

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

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JOURNAL

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Society for Psychical Research

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 276th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1, on Thursday, 11 December 1930, at 5 p.m., SIR LAWRENCE JONES, BART., in the chair. There were also present: Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Miss Ina Jephson, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Dr F. C. S. Schiller and Dr V. J. Woolley; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

It was decided to hold the Annual General Meeting at 3.30 p.m. on Friday, 26 February 1931.

GENERAL MEETING.

THE 177th General Meeting of the Society was held at Friends House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1, on Wednesday, 26 November 1930, at 6 p.m., SIR LAWRENCE JONES, BART., in the chair.

MISS INA JEPHSON read a Report on "Further Experiments in Card-guessing, with a more Evidential Technique." Miss Jephson gave a summary of the experiments recently conducted by Mr Soal, Mr Besterman and herself, reports of which will, it is hoped, appear shortly in *Proceedings*. An interesting discussion followed.

NOTICE.

MEMBERS will have observed that the Index and Titlepage of the volume of the *Journal* just completed were issued to all members with the December number, instead of to those only who purchased binding-cases, as heretofore. This departure will, it is hoped, encourage more members to bind and preserve their *Journals* for future use and reference. Complete sets of the Society's publications are now very difficult to form and this will become more and more

difficult as time passes. It is therefore in their own interests that members are advised to preserve their copies.

Binding-cases for vols. xxv and xxvi (which are treated for this purpose as a single volume) can be supplied for 1s. 6d. Alternatively, members can send in their sets of the *Journal* for the two years (1929 and 1930) and have them bound by the Society's binders for 4s. 0d., which includes the cost of the binding-case. Missing numbers of the *Journal* for recent years can be supplied for 9d. each. Orders should be accompanied by remittances, and should be addressed to the Secretary.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE ATHENS CONGRESS.

THE *Transactions* of the Athens Congress are now published, and can be supplied for 7s. 6d., on application to the Secretary.

In addition to a Diary of the Congress, in which are included several addresses by Dr Tanagra, Dr Driesch and Sir Oliver Lodge, the volume contains the following papers :

Personne et Suprapersonne, par Hans Driesch, Professeur à l'Université de Leipsic.

Das psychophysische Problem vom parapsychologischen und vom phänomenologischen Standpunkt aus, von T. K. Oesterreich, Professor an der Universität Tübingen.

Das psychophysische Energiefeld als Träger des sinnlichen und übersinnlichen Erlebens, von Karl Camillo Schneider, Professor an der Universität Wien.

Le Médium Frieda Weissl, par le docteur Baron von Winterstein, Président de la S.R.P. Autrichienne.

Le Dessin Médiumnique, par Prosper de Szmurlo, Président de la Société Psycho-Physique de Varsovie.

La Télépathie de la Mémoire Latente, par le Dr A. Tanagra, Président de la S.R.P. Hellénique.

La Suggestibilité des Hystériques en Grèce, par le Dr Milt. Vlastos.
Parapsychologisches bei Geisteskranken, von Dr K. Konstantinides.

Some Suggestions for the Improvement of the Conditions of Investigation of Controllable Phenomena, by W. H. Saltcr, Hon. Treasurer and Joint Hon. Secretary of the Society for Psychological Research.

On the Reasons for the non-Recognition of Psychological Research by the Majority of the Scientific World, by Sir Oliver Lodge.

The Trance Phenomena of Mrs Ingeborg, by Th. Wereide, Professor at the University of Oslo.

A Critical Estimate of the Present Status of Psychical Research, by Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor of the Society for Psychical Research.

The Case of the Abbé Vachère, by the Hon. Everard Feilding.

Das verkehrte Bild in der Telepathie, von Sanitätsrat Dr G. Pagenstecher.

Das Verhältnis des Israelitischen Prophetismus zu den Problemen der Bewusstseinspaltung, von T. K. Oesterreich, Professor an der Universität Tübingen.

Über Spiritismus, von Dr Johannes Hohlenberg.

Eine neue Forschungsmethode in der Parapsychologie, von Professor Daniel Walter.

Zwecksetzung und Zielstrebigkeit in der Biologie und Parabiologie, von Prof. Ing. V. Mikúška.

Un Cas de Connaissance Paranormale, par Zoé Comtesse Wassilko-Serecki, Secrétaire honoraire de la S.R.P. Autrichienne.

Un Cas de Lévitiation chez les Derviches, par Carl Vett, Secrétaire honoraire du Comité international des Congrès pour recherches psychiques.

Der Kampf um Valiantine, von Dr Walther Kröner.

Recent and Current Investigations undertaken by the Society for Psychical Research, by Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor of the Society for Psychical Research.

Les Médiums Télékinétiques en Grèce, par le Dr A. Tanagra, Président de la S.R.P. Hellénique.

Meine Dreijährigen Untersuchungen mit dem Breslauer Medium Frau S., von Dr T. Kindborg.

Telepathische Experimente zwischen Athen, Paris, Warschau und Wien, von Dr K. Konstaninides.

CASE.

L. 1294.

IMPRESSION RECEIVED AT THE TIME OF A FRIEND'S DEATH.

THE following case has been contributed by a friend of Mrs Salter, known to readers of the *Journal* as *Miss Ann Jones*. *Miss Jones* has had other apparently supernormal experiences, which will be found recorded in the *Journal* (1912), xv. 337-9, 339-42 (on which cp. xvi. 14-5); (1913), xvi. 51-6 (cp. xvi. 78-9); (1914), xvi. 306-10 (cp. xxi. 117-8); (1924), 350-2. Several of these cases are discussed by Mrs Sidgwick in her supplementary examination of "Phantasms of the Living," *Proceedings* (1922), xxxiii. 317-8, 330-1, 352-3.

Miss Jones's account of her experiences, which is dated 13 July 1930, is as follows :

“Death of Camille Vidart.

“ On the morning of Saturday June 28th I was unable to get to work as usual because of a sense of disturbance and of a death of some importance. It seemed to me that some public person was dying. I knew that the death did not concern my husband who was away in Kent at the time. Towards noon the feeling became so insistent that I called my housemaid Dorothy Holtby out on to the roof where I was trying to write and told her to make a note of the day and of my premonition.

“ On July 9th I received a copy of *Le Journal de Genève* with the announcement of *Camille Vidart's* death.

“ She was my godmother and a person well known as a linguist and a feminist in Europe and America. I had not heard that she was ill nor had we exchanged any letters since our Christmas greetings. I saw her last in the spring of 1928 when she visited me in London.

[Signed, *Ann Jones*]”

With this statement was enclosed the housemaid's corroboration.

“ On Saturday morning, June 28th [*Miss Ann Jones*] called me on to the roof of her flat in Hatfield, Hertfordshire, and said that she had a feeling, that something rather sad was happening, but that it was entirely out of England, and did not concern any of her close relatives.

[Signed] Dorothy Gertrude Holtby.”

Miss Jones also sent a cutting from *Le Journal de Genève* announcing the death of Mademoiselle Camille Vidart on 28 June. The notices “ *de faire part* ” include three from Societies in Geneva, thus corroborating *Miss Jones's* impression that the person who had died was of some public importance.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ON A SERIES OF SITTINGS.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—I have read with much interest Mr Irving's comments (in *Proceedings*, xxxix. 333 ff.) on my report on the Warren Elliott sittings and cannot but help feeling somewhat gratified that he has found so little matter for criticism. Mr Irving's personal experience of sittings with various mediums is far wider than my own and it was only to be expected that from that experience he would be able to modify and correct some of the impressions which I derived from the study of my narrower material.

I was bound by the facts actually before me and I endeavoured to make it clear by the language which I used that any judgments which I passed and any suggestions which I made were based solely on the evidence of those facts. In one or two places in the report I specifically referred to the possibility of evidence from other sources modifying the conclusions at which I had tentatively arrived.

I am glad to see, therefore, that the modifications which Mr Irving's wider experience suggests are mainly in the nature of amplifications or extensions of my own suggestions.

May I make a few remarks on the various points raised by him? The correspondence between the statement made in his Leonard sitting with that in the Elliott sitting of which an extract was given on page 86 of my report, is very interesting. I agree that if a number of such correspondences between statements made by different mediums concerning the post mortem conditions of the ostensible communicators could be found, they might be held to possess some small evidential value, but until such correspondences are forthcoming in considerable numbers and of many varieties, I think it is safer to take the attitude which I adopted and, while not denying the possibility of evidential value, not to seek to use it in supporting any hypothesis. As it happened, the matter under discussion when I made the remark in question was a statistical one and whether I had allowed an evidential value to these post mortem statements or not would have made little, if any, difference in the conclusion.

As regards Feda's use of symbolism, I, of course, accept Mr Irving's interpretation of the "mackintoshes and umbrellas" incident. I had before me simply the record of the words used by Feda and, as Mr Irving says, any one reading the script might take this for an example of symbolism.

On this matter of symbolism and the psychological processes involved in the reception and transmission of impressions received by the medium, Mrs Salter's paper in the same issue of *Proceedings* has much of great interest.

Concerning proper names, I was, of course, only speaking of the sittings actually before me. I know of one or two cases, apart from these, where names have been correctly or nearly correctly given, but on the whole, so far as my knowledge goes, I think it is correct to say that proper names, and more especially surnames, do present a considerable difficulty to the Control. I believe that in this view many investigators will agree with me. I do not for a moment imply that such names are never correctly given, I simply suggest that they are peculiarly difficult to get through, the reason for this difficulty being easily imaginable. Hence it is that when they are successfully given they possess a high evidential value,

I cannot quite understand Mr Irving's criticism of my treatment

of the reference to Miss Newton and events at the offices of the Society. I ascribed these provisionally to telepathy or clairvoyance and said, on page 160, that there was no grounds on which a choice between the two could be based. In those cases where, as in the one cited by Mr Irving, the information was not in the possession of Miss Newton at the time the statement was made, telepathy from her would seem to be excluded. This might constitute grounds for preferring the hypothesis of clairvoyance, though telepathy from some other person who had the necessary information would still be a possible explanation.

