

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

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### TO OUR READERS.

It will be interesting to our Members to know that at the close of the year 1884 the Society consisted of:—

Members .. . . .	223
Associates .. . . .	258
Honorary Members .. . . .	6
Corresponding Members .. . . .	9
Honorary Associates .. . . .	21
Vice-Presidents who are not otherwise Members .. . . .	3
Total .. . . .	520

In fact, during the past year the Society has nearly doubled the number of its Members and Associates. A similar progression took place during 1883, for at the close of that year there were 288 Members and Associates compared with 150 at the close of 1882, at the beginning of which year the Society was founded. We can hardly expect the growth of the Society to continue in this geometric progression, though we may reasonably hope that the Society, being now so widely and honourably supported, will "go from strength to strength."

Thanks to the assiduity of its Special Committee, and to its generous donors, the Library, at 14, Dean's Yard, now numbers nearly 800 volumes, bearing for the most part upon the various subjects that come within the scope of the Society's operations. Of these books, 520 are in English, 135 in German, 110 in French, and 15 in other languages.

Our readers will find on another page some important suggestions relative to the future attitude of the Council towards the investigating Committees, made by the President in his address at the last General Meeting.

It is hoped that these proposed changes will not only enable some distinguished scientific men, who take an interest in the Society's work, to

become members of the Council, but that they will also tend to promote more numerous centres of investigation, and more frequent contributions of papers to the Society's *Proceedings*.

Another change, which will take effect immediately, will also be of special interest to the readers of this *Journal*. The Literary Committee have resolved to publish in the *Journal* a selection of the reports of phenomena that they from time to time receive. Such reports have hitherto been printed on slips and kept at Dean's Yard, and have, therefore, been only accessible to members who go to the rooms of the Society to see them. A vast accumulation of these cases, most of which are still under consideration by the Committee, can be seen at Dean's Yard. In future the wider publicity which these cases will receive will doubtless evoke from many of our members both criticism and theory, expression to which may be given in the pages of the *Journal*.

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## NEW MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES.

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### MEMBERS.

- GRAHAM, ALEXANDER, 9, Gray's Inn Square, London, W.C.  
 MACALISTER, JOHN J. W., Leeds Library, Leeds.  
 PAGE, A. C., M.D., Truro, Nova Scotia.  
 SENNETT, ALFRED R., A.M.I.C.E., M.S.T.E., 62, Hatton Garden, E.C.  
 STAPELTON, JOSIAH G., 47, Lee Terrace, London, S.E.  
 VANE, FRANCIS P. F., Isthmian Club, 12, Grafton Street, London, W.

### ASSOCIATES.

- BIRRELL, MISS, 37, Addison Gardens North, London, W.  
 CAMPBELL, JAMES A., Barbreck Loch-Gilp-head, Argyll, N.B.  
 FORD, MISS EMILY S., 27, Albany Street, London, N.W.  
 GRAHAM, J. W., B.A., Avenham View, Preston.  
 LAYCOCK, REV. JAMES A., M.A., 2, Eton Terrace, Harrogate.  
 MARSHALL, ARTHUR, Weetwood Hall, Leeds.  
 MARTIN, MRS. ELIZABETH G., 42, Rue Gambetta, Honfleur (Calvados),  
 France.  
 MOULE, JOHN, Codicote, Welwyn, Herts.  
 ROXBURGH, ROBERT, M.B., F.R.C.S.E., Weston-super-Mare.  
 VIVIAN, H., Trinity College, Cambridge.  
 WALKER, MISS M., 17, Gloucester Street, Warwick Square, London, S.W.  
 WHITE, WILLIAM, Morden House, 55, Highbury Hill, London, N.  
 WHITE, MRS. HENRY, 22, Grosvenor Place, London, S.W.  
 WINCKLEY, MRS., Flambards, Harrow-on-the-Hill, near London.

## COUNCIL MEETING.

At a Council Meeting, held on the 30th of December, the President in the chair, the following Members were present :—Professor Barrett, Messrs. Alexander Calder, Walter H. Coffin, Edmund Gurney, Chas. C. Massey, F. W. H. Myers, Frank Podmore, Henry A. Smith, and J. Herbert Stack.

After the Minutes of the previous Meeting had been read, six new Members and 14 new Associates were elected, whose names and addresses appear on another page.

Two Members, namely, Mr. James Britten and Mr. George F. Pope, desired to continue as Associates for the coming year, which was agreed to.

Two Members, namely, Major-General Maclean and Mr. Frederic W. Sharpe, and two Associates, namely, Mr. Henry Y. Dickenson and Miss Lucy Stables, tendered their resignations, which were accepted with regret.

The stock of *Proceedings*, Part III., being nearly exhausted, it was resolved that a second edition of 1,000 copies be printed according to an estimate which had been obtained for the work.

The President brought before the Council some changes which he thought might be introduced with advantage into the mode in which the work of the Society was carried on. He would propose, with regard to the expenditure by Committees, that they should have definite grants authorised, in anticipation of their requirements. He also wished to propose that for the future the formal relation of the Committees, both to the Council and to the Society, should be changed, so that the Council should no longer appoint the Committees, or hold itself responsible for their reports: its function should be merely to bring before the Society and the public the results of research conducted by properly qualified persons. He thought this change on the whole desirable, even in regard to those branches of inquiry which had hitherto mainly engaged the Society's attention; and he thought it was still more important in regard to other branches which were likely to engage the attention of the Society in the future, and in the investigation of which it was probable that there would be greater differences of individual opinion than in those matters which had mainly occupied them in the past. In making such a change as this, the President pointed out that they would be following precedent, especially the practice of the Royal Society, an extract from the rules of which the President read, in harmony with the course he was advocating.

The Council concurred with the views of the President, who subse-

quently entered more fully into the matter in his remarks at the General Meeting in the evening.

It was agreed that the Annual Business Meeting of the Members of the Society should be held on Friday, the 30th of January, at the Rooms of the Society, 14, Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W., at 3.30 p.m. The requisite notices were directed to be sent out in accordance with the Constitution and Rules.

It was also agreed that a General Meeting should be held on the evening of the same day, at the Rooms of the Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall. The chair to be taken at 8.30 p.m.

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### GENERAL MEETING.

A General Meeting of the Society, which was largely attended, was held in the Hall of the Society of British Artists, on December 30th. The chair was taken by the President of the Society, who, in opening the proceedings, remarked :—

It is proposed, at the next Annual Meeting, to obtain the approval of the Society for a change of some importance in the relations between the Council and the Committees for experimental investigation. Hitherto these Committees have been appointed by the Council as Committees of the Society, and the Council has been, to some indefinite extent, responsible for their reports. There is no reason to believe that this responsibility has so far been felt as burdensome by any member of the Council; and it seemed desirable, in the first stage of the Society's existence, that the startling experiences and views laid before the public by the Committees should, if possible, receive whatever support could be given them by the official acceptance of the Council. But in dealing with subjects so difficult and obscure as those into which we have undertaken to inquire—in which the methods of investigation must necessarily be very tentative, and the most cautious investigator must expect from time to time to have to retrace his steps, regard the results already attained in a new light, and admit the misdirection and waste of a certain portion of his labour—it would be a mistake permanently to hamper the selection of papers for publication by requiring the Council to be in substantial agreement with the conclusions arrived at by their authors. It rather seems desirable that the Society for Psychical Research should, in this matter, follow the example set by the Royal Society; *i.e.*, that it should be expressly stated that the Council does not as a body give any opinion on the subjects brought before them, either by Committees or individuals. Henceforth, then, the publication of the papers in the *Proceedings* would only imply that the Council regards them as, on the whole,

deserving the attention of persons interested in the subjects to which they relate, "without pretending to answer for the certainty of the facts or propriety of the reasonings contained in the several papers so published, which must rest on the credit or judgment of their respective authors."\*

It is hoped that the present investigating Committees will continue their functions; but, with the exception of the Literary Committee, it is intended that for the future they should not be appointed or in any way controlled by the Council. The Council will merely (1) assign to them whatever portion of the funds of the Society it may think fit, to meet the expenses of investigation; and (2) accept from them, or from any other competent Committees or individual investigators, such records of work done as may appear, on the principles above stated, suitable for communication to the Society or to the public at large.

The Literary Committee it seems desirable to retain as at present, in order to secure the systematic collection, by a single organisation, of scattered evidence bearing on the subjects investigated by the Society; but the members of this Committee should have the sole responsibility for any conclusions they may publish, as to the value of the evidence collected, or its scientific explanation.

Professor Sidgwick added that an incidental advantage of the proposed change would be that some of the scientific men who take an interest in the work of the Society, but do not see their way to spend much time on it, might be induced to join the Council, and undertake the function of exercising a general supervision over the papers, and of giving advice when anything appeared to them careless or hasty, either in the experiments themselves or the inferences from them.

Professor Barrett then read a paper giving a number of casual experiments on Thought-transference, which had been received from various correspondents throughout the country. It was pointed out that although by themselves these cases are but of slight evidential value, yet, taken in connection with the more rigorous and protracted experiments of the Committee, they suggest a probably wide diffusion of the faculty of incipient Thought-transference. Some discussion followed, in which Professor Haycraft, Mr. Myers, Mr. Powell, and others took part. Professor Barrett having replied, Mr. Edmund Gurney gave an outline of the remarkable paper on Mental Suggestion which Dr. Richet has recently published in the *Revue Philosophique*, a review of which will appear in Part VII. of the *Proceedings* of the Society.

