasted in attempting to reach the North or South Poles, or the top of Mount Everest, and after the story is told is mankind a whit better off? What a contrast is the story the history of Psychical Research can tell, with all its want of money and sympathy from the people at large. If Mount Everest were conquered to-morrow, and some valuable evidence were also obtained of the soul in man, and

his continued existence in another state after death, which would get the largest newspaper headings and the most prominent position? Who can doubt that to-day the former would come easily first, and of what insignificant and transitory importance it is compared to the latter? We live in a world of distorted values, but slowly and surely the irrefutable evidence obtained by psychical researchers is making its influence felt, which accounts for the growing interest everywhere noticeable of all that pertains to this mysterious region which it is our business to explore and continue exploring till some day it is conquered.

Abnormal Diagnosis.

I had the opportunity recently of making an interesting experiment with a trance medium whose control claims to be the spirit of an African medicine man, who died some hundreds of years ago. The writer was invited to a spirit healing circle, which is held in his village once a week, when the medium attends and administers to his numerous patients. The medium is a London man, but he was given a motor car by a grateful patient which enables him to make his daily "rounds" in comfort and ease. No charge is made, but a money box is left on the table, and all are expected to give as they can afford. The local doctor has been converted and is a regular attendant, but medical etiquette makes it impossible for him to be more than a spectator. The patients assemble in the sitting room, the medium occupying a chair in the centre of the room. The trance state comes quickly and he commences to talk in broken English, but at times runs off into an unknown language which the control claims to be his African tribal tongue. Some most interesting experiences were given to the writer, and the medium's diagnosis has been so accurate that the villagers call him the X-ray man. He stands in front of the patient and claims to see right through him. When in the trance state the medium has to be led, if he desires to move, as nothing appears solid and he would try and walk through tables, chairs, etc., if not guided. Many remarkable and seemingly hopeless cases are being cured by this remarkable man, but it was to test his claim to see through and into the human body and discover malformations, etc., that the following experiment was carried through. The medium was asked to come to the writer's house one afternoon. He sat in a room with the sun streaming in and very quickly became entranced. Four visitors, two gentlemen and two ladies, staying in the house, were brought in, one at a time, each examination occupying about ten minutes. The writer was present on each occasion but in the case of one of the ladies the diagnosis and

remedies were becoming so personal that he left the room. Without moving from in front of his subject, who sat on a chair in the centre of the room, the medium diagnosed each one correctly, mentioning the various internal troubles they had experienced from their youth upwards. At times he took the patient's hand, but otherwise no touching or feeling was made. One had suffered from concussion; another from spinal curvature; a lady, from the birth of her last child; and everything was told correctly in detail, without hesitation or error. The experiment proved successful and substantiated the claims made by his village patients. We hope on a future occasion to examine in our laboratory the gift the medium has of penetration, as though it may be unwise, with our present limited knowledge, to offer an explanation, yet it should be comparatively easy to test the accuracy of his power of diagnosis. Meantime we can only class it under the general term of telesthesia.

Death-Bed Visions.

Sir William Barrett, in his later years, collected a number of well-attested cases of visions seen by dying persons, shortly before death, and even in some cases, by those in attendance in the sick room. He intended publishing these in book form, being engaged in this work at the time of his death, and the book has now been published by his wife. A few instances have been selected to illustrate each type of psychical experience and they are presented to the reader without bias, although the author does not disguise the fact that, in his own judgment, they constitute evidence in support of the hypothesis that the soul survives the death of the body. This subject of death bed visions especially interested Sir William, because the evidence it affords is, by its very nature, entirely free from any attempt to mislead. Of especial interest is the chapter devoted to visions, seen by the dying, of persons unknown by them to be dead, and various well-attested cases are given in this book. In his opening remarks the author says: "The evidence of visions of the dying, when they appear to see and recognise some of their relatives of whose decease they were unaware, affords perhaps one of the strongest arguments in favour of survival. Even Professor Richet regards this evidence as impossible to explain by cryptesthesia."