And finally, as regards the apparent discontinuity in communications, Mr Irving brings forward some very interesting and suggestive facts. On page 114 of my report I remarked that habitual associations were about the most individual part of the entire mental furnishing, and suggested that some evidence of identity might possibly be derived from a study of these. Mr Irving's cases are good examples of what I was referring to.

I was pleased to note that Mrs Salter, in her paper above referred to, appears to take the same view as myself. She says on page 325, "Apart from all physical characteristics a man's personality is chiefly expressed in the association of ideas which constitute his memory."

It seems to me that a promising avenue of research might be found along these lines. Perhaps Mr Irving may be able to discover among his records some further instances of sequence of topics which exhibit the *probable* associative processes of the ostensible communicator. If a considerable number of such could be found it would, I submit, be valuable evidence of identity.

Yours, etc.,

H. F. SALTMARSH.

MANIFESTATIONS OF THE LIVING.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—In *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*, September 1930, p. 559, Herr Hans Schubert concludes a paper entitled "Are manifestations of persons still living possible?" by the wish that his readers should send him well attested evidence bearing on similar facts.

Some forty years ago, in St Petersburg, I came across such a fact. In M. D. Shilkin's circle (who was later on one of my best friends) a "message" was once received—not in my presence—purporting to come from a certain Manassévitch-Manouiloff (who played a rather sinister part many years later in the political life of the Russian Empire). Manassévitch-Manouiloff, then in Paris, gave his correct address alleged to have been unknown to any one

present ("Hotel Bergère, cité Rhin") and mentioned by name Mme E—eff, a lady with whom he was staying, a fact also supposed to be unknown. It turned out afterwards that he had epileptic fits at the time and therefore may have "communicated" during one of those fits; and on his return to St Petersburg, when Mme E—eff's name was mentioned to him, he was said to have shown much embarrassment.

I had at the time a *procès-verbal* of the sitting in question drawn up, and sent a translation to Mr Myers who, I think, thought the case remarkable. Unfortunately it was afterwards ascertained so far as I can remember that the (private) medium through whom the message was obtained, played tricks on some other occasion or occasions; so we thought it safer to consider the Manassévitch-Manouiloff case as null and void. But it *may* have been genuine after all.

Yours, etc.

PEROVSKY-PETROVO-SOLOVOVO.

REVIEWS.

GONZALO R. LAFORA, *Don Juan and other Psychological Studies*.
Translated by Janet H. Perry. Preface by Charles S. Myers.
8vo, pp. 288, 13 ill. London: Thornton Butterworth, Ltd.,
1930. Price 7s. 6d. net.

This book contains five essays, with the last of which, entitled "Spiritism", we are alone concerned. The author is described on the titlepage as "Professor of Psychiatry in the Faculty of Medicine, Director of the Laboratory for Cerebral Physiology at the Cajal Institute, University of Madrid", and in addition, on the wrapper, as "Vice-President of the Spanish League for Mental Hygiene". The translator, we are informed, is "Lecturer in the Department of Spanish Studies, University of London, King's College". The writer of the Preface is of course a distinguished psychologist, to whom, the translator states (p. 11), she owes "a debt of gratitude for his careful revision of my manuscript".

Under these eminent auspices we are entitled to expect a treatment of the subject distinguished by scientific precision and psychological insight. And our hopes are encouraged by Professor Lafora himself, who repeatedly declares himself to be animated by the most rigorous scientific principles. All too soon, however, the reader perceives that these hopes are not to be realised. At the very outset of his essay we find the author sustaining his argument by lengthy quotations from the *Daily Mirror*, soon followed by similar excerpts from *La Petite Gironde* and from the *Paris Times*. We find the following definition (p. 238): "Automatic writing, produced by

some instrument unknown to the medium, or else by a pencil only". In short, Professor Lafora's essay on spiritism is quite valueless. Many of his errors it is astonishing that the translator and the writer of the preface should have passed. We are glad to say, however, that when the worst of the author's mistakes, one affecting the Society, was pointed out to the publishers, they readily agreed to cause it to be corrected in future copies sold.

TH. B.

EMILE CAILLIET, *La Prohibition de l'Occulte*. 8vo, pp. xii. 206. Paris: Félix Alcan, 1930. Price 15 fr.

This book, though its conclusions must be rejected, deserves a welcome on the score of its subject and of its method. The subject of the book is Prof. Bergson's conclusion in his Presidential Address to the S.P.R. (*Proceedings*, xxvi. 463) that behind the prejudice entertained by official science against psychical research lies an unconscious though natural and deeply-rooted metaphysic. Prof. Cailliet's method is to examine this metaphysic by tracing it back to the savage's belief in magic and fear of the sorcerer. This application of psychologico-ethnological treatment to psychical research is becoming more and more recognised as an essential part of our studies: for a true perspective is notably lacking in psychical research.

In the present book, however, it is with some astonishment that towards the end of a volume notable for its clear reasoning and command of the facts, the reader is suddenly confronted with the conclusion that the metaphysic postulated by Prof. Bergson is a true one and one that has divine sanction. How Prof. Cailliet came to such a conclusion after convincingly demonstrating that the unconscious prejudice in question is simply a survival of the superstitions of savage man, is a difficult problem.

TH. B.

PIERRE VILLEY, *The World of the Blind (a Psychological Study)*. Translated by Alys Hallard. 8vo, pp. 403. London: Duckworth, 1930. Price 7s. 6d. net.

M. Villey, though he has been completely blind since the age of four and a half, is Professor of Literature at the University of Caen and is the author of a monumental work on Montaigne. The present book, which has been awarded a prize by the French Academy of Moral and Political Science as the best work in recent years on the psychology of the blind, brings out clearly the qualities which have enabled its author to triumph over his disability. It is marked by psychological penetration, a deep knowledge of the literature of its subject, and, above all, by unsentimental common-sense.

From the point of view of psychical research chapters IV to VI are the most important. In these M. Villey shows that the possession by the blind of a sixth sense or supernormal faculty is merely a popular legend (a conclusion to which the reviewer has also come as the result of experiments with blind children). Compensatory hyperaesthesia of the remaining senses M. Villey demonstrates to be non-existent. The sense of obstacles is conclusively put down to minute sensory observations, and the alleged faculty of orientation is shown to be largely exaggerated, and, what there is of it, to be a function of the sense of obstacles plus muscular memory. M. Villey is to be congratulated on a very able, as well as sane and sensible piece of work.

TH. B.

SHORT NOTICES.

AUGUSTE VIATTE, *Les Sources Occultes du Romantisme : Illuminisme, Théosophie, 1770-1820*. 8vo, 2 vols. Paris : Honoré Champion, 1928. Price 60 fr.

This very fully documented study describes and analyses what may be called the occult atmosphere of the half-century 1770-1820. Such phenomena, for instance, as the spread of Swedenborgianism and Mesmerism are here for the first time placed in a proper historical perspective. Inevitably much suggestive material is brought together bearing on the forerunners of modern psychical research. There is a valuable bibliography, covering manuscripts as well as printed sources.

EMILIO SERVADIO, *La Ricerca Psichica*. Preface by Charles Richet. 8vo, pp. 148. Rome : Paolo Cremonese (Collezione Omnia), 1930. Price Lire 6.50.

The author has succeeded in compressing into a very small space a comprehensive history and survey of most aspects of psychical research. He is a little indiscriminate in his choice of authorities and nowhere goes very deep below the surface, but in view of the space available it is a very creditable performance. Signor Servadio gives a bibliography of over 200 items, and is up-to-date enough to announce that the next Congress for Psychical Research will be held in London in 1932 on the occasion of the jubilee of the S.P.R.

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, *The Edge of the Unknown*. 8vo, pp. vii. 332. London : John Murray, 1930. Price 7s. 6d. net.

Sir Arthur here collected a number of articles on various aspects of spiritualism. His point of view and method of treatment are too well known to need explanation, but one cannot help feeling admiration for the persistence with which Sir Arthur continued to

advocate the most hopeless causes. Thus, the first and longest of these articles is one on Houdini, in which the writer still maintained his conviction that the conjurer accomplished some of his feats with the help of spirits. It is also a pleasure to welcome Sir Arthur's statement that "the unmasking of false mediums is our urgent duty" (p. 7).

E. J. DINGWALL, *Ghosts and Spirits in the Ancient World*. 16mo, pp. 124. London: Kegan Paul (Psyche Miniatures, General Series, no. 28), 1930. Price 2s. 6d. net.

This is an account of magic, divination, and beliefs in the supernatural in the ancient world, with the chief emphasis on Egypt. The field is covered very rapidly, but many points of interest are brought out. Dr Dingwall never fails in the important task of drawing the reader's attention to the striking parallels between these ancient beliefs and contemporary doctrines. His chief fault is a rather careless use of language. For instance, after writing of the folklore of fox-elves, he continues (p. 31n.): "Stories of this sort are by no means confined to the realm of myth and fable. A striking example was occurring in a private family only a few years ago in the centre of London." Reading a bare statement of this kind the uninitiated student might well believe that the "striking example" is accepted by Dr Dingwall as a fact.

A. A. FRIEDLÄNDER, *Telepathie und Hellsehen*. 8vo, pp. 89. Stuttgart: F. Enke, 1930. Price M. 4.

Professor Friedländer is of the opinion that neither telepathy nor clairvoyance is true. To justify this view he does not criticise the published evidence, but prefers to display a very pretty wit in mocking the follies of anthroposophy, popular prophecies, the physical phenomenon, "mental radiation", and the like: everything, in short, but telepathy and clairvoyance.

TH. B.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Revue Métapsychique, September-October 1930.