The meeting then became informal and conversational.

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\*Quoted from the advertisement prefixed to each volume of the *Transactions* of the Royal Society.

## COINCIDENTAL DREAMING.

The frequent discussions which have waged of late years concerning so-called prescient dreams, presentiments and alleged spiritual phenomena of all sorts, have led most of us to form an opinion on the question of whether their origin is supernatural\* or otherwise. For myself, having lived a great deal among the lottery-loving children of Italy, not to speak of occasional visits to Monte Carlo, and hearing thus a great deal of talk of the ignorant among the former, and of the educated at the latter, concerning the effect of certain events, dreams especially, on certain numbers, I have been led to consider the two groups of phenomena together, and of all the stories I have met with, published or otherwise, there are none which cannot be accounted for by the simple process of *coincidence*.

This is not the place, perhaps, to enter into a discussion of my views of the subject, I state the fact because it is the ground of my having so large a collection of striking coincidences of the sort in hand. My idea is that if everyone would note *useless coincidences* with as much care as they bestow on the few which have a result that seems like a warning or prediction, they would be satisfied that the latter are no more supernatural than the former.

That there may be hereafter to be unfolded a *science of coincidences* is not impossible. What is any science but deduction from the observation of coincidences? What is any so-called cause and effect but a more or less frequently recurring coincidence? Meantime, the only plan for groping the way towards finding out if there is such a science is to observe and note all those which come in our way; by collation and discussion the principle of their occurrence may in time be guessed at with sufficient accuracy to turn them to some account.

I subjoin a quotation from an article on the subject, which I wrote for *Notes and Queries* of 1st November, in the hope of inducing others to take note of the similar "useless coincidences" which must undoubtedly happen to most persons. It occurs in course of some observations, on curious instances of inconscient thought.

"If people are constantly dreaming of a variety of subjects, it *must* be now

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\* One of the correspondents alluded to later on has objected to the introduction of the word "supernatural"; he says that if a thing happens it is of its nature to happen, and the word has no meaning. Of course, this is true for anyone who philosophises, but in writing for the general public, the word obviously denotes a quality in an event which takes it out of that order which *they are accustomed to consider* the common order of nature. Further on in the same letter, he himself uses the word "chance," which seems to me to be liable to the same limitation.

and then that the subject dreamt of should happen to coincide with something that occurs shortly after. It is only when such coincidence is of an important nature that it is remembered and talked of, and then it is thought only to be accounted for by supernatural agency. But if people would take note of the useless coincidences as well, one source of superstition would be removed. I have myself in this view noted a considerable number of very striking coincidental dreams, and so much to the point that it may be thought worth while to give a couple of instances. In the first case I had been somewhat troubled at having been obliged to delay returning the call of a dear Roman friend, the late Countess Lomax, and as the day was approaching for her leaving England, I one night fulfilled the duty in a dream. She had given me an address at the house of a relative, 36, Dorset Square; I had no distinct knowledge where that was, much less of how the numbers were distributed, nevertheless in my dream I went straight to a house about the centre of the south side. This actually proved to be the position of the house when I made my call in person next day.

“In the second case I dreamt that I was walking in a wood in my father’s place in Kent, in a spot well known to me, where there was sand under the firs; I stumbled over some objects, which proved to be the heads left protruding of some ducks buried in the sand. The idea impressed me as so comical that I fortunately mentioned it at breakfast next morning, and one or two persons remember that I did so. Only an hour later it happened that the old bailiff of the place came up for some instructions unexpectedly, and as he was leaving he said he must tell us a strange thing that had happened: there had been a robbery in the farmyard, and some stolen ducks had been found buried in the sand, with their heads protruding, in the very spot where I had seen the same.”\*

This story contains the elements of as improbable a coincidence as could have occurred; yet it is impossible to suppose it anything else. The farm was underlet, and I had not even any interest in the ducks to carry my thoughts towards them under the nefarious treatment they received. No discovery of the hiding-place nor of the culprit ensued from my dream, but it is not at all inconceivable to me that, out of all the dreaming and all the happening of every night and day, a coincidence as circumstantial even as this should occur. Indeed, it seems to me that it *must* of necessity, once in a while, fall out so, and that if it had not been the

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\* The following is an attestation that this fact is remembered by an independent witness:—

“I distinctly remember, and have often since spoken of the circumstance, of Miss R. H. Busk’s relating to me her dream of ducks buried in the wood, before the bailiff, who reported the incident, came up to town.—J. PITT BYRNE.”

custom to discourage any relating of dreams, such coincidences would be found to happen as regularly as all the other coincidences of life.

In spite of the prohibition from telling one's dreams, which prevailed in one's earlier years, well I remember the first time I ever dreamt. The enchanting surprise of it was like a revelation never to be forgotten. I was about seven. I thought we were having the most delicious children's party in the day-nursery; it was not a mere act of memory, we never had one there. In the midst of the lights and the dancing, the crackers and the negus, the noise of raking out the night-nursery grate woke me to a dingy winter's morning; but so strong was the fascination upon me that nothing could persuade me the next room was not full of little playfellows, till I was dressed and allowed to go and see its emptiness for myself. What a disillusion it was! And the immense difficulty I had in realising the truth still strikes me now.

There is, in "Pilgrims of the Rhine" a charming story, or rather suggestion for a story (for the opportunity has been really thrown away, so weakly is it carried out) of a man, a German artist, if I remember right, whose real life is in his dreams. He meets his ideal there every night, and passes his existence with her, only waking up to make enough by his painting for his support; to eat and drink to maintain life by its lower requirements, and then fall back into the happy land of sunshiny fancy. Who could not imagine such an existence pleasanter than our ordinary "work-a-day" succession of processes? Who has not had nights of happy dreams enough to wish it could be so ordered? Do not our greatest pleasures come from illusions; not to speak of those which poets have descanted on, in Hope, Memory, Anticipation (which are all illusions), does not the chief delight of actual possession come from the illusory halo with which our imagination clothes the subject of it, for the nonce? And who knows that we might not arrive at the means of commanding our dreams if we only made them a subject of sufficiently careful study? I have met people who thought they had the rudiments of such a power. I remember, myself, while still a child, dreaming for two nights following, that, when out for the usual "constitutional" in Kensington Gardens, a lion came up out of the well there and ran after me. I resolved very determinedly to cure the fright, if it occurred again, by saying, "It's only a dream." It *did* occur the next night, and I did command my thoughts sufficiently to observe my intention, but the sensation of fear—probably the consequence of "muffins for tea"—remained just the same, and I remember running away shouting, "It's only a dream!" till I awoke myself.

Since then it has been often the converse that has happened. Continually, while dreaming of dwarfs, or of animals talking, or other impos-

sible occurrence, I have gone to fetch people, or called those I thought stood by, to witness that these strange things actually do occur, saying, "I am certainly not dreaming now, am I?" I remember, in particular, once thinking I had floated down the whole length of St. Peter's by the pleasant process which, I think, is dignified by Spiritualists as "levitation," and finding a friend lighting his cigar at a *brasero* under the portico (!) calling him to bear witness that my feet were not touching the ground, though he had lately denied the possibility of such an event. It was not a little mortifying, after such a triumph, to wake and find I had not had the opportunity of convincing him after all! I tried, as I often have on other occasions, to restore my mind to its late condition, but, even when falling asleep again immediately, it is rarely that the chain of thought could be resumed.

To return to the coincidental class. I will give a few more of the instances that have occurred to me, almost as circumstantial and quite as purposeless as the above.

1. I dreamt one night (in London) that I was in the Carnival in Naples, and among other projectiles that were being used along with the confetti were squibs and crackers; some of these struck a very fine palm-tree; in fact, the people in one balcony were making it their butt. I was indignant at the injury to the beautiful tree, and called to them to desist. A friend with me seconded these endeavours of mine, but what seemed to strike me most was that he kept urging on me confidentially not to say palm-tree, that no one ever now-a-days used the word, that the accepted name in good society was "stem-tree." The next morning the *Times* contained an account of a quantity of "*stems of palm-trees*" having been washed ashore somewhere on the east coast of England.

2. One night, in Rome, I dreamt that in some shop, where I went with one of my sisters, the assistants were all deaf and dumb, to whom we could only explain our meaning by signs; nevertheless they were talking together glibly enough. I thought I pointed this out with some indignation, and that my sister answered, "Of course, deaf and dumb people can always talk to each other; it is only with us that they can't communicate." The comicality of this fancy led me to tell her of the dream the next morning. Later in the day we went to a shop in the Via San Romualdo, where we often dealt, but through there being a new shopman who did not know the location of the goods, we were led to observe for the first time that the mistress of the shop, who sat at the desk, was deaf and dumb, as she had to direct him by signs how to find what we required.\*

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\*I subjoin a line of attestation concerning this instance also, premising however, that this writer's memory is not so distinct as the other's:—

"My sister, Miss Busk, told me of her dream of the deaf and dumb before this circumstance occurred.—ROSALIE VANSITTART.—Rome, December 19th, 1884."

3. Another time my dream was all about a brown retriever, it seemed to me I had never seen any but black retrievers before, and wondered how this *lusus naturee* had arrived. The next morning, walking near Portman Square, a brown retriever ran up against me. Of course, brown retrievers are not very rare, and my unaccountable surprise at seeing one in a dream, in conjunction with meeting one, not in a game country, but in Portman Square, was another "useless coincidence."