Sir William Barrett was one of the most critical of men so far as evidence was concerned, but with it all he had a clear and analytical mind, which made his opinions at all times of especial value. For over forty years psychic phenomena was one of his chief studies, and by means of lectures, books, and pamphlets he gave the knowledge he had gained to the world at large. To what definite conclusions he came ultimately

were best known only by his most intimate friends. The following were among the last words ever written by him on the subject to which he gave so much thought and study, especially during the last ten years of his life:—

"Already we discern on every side a movement of the human spirit towards a new interpretation of the world, a new estimate of, and new belief in, the highest values. We need tolerance which springs from knowledge and sympathy that comes from love.

"The common and grossly materialistic conception of the soul is that it is limited to the confines and contours of the body. This is surely an erroneous conception if, as we believe, the soul is an immaterial entity, not simply a function of the brain. For all we know to the contrary, the human soul may spread through a vast orbit around the body and may intermingle with other incarnate or discarnate souls. Tennyson speaks of a dream condition, 'when the mortal limit of the self was loosed, and past into the Nameless, as the cloud melts into Heaven.' Moreover the intimacy and immediacy of the union between the soul and God is the fundamental idea, not only of the New Testament, but of all great Christian thinkers.

"If our incarnate minds can by suggestion direct and modify the cell-life of the body, it is not incredible that discarnate minds may effect similar or even profounder processes in the evolution of higher forms of life."

Sir William was deeply interested in the formation of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, and was present at one of the preliminary meetings. By his death we lost a helpful and sympathetic friend.

J. A. F.

NOTICE.

THE S.P.R. AND THE NATIONAL LABORATORY.

On page 100 of the current S.P.R. JOURNAL the fear is expressed that the National Laboratory and its official organ will in some way be confused with the association in Tavistock Square. An examination of the aims of the Laboratory, and a perusal of the principal article in the first number of its official JOURNAL—in which is described the finest installation in the world for scientific psychical research—must dispel all doubts as to any similarity between the two associations.

NATIONAL LABORATORY of PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

The National Laboratory of Psychical Research has been founded to investigate in a dispassionate manner and by purely scientific means, every phase of psychic or alleged psychic phenomena. Starting with no preconceived theories—scientific, philosophical, or religious—the Council of the National Laboratory will endeavour to ascertain and demonstrate the laws underlying psychic or abnormal manifestations. Every person connected with the Laboratory—whether in an honorary or executive capacity—is, *by personal investigation, absolutely convinced of the reality of abnormal phenomena* (both physical and mental), for which a normal explanation cannot be found. But the Council realise that before the general public can be induced to admit the necessity for psychical research, or the existence of phenomenal happenings, the whole question must be put upon a sound and impartial scientific basis. For this reason the National Laboratory of Psychical Research has been founded, and the most modern laboratory methods will be employed in putting upon a permanent footing in Great Britain this most important science. Unembarrassed by useless or obsolete traditions, free from extraneous influences, and with no obsessions as to what is, or is not possible in psychical research, the Council of the Laboratory hope to present to the general public authoritative reports of their experiments which will carry conviction.

ADVANTAGES OF MEMBERSHIP.

Members of the Laboratory have the privilege of using the various rooms of the Organisation; facilities for photography, photo-micrography, enlarging, chemistry, metal-working, etc., under supervision, and so far as they relate to psychic experiments made in the Laboratory. Free tuition in above subjects is provided when necessary. Members can borrow lantern lectures dealing with psychic subjects; free admission to the lectures of the Organisation; use of library, etc., and facilities for attending experiments with well-known mediums. The *British Journal of Psychical Research* is supplied free to members.

The National Laboratory of Psychical Research is the best-equipped in existence, and is the only institution in the world where the private member can construct his own apparatus and make his own psychic experiments under laboratory conditions. The Council regard the Organisation as of Public Utility, and purely nominal fees are charged the members of the Laboratory. Funds are therefore *urgently needed* for the proper upkeep of the Laboratory and the costly research work which is being undertaken.

Subscription Rates are as follows:—Members in Great Britain and Ireland, £2 2s. per annum; Members resident abroad, £1 1s.