This number opens with an article by Professor Charles Richet on "Long fastings" à propos of Therese Neumann. Various cases of which many are very old (16th, 17th and 18th centuries) are cited, after which M. Richet proceeds to describe two in his own experience. Though expressing doubts as to the trustworthiness of some observations bearing on Therese Neumann (p. 386 footnote), he is of opinion that we must admit "that paradoxical, unlikely, incredible and most absurd fact" that Lavoisier's law as to animal heat being the result of combustions of the carbon and hydrogen contained in

the food stuffs absorbed is not without exceptions ; in consequence we have here to deal, he thinks, with a special physiology wholly different from the normal one.

M. Pascal has a lengthy and excellent paper on hypnotism, to part of which paper Dr Osty, the Editor, replies. Both agree that the phenomena of hypnotism seem now to be on the wane ; but whilst M. Pascal believes in a revival of the hypnotic researches, Dr Osty thinks also possible in the future other (unspecified) methods " which will put at the physician's disposal the profound resources of human psychism ". It will probably astonish some of my readers to hear that, as pointed out by M. Pascal, the very existence of hypnosis has been denied by some critics (Delmas et Boll, *La Personnalité humaine*, 1922) !

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, November 1930.

Dr van Holthe tot Echten, a Dutch magistrate, describes apports (flowers and pebbles) which occurred in the presence of the medium Melzer, of Dresden, during his stay in Holland last year. One incident of the kind at least cannot be explained by Melzer cheating himself, since he had already left the country ; but of course there may have been other non-supernormal " possibilities ".

Professor Bleuler has a paper on " Occultism and its Critics ". It is in fact a lengthy *plaidoyer* in favour both of the mental and of the physical phenomena with special reference to the Schneiders. I agree with the writer when he says *à propos* of certain theories put forward to " explain " some of these phenomena that we have in them " occultism in disguise, not physics " ; and I would specially mention in this connection, besides hyperaesthesia as used by the late Dr Baerwald to account for alleged clairvoyance at close quarters (p. 658), the cosmic reservoir of memories hypothesis.

Dr Mattiesen brings to a close his paper on " The Psychological Aspect of *Spuk* " : a *mixtum compositum* of hauntings, poltergeist performances, and phantasms of the dead *à la* von Driesen-Ponomareff (cp. *Proceedings*, x. 385). His conclusions are favourable to the spiritistic theory, though he seems to admit that we may sometimes postulate (supernormal) action on the part of the living as well. The constant mention of extremely suspicious poltergeist cases by the side of episodes of a different character and probably or obviously genuine, however we explain them, is not calculated, I am afraid, to enhance the value of an otherwise interesting study.

Is it permissible under the present German code to hypnotise in a trial either the person accused or the witnesses and to use the information thus obtained ? Dr Werner Lucas discusses this question and answers it in the negative. Clairvoyants may however, he maintains, be hypnotised and their statements made use of.

Herr Hans Hänig relates and discusses under the title of "Telepathy or Clairvoyance?" a case of the finding of a lost book, where information thought by him valuable was supplied by Frau Hessel of Leipzig; and Dr Marcinowski describes the apparition of an aunt seen by a friend of his three days before the lady's death.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, December 1930.

Dr Sünner, the Editor, describes some psychometric experiments of his in Berlin, with Otto Reimann, the Prague "metagraphologist". One of these in particular dealing with Chinese writing would be no doubt very striking if we could be sure that it was absolutely impossible for Reimann to obtain the information given by him, by normal means; but in spite of Dr Sünner's very positive assertions to the contrary, it is difficult to feel certain on this point.

Herr Carl Vogl narrates four recent sittings with Frau Silbert which do not seem particularly instructive one way or the other. The phenomena (intellectual and physical) which M. A. Konecny of Prague, observed in the same town of Graz with another medium, Kordon by name, seem to me to suggest collusion very strongly.

Dr Freudenberg describes a sitting with Karl Löwen, the 75 years old Bodenbach "medium". The latter gentleman is going to be compelled by his circumstances, we are told, to exhibit himself in a music hall: it is therefore to be presumed that his phenomena may be susceptible of a normal explanation after all.

Heinrich Freiherr Droste zu Hülshoff describes—at best at second or third hand—an old case of haunting of a very "orthodox" character. Dr A. Schmidt prints an account of the premonitory dream of his own death by drowning seen three days before by a Czechoslovakian schoolboy. The coincidence is certainly very striking, though I am strongly inclined to consider it as purely fortuitous. It is very satisfactory that the case is as well authenticated as it could be.

À propos of Mr Price's report on Rudi, Dr Bruck has a paper on both Willy and Rudi Schneider and recalls some supposedly supernormal phenomena he witnessed with them. That most suspicious of all physical phenomena, direct voices, is dealt with in a short paper by Herr Gustav Zeller.

An account is reproduced from the *Süddeutsche Sonntagspost* describing how the whereabouts of the dead body of a Herr Pallitsch of Chemnitz, who had attempted to make the ascent of the Kramerkreuz in the Bavarian mountains and had not come back, were discovered through a clairvoyant dream of Frau Pallitsch's (supplemented by an experiment with a pendulum held by a gentleman of her acquaintance over a map). It is a great pity that there is in

Germany no organisation similar to the S.P.R. to substantiate the newspaper account.

Herr Albert Hellwig, the Potsdam *Landgerichtsdirektor*, is the subject of some more vituperation, this time owing to his attitude when presiding over the Felzer trial which has just taken place at Potsdam. We wish on the contrary to express to him our sympathy in this connection.

Zeitschrift für Metapsychische Forschung, February-September 1930.

This monthly review has taken the place of the defunct *Zeitschrift für psychische Forschung* (of which the last number appeared in August 1929) and is edited by Dr Christoph Schröder of Berlin. The general standpoint is to my liking much too "positive," but it must be admitted that the review contains many papers of interest. Here we must content ourselves with noticing but a few of them.

Dr Schröder prints a further instalment of his paper on *Metaplasma Phänomenik*, in which he reviews the *Margery* case, and M. Josef Switkowski's (of Lwow) astounding accounts dealing with alleged "gradual condensations of *apports*." In an article on the so-called mango phenomenon he surveys Jacolliot's experiments with the fakir Covindasamy, an incident alleged to have occurred with Mrs d'Espérance in 1880 and testified to by a Mr Oxley, etc. The Jacolliot observations are absolutely inexplicable, as described, by conjuring, and if not genuine imply deliberate lying. I believe the author of *Le Spiritisme dans le monde: l'Initiation et les Sciences Occultes dans l'Inde* (Paris 1875, translated into English as *Occult Science in India* [London 1919]), to be regarded as quite untrustworthy, but I am not quite aware on what grounds this opinion is based; perhaps one of our French members will be able to substantiate it.

Two interesting cases bearing on the problem of "spirit-identity" are published. In the first (March number) a Herr Baumert describes some automatic messages received by himself and dealing with relations said to have existed between Goethe and Lavater, the well-known Swiss philosopher and "physiognomist." The messages appear to have contained particulars unknown consciously to Herr Baumert and subsequently ascertained to be true. In the second (February number), a series of evidential communications with very precise biographical data purporting to come from a German musician named Rochlitz (died 1842) was obtained in a circle in the course of several sittings, which name is certified by the sitters on oath to have been unknown to them. The episode is curious but seems to me to exemplify but too well the internal weaknesses inherent in cases of this type.

Professor Messer describes (March number) a sitting given by the

medium Heinrich Melzer, of Dresden, at which phenomena of what the Professor calls "possession" occurred. They seem quite unequivocal.

Dr Mattiesen discusses cross-correspondences and champions the theory of their spiritistic origin (April, June and July numbers). An audacious and characteristic attempt to rehabilitate Anna Rothe, the "flower-medium" who was thoroughly exposed in Germany at the beginning of the present century, is made by Dr Bertram, (April), who also describes (July, September) some cures achieved by "animal magnetism". In the April number also Herr Michal Mares expresses a different view of the incident discussed by Count Klinckwostrom in *Die Umschau* (see *Journal*, xxvi. 162, and above, p. 12).

Dr O. Fischer, of Prague, has a paper (May, June, July numbers) on Otto Reimann, the Prague "metagraphologist". Herr Herbert Baldus discusses (June) magic among certain Red Indian tribes of South America (chiefly Paraguay). The paper is attractive but any cases approximating to the S.P.R. standard are conspicuously absent.

Professor Kasnaeich, of Graz, has the beginning of what promises to be a very lengthy account of Frau Maria Silbert and her phenomena (July, September). His account is hardly calculated to dispel the unfavourable impression produced on serious students of the subject by the narratives of such observers as *e.g.* Dr Walter Prince and Mr Besterman.

Dr Karl Camillo Schneider has a paper (June number) on "Deferred Telepathy" (read at the Athens Congress) dealing with experiments in telepathy between Vienna and Athens. Here again we have to do with persistent attempts to interpret quite unsatisfactory results as successes. Again we feel bound to protest categorically against such a tendency. Besides "deferred" telepathic impressions, we also note in these Vienna-Athens experiments "anticipated" ones, which Dr Schneider thinks quite a "novelty". Many, of whom I am one, will consider these alleged "anticipations" coupled with Dr Schneider's almost desperate attempts at interpretation as nearly fatal to the reality of anything like genuine thought-transference in the series in question.

Herr Heinrich Neugebauer, a former naval officer, describes (September) a fakir's *séance* at Singapore (on board ship) in October 1885. At first Herr Neugebauer witnessed a successful performance of mango-tree growing, then he had the experiment repeated after surreptitiously substituting sea water to the fresh water with which the fakir was to sprinkle the "growing" plant. The experiment failed, and the Indian, after having ascertained that the water was salty, flew into a rage and ran away. Herr Neugebauer sees in this

a proof that the "phenomenon" in question was a "natural" one (here "natural" and genuine are of course almost synonymous) since the use of salt water in most cases acts fatally on plant-growing.

Der Morgen, 1930, Heft 1.