4. Another time I dreamt that a friend was about to be married to a gentleman of my acquaintance; but as the said friend was already married I was greatly puzzled, for, with the usual certainty with which the knowledge of an event presents itself in a dream, I had no doubt on the head that the said marriage was to take place; I was only bothered by the contradictory fact I have named. By the next morning's post I received a letter from this very friend announcing the sudden death of her husband. (She did not marry the other man, however.)

5. In another dream I found myself, without surprise, seated in a Protestant church, notwithstanding that I had some years before become a Catholic, but I thought I was greatly concerned in keeping the place next me for a friend who was to join me there. To my dismay, a gentleman came, "without with your leave, or by your leave," and established himself in this place in a peremptory manner. I turned round with the intention of evicting the intruder, though my hints had no effect upon him, but in doing so I observed that he was Canon Kingsley. The next morning the first event that caught my eye in the newspaper was the announcement of Canon Kingsley's death. Now, I knew no more of Canon Kingsley than of the Shah of Persia; I had seen both in public, and I had read a book by each, and there my acquaintance ended. I had not been thinking or talking about him. It could only have been a kaleidoscope mixing up of images in the brain—yet, had it been some particularly dear friend whom I had thought I felt placing himself so unexpectedly by my side, and had that friend also died unknown to me the day before, it would have been said by all ghost-believing people that it was the actual spirit of the dear departed. As this was certainly no apparition of the sort, I argue that in the cases where the condition of affection enters into the details of the case, they are yet nothing more than fortuitous coincidences either.

6. I will mention, in connection with this, one incident—a hallucination, not a dream—out of many analogous ones I have noted. A husband and wife, friends of mine, reside abroad a great deal; they are very fond of each other, but the husband has a greater fondness for foreign

climates than the wife. One year the wife had insisted very much on returning home, the husband was disinclined; I believe he had also some literary work which tended to tether him, and the end of the discussion was that the wife went home alone. One night, when my friend was sitting up late writing, he received as strong an impression as possible, that a cold grip had been laid upon his arm, and, on looking up, the form of his wife seemed to stand beside him. He was so strongly impressed that he could only summon courage to take one stolen glance at her, and then she looked so pale and sad that he conceived the worst apprehension, and, the first thing in the morning, telegraphed to inquire after her. The answer was that she had never been better in her life. Again, had she died that night, you could not have persuaded a ghost-believer but that her spirit "had been permitted to give him a tender warning of her departure, on her way to the land of spirits." But as he received as strong an impression of her visit as possible when nothing of the kind had occurred, why should it be any more real when the coincidence happens, of the person dying about the same time?

To me this sort of thing presents no sort of necessity for supposing the intervention of the supernatural.

The imagination gets very easily accustomed to form an image by anticipation, of an object which a word or an association leads it to expect to meet. How often, even a child (at an age when experience has not yet crowded its mind with memories as in the case of older persons) will answer, before we have done speaking, something which the beginning of our sentence made it expect we were going to say, and that within the half-second it takes us to bring out our real and quite opposite purport. It is by such a process of mental anticipation that we are prepared for the work of life,—that a formidable speaker in the House has his answer ready for his antagonist, and the wit his repartee. But all qualities have their defects, and the defect of this one is, that by over-eager readiness our mind forms its image of what it has to prepare for, too quickly.

"We half create the wondrous world we see,"

and sometimes, while performing this our part in the reception of images, we make mistakes. As an instance—only yesterday, while hastily glancing over the *Times* at breakfast, I saw a letter\* on the Vivisection question. The writer began by calling up a picture of a wretched sufferer "on an invalid chair, propped by pillows, pale and careworn," whom he further on declared to have derived some benefit from a vivisection experiment. But my sympathies being antecedently a little on the side of the vivi-

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\*This letter has since become celebrated in the annals of the Vivisection controversy.

sected fellow-animal, and reading such a dismal description of the fellow-invalid, and not knowing which side the letter advocated, as I divided my attention between the newspaper and the breakfast-plate, my eye running over the next line read that this wretched being had "a really *penitent* word to say on the subject." Lower down I perceived I had made some mistake, and then found the word was *pertinent*, not *penitent*. There was no blurr of the type, the mistake was entirely in my own imagination, fancying I *saw* the word I *expected*.

This power of anticipation is so strong that I have often fancied for a moment that I *had* read a certain announcement in a letter, &c., when I was only recalling my brief mistaken expectation of what was coming, at the beginning of a sentence, which really, as it turned out, led up to something different.

And in a similar way, in the above instance, my friend who was writing in his armchair, probably brain-fatigued by his interest in the subject his pen was treating, found his attention fall away from it; his wandering thought would then naturally occupy itself with his distant wife; by association a little word would wake up in his memory, and point a twinge of self-reproach; hence would arise an affectionate anxiety as to her present condition. Just then might have supervened a little shudder as the night-chill came on, and the fire burnt low, occasioning a sensation like a cold hand laid on his arm; with this might have occurred a changing shadow thrown across the lamp-beams from a sinking of the spent fuel in the stove. Quite materials enough here to construct a "ghost" without need to "stir the heaven of their repose" of those "who are at rest."

While this paper has been preparing for the press, I dreamt most vividly of seeing two friends of mine (husband and wife) gliding along the sea-shore, the one a little time after the other, but both looking so strangely sad and wearing such mysterious aspect, altogether unlike their own, that I took note of the exact date, and wrote to ask if any coincidental unhappiness had occurred, for I am not so possessed by my own theory that the possibility of that of others being right has no power to create misgivings where one's affections are concerned.

The answer agreed perfectly with what I take to be the key to all "prescient" dreaming. A strong believer in the same might have put the two together with the most insignificant amount of working up and unconscious embellishment, and there would have resulted a most notable example. But the strict facts point to nothing but the merest coincidence. It happened that my friends *were* staying by the sea-side (this I knew previously), and that a family calamity *had* befallen one of them at a time not far from that of my dream. But it did *not* abso-

lutely coincide in date, as belief in the action of telepathy ought to require; and it was not of the nature that my mind had been led to apprehend; so that it could not really be critically considered to fulfil the due conditions of prescience or warning in any way.

With regard to the lottery question, it is undeniable that both in the weekly public drawings in Italy, and at the tables of Monte Carlo, numbers dreamt of with particular emphasis, or recommended by the books of counsel as connected with various events, *do*, now and again, turn up. It could not be otherwise when the same are tried so often. Once, when a nephew of mine had been set upon by some Revolutionists in Rome for his known steadfastness to the rightful Government, a number of people in our neighbourhood who had seen him drive home with forehead bleeding, played that week on the numbers corresponding with "*gente assai*," "*grondante sangue*," and the day of the month; those numbers actually came out. When Pius IX. died I was absent from Rome, but a friend who knew I was interested in testing these things, played for me (by the way, it is generally considered to bring luck if another person plays for you). I lost because two of the numbers selected failed to appear, but one of them—85, the number assigned to "dead Pope"—really did, and I heard that out of the multitude of combinations tried that week some people hit on one which won. When I was collecting "The Folk-lore of Rome," a weird old woman, who gave me several of the traditions for it, told me one day she had dreamt of three numbers recommended in the books of counsel, connected with something that had occurred to her, and she was certain they must come out. I thought it incumbent on me to discourage her credulity, by refusing to profit by her advice; nevertheless, her three numbers came out just as she had predicted. In course of the more than 20 years that I have known Italy I have been made acquainted with a few more such *coincidences*. But I have known incomparably more trials that have failed. The disproportion is so enormous that one would think it must destroy all faith in "trying one's luck." But the argument of the votary always is that it was not the predicted number that was fallacious, it was that the player was not lucky enough to hit on the right combination of events; consequently he goes on putting his faith in the numbers and trying over and over again various combinations until either he has no means left to try with, or, by force of coincidences some combination he has tried turns out "lucky." This is the most unlucky event of all, because without counting up the number of failures, the one winning fact is published abroad and induces a number of other persons into error.

Since the above was written, my little article in *Notes and Queries* has brought me a good many letters on this subject from

various quarters, to some of which I should be glad to subjoin a few words of reply. Mr. C. C. Massey, both in the columns of *Notes and Queries* and of *Light*, and other correspondents in private letters, have taken exception to my introduction of the word "superstition." It very often happens that, in striving after brevity, one fails to hedge one's argument against conveying some one or other of the constructions to which it is liable, but which it was not intended to bear. That there *are* people who attach a superstitious value to the alleged fulfilment of a dream he will not, I fancy, deny. But I can quite believe that this has no connection with his own line of thought. At the same time, if I said a few words in deprecation of superstition I do not see why persons who are not superstitious need take umbrage at them. Mr. Massey would very probably not deny either that the grounds of belief in a future state, and the evidences of the separate existence of a soul, must be sought in some region of inquiry quite above that of hallucinations which may chance to coincide with a person's death, or a "rapping, tapping, at my chamber-door," for which we may not for the moment be able to account; that the arguments in favour of religious belief and of a moral government of the world, must stand or fall by some higher criterion than the coincidental failing of an heir to a family which has been guilty of spoliation or other crime.

I think of coincidences exactly what Max Müller has said of myths. "Morals have been made an appendix" to coincidences just as they have been "to fables." Coincidences in themselves, like "the original myths, have no moral teaching. But art and religion have made use of coincidences as of "myths (themselves devoid of moral conscience) for their own æsthetic and moral ends."

By another correspondent it has been brought forward against my theory of coincidences that dreams coinciding with subsequent events are taken out of the category of common dreams by being more vivid and coherent. I seize this opportunity of stating that my experience is entirely at variance with this view. For besides that we have no proof they are more vivid except by arguing backwards (and I have reason to think many occur which, for want of being vivid, are simply not remembered), I have frequently had the most distinct and consecutive dreams which have had no sort of fulfilment. I have somewhere a note of some curious dreams of encounters and conversations with statues endued with life, that I have had soon after being much in the sculpture galleries of Rome and Naples, but I cannot find it now. I have also dreamt with the greatest detail of being turned into stone, of the gradual lowering of the temperature and subsidence of the pulse, the horror at first, and the subsequent peacefulness and fascination, till at

last one had attained a condition to awake from which was disappointment.

I have dreamt again and again of circumstances concerning absent friends, or of seeing them with unaccountably sad and anxious looks, which have struck me forcibly enough to make me secretly anxious to have news of them, and yet there was nothing in the least the matter with them in reality. I have heard my room door burst open and my name called, which is a favourite mode for the passing spirit of friends to manifest themselves among Germans, and yet the friend whose voice I recognised has been all the time in normal plight. I have had quite lately three most strikingly consecutive dreams, none of them connected with any matter in which I had been recently engaged, which have remained in my mind without any attempt at fading away. In the first I thought I was living in a very large, well-appointed house, and some ill-looking gipsies came to the window to beg, whereupon the mistress of the house was seized with the idea that it would exercise a civilising influence on them to invite them in and show them all the convenient arrangements of a luxurious abode; accordingly we led them over every part of the house and showed them the pictures and the *bric-à-brac*, and explained the uses of everything; but at last my hostess, to my extreme surprise, led them downstairs into a large crypt which ran all the way under the house, and where I seemed to know that we had Pius IX. in keeping, because he was not dead, as the world supposed, but imbecile, and as it would be impolitic to have an imbecile Pope he was hidden away here. I remonstrated at this betrayal of the great secret, but in vain, and in we all went. Pius IX. was reclining on a sort of altar-tomb, and my hope then was that he might not speak, and so they might suppose it was only his marble effigy. So far from this he got up and spoke to them, but no harm came of it as the gipsies did not seem to know anything about who he was. Ultimately they all went away, and I was left alone with him, which I did not half like; presently he began to complain of being tired and begged me to help him to lie down again, but he walked on to the far part of the crypt to another raised tomb there was there, and in doing so wore himself out and fell to pieces, and then I called a maid to come and help me put him together with diamond cement, he talking to us all the time.

In another, three friends with whom I was talking suddenly transformed themselves into three figures in elegant Japanese dress, and acted a sort of burlesque or extravaganza on the dining-table; one was a lady with a large high tortoiseshell comb in her back hair, the other two were men and all had fans. They performed the most graceful evolutions and dances the fan and the comb being, as it were, the "motive" of the whole. They constantly interchanged them, and now and then, at stated

parts of the dance, the tall comb on the lady's head waved *itself* backwards and forwards with the movement of a fan.

In the third I thought I was in the dungeons of the Castle of St. Angelo, and was about to be put to torture. Suddenly a figure with no clothing but a red tattered drapery appeared and spoke with the guards, and I was immediately set free, and they carried him off instead. At first I would not consent to this, and then I guessed that it was Christ, and I said, quite unconcernedly, "I know what always happens in that sort of case. He will let them lock Him up in my place, and in the morning when they go for Him they will find that He has gone through the locked door." A friend, who then seemed for the first time at my side, said, "Hush, if they hear you say that they will stop your going, and take you back," and he dragged me away. We had not gone very far when I most grotesquely discovered that I had left my waterproof behind, and said I must go back for it. My friend strenuously opposed this and finally ran away, but I persisted in going back, but woke before I reached the fortress. I need not say that none of these have "come true."

Finally, I give for what it is worth, my testimony as an observer of coincidences and collector of folk-lore, to the unfailing accuracy of four noted folk superstitions. 1. I never dreamt of silver without some distinct and separate vexation happening to me the next day over and above the normal "evil thereof." (On the other hand, I never knew of any particular good luck follow dreaming of gold.) 2. I never saw a winding-sheet on a candle without hearing of the death of some person in whom I was interested immediately after. 3. I never observed the fire burn on one side without hearing of either a death or a parting. 4. I never saw a cat wash over its ears without rain following. These are indisputable facts; but I do not consider them any more for that predictions or warnings. They are simply coincidences of which science, in its present state, does not supply the connecting link. It is most probable that, in the last case, the condition of the atmosphere exercises an irritating influence on the delicate susceptibilities of the cat; and I feel no doubt that something equally simple exists to connect the other instances, though one may never know.

I cannot at this time refer to a collection I made a short while ago of coincidences of simpler occurrences still, and of late I have not taken note of them; but I have found that it falls within the experience of most people with whom I have conversed on the subject, as well as my own (though they had not paid attention to the matter until I have spoken of it) that two events having apparently no possible connection will again and again coincide. Such as that two people who have nothing

to do with each other, should happen to call on the same day time after time; or that if one happens to be playing a certain piece of music when a particular friend calls, one should be playing the same when he calls again ever so long after, though one had no reason for playing it that day. Coincidences of this nature might also be collected, and I believe there are few persons who would have none to contribute.

I know many persons dismiss the consideration of these events with such an expression as "What possible connection *can* there be between a fire burning unevenly in one country and a person dying in another country?" I see none—any more than they; yet I am certain of my facts nevertheless. One would similarly refuse credit to all conjuring tricks if one did not know that they are not only really performed, but are mostly of the most simple contrivance. "How *can* a wand held over an egg make it dance?" one might say, if one did not know that the egg is blown out and connected with the wand by a hair. Still more might one, with a similar sentence, dismiss belief in half the combinations of chemistry, cooking, and what have become the commonest combinations of all sorts.

I can fancy that some amateurs of the telepathy theory may see in it a mode of accounting for some of the folk-omens\*—one would like to think that the inanimate things about us sympathise with our interests and take upon them the office of telegraphy without the intervention of hired clerks and wires; but it is not always the readiest solution that is the right one. If telepathy existed to the extent of producing these isolated but intimate coincidences, it must do so many other things which observation proves with equal certainty that it does not do.

No, I think the science of coincidences is yet far to seek.

R. H. BUSK.

[Our best thanks are due to Miss Busk for her interesting paper, but we presume Miss Busk would not deny that coincidences, such as are numbered 1, 2, 3 in the fourth paragraph from the end of her paper, belong to a wholly different category to coincidences such as apparitions at the moment of death, or the correspondence in position of numerous

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\* The local colouring and chronology of these folk-omens often supplies a fantastic commentary on their credibility. In some parts of England, for instance, it is an unfailing omen of, I forget what, if the (coal) fire is found in the morning alive from overnight. In wood-fire countries this is a matter of everyday occurrence. Dreaming of gold, silver and copper have their connection with degrees of good and bad luck: what about times and countries where paper money, or cowries, &c., prevail? Dreaming of losing a tooth predicts the loss of a friend. Since the general introduction of false teeth, will the dreamt loss of a false tooth betoken the loss of a false friend?

black lines seen in the spectrum of the sun with bright lines seen in the spectra of certain terrestrial bodies. This latter correspondence is (i) a general fact, *i.e.*, of universal observation, but for all that it might be a mere chance coincidence. We can, however, estimate the probabilities of its being so, and such an estimate shows (ii) that mere chance cannot account for it, but that there is probably some cause common to both the dark and the bright lines. What that cause is does not here concern us, but what we wish to point out is that the coincidences 1, 2, 3, cited by Miss Busk, must be shown to be something more than mere chance coincidence before they can be deemed worthy of serious attention. At the same time we quite agree with Miss Busk that as all our natural knowledge is derived from observation of coincidences, or the consequents of certain antecedents, it is desirable to keep a careful record of all recurring coincidences, however unrelated they may appear to be.—ED. JOURNAL S.P.R.]

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SPECIMENS OF THE CLASSIFICATION OF CASES FOR  
“PHANTASMS OF THE LIVING.”

IX.

In the December number of this *Journal* I printed a synoptic view of the divisions, classes, and groups in which our cases of the veridical hallucinations of waking persons have been provisionally arranged. And I must hope that the readers of these papers will from time to time refer to that synopsis in order to understand at what point in our series we have arrived, and what is the relation of the newly-cited cases to those which have preceded them.

It will be seen that in the November number we dealt with Division II., class G, group  $\alpha$ ; *i.e.*, cases where a percipient, alone or virtually alone, perceived a veridical, but unrecognisable, auditory phantasm. Group  $\beta$ , in the same class, to which we now come, includes cases in other respects similar, but where the phantasm was tactile instead of auditory.