Professor Hans Driesch has a very valuable paper on "Parapsychological Hypotheses." Only mental supernormal phenomena are dealt with. Our late President commences by briefly reviewing the alleged facts and then enumerates the hypotheses put forward to account for them, beginning first with those which attempt to "eliminate" the facts themselves: chance-coincidence, fraud, fishing, unconscious indications, "specially favoured (*bevorzugte*) reactions" (by which is meant the tendency some people have to choose a certain number or a certain colour, etc.), illusions of memory. Then come the "positive" theories: that of brain-waves, or, as Professor Driesch prefers to call it, the broadcast or radiation hypothesis, the animistic hypotheses (Professor Driesch notes that there are several of them), the "World Consciousness" and "Life planes" theories, and Spiritism, which the writer thinks worthy of serious discussion. The two last sections of the paper deal with prophecy and psychometry. Whilst greatly admiring the masterly way in which the matter is presented and reviewed, I cannot help thinking the discussion of such theories as *e.g.* that of a "World-Consciousness," premature. I also think prevision of the future far less established than the author seems to believe (p. 30); nor do I consider that the evidence in favour of psychometry altogether justifies us in examining in detail the more or less bewildering "positive" theories put forward in connection with this, to Professor Driesch, "the obscurest phenomenon of the whole of parapsychology," but which to my mind is not yet established on an incontrovertible basis of fact.

Leipziger Illustrirte Zeitung, 20 November 1930, no. 4471.

Count Klinckowstroem has a short but suggestive paper on mediums who confess their own frauds, beginning as far back as 1882 and 1883 (Chapman, who, the writer says, helped Alfred Firman for many years, and Truesdell). We are reminded at the end that the notorious Kraus, with whom Dr von Schrenck-Notzing experimented, and who was the subject, under the pseudonym of Weber, of a paper read by the Baron at the Paris Congress of 1927, and of a report by Mr Besterman in the *Journal*, xxiv. 388-92, has not yet succeeded in publishing his detailed description of how he performed his tricks. We trust it *will* be published. P.-P.-S.

The Aryan Path, January-December 1930.

This new periodical contains much of interest to students of psychical research. In the April issue are two brief articles on "Psychical Research and Spiritualism: Two Points of View", the former being represented by Mr H. S. Redgrove, the latter by Mr D. Gow. Similar articles appear in the June number, Sir Lawrence Jones writing on "The Present Position of Psychical Research" and Mr Gow on "Spiritualism—Forty Years After", to which the Editors add an Afterword. In the numbers for July to October is printed a series of four articles entitled collectively "Contacting the Invisible"; they deal respectively with "Intercommunications", "Mediums and Mediumship", "Mediums, Psychics and Religions", and "The Path of Theosophy". The Editors of this periodical are concerned to maintain a lofty idealistic outlook on things and affairs; they are critical both of psychical research and of spiritualism, though going further in their acceptance of supernatural phenomena than most critical students of psychical research.

TH. B.

THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE
CIRCULATION.

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on a definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only." The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychological Research

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 277th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Friday, 16 January 1931, at 3 p.m., MR J. G. PIDDINGTON in the chair. There were also present: Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs Henry Sidgwick, and Dr V. J. Woolley; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

The Report of the Council for the year 1930 was considered and approved as amended.

THE 278th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 28 January 1931, at 3 p.m., MRS HENRY SIDGWICK in the chair. There were also present: The Earl of Balfour, Sir Ernest Bennett, Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Professor E. R. Dodds, Miss Ina Jephson, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Mr G. W. Lambert, Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr J. G. Piddington, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr S. G. Soal, and Dr V. J. Woolley; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Certain questions connected with the future policy of the Society were considered and fully discussed.

THE LONDON PSYCHICAL LABORATORY.

[We have pleasure in printing, as requested, the following notice. It is impossible for too much research of a serious kind to be carried on into the many difficult problems of psychical research, and we therefore welcome the creation of this new body.—ED.]

AFTER careful thought the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance have decided to found a Research Branch to be known as

The London Psychical Laboratory. A Committee to this end has been established and the following gentlemen have consented to serve :

Lord Charles Hope.
 Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P.
 Mr H. F. Prevost Battersby.
 Mr J. W. Miller.
 Mr H. Leitner.
 Dr R. Fielding-Ould (Chairman).
 (Miss Phillimore, Secretary).

That there is an immense field open for scientific Research in Psychic Science cannot be disputed, and it was obvious that an influential organisation like the London Spiritualist Alliance could not ignore its obligations in this direction.

The Committee have full power to carry on any research that seems promising, but is under the direct control of the L.S.A. Council in matters of finance and publicity.

The Proceedings of the Research Committee will be published in *Light* from time to time, and Reprints circulated to all the leading Psychic Societies in Europe and America.

The Secretary (as above) will always be glad to receive suggestions and any information in regard to mediums which will help the Committee in its work.

Even the most enthusiastic Spiritualist will agree that nothing but good can accrue by turning the cold eye of science upon the elusive and mystifying phenomena in which he is deeply interested.

CASE.

P. 301.

A PREMONITION.

It will be remembered that Miss Clarissa Miles, a valued Member of the Society, died in August last and that an obituary notice was printed in the October *Journal* (xxvi. 116). We have to thank her sister, Mrs Geoffrey Lubbock (also a Member) for sending us the following account of her sudden death and her anticipation that something was going to happen.

“ Case of Premonition.

“ My sister, Miss Clarissa Miles, lived for 22 years in a Flat in Egerton Gardens. The lease of this Flat terminated on the 14th August this year.

“ For months she had told us of her glorious visions which to her, appeared to be, the end of the World in its present state, and the approach of the Spiritualizing of the World. My sister Mrs Kings-

eote & I, had implored her to look for another residence, all last summer, but she always responded 'My life is going to change, the Flat has served its purpose, & don't worry me as to what I am going to do, something will happen before then.'

"On Monday August 11th she had a stroke & she died on Wed. Aug. 13th, the day before the lease of her Flat was up. Miss Edith Harper writes me : on the morning of the 11th she rang Miss Miles up on the telephone, & asked her where she was going when she left her Flat, she replied, 'I hav'nt the least idea, I have made no plans whatever.' She paused a moment and then added 'I feel something is going to happen before then, yes something is going to happen almost any time now.'

"[Signed] MARGUERITE LUBBOCK."

The evidenee of two people is always better than one, and at our request Mrs Lubboek was good enough to ask Miss Harper (mentioned above) if she would give us her aecount of what occurred, which she has very kindly done as follows :

"As desired, I willingly send you my reollection of my last eonversation with Miss Clarissa Miles. She was a very intimate friend and I was in elose touch with her movements. I knew she had given up her flat in August but had made no arrangements for a future dwelling. On the morning of Monday 11th August this year [1930] my mother received a letter from her saying she had arranged to store her furniture and to leave the flat on the following Thursday (14th). She asked that I would ring her up and arrange to come to tea before then. I duly rang up, about 10 a.m. Miss Miles herself answered the telephone, and sounded quite eheerful. We fixed the following afternoon, Tuesday 12th, for my visit. I asked where she intended going on Thursday when she left the flat, and she replied 'I have not the very remotest idea. I have made no plans whatever,' or words to that effect, equally emphatic. She then added : 'I feel something is going to happen before then.' I made some answer like 'Do you ?' and she repeated in a tone of great finality 'Yes, I feel something is going to happen.' We talked a little more and she told me to be sure to come next day. We then said Goodbye. That is the last time I have ever heard her voice. When I went next day to Egerton Gardens Miss Miles was quite unconseious, and she passed away on Wednesday 13th August, just two days after her talk with me on the telephone.

"Miss Miles frequently spoke of some great and wonderful event she felt would happen very suddenly. She was wont to give a spiritual interpretation to most of the affairs of life, both everyday and national.

"[Signed] EDITH K. HARPER."

In reply to a suggestion that Miss Miles might have had sub-consciously some vague perception of the state of health preceding the stroke, Miss Harper wrote :

“ I am perfectly sure that Miss Miles had no anticipation of her own immediate death. She was extremely active, never spared herself, and on at least one occasion shortly before her passing declared she never felt better in her life. I however noticed the last time I saw her, sometime in July, that she looked tired. But many people do, in hot summer weather, do they not. Her prophetic ideas always related to some great ‘ cosmic ’ event about to happen, of which we were ‘ just on the eve,’ and she fitted current happenings, personal and universal, ‘ into the picture.’ ”

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1930.

Spontaneous Phenomena. Various cases of spontaneous phenomena, both mental and physical, have been reported to the Officers of the Society during the year, and each case, as well as some cases reported in the Press, has been followed up so far as practicable. The Council regret, however, that the number of cases of spontaneous mental phenomena received by the Society has shown a distinct falling off in recent years. This is not the first occasion that the Council have had to record a decrease. It would seem that there are recurrent good and bad periods for spontaneous cases, and that the present period is a bad one owing to the erroneous belief that it is no longer of scientific interest to collect and analyse cases of this kind, in view of the number that have already been collected and analysed by the Society. Some of our Members and Associates may perhaps hold the view that the cases already collected are sufficient to establish telepathy or some other supernormal faculty, but this position is far from being accepted by general scientific opinion. Moreover, even if there were general agreement that the cases already collected were sufficient to prove, *e.g.* telepathy, it would still be necessary to go on collecting them, both because evidence loses much of its cogency with the lapse of time and also because every fresh case may throw some light on the psychology and *modus operandi* of supernormal faculties, of which little is at present known. Another cause of the decrease may be that popular interest in these cases has been satiated by recent exploitation in the public press.

During the year visits were made to four houses in various parts of London, and to one in Leicester, for the purpose of investigating alleged apparitions and noises. In none of these cases was there reason to suppose that any supernormal causes were at work.