In approaching *tactile* hallucinations we make in one way a decided advance as regards the evidential value of our narratives. For among the mere delusive hallucinations of sane persons imaginary touches are much rarer than imaginary sounds. Slight spasms or cramps of the

muscles may indeed give the impression that the arm or leg is being grasped from without. In a case recorded by Dr. Paterson (*Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*, No. 154), cramp of the triceps seems to have been the exciting cause of a hallucination which began with a clutching of the arm, and extended to imagined words and a figure. In this case the subject was much predisposed to hallucination. The cramp returned repeatedly, but did not produce the same effect again. The *παλμοί*, or quiverings of the subcutaneous muscles, from which, as supernaturally caused, the ancients were wont to draw auguries, belong to the same category. Illusions based on any of these fibrillar tremors would most naturally take the form of a supposed sudden grasp or touch of a finger. If the sensation were at all *prolonged*, its true nature would probably be recognised. There is no reason to suppose that it would be accompanied with a feeling of change of temperature, as of a specially *cold* touch or the like.

On the other hand, the tactile illusions of the insane (which merge into *internal* sensations in various ways) are usually of a more violent and painful character; as cuttings, tearings, gripings, and the like. They seem generally referable to some actual nervous lesion, central or peripheral, and suggest the persistent attack of an enemy, not the touch of a friend. The tactile illusions which sometimes precede an epileptic fit, or accompany the onset of paralysis, are, of course, not likely to be referred to any other cause.

The cases here referred to, it will be observed, are all cases of tactile *illusion*—that is, of the misinterpretation of sensations which have a real objective basis. Pure tactile *hallucination*, the imagination of a touch which is, in fact, a purely subjective phenomenon, seems a rarer thing.

But on the other hand, sensations of being touched do not readily shape themselves into a form clearly evidential of telepathic action. There are five ways in which such action might conceivably be suggested.

(1) The touch might leave an abnormal mark, as alleged in the Beresford case.

(2) The touch might be so characteristic as to be clearly recognisable as that of some absent person.

(3) It might seem specially to invite attention, as by repetition or insistence.

(4) It might be symbolical of death, as by extreme coldness.

(5) It might be accompanied by some auditory or visual phantasm.

The *first* of these categories is excluded from our consideration as in

volving an action on ponderable matter, which is outside the region of pure *phantasm* with which these papers are concerned.

The *second* category will come on for consideration later, when we are dealing with *recognisable* phantasms. In this class we are confining ourselves to forms of phantasm too rudimentary for definite recognition.

Of the *third* category we have several examples. I select a narrative which includes also some touch of *symbolism*, as the hand is felt as cold. The incident, however, is too remote to allow us to press a detail of this kind. For so remote a story the evidence is good, as the incident was both a *noticeable* and a *simple* one, and therefore, the less likely to have been imagined or distorted. The Admiralty confirm the fact that Captain Heywood was in command of the *Montague* at the date referred to ; but for "Master of Marines" we should apparently read "Captain of Marines."

From Lady Belcher, known to F. W. H. M.

DEAR SIR,—A note from Miss Keighley yesterday morning reminds me that I ought some time since to have complied with a request of Miss A. Swanwick's, that as you are much interested in those singular communications which sometimes seem to take place between living and departing beings, she wished me to repeat in writing for you a well authenticated story I had told her.

During the great French war, when Napoleon I. was overrunning Holland and after the unfortunate Walcheren expedition, our fleet was ordered to the Scheldt, I believe in the severe winter of 1813. The sailors and marines from the various ships were landed in parties to man and defend the dykes. So severe was the cold that long wooden sheds were erected, and large fires kept up for the watch parties.

All the officers in turn landed to keep the men to their posts.

On one night when my father, Captain Peter Heywood, landed with his men from the *Montague*, the line of battle ship he commanded, and the watch had been set, the officers stretched themselves down on some mattresses, the first lieutenant near him, then the Master of Marines. All was quiet, when the last mentioned officer cried out that some one had laid a cold hand on his cheek ! Silence was ordered. Again in a few minutes he made the same complaint and challenged the lieutenant, who peremptorily ordered silence. A third time he made the same outcry, jumped up and rushed from the spot in terror. The whole party were thoroughly roused, and my father considered the circumstance so peculiar that he noted it, with the date and the precise hour at which it had occurred.

Weeks after, when the despatches and letters arrived from England, the Master of Marines received the news of his father's death, and the hour of his departure, which tallied exactly with the note which Captain Heywood had made. Up to the period of my dear father's death I have heard him

mention the fact, but he never reasoned on it. He possessed a calm judgment and a very religious mind.—I remain, dear sir, yours very truly,

DIANA BELCHER.

25, Cumberland Terrace, Regent's Park.

April, 1884.

It so happens that in other cases which we possess where there is the symbolism of a cold hand, the pressure of a heavy corpse, &c., the agent is *recognised*; so we shall come upon them under a later group. But I should not be surprised to come on some case where the sensation of chilling touch or lifeless pressure suggests the idea of death, without any accompanying identification of the dying person.

Passing on then to the *fifth* category above mentioned, I proceed to give an incident where the touch is not only repeated, but conjoined with a spoken summons.

From Mrs. Hancock, Penarth Lodge, Stoke Bishop, Bristol, a member of the Society of Friends, known to E. R. Pease.

In my Northern-Irish home, I received a letter on the 7th November, 1865, from my brother in Warwickshire, saying that my mother was ill, and he wished I would go and see her. I started the same evening by Belfast and Fleetwood. I had been several hours in my berth, on the Irish Channel, and was half asleep, when I was startled by feeling a hand grasp my shoulder and a voice say, in a loud whisper, "Come quickly." I rose up and sat looking round the cabin, but could see no one. I called to the stewardess, but she was fast asleep, and so were all the other ladies. I again lay down, but not to sleep, and in a very short time, not 20 minutes afterwards, the same pressure was put on my shoulder and the same words were distinctly uttered close to my ear, "Come quickly." I again called loudly to the stewardess and told her to light the lamp, for I was sure that some one must have been standing by me. She declared that no one had been in the cabin, and all around was so still and quiet. I reached the station at half-past 12 at noon, when my brother met me. He said, "All is over, my mother passed away at 4 this morning."

I ought to have stated that when I called to the stewardess and made her light the lamp, immediately after I heard the voice and felt the hand on my shoulder the second time, I then asked her to tell me what o'clock it was, and she said "Four o'clock." I looked at my own watch and it was the same. I being an only daughter and my mother having been a widow the last five years of her life, she was much wrapped up in me and in my children, and the tie between us was of no ordinary kind. I have always looked upon this as a direct voice from herself, just as she was dying and passing into the spiritual world.

(Mrs.) LUCY HANCOCK.

Penarth Lodge, Stoke Bishop, Bristol.

April 14th, 1884.

In reply to your question, whether I have at any other time, besides the one described, "had an experience of the kind, *i. e.*, fancied I heard or felt a

human presence when no one was present," I have to say that I never did.—  
LUCY HANCOCK.

June 26th.

Now although Mrs. Hancock knew that her mother was dangerously ill it would be difficult to ascribe this phantom to expectant imagination, since when it came, and came repeatedly, Mrs. Hancock was so far from recognising it as abnormal, or associating it with the dying person, that she called twice to the stewardess for protection against the supposed intruder. The call, indeed, was a *whispered* one, so that the tones which give character to a voice would not be heard; yet one might have supposed that here, if ever, the summons might have been recognised by one who was in fact already hastening to obey it.

But it would be quite fallacious to expect that either the percipient's recognition of any phantasm, or his degree of alarm at any phantasm, could be predicted from the nature of the phantasm itself. Both recognition and alarm depend mainly on the percipient's subjective state at the moment, the amount of attention which he can rapidly bring to bear on the phenomenon, and the explanation of it which first occurs to him. It has sometimes been said that the apparitions which people say they see can be no more than vague fancies, for when they really *do* see something which they take for an apparition (as a man dressed in a sheet, &c.) they faint with fear or die outright. This saying contains a certain element of truth, along with much over-statement. It is probably true that the fictitious phantom often gives more alarm than the real one, just as a person who *tries* to startle one is more likely to startle one than a person who merely presents himself, or tries, at most, to attract one's attention. The fictitious phantom chooses someone whom he knows to be already in a fright, and does his best to frighten him still further. The real phantom comes to some one who is not thinking about anything of the kind and merely tries (or seems to try) to make him perceive who it is that has come to him. Moreover, the fictitious phantom takes advantage of his spectator's prepossessions in a way which the real one generally does not. It is dead people in sheets that the ghost-fearing world stands in awe of; not people who are believed to be living, and who appear in their ordinary clothes. Now the true death-wraith, as we shall see as we proceed, is for the most part what may be called studiously commonplace in his appearance. He does not affect *bizarrierie* or aim at sensation of any kind; in fact, to speak seriously, he is probably himself for the most part only a sensation, which externalises itself not in the strangest but in the most familiar aspect.

Thus far, then, there is a certain truth in the assertion that the sham ghost terrifies more than the *bond fide* one. But he certainly does not do

this, as was further asserted, by the mere fact that in his case there really *is* something to see or feel, while in the other case there is *not*. In the first place, people confuse real percepts, phantasmal quasi-percepts, and mere subjective sensations in all kinds of ways. A great poet once told me that in youth he sometimes went into the dining-room when it was dark, and walked up and down making verses. One evening, whilst thus employed he suddenly felt something clutch his leg. Startled for the moment, he rapidly argued with himself that the feeling must have been a mere illusion, and continued his walk and his ode. Afterwards his younger brother confessed to having hidden under the table and caught his leg to frighten him.

On the other hand, when phantasmal touches are felt, as in the case of Mrs. Hancock, they are very often taken to be the touch of some real intruder. When phantasmal figures are seen they are very often addressed as living persons, and even pursued for some distance, and if they vanish during the pursuit the sensation which they leave behind them is less often one of terror than of mere annoyance and bewilderment.

Equally mistaken, therefore, on the other hand, are those who talk of that indescribable awe which accompanies any contact with the supernatural;—justifying their own agreeable shudder at a ghost-story by attempting (so to speak) to deduce it from a cosmical law. It will be well to get rid of all these *à priori* fancies, and to recognise the fact that what a man thinks a phantom *is* when he sees it, or what he feels if he takes it for a phantom indeed, depends (as in the case of any other startling incident) much less on any definite rule as to the nature of the incident itself than on his own condition of nerves and brain at the moment. How widely this *susceptibility to shock* may vary in the normal states of a normal individual, anyone who is not grossly lymphatic can easily see for himself. It is enough to note the extremely different conditions—of heavy apathy or alert alarm—into which a sudden arousal from healthy sleep may summon us. I have been awoke by a mouse, and have started up with every sense on the stretch. I have been awoke by an earthquake, and have fallen asleep again without making a single reflection.

*Class G, group γ.*—Our next group consists of rudimentary, unrecognisable visual phantasms. Of these we have but few. We have, indeed, a good many cases where the phantom is *unrecognised*, though definite enough to have been capable of recognition; but these belong to a later class. In the present group we include only such phantasms as a ball of fire, or a vague shadow. Cases of this kind (which belonged to class F) were given in the *Journal* for October, 1884. Such a phantasm as a ball of fire seems to point strongly to-

wards the explanation by telepathic impact,—it looks, that is to say, like the result of some vague shock to the brain rather than like the presence of any objective entity. But here again our subject is more complex than at first sight appears. For just as *raps*, which we might have classed merely as one of the simplest forms of externalised brain-shock, have been seen to slide insensibly into the raps termed spiritualistic, even so do these “balls of fire” slide insensibly into the so-called *corpse-candle*, or moving light alleged to be seen, with various symbolical modifications, as a premonition or announcement of death. For instance, we have a case where, at the moment of a friend’s death, our informant saw a small light move across the room and pause above a chest of drawers, on which chest he then heard three raps given. Now from one point of view this might be merely the externalisation, to sight and sound, of a telepathic brain-shock. But, on the other hand, these small and momentary phenomena contain in miniature the whole question of corpse-candles and spiritualistic séances. Once more, therefore, we must turn aside from a complete investigation of a special class of phenomena, because the task would carry us outside the limits of the present work.

Of unrecognisable *shadows* or ill-defined forms we have, I think, only two satisfactory cases. In one of these a dark shadow bends over the percipient’s bed, and utters words in a voice which is not recognised. In the other case the quasi-percept is oddly called “a bright shadow ;” explained as an ill-defined luminous appearance (occurring in the daytime) of about the size and shape of the child whose death at the same moment seemed to have generated the phantasm.

But here we may pass on to the cases where the phantasm is *recognised*, class H of our synoptic scheme. And first of group a under this class, simple recognised auditory phantasms.

This group is a large one ; and as might be expected, the great bulk of it consists of cases where the percipient hears his own name called, generally more than once, and in a tone of anxiety or appeal.

“George, George,” “Mother, mother,” “Mary, Mary,” “Mamma, Mamma,” “called by my name in soft low accents,” “in a tone of mental distress,” “in an anxious and suffering voice,” such are the calls and the tones of which these percipients speak. It is noticeable in the *first* place, that this audition of a *name* is a form which a mere delusive hallucination readily assumes, and for that very reason, in our view, a form in which a vague telepathic impact would be likely to externalise itself ; and in the *second* place, that the actual or mental utterance of a beloved name is one of the commonest ways in which a moment of culminant anxiety or distress finds its expression ; that is to say, it is likely that many “agents” in some critical moment would project their

telepathic influence in this special form, and it is also likely that a *vague* telepathic impact would often present itself in this special form to the percipient's senses.

And in a somewhat similar way we may explain one or two cases where the sound heard at the moment of death is identified as the *footstep* of the agent, or the rattle of the gig in which he is expected to return home. All the sounds belonging to such a return have no doubt long since become an established cerebral element, for agent and percipient alike, and easily revocable into the consciousness of either.

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS.

### CASES RECEIVED BY THE LITERARY COMMITTEE.

It is proposed to print in the *Journal* a considerable part of the evidence received by the Society for Psychical Research from month to month. This has already been done to some extent; but the great bulk of the cases sent to us have hitherto been printed on separate slips, at the expense of a Member of the Society. These slips, with a few exceptions, are open to the inspection of Members and Associates at 14, Dean's Yard. For convenience of reference, the cases now to be printed in the *Journal* will be lettered and numbered continuously with the slips already printed. No opinion as to the evidential value of the cases quoted is implied by the fact that they are printed in the *Journal*. The series from which specimens will be given will consist of

- L—Phantasms of the Living.
- G—Ghosts, or Phantasms of the Dead.
- M—Mesmeric and Clairvoyant Cases.

The *numeration* of the slips merely indicates their collector or editor. In each series the sequence is as follows:—

No.	1—300, and 1,000—1,300	Edited by Mr. Podmore.
„	300—600, and 1,300—1,600	„ Mr. Gurney.
„	600—900 ... ..	Mr. Myers.
„	900—1,000 ... ..	Mr. Hodgson.
„	1,600—1,700 ... ..	Prof. Barrett.

In the G series, Nos. 1—100, are edited by Mr. Pease.

We begin with a group from the G series. The G cases are further classified as :

Transitional, *i.e.* : Where the phantasm occurs soon after death.

Fixed local  
and  
Fixed family: } Where it is alleged to haunt some locality, or  
some family or group of persons.

Motived : Where it is alleged to appear in order to effect some definite purpose.

Occasional : Where the appearance is isolated, and apparently purposeless.

G.—637—Transitional.

Sent to F. W. H. M. by the Bishop of Carlisle.

From the Rev. G. M. Tandy, Vicar of West-Ward, near Wigton,  
Cumberland, formerly of Loweswater.

When at Loweswater, I one day called upon a friend, who said, "You do not see many newspapers; take one of those lying there." I accordingly took up a newspaper, bound with a wrapper, put it into my pocket and walked home.

In the evening I was writing, and, wanting to refer to a book, went into another room where my books were. I placed the candle on a ledge of the bookcase, took down a book and found the passage I wanted, when, happening to look towards the window, which was opposite to the bookcase, I saw through the window the face of an old friend whom I had known well at Cambridge, but had not seen for 10 years or more, Canon Robinson, (of the Charity and School Commission). I was so sure I saw him that I went out to look for him, but could find no trace of him.

I went back into the house and thought I would take a look at my newspaper. I tore off the wrapper, unfolded the paper, and the first piece of news that I saw was the death of Canon Robinson!

GEO M. TANDY,

Vicar of West-Ward.

Mr. Tandy has had no other hallucinations.

G.—638—Fixed Local.

The writer of the following case, Mrs. L., is known to me. Mrs. L. has read this to Mr. L., and he confirms it. I inspected the locality with Mrs. L., on November 15th, 1884, and concur with the description given below.

F. W. H. M.

We were walking home from Richmond, my husband and I, one bright July day about half-past five, having ordered the boat to meet us and take us up to our own steps.

Between Richmond and Twickenham, on the Surrey side, is a splendid avenue of large trees; between the avenue and the river is a long and wide stretch of beach, and at the Twickenham end the ground is very open, and one sees the curve of the river and glimpses of some houses at Twickenham and Teddington; there is no bank or tree to intercept the view, and any one walking along the towing path can be seen for a long distance.

When a little way down the avenue, at the third tree, perhaps, a man passed stealthily behind me, to my left side, and went outside the trees—I was walking the furthest from the river. Two or three times he passed me thus, always in the same stealthy manner, as if not wishing to be seen.

I did not draw my husband's attention to him, because, although the last man to commence a quarrel, he never submitted to an imperitance, and this stranger's movements appeared so spy-like.

I did not know my husband had seen him till he passed the third time; then R. said:—

“What is that fellow dodging about for? the avenue is open to all, why does he not keep in or out of it? he appears anxious to know what we are talking about; as it does not concern him, we will go out into the open.”

We were then about the seventh or eighth tree down. As he spoke he stepped on to the open beach, and gave me his hand to help me over some obstruction in the path, a fallen branch, if I remember rightly. Both these movements were made in less time than it would take me to speak of them.

As I put my hand in his, I looked round, and saw the stranger standing between the trees. It was the first full look we had, and I said, “He looks as if he had stepped out of an old picture!”

We could see only his boots, his cloak, and hat. The boots were peculiar, high, and falling over at the knee, his cloak large and round, and thrown over his left shoulder, in the Spanish fashion, and his hat, apparently a soft felt, had a very wide drooping border, and was worn so much on one side we saw no face.

We both distinctly remember that in all the times we saw him that day, no face was visible. His whole costume was of one tone, and that of a dusty cobweb is the only thing I can liken it to.

We stood looking at him, I wondering if he would resent my husband's speech, but he made no movement, and I put my hand in R.'s to step into the open. As my husband's fingers closed on mine, he started, and as I looked up to see the cause I saw his eyes fixed steadily on the open space at the remote end of the avenue.