Experimental Work. A great deal of work has been done during the past year in analysing the results of the experiments in telepathy

and clairvoyance mentioned in the last two Annual Reports. The clairvoyance experiments had not been completed by the end of 1929, as the results obtained by Professor Gardner Murphy had still to be received. Owing to the large number of percipients, both in the United Kingdom and the United States, the analysis of the results was a complicated work, in which the experimenters were again fortunate enough to secure the advice of Dr R. A. Fisher, F.R.S., of Rothamsted, and Dr E. S. Pearson, of University College, London. The co-operation of members of the Boston S.P.R. brought a most valuable addition to the experiment. Papers on these experiments in clairvoyance and telepathy have been read by Miss Jephson and Mr Soal.

Mass experiments in telepathy and clairvoyance under strict conditions are somewhat of a novelty, and the technique for conducting them requires careful study. Among the objects of such experiments may be mentioned (1) to test how widely the faculties of telepathy and clairvoyance (assuming them to exist) are distributed ; (2) to determine the psychological elements such as preferences of various kinds present in normal individuals and allowance for which has to be made in evaluating supposed supernormal phenomena ; (3) to discover individual percipients with powers sufficiently marked to justify their intensive investigation ; and (4) to provide some sort of check on other experiments conducted under less strict conditions.

These particular experiments did not give results indicating the existence of any factor other than chance. Possibly the conditions enforced may not have been such as to encourage any supernormal faculty existing among the percipients. Only by further experiments can it be shown whether it is possible to devise a technique providing adequate safeguards against normal leakage and at the same time free from any inhibitive factor.

Miss Jephson has, throughout the year, continued to carry out further experiments with cards, with members of the Society and with Mr Soal's group of percipients. In order to make the conditions as informal as possible, the experiments have been conducted on several occasions in the form of games at parties given by Miss Jephson, and also later by Mrs Worsfold.

The Council take this opportunity to thank all the numerous members and others who have taken part in these experiments, who have helped in their organisation, or who have contributed towards the expenses ; in particular, Dr Fisher, Dr Pearson, Professor Gardner Murphy, and Dr Flugel.

In addition to group experiments, investigation of individuals with marked powers is also desirable, and the Council hope that if Members or Associates know of any persons who apparently possess telepathic or clairvoyant powers in a marked degree and would be

willing to collaborate in further experiments, they will help the work by informing the Society.

The Council consider that at the present time experiments in telepathy and clairvoyance offer the most promising line of research work which the Society can pursue, and they hope that they will be pursued with vigour.

Sittings with Mediums. During the year sittings have been held by officers of the Society, and also by members co-operating with them, with various "mental" mediums, including several who are little known and some who have been brought to the Society's notice for the first time during the year. Whenever the Officers of the Society hear of a promising new medium in this country, sittings are at once obtained. In some cases, however, it is impossible for the Society to get such access to the medium as would enable any useful investigation to be made.

Records of these sittings are preserved in the Society's files, and from time to time brief abstracts are printed in the *Journal*. But it has never been the Society's practice to publish in *Proceedings* reports of sittings which present no features that are either new in character or of marked evidential value.

For help in investigating several of these mediums the Council wish to thank various members of the Society. One of the new mediums investigated (non-professional) presented matter for useful investigation of the trance state. Several sittings have already been held with this medium and more are arranged for; two medical members of the Society are co-operating with the Research Department in the investigation.

Preliminary work has been done in the *Séance*-room with a view to a systematic study (to be carried out in the immediate future) of the psychology of testimony as applied to physical phenomena.

The Library. The grant from the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust is now in its fourth and last year. Chiefly with its aid the number of books and pamphlets in the Library has been approximately doubled, and now stands at over 6900, an increase of over 500 during the year. A further Supplement to the Catalogue, covering the period from October 1929 to December 1930 inclusive, will be published early in 1931.

A gratifying increase in the number of Members borrowing from the Library and of books borrowed can again be reported: during the year 99 Members borrowed 868 volumes, apart from a large number consulted in the Library. In addition 74 volumes were borrowed by the National Central Library, many more than last year. For the first time Members exercised their privilege of borrowing from the National Central Library, through the Society, books not in the Society's Library, without restriction of subject.

The Society was again represented by Mr Besterman at the Annual Conference (at New College, Oxford) of the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux (ASLIB), to which the Society is affiliated. During the year Mr Besterman was elected to the Council of this body. Members are again reminded that as books can be obtained through the National Central Library, so can information be secured by Members through ASLIB, in each case without cost.

President for 1930. Dr Walter Franklin Prince, the Research Officer of the Boston Society for Psychic Research, was elected President for 1930. Dr Prince is one of the most experienced, persevering and distinguished students of psychical research now living and the Council look upon Dr Prince's presidency as further evidence of the cordial relations which have always existed between serious psychical researchers in the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Council wish to express their appreciation to Dr Prince for having come specially to England, in July, to deliver his Presidential Address, which has now been published as Part 115 of *Proceedings*, and re-issued with the Council's permission as a *Bulletin* of the Boston S.P.R.

The Athens Congress. The 4th International Congress for Psychical Research was held at Athens in April 1930, when the Society was represented by Sir Oliver Lodge, the Hon. Treasurer, and the Librarian and Editor.

At the Congress, which was highly successful, the representatives of the S.P.R. gave an invitation, which was unanimously accepted by the other delegates, that the next International Congress should be held in London in the autumn of 1932, which year is the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Society.

In giving this invitation the Society has undertaken a heavy responsibility, and the Council hope that Members and Associates will loyally co-operate in seeing that it is adequately discharged. The Council have already appointed Committees for dealing both with the business side of the Congress and the entertainment of visitors, and also with the preparation of papers on those branches of psychical research in which our Society has taken a particular interest.

At the Athens Congress the Society's representatives also undertook the responsibility of getting the *Transactions* of that Congress published in the United Kingdom. The *Transactions*, which were prepared for publication by Mr Besterman, were published in December at the price of 7/6 and are now on sale. The Council hope that they will have a ready sale among Members and Associates so that the Society need have no apprehension of incurring any financial loss through undertaking to publish the volume. Generous

contributions have been received from Continental sources, and it is hoped that individual members of our Society will not be backward.

Changes in the Council. The Council appointed Miss Jephson (previously a co-opted member) an elected member to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr Feilding, recorded in the Annual Report for 1929.

Dr C. D. Broad of Trinity College, Cambridge, was co-opted a member of Council.

Obituary. During the year the Society suffered a heavy loss in the death of the Earl of Balfour, who had been a member since 1882. He was President in 1893, and he was a vice-President from the formation of the Society to the time of his death.

The Council also regret to record the deaths of nineteen Members and Associates, including the following, who have been members for a considerable time : Miss Louisa Bigg (who left the Society a legacy of £100), Sir Edward Brabrook, Miss L. E. Cotesworth, Miss Clarissa Miles, Miss Edith Shove, Dr Abraham Wallace and Madame Yaraschenko.

Attacks on the Society by Members. In January 1930 the late Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, then a Member, addressed to all Members and Associates a circular in which he announced that he had resigned his membership of the Society owing to his disapproval of its alleged anti-spiritualist bias, and he invited other Members and Associates to follow his example by resigning and joining another organisation, which he named. The Council are glad to say that this attack on the Society failed almost completely, only six Members and one Associate, none of whom had ever taken an active part in the Society's work, resigning on the ground of agreement with this circular. Other attacks by other members in the public press and elsewhere have met with equally small success.

Membership of the Society. The Council have, however, to record a serious number of resignations for other reasons, in particular on account of the general economic depression which, as is well-known, is affecting other Societies of all kinds. The total resignations taking effect between 1 January 1930 and 1 January 1931 amount to eighty-four, viz. fifty-nine Members and twenty-five Associates. A great majority of those who gave any reason for their resignation mention financial stringency, long illness, residence abroad, etc.

The new Members elected number thirty-nine, and the Society now (1 January 1931) has 586 Members and 368 Associates. As mentioned in last year's Report it is inevitable that the number of Associates should decline so long as financial reasons compel the maintenance of the rule of not electing new Associates.

But if the Society has suffered from the general depression, it must be remembered that it is still reaping the benefit of the con-

tinued interest and co-operation of several hundred people outside the Society who, ever since the Broadcast Experiment in 1928, have helped in experimental work. It was this group which made possible Mr Soal's prolonged series in long-distance telepathy, the experiment with cards in sealed envelopes, and Miss Jephson's new series.

Mr Price's Circulars. In October a Member of the Society, Mr Harry Price, wrote to the Council suggesting that an amalgamation should take place between the S.P.R. and his "National Laboratory of Psychical Research."

Before the Council had had time to reply to this proposal, Mr Price circulated to the Members and Associates of the Society a copy of his letter to the Council, together with voting papers (unnumbered and not requiring signatures) which they were asked to return. The Council consider as most improper this attempt to obtain the opinion of the general body of Members and Associates on a proposal which Mr Price had submitted to the Council and which the Council in accordance with his request had under consideration. They do not intend to take any further notice of it. Mr Price's letter to the Council and the Council's reply have been printed in the *Journal* for December 1930. Mr Price has since issued a further circular, dated 19 December. The Council feel it their duty to inform Members and Associates that in framing their reply to Mr Price's proposal they took into consideration :

(a) That the principles on which the Society was founded and in accordance with which it has always been carried on, do not admit of the kind of publicity practised and advocated by Mr Price.

(b) That the greater part of his instruments and books are of little or no value for psychical research, whatever other value may attach to them.

(c) That, far from any financial benefit accruing to the Society if the proposal were accepted, the result might well be a serious loss.

Privacy of the Journal. In the *Journal* for June and July 1930 the Council caused a note to be printed, drawing attention to the private nature of the *Journal*, and expressing the hope that all Members and Associates would co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy. The Council were compelled to issue this appeal because of several instances in which matter printed in the *Journal* was reprinted elsewhere without their consent. So long as the privacy of the *Journal* is respected Members and Associates have the advantage of reading records of sittings, reports of "supernormal" phenomena, etc., which the contributors often desire not to be made public. It is also possible in a *Journal*, the circulation of which is confined to readers with some knowledge of psychical research, to print cases interesting in themselves but not always fully conform-

ACCOUNTS OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE

Dr.