There, clearly defined by the bright background of the towing path and the river, stood the figure that, less than an instant before, was by our side, and which we certainly thought to be that of a fellow creature (of rather ill-bred manners, utterly inconsistent with the decided dignity of his appearance).

Had he been shot out of a gun, he could not have gone faster.

The distance I have since measured ; it is [about 150 yards\*] ; the time occupied in traversing it I could not have counted a dozen in, however rapidly.

Now comes the most peculiar part of our experience, that which has made me very chary of telling it, for fear of ridicule.

When we saw the figure standing out there on the open ground, we were simply perplexed ; no sensation of fear, or suspicion of the supernatural, entered our minds. We walked towards him with our eyes fixed on him.

There stood the figure, clearly defined, till we got within a certain distance ; then it changed. It is so difficult to describe what did take place ; the only way I can suggest it even is thus : You have seen a thick volume of smoke come out of a railway engine and gradually become thinner and thinner as it hovers over the ground, till you see through it the objects behind.

That is what took place. The figure stood there still, but, though it did not lose its shape, it gradually became transparent, till we saw the river and the bank and the distant trees through it ! Still it was there. Then it got fainter and fainter, till there was not the least suggestion of it left ; nothing but the large, bright, open space, without a single object behind which any one could have hidden.

We stood still, and I saw our boat coming. I got into it, feeling rather "dazed," like one does when waking from a too heavy sleep. As my husband pulled past the place where the figure had stood, for the first time a feeling of horror came over me, and I said, "What could it have been ?"

He answered, "God only knows, darling, perhaps we never shall."

And so, I suppose, we must leave it.

M. R. L.

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\* Distance not yet precisely obtained.—F.W.H.M.

## G.—639—Fixed Local.

Sent by the Rev. Professor Sayce to F. W. H. M.

About midway between Bath and Bristol is the village of Timsbury. The principal house in the place is one which was built during the reign of Henry VIII., and was known in the time of my boyhood as The Court. When I was 12 years of age my father moved to the neighbourhood of Bath, and was shortly afterwards requested by an old friend to ascertain whether there was a large house, with grounds attached, in the locality to be let furnished. Timsbury Court was the only one which could be heard of, and as it seemed exactly the kind of place that was wanted, Mr. B. agreed to take it. With his wife and daughter, and a staff of servants he brought with him, he accordingly took up his quarters in the house at the beginning of October. Neither he nor any of his household knew any of the inhabitants of the village, or were in any way acquainted with the neighbourhood.

The following December my brother (who was two years younger than myself) and I went on a visit to our friends at Timsbury. As we were the first guests they had received we were given what was considered the best bedroom in the house to sleep in. It was called the Drab Room, because the walls were hung with drab tapestry, and was approached by a corridor which branched off from the head of the staircase. The nearest room to it was occupied by Miss B. Opposite the door was a mullioned window. Between the door and the window was the entrance to a recess in the wall which was fitted up as a dressing room.

As my lungs were delicate, and the weather was cold, I was not allowed to leave the house during the week that I spent in it, and a fire was kept burning in the bedroom. On the Thursday afternoon I had been reading a book on mesmerism,—a very undesirable one for a weakly boy to get hold of, and when it became too dark for me to read any longer without a light, I went upstairs to prepare for dinner. While I was standing in the dusk before the looking-glass on the table in front of the window, brushing my hair, I happened to glance towards my right, and there distinctly saw the figure of a man standing at the entrance of the dressing-room, about a yard distant from me, with his eyes fixed upon myself. What he looked like I will state presently. The suddenness of the appearance startled me exceedingly, and I rushed downstairs into the drawing-room in an agony of terror, declaring that I had seen a "ghost." I was well laughed at for my folly, and told that I must not read any more books on mesmerism. By the time dinner was over I had become reassured, and soon ceased to think any more about what I had seen.

The following Saturday night I chanced to awake when the fire, which had been blazing brightly when I went to sleep, now cast only a slight flickering light over the room, just sufficient to disclose the outlines of things but no more. I then saw distinctly a human figure come out of the dressing-room and walk by the side of the bed. My brother, who was sleeping on that side of the bed, happened to be awake also, and saw the figure as well as myself. I asked him who it was. "Only Lizzie" (that is Miss B.), he said, and satisfied with the answer I turned round and fell asleep again. My brother saw the figure pass to the foot of the bed and there lost sight of it. In the morning I mentioned to Mrs. B. that her daughter had been in our room during the night, but no further notice was taken of it at the time. I must not forget to add that on several occasions my brother and I were much disturbed by strange noises which we ascribed to the wind.

The following spring two young ladies who were on a visit to the house, slept in the Drab Room. Early on Sunday morning they awoke suddenly, and saw a figure come out of the dressing-room and walk to the foot of the bedstead, where it stood looking at them. They were greatly alarmed and covered their faces with the bed clothes, but the next morning determined to say nothing from fear of ridicule. In fact they did not mention what they had seen until some months afterwards.

In the course of the summer the room was occupied by Mrs. Hb., a lady of decidedly unimaginative character. On the Sunday morning after her arrival she appeared at breakfast looking pale and unwell, and, after breakfast, asked Mrs. B. if she might have her room changed. Mrs. B. of course assented, but pressed her visitor to tell her what was the matter with the room, as she fancied she might have been annoyed by rats or something similar. After a great deal of hesitation Mrs. Hb. confessed that though she knew her hostess would think her extremely foolish, she felt convinced that she had seen something supernatural that morning. She had been aroused from sleep, she said, by hearing the clock strike 4, and just afterwards saw a human figure come from the dressing-room and pass to the foot of the bed, where it stooped down, so as to be hidden from view. She thought someone was playing her a trick, and jumped out of bed to see who it was; she searched the room and found nothing. Mrs. B. naturally in her mind ascribed her guest's apparition to a nightmare, but nothing would persuade the latter that she had not actually seen it with waking eyes.

In the early part of September, Mr. B. received a visit from his son-in-law, Mr. H. and his wife, who like the five visitors before

them, also occupied the Drab Room. I heard the following story from Mrs. H.'s own lips. On the Thursday night after their arrival, she was sleeping on the side of the bed nearest the dressing-room, and was aroused from her sleep by feeling a cold clammy hand laid all across her face. It prevented her from opening her eyes, though she felt that if she could do so she would see something "uncanny." She kicked violently and awoke her husband, who told her she was suffering from nightmare, that was all. Mrs. H. was convinced that it was otherwise, and refused to sleep another night on that side of the bed. The following night Mr. H. was prevented from getting any sleep by an attack of toothache, and in the morning again began to laugh at his wife, telling her that if "there *were* a ghost in the room he must have seen it as he had been awake all night." The toothache disappeared in the course of the morning, and the following (Saturday) night Mr. H. slept additionally soundly in consequence of his want of sleep the night before. Suddenly he was startled from his slumbers by a cold clammy hand placed upon his forehead. He sprang up and saw a brown-looking figure, crouched up, hieing away from him into the dressing-room. He felt his pulse, which was beating normally, then he got out of bed, poured some water into the basin, and plunged both his face and his hands into it. Then he returned to bed, and sitting up in it looked at his watch, and found it was a little after 4 o'clock. At ten minutes past 4 the figure came out of the dressing-room, and stood close to his pillow, so close indeed that he might have touched it had he chosen. This time the figure was erect, and he was able to measure its height against the window-frame, from which he discovered that it was not quite his own height. The figure was that of a man, dressed in a dark coat, which was fastened by gold buttons at the throat and wrist. The hair was dark and parted in the middle, the face pale and smooth, and the nose of the Greek type. In both face and dress the figure was precisely the same as that which I had seen. Mr. H. deliberated whether he should speak; while doing so he coughed, and immediately afterwards the figure melted before his eyes "like a mist." After this further sleep was out of the question, and Mr. H. agreed with his wife that they had better change their room. As the next day, however, was Sunday, they thought they would pass one more night there. In the course of this Mrs. H. was awakened by "horrible shrieks, groans and sighs," that proceeded from some part of the room. Her husband was awake, and she asked him what it meant. He replied that he had been listening to those sounds for more than an hour. Then he sat up and said, "In the name of God I command you to be silent." After this they heard no more.

The story soon became known in the village, and our friends then learned that the Drab Room had been held to be haunted from time immemorial, though they could hear of no legend to account for the supposed fact. In the time of their predecessors it had been closed in consequence of the belief about it. So well-known in the village, indeed, was the belief, that some of the old people, as it turned out, refused to venture near the gates of the house itself after dark. Our friends remained there only a year or two after the discovery, as their servants became frightened and were accordingly disinclined to stay with them.

A. H. SAYCE.

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Mrs. Saxby, Mount Elton, Clevedon, sends us an extract from a letter written January 12th, 1860, by Miss Lily Boyd, the Miss B. of Professor Sayce's narrative. After describing the appearance to Mrs. Hb. in much the same way as Professor Sayce describes it, Miss Boyd continues :—

The next instance that has occurred, since we occupied the house, is more remarkable still. Mr. Sayce's two little boys slept together in the haunted room, when they stayed with us. On their return home their mother said, "You must have been very happy. Had you a pleasant visit?"

They replied they were very happy all day, but "they did not think it was kind in Lily to dress up in white and come to their bed at night, and that they did not like it at all." These children had never heard of the Timsbury Ghosts, and never speak of what they saw there as anything but "Lily dressed up."

They told their nurse that "one night Lily went into their room, dressed up in white, to frighten them, but they were so sure it was Lily that they determined not to take any notice of her, as they were very tired." Was not this most curious?

Frederick Holt, my brother-in-law, was all but frightened out of his senses, by an apparition which he saw in the haunted room. He had been lying awake for more than hour, one night, or rather very early one morning, when, from the corner whence it usually issues, where the dressing-closet door opens into the bedroom, a figure appeared, and slowly passed the bed. Frederick felt his pulse and his heart, in order to ascertain whether he was any way excited or fevered, as he thought, at first, it must be an illusion, but his pulse was quite steady. In about 10 minutes the figure returned, with its hands upraised, and with the most agonised expression of countenance that could be described. Mrs. F. Holt was asleep by her husband one night when the apparition appeared to him. He says he did not awaken her at first for fear of frightening her, and that when the figure returned he felt completely paralysed. He had himself been awakened that night by what felt to be a hand pressed tightly over his

face, and he then saw an elderly gentleman with a fine line of face passing from his bed. He was dressed in brown, in the old style, with a long rounded-off waistcoat, and a light neckcloth which was fastened with a brooch or pin. He passed from the dressing-closet, at one side of the room, to a kind of wardrobe-closet for hanging things in at the other. Mr. Holt put his hand upon his own pulse to see if anything was the matter with him, and counted 80 beats, when the old gentleman came out of the hanging-closet again, and again passed by his bed, but this time it stopped, raised up its arms, and, clasping its hands together, laid them down, pressing them on the bed in which Mr. and Mrs. Holt were lying. It then passed on again to the dressing-closet.

Mr. Holt then told his wife what he had seen. Mrs. Holt saw nothing, but they both of them heard loud whisperings and voices all about the room. Neither of them could understand what the voices said. They described the room "as seeming all alive with voices."

These two accounts are quite independent, and it will be seen that Professor Sayce's recollection, at the distance of a quarter of a century, corresponds pretty closely with the contemporary account.

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The Hon. Secretary of the "Haunted House" Committee informs us that there is a house now to let, near the Sussex coast, which is said on good authority to be haunted. The rent is about £100 per annum. He can send the usual particulars, and also the evidence for the abnormal occurrences, to any member of the Society who might wish to take the house.

## EXPERIMENTS WITH THE MAGNETIC NEEDLE.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

New Athenæum Club, S.W.

30th December, 1884.

SIR,—Professor Barrett has told me that certain experiments which I have been making with the magnetic needle would possess an interest for the members of the Society for Psychical Research, and he has suggested that I should furnish a report of them. But for his suggestion I should have hesitated to do so, as I greatly doubt whether these experiments have any real bearing on things psychical as distinguished from things physical.

My attention was first drawn to the subject by reading Reichenbach's account of his experiments with sensitives, and also the account given in Zöllner's *Transcendental Physics* of the effect produced on the magnetic needle by the finger of Dr. Slade. It seemed to me unlikely that two such observers as Reichenbach and Zöllner should be completely deceived in their observations, and I thought I would try for myself what effect could be produced on the needle by the human organism. Of course, a merely negative result would have proved nothing; but any positive result might be expected to throw some light on the phenomenon. And as I had cultivated mesmerism with some success, I thought it quite possible that I might produce some effect. I accordingly purchased a very ordinary compass with a glass cover, and found that by pointing the finger at the needle covered or uncovered no effect whatever was produced. It then occurred to me that in all the recorded experiments the compass had apparently been under glass, and it struck me as possible that the glass itself might have had something to do with the results obtained by others. Instead, therefore, of moving the finger near the glass, I moved it in contact with it. The result was that the needle, after a while, adhered to the glass by one of its points. In this there is nothing extraordinary. The needle will readily adhere to such a non-conductor when it has been charged with electricity by friction. It is in what followed upon this that the interest of the experiment consists. If now, when the needle was thus adhering to the glass, the finger was pointed at it from a little distance, the needle most certainly moved, and always in one direction—that, namely, away from the finger. This was so far interesting that it seemed to throw some light on the probable, or at least possible, genesis of the belief which connects (so-called) animal with mineral magnetism. This was probably the phenomenon which had been observed by Reichenbach and Zöllner, and the possibility of which had been so strenuously denied by other physicists. But whether this phenomenon proved the contention of Reichenbach and Zöllner was to my mind a very different matter. Unfortunately, I am not myself a physicist, and I feel the awkwardness of handling a subject with which I am but superficially acquainted; but I certainly think that the phenomenon is in some way due to the difference in temperature between the glass and the finger, and that it comes, therefore, under the known laws of heat and electricity. But this is a matter on which trained physicists should be able to speak with authority.

I repeated this experiment many times, and found that the slightest

dampness on the glass prevented the phenomenon—a fact which seemed to ally it with statical electricity. I then once more made an attempt to affect the uncovered needle. I fitted up a little apparatus by which the naked needle was very delicately poised, and I fixed a piece of glass perpendicularly by the side of it, at about the distance of half an inch from it. I then found that, if by a slight friction on the glass I brought the needle into a state of oscillation—which was easy enough—I could then produce the phenomenon by pointing my finger at the naked needle. I presume that this is practically the same experiment as the other, but it *seems* more remarkable.

Two or three details should be noticed in conclusion. One is that the needle is always *repelled*, whether the finger is hotter or colder than the glass; for I have tried the effect of all possible changes of temperature. Another is that the effect can be conveyed very well through wood, but badly through metal, and not at all through india-rubber. Another point to notice is that the repulsion, under favourable circumstances, is strong enough to overcome the attraction of the magnet for iron (of course I took care to see that the iron had not been magnetised). Once more, the finger was clearly not magnetic as it repelled equally either end of the needle. Finally, I fancied that something at least depended on my own physical state. Sometimes a single pass on the glass would make the needle lively; at other times 30 passes would produce no effect, and this when the glass was perfectly dry. The experiment, as a rule, succeeded best soon after I had taken a meal, and at night better than in the day. This again would seem to connect the phenomenon with *heat*, it being a fact that the temperature of the body is higher after feeding, and also after intellectual exertion such as one naturally makes of an evening by reading or writing.

I should be very glad if the publication of this report should lead to the complete elucidation of anything which at present may seem mysterious in the behaviour of the magnetic needle.—I am, your very faithful,

A. EUBULE-EVANS.

[If the facts are as our correspondent describes I cannot account for them on physical grounds, although the pointing of the finger might discharge the electrified surface of the glass, and allow the electrically attracted needle to resume its north and south position, which would appear like repulsion by the finger. But this explanation appears to be negated by the following letter I subsequently received.—ED. JOURNAL S. P. R.]

31st December, 1884.

SIR,—After two years of incredulity I am to-day convinced that Reichenbach and Zöllner were correct in affirming that the magnetic needle could be moved by something emanating from the human finger; although only last night I sent a report of my experiments to the Secretary of the Society for Psychical Research, and in this report I stated that I was by no means convinced by my own experiments.

This morning there is a hard frost here which has hardly ever been the case when I have been experimenting. I mounted a small needle on a very

delicate pivot without any covering, and pointed a finger of my right hand at it. No result. It then occurred to me to point the left hand index finger—a thing I had never done before—and, lo! the needle was distinctly repelled. Being by nature very sceptical in such matters, I thought the motion might be caused by my breath, so I bandaged my mouth and nostrils, and held in my breath. There was no doubt about it—the needle became strangely perturbed, being at first attracted and then repelled by the finger. A curious circumstance was that I could effect this only at the south-seeking pole. I tried to affect the north-seeking pole with the *right* hand, but without result. I can throw no light on the cause of the phenomenon, but of its reality I am now at last certain. Whether I shall be able to repeat it I do not know, as I have tried so often before in vain to produce it. . . .

Since writing the foregoing I have successfully repeated the experiment at least a dozen times, but the power has now (for the time at least) gone again.

A. EUBULE-EVANS.

[Having read the note I attached to the former letter, Mr. Eubule-Evans informs me that when the finger was pointed at the needle, it was not merely released and allowed to resume its normal position after oscillation, but it was distinctly pushed aside by the finger—of course without contact—only resuming its proper north and south position when the finger was removed. I can only express the hope that Mr. Eubule-Evans will keep a careful record of all the conditions of his experiments, and that he will give me the opportunity of witnessing the phenomenon. It is also very desirable that the experiment should be carefully tried by as many of our friends as possible—ED. JOURNAL S.P.R.]

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIBRARY CATALOGUE.

*The following additions have been made since last month.*

- 
- LEE (Rev. Frederic George, D.C.L.) *More Glimpses of the World Unseen* .....London, 1878\*
- THEOSOPHIST (The) Vol. II. and III. ....Madras, 1880-1
- 
- BERTRAND (Professor Alexis) *L'Aperception du Corps Humain par la Conscience* .....Paris, 1884
- JANKOWSKI, (Eduard) *Phänomenologie und Metaphysik der anormalen Sinnesbilder* .....Leipzig, 1882†
- LUYS (Dr. J.) *Le Cerveau, 3rd edit.* .....Paris, 1878‡
- RICHER (Charles) *L'Homme et l'Intelligence* .....Paris, 1884
- YUNG (Dr. Emile) *Le Sommeil Normal et le Sommeil Pathologique* .....Paris, 1883
- 

\* Presented by Mr. H. A. Smith.

† Presented by Mr. C. C. Massey.

‡ Presented by Dr. A. T. Myers.