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1930.

Cr.

To Balance, 31st December, 1929 :						
In Secretary's hands (General Fund)	£12	4	10			
On Current Account at Westminster Bank (Research Fund)	1	3				£566 4 0
On Current Account at Westminster Bank (Library Fund)	134	5	0			14 15 0
Less Overdraft on Current Account (General Fund)	£146	11	1			97 19 7
				£136	10	5
Subscriptions :						
Members (1928)			£2	2	0	
" (1929)			14	11	9	
" (1930)			1,046	14	1	
" (1931)			42	0	0	
Associates (1929)			£2	1	8	
" (1930)			371	2	3	
" (1931)			3	3	0	
				1,105	7	10
Special Annual Subscriptions				376	6	11
Donations				10	0	0
Sale of Publications :				110	11	2
Per Secretary to members				£65	4	10
" Secretary to Public				40	2	6
" F. W. Faxon Co.				16	10	6
" Jackson, Wylie & Co.				107	7	0
Rent from Society's Tenant				229	4	10
Contribution to the Piper Fund				250	0	0
Interest on Investments (including Interest on Securities of the Piper Fund, £45 7 7)				20	10	3
Legacy from Miss Louisa Bigg				284	5	7
Funds held on behalf of International Congress				100	0	0
Contributions to Research (see Research Fund Account)				108	19	2
Contributions to Library (see Library Fund Account)				23	8	11
				201	18	9
				£2,957	3	10
By Printing of Publications :						
Journal (Nos. 457-467)				£199	10	6
Proceedings (Parts 111, Appendix-114)				366	13	6
Binding Proceedings and Journal						£566 4 0
Postage and Dispatch of Publications						14 15 0
Salaries :						97 19 7
Secretary				£300	0	0
Assistant Secretary				176	8	0
Pension to Miss Alice Johnson						476 8 0
Grant to Mrs Piper						120 0 0
Travelling and Research (see Research Fund Account)				£30	1	5
Salary, Mrs Brackenbury				91	0	0
Library (see Library Fund Account)						121 1 5
General Upkeep of Library						373 17 5
Rent						3 10 11
Rates						175 0 0
Fuel and Lighting						41 17 2
Caretaker's Wages, Uniform and Cleaning Expenses						45 16 6
House and Property Repairs						139 6 1
Furnishing						92 6 10
Expenses of Meetings of the Society						2 9 0
Stationery						15 10 2
General Printing						39 15 9
Travelling Expenses						26 8 3
Insurance						11 0 0
Telephone						16 17 6
Auditors' Fee						16 3 8
Reviewing Periodicals						15 15 0
Press Cuttings Subscriptions						47 12 6
Clerical Assistance						8 8 0
						39 5 6
						£2,687 8 3

Brought forward - - £2,957 3 10

Brought forward, - - £2,687 8 3

" <i>Income Tax on Interest from Consols and Annuities, and War Stock</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	12	1	0
" <i>Sundries</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	13 2 9
" <i>Purchase of Second-hand Proceedings</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	5 1 0
" <i>Commission on Sales, Cheques, etc.</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	26 11 11
" <i>International Congress Expenses</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	7 13 9
" <i>Balance in hand, 31st December, 1930 :</i>							
On Current Account at Westminster Bank (General Fund) - - - -					£64	14	0
In Secretary's hands (General Fund) - - - -					23	10	8
On Current Account at Westminster Bank (Research Fund) - - - -					3	8	9
On Current Account at Westminster Bank (Library Fund) - - - -					12	6	4
On Current Account held on behalf of International Congress - - - -					101	5	5
							205 5 2
					£2,957	3	10

£2,957 3 10

RESEARCH FUND.

To Balance, 31st December, 1929 :

On Current Account at Westminster Bank - - - -	-	-	-	£0	1	3
" <i>Donations</i> - - - -	-	-	-	23	8	11
" <i>Grant from General Fund</i> - - - -	-	-	-	10	0	0

By <i>Thought-Transference Experiments</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	£5	9	3
" <i>Clairvoyant Experiments</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	3	11	7
" <i>Miscellaneous Sitings</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	6	19	10
" <i>General Expenses of Research</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	14	0	9
						£30	1	5

" *Balance in hand, 31st December, 1930 :*

On Current Account at Westminster Bank - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	3	8	9
						£33	10	2

LIBRARY FUND.

To Balance, 31st December, 1929 :

On Current Account at Westminster Bank - - - -	-	-	-	£134	5	0
" <i>Grant from General Fund</i> - - - -	-	-	-	50	0	0
" <i>Carnegie Trust Grant</i> - - - -	-	-	-	200	0	0
" <i>Sale of Surplus Books</i> - - - -	-	-	-	1	18	9

By <i>Books</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	£331	2	7
" <i>Binding</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	38	10	10
" <i>Subscriptions</i> - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	0
						£373	17	5

" *Balance in hand, 31st December, 1930 :*

On Current Account at Westminster Bank - - - -	-	-	-	-	-	12	6	4
						£386	3	9

MEMORANDUM OF ASSETS.

GENERAL FUND

£58 11	2 2½% Annuities.	
£62 19	0 2½% Consolidated Stock.	
£750 0	0 5% War Stock 1929/47.	
£800 0	0 York Corporation 3% Redeemable Stock 1916/41.	
£250 0	0 New South Wales 5% Stock 1935/55.	
£1,200 0	0 Southern Nigeria Lagos Government 3½% Inscribed Stock.	
£937 0	0 London, Midland & Scottish Railway 4% Debenture Stock.	
£562 0	0 London, Midland & Scottish Railway 4% Preference Stock.	
£1,540 0	0 East Indian Railway Irredeemable Debenture Stock.	
£520 0	0 East Indian Railway Deferred Annuity.	
£100 0	0 Prescott Gas Co. 4% Preference "B" Stock.	
225	Consolidated Ordinary Shares of £1 each of the Prescott Gas Co.	
£175 0	0 South Staffordshire Tramways (Lessees) Co. Ltd. (in voluntary liquidation) 4% Debenture Stock.	
300	Deferred Shares of 5s. each of the South Staffordshire Tramways (Lessees) Co. Ltd. (in voluntary liquidation).	

ENDOWMENT FUND.

£1,460	0 0 4% Consolidated Stock.	
£600	0 0 4½% Conversion Stock 1940/44.	
£646 15	0 5% Treasury Bonds 1933/35.	
£500 0	0 4% Victory Bonds.	
£850 0	0 5% War Stock 1929/47.	
£908 0	11 India 3½% Stock.	
£161 11	6 New South Wales 5% Stock 1935/55.	
£1,797 0	0 London & North Eastern Railway Co. 4% Debenture Stock.	
£1,055 0	0 Great Western Railway Co. 5% Rent Charge Stock.	
£2,258 0	0 London, Midland & Scottish Railway Co. 4% Preference Stock.	
£260 0	0 East Indian Railway 3½% Debenture Stock.	
£1,260 0	0 East Indian Railway 4½% Irredeemable Debenture Stock.	
	F. W. H. MYERS MEMORIAL FUND.	
£750 0	0 0 5% Conversion Stock 1944/64.	
£250 0	0 0 3½% Conversion Stock 1961.	

Piper Trust Fund Securities held by Trustees.

We have examined the above Accounts and compared them with the Society's Cash Book, Receipt Books, and Vouchers, and certify that they are in accordance therewith. We have also verified the investments of the General, Endowment and Myers Memorial Funds as set forth in the above Statements.

70A Basinghall Street, London, E.C. 2, *February 2nd, 1931.*

HARTUEYS, WILKINS, AVERY & FLEW, *Chartered Accountants.*

ing to the highest standards of evidence. A private *Journal* also, gives excellent opportunities for the frank exchange of opinions between its readers.

The Council accordingly wish to reiterate with the utmost emphasis the appeal made in the *Journal* for June and July.

Publications. Three parts of *Proceedings* were published during the year: Part 114 in March, and Parts 115 and 116 in October.

Three further Parts are in the press.

The Secretary's sales to the general public amounted to £40 2s. 6d., and of the *Proceedings* and *Journal* to Members of the Society, to £65 4s. 10d.; the total returns from the Society's agent in America amounted, after deduction of commission, to £12 11s. 4d. In addition the amount of £107 7s. was received from Messrs Jackson, Wylie and Co. on the winding up of the Society's account with these former agents.

Meetings. The following meetings have been held during the year:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 27 February. | Annual General Meeting. |
| 2 April. | "Some Investigations into Poltergeists," by Dr V. J. Woolley. |
| 5 June. | "The Recent Congress at Athens," by Mr W. H. Salter. |
| *14 July. | Presidential Address by Dr Walter Franklin Prince. |
| *31 October. | "Experiments in Supernormal Perception at a Distance," by Mr S. G. Soal. |
| *26 November. | "A Series of Experiments in Clairvoyant Card-guessing with a more evidential Technique," by Miss Ina Jephson. |

REVIEW.

ANITA M. MÜHL, *Automatic Writing*. 8vo, pp. xv. 214, 20 plates. Dresden and Leipzig: Theodor Steinkopff, 1930. Price 12s. 6d.

The author of this book (which, though published in Germany, is written in English), was formerly an assistant physician at St Elizabeth's (Psychiatric) Hospital, Washington. She has made a special study of the use of automatic writing for therapeutic purposes, as a means of evoking forgotten memories and associations. It is evident from the reports she gives of some of her cases that this method can be practised with good results, though Dr Mühl gives a timely warning against its indiscriminate use without proper supervision. According to Dr Mühl's experience the habit of writing

* General Meetings.

automatically can be induced in the great majority of cases (including persons in normal health of mind and body) by regular practice under favourable conditions : in some cases automatism is best induced by complete rest and quietude, in others by setting the subject to read aloud, thus distracting the normal consciousness.

The examples quoted and discussed by Dr Mühl, though of considerable psychological interest, have little relation to the experiments in automatic writing carried out in recent years by the S.P.R. This is made clear by the statement on p. 22 that "the material produced . . . is endogenous." That this statement is true in a great majority of cases no student of automatism is likely to deny, but on the other hand there is a small residue in which the evidence for some extraneous influence of a supernormal character (probably telepathic) is exceedingly strong. Dr Mühl would be hard put to it to fit into her preconceived framework the whole of the trance-writings, let us say, of Mrs Piper, to which, curiously enough, she makes no reference.

It is of some interest to observe that, generally speaking, the writings discussed by Dr Mühl differ markedly in character from those in which there is good evidence of supernormal faculty : according to her own statement (p. 97) their two principal sources of origin are "1. Phantasy, and 2. Actual Recall." Actual recall, that is, recall of past incidents and memories in the life of the automatist, seems to play an almost negligible part in writings of the supernormal type, and phantasy of the simple, obvious, fairy-tale kind described by Dr Mühl, has only a minor rôle, though it does undoubtedly intrude at times. Examples are to be found in some of the material from Mrs Piper's trance-writings quoted by Mrs Sidgwick in her paper on "The Psychology of Mrs Piper's Trance-Phenomena" (*Proceedings*, xxviii), or again, in my mother, Mrs Verrall's discussion of her automatic writing, especially in the references to the "Isles of the Blest" (*Proceedings*, xx, 112-8). I believe that if it were possible to classify all automatic writings according to (a) the amount of purely subjective phantasy they contained, and (b) the evidence they offered for any supernormal faculty, these two elements would be found to occur in inverse proportion.

The obvious points of analogy and difference between Dr Mühl's examples of automatism and those discussed in our *Proceedings* suggest various interesting experiments which might be attempted by the future student of these subjects. For instance, a good automatist of the supernormal type might be induced by Dr Mühl's methods to let himself (or herself) go along the lines of phantasy, with the object of comparing the two kinds of automatic material thus obtained from the same immediate source. The same auto-

matist (if possessed of sufficient strength and patience !) might also be subjected to enquiry by other methods of psycho-analysis. In the present state of our knowledge such experiments offer obvious difficulties. It is to be hoped that the psychologist of the future may be better equipped.

In the meantime such researches as Dr Mühl has carried out are useful in their own field. Incidentally some of the writings she quotes have a certain naïve and childish charm, and there are some automatic drawings, which though of little artistic value, are vigorous and expressive.

H. DE G. S.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Bulletin du Conseil de Recherches Métapsychiques de Belgique.
October 1930.

This number opens with a lengthy paper by the President, discussing "Unconsciousness, Tropism, Instinct, Intelligence, the Subconscious, the Superconscious, Intuition, Conscience": a long and impressive array.

M. Rutot speaks further of the Vandermeulen apparatus. Many "messages" received through the Ouija board in connection with the ringing (*Journal*, October 1930, pp. 127-128) are reproduced *verbatim*. These are—let us speak plainly—*very* stupid and not in the least calculated to enhance the interest which might be felt in the apparatus outside a few very small groups. This regrettable circumstance ought not however to obscure the chief issue: how is the ringing itself to be explained? It is for specialists only to answer this question.

In a short paper on "scientific metagnomy" the same author describes psychometric experiments with a Mme Lagrange. It is characteristic that M. Rutot thinks thought-transference was excluded because in his conscious mind there was only knowledge bearing on the object, its age, origin, etc., which elements Mme Lagrange did not detect, whilst she saw the *ambiance* of the object and was at times able to "represent its ancient owner's sensations." As if a clairvoyant could not, we may imagine, abundantly adorn with his (her) fancy a nucleus telepathically transmitted and perceived without becoming aware of some of the data! However this consideration is of a general and purely theoretical character: in the present case I do not at all feel inclined to postulate any supernatural hypothesis.

P.-P.-S.

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychological Research

NEW MEMBERS.

Adiercron, Mrs Rodolph, Culverthorpe Hall, Grantham, Lines.

Andreae, Frau Edith, Cronbergerstrasse 7-9, Grunewald-Berlin, Germany.

Giglio, E., 115 Old Broad Street, London, E.C.2.

Hargreaves, John N. D., 78 Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 279th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1, on Wednesday, 6 February 1931, at 3 p.m., SIR OLIVER LODGE in the Chair. There were also present : The Earl of Balfour, Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Mr G. W. Lambert, Mr W. H. Salter, Mr S. G. Soal, Mrs Henry Sidgwick, and Dr V. J. Woolley ; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Four new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

The procedure at the Annual General Meeting was discussed, and Sir Oliver Lodge agreed to take the chair.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS.

[It being necessary to complete the Journal for press on the day after the Meeting, only a brief report is printed below. ED.]

THE Annual General Meeting of Members of the Society was held in the Society's Library at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1, on Thursday, 26 February 1931, at 3.30 p.m., SIR OLIVER LODGE in the chair.

The Annual Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet, and the Report of the Council, were taken as read and adopted by the meeting. The retiring Members of Council were re-elected.

Messrs Hartleys, Wilkins, Avery and Flew were elected Auditors for the year 1931.

Mr Dingwall moved the following Resolution: "That this Meeting views with grave concern the decline in the prestige of the Society both at home and abroad, and is of the opinion that a change in the administration is desirable."

This Resolution was also signed by Mr G. B. Brown, Mrs J. G. Robertson, and Mr Charles Röthy, and was defeated on a show of hands by an overwhelming majority.

Mrs Goldney moved the following Resolution: "That this meeting approves of the amalgamation (proposed by Mr Harry Price and supported by an overwhelming majority of S.P.R. voters) of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research with this Society; and requests the Council to appoint a Committee to discuss the details of the suggested plan with the Administration of the National Laboratory." This Resolution was also signed by Mr Harry Price and Mrs J. G. Robertson.

In view of the changed circumstances in regard to the National Laboratory since Mr Price's proposal was first made the Resolution was withdrawn, with a view to submitting a further proposal for the consideration of the Council.

IMPORTANT NOTICE CONCERNING MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY.

MEETINGS of the Society will, from April 1931, be held monthly, except in August and September. These meetings will provide opportunity for the usual formal papers, and also for informal addresses and conversaciones. Notices of the meetings will be printed as usual in the *Journal*, and it will be advisable always to consult these, as special additional meetings may be arranged from time to time.

Members and Associates are particularly asked to note that all future meetings (unless specific notice to the contrary is given) will be held at 5.30 p.m. on the last Wednesday of each month. Tea will be served from 4.30, to which Members and Associates are invited.

CASE.

L. 1295.

APPARITION OF A RELATIVE SEEN AT THE TIME OF HER DEATH.

PROFESSOR W. W. GRUNDY, a Member of the Society, very kindly sent us, in a letter dated 17 November 1930, some particulars of an apparition seen on the 15th of the same month by his sister-in-law, who was at the time staying in his house. He wrote, in part :

“ On Saty. last (Nov. 15) my wife was upstairs in bed with a cold. I was out of doors somewhere and my wife's sister was quietly reading a novel downstairs, awaiting tea. Suddenly she had a vision of her aunt, an old lady of 81, in the doorway : she had known this aunt to have been ill recently although she had got over many such attacks before and the recent news has been on the whole v. reassuring.

“ She looked at her watch : it marked 4.45.

“ That evening—about 7.30. we received a wire handed in at 6.29 p.m. saying that her aunt had passed away ‘ this afternoon.’

“ By this (Monday) morning's post at 11.0 a.m. a letter arrived to say that her aunt had passed away at *exactly* 4.45 p.m. on Saturday.”

“ [Signed] W. W. GRUNDY.”

In response to our request Professor Grundy obtained the following statement from his sister-in-law :

“ Being away from home and on a holiday with relations during Nov. last,—I was sitting by the fire on the afternoon of Saturday Nov. 15th, reading a book.

“ I had been much troubled for the previous three days by bad news from home of the serious illness of my Aunt, with whom I lived and whose daily life had been part of mine for the last five-and-a-half years, but I was prevented at the time by unæ voidable circumstances from returning to her, as I much wished to do.

“ As I was sitting with my eyes on my book, the room being brightly lit with electric light, and the open door-way also lit from the light in the hall, I became aware that my Aunt was standing in the doorway, silently looking at me right opposite and in a line from my chair by the fire-side, I raised my eyes, with the astonished exclamation ‘ Why ! *there's* Aunt Jane ’ and at once the appearance vanished.

“ I made a mental note of the time ‘ a quarter to five,’ and later in the evening received a wire from her daughter to the effect, her mother had passed away at 4.45.¹ that very afternoon.

“ The whole incident, now I look back—cannot have taken more time than about ten or 15 seconds, as far as I can judge, but in that short space of time, tho' my eyes were not in the direction of the doorway but fixed on my reading, I was aware of her presence as clearly as I had seen her last, even to the dress she was wearing, and it was not until I looked up, and the presence vanished that I realized at all, it was a Spiritual Visitation.

“ [Signed] GWEN JONES.”

¹ [Note by Professor Grundy : N.B.—This is inaccurate. The wire contained no mention of time: merely stated ‘ This afternoon.’]

Two confirmatory statements were also obtained; one is from Mrs Grundy, the sister of the percipient, and is dated 5 December 1930:

"On Saturday, Nov. 15th 1930, my aunt who lived at Aberystwyth, passed away and at 7.30 p.m. the same day I received at the above address a telegram to that effect—not however stating the time or hour of the passing.

"My sister, Gwen, who was staying with me at the time on hearing the news asked 'Is the time given? I had an idea that she passed away at about 4.45 (p.m.) but I did not want to worry you then.'

"In a letter which arrived on Monday, Nov. 17th the time was given as 4.45 p.m. on the Saturday. I certify the above to be a true account.

"[Signed] J. H. GRUNDY."

The second corroborative statement is from Professor Grundy and is dated 19 December 1930:

"I hereby certify that both accounts to my knowledge strictly correspond to the facts except that (as noted on her letter) my sister-in-law was incorrect in stating that the time of death was mentioned on the telegram. It was however mentioned in a letter received on Monday morning Nov. 17th.

"I may add, for what it is worth one way or the other, that my sister-in-law in another letter states that this is *not her only* experience of a vision.

"She once had an equally clear vision of an absent friend—then and still happily alive with us.

"[Signed] W. W. GRUNDY."

It will be noted that the weakness of this case lies in the fact that the vision was not narrated until after the receipt of the telegram announcing the death. On the other hand, we have adequate evidence that the exact time of the death was given before the arrival of the letter in which the time was mentioned. It is unfortunate that, as we are informed by Professor Grundy, the telegram was not preserved, since proof that the time of the death was not mentioned in it is thus absent. But it is difficult to suppose that Professor and Mrs Grundy should be mistaken about such a matter so soon after the event, especially as Professor Grundy repeats in a later letter that he is quite clear on this point.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AN INDIAN FORTUNE-TELLER'S TRICK.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—The following account of a trick played on me by an Indian fortune-teller may amuse your readers.

According to his own account, he spoke no languages but English (very imperfectly) and "Sanskrit" and had recently arrived from South Africa. After telling me to write down my name, and reading it when written, he examined the palms of my hands attentively and then proceeded to give accurate details of my affairs (*e.g.* year of birth, number of brothers and sisters, salary, etc.). Most of these he could have learnt from the Civil Service List and from local gossip, but not all. He also told me that I had an enemy in my own office (a fairly true statement about anyone in any office). He seemed to rely largely on "fishing" and I am glad to say appeared to find it particularly unprofitable, as he sweated profusely, darted piercing glances at me out of a pair of very shrewd eyes, and complained several times that I was evidently much accustomed to fortune tellers (which is however not a fact).

He then told me to wash my hands, which I did thoroughly, using soap and a nail brush. He did not after that touch the palms of my hands which I kept clenched and resting on my thighs. After about five minutes in this position which he employed in reciting a rigmarole (referred to comprehensively as, "I pray the God for you"), he told me to open my hands, which I did and found the figures 81, 111 printed (in what looked like printer's ink) across the palm of my right hand.

He was ecstatic and rapturously announced that this number referred to the number of "gold pieces" which I was to acquire in June 1931, (had he the "Calcutta Sweep" in mind perchance?).

After my first surprise, it dawned on me that a combination of 8 and 1 is the only combination that can be printed from a positive and still make sense, whichever way you read it. I assumed that he must have written the figures on his own finger in some sort of invisible ink, impressed it on my palm during the hand-reading episode, and that the hand washing acted as a developer (not an instantaneous one, however, since there was nothing on my hand visible when I dried them). But why a man with such a good trick as that at his disposal did not learn to write figures in the negative I cannot understand. Possibly this is the essential difference between East and West.

To my great annoyance he rubbed out the figures from my palm with one stroke of his finger. In spite of his obvious "fishing" and general trickiness, I am convinced that this man displayed a certain

power of mind reading. The evidence is unfortunately too essentially personal to be made known to others.

This fact of subjective conviction of the truth of supernormal phenomena which apparently convey information much too private to be proclaimed *coram publico* is one of the great drawbacks in Psychological Research, it appears to me. Yet such evidence cannot be neglected.

Yours, etc.,

G. R. M. MILLER.

REVIEWS.

- H. A. DALLAS, *Human Survival and its Implications*, pp. 70. REV. C. DRAYTON THOMAS, *The Mental Phenomena of Spiritualism*, pp. 136. STANLEY DE BRATH, *The Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism*, pp. 95. HELEN MACGREGOR and MARGARET V. UNDERHILL, *The Psychic Faculties and their Development*, pp. 91. SIR OLIVER LODGE, *Demonstrated Survival: its Influence on Science, Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 37. 8vo. London: L.S.A. Publications Ltd., 1930. Price 1s. each.

This is a useful set of handbooks for inquirers. Miss Dallas is an investigator of long experience, and she gives much wise advice. It is well to read extensively before seeking personal experience, and when investigation is begun, critical scrutiny of facts and inferences is essential. Stress is laid on the importance of spontaneous phenomena such as those described in Sir William Barrett's book, *Death-Bed Visions*, and many apposite quotations are given from the works of Myers, Lodge, Richet, Crookes, and other workers. Consideration is given to the various descriptions of other-side conditions, but it is made clear that there are many possible interpretations of what is said. On the religious side it is shown by extracts from letters that in many cases the study of psychical phenomena has brought many people back to the religious view of life, after a period of doubt or disbelief; and at the same time it is pointed out that there is nothing in psychical research facts or inferences that is inharmonious with present-day science. Miss Dallas's contribution, though written from the standpoint of one who is convinced of survival and communication, is a sane and balanced presentation of the case in its general aspects and without the detailed evidence which appears in other booklets of the series.

Mr Drayton Thomas leads up from non-spiritistic clairvoyance, psychometry, subliminal writing, and the like, to mediumistic phenomena in which the agency is claimed to be a discarnate human being. He gives illustrations of the kind of phenomena observed in each of the departments, and is specially interesting when dealing with communications purporting to come from his father and sister,

in a long series of sittings. Readers of Mr Thomas's other books, in which more detail is possible, will remember that the evidence from his communicators is extensive and weighty. On the side of interpretation, Mr Thomas goes rather far when he says of the subliminal mind that it is the "area wherein all forgotten memories are stored" (p. 13). All will agree that the evidence points to the conclusion that subliminal memory is wider than supraliminal memory, but to assume that *all* forgotten memories are subliminally stored seems rather venturesome, though it has been frequently done since T. J. Hudson set the fashion. However, no doubt Mr Thomas wishes to be fair and even generous to opponents of the spiritistic hypothesis, and he makes them a present of subliminal potencies which are not proved but will come in useful. He rightly warns automatic writers against taking their script seriously unless it contains verifiable facts unknown to them; and he discounts the inspirational speaking which is so common at spiritualistic meetings but which does not seem to go beyond the possibilities of the speaker's own mind. Most of us will agree heartily that if the speaker had prepared something with conscious attention it might have been better than the "inspirational" sounding periods which seemed to contain very little meaning. But Mr Thomas makes it clear that he regards the belief in discarnate human agency as a justifiable inference from some of the evidence.

The third booklet is a compilation of facts and conclusions regarding dowsing, raps, telekinesis, hauntings, apports, direct voice, materialisation, with quotations from Richet, Schrenck-Notzing, Osty, Geley, Crawford, the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R. and so on. Mr De Brath has had a wide experience of this side of the subject, and is specially interesting when he describes his results in psychic photography, when he took his own camera and obtained extras which convinced him of some supernormal agency. He gives a handy summary of the *Margery* case, particularly the thumb-print evidence. On the philosophic side he regards the universe as made up of matter, energy, and mind; a human being is made up of body, soul and spirit. The outcome of psychical research is an extension of knowledge; its results are not inharmonious with the already known.

Miss Macgregor and Miss Underhill give practical advice to beginners as to the method of development by sitting in circles, by using the crystal, planchette, and the like. They do not say much that will be new to our members, but the information, advice, and warnings given will be useful to those who have not previously read or investigated.

Sir Oliver Lodge points out the interesting and suggestive analogy between magnetism and matter on the one hand, and life and matter

—mind and body—on the other. Magnetism can exist apart from matter, but without matter it can make no sign to us ; we are aware of electricity and magnetism by their effects on the matter of a filament or galvanometer or iron filings and the like. Life and mind manifest themselves to us through matter, but may exist apart from it. Survival is demonstrated, though not yet recognised by all scientific men. When mind is recognised generally as so existing, it will revolutionise biology and must have a potent effect on science. Philosophy cannot explain the relation of mind and matter by attending to matter alone. It concerns itself with the whole of knowledge, and must take all the facts and conclusions of science into account. Psychical evidence indicates not only survival but the survival of memory and the full personality. The universe is one, and the division between this life and the next is an artificial one, due to our limitations. Experience in the next stage, though no doubt still limited by an ether-body or space-body which is not matter, will be as real as experience is now. Religion is the reaction of an intelligent person to the conception which the person has been able to form concerning the meaning and cause of existence (p. 26). If minds are real, and we survive, the door is open to rational belief in other and higher intelligences, to the existence of a spiritual world. Christ was a lofty Being who came down to reveal more of God to men. Psychical evidence proves the preamble of all religions, as Myers said, and it is in harmony with the essentials of Christianity. It is impossible to review adequately, in the space available, this profound and far-reaching though simply expressed statement of the case. Students must read it for themselves.

J. A. H.

T. K. OESTERREICH, *Das Mädchen aus der Fremde. Ein Fall von Störung der Persönlichkeit.* 8vo, pp. xii. 178. Beiträge zur Philosophie und Psychologie (Heft 5) : Stuttgart 1929. Price M. 7.50.

Professor Oesterreich gives a very lucid and exhaustive account of a remarkable case of disturbance of the personality. It is the case of a German girl of the lower classes who, after an almost tragic life (the account of which in her own words, here faithfully reproduced, is pathetic in the extreme), was taken up by the Stuttgart police in a helpless condition. She was unable to speak or understand any language accessible to the combined philological and linguistic resources of the authorities. She wore her hair in a pseudo-Oriental style, and her whole appearance and behaviour (*e.g.* manner of eating) gave a similar impression. She practised a peculiar Buddha cult, unrecognisable as any known to students of the subject.

Fortunately, after being doubtfully treated in a charitable institution, and driven from pillar to post by the police, she fell into kindly hands. Her behaviour and beliefs were carefully studied and recorded, and her language was taken down. For many months the mystery was unsolved, making a nine days' journalistic wonder, and might have remained unsolved but that one day the girl announced in writing that she was German and could speak and understand German. Then the psychologists came on the scene, and gradually the whole of this strange case of dissociation was explained.

The peculiar interest of this case lies in the fact that it was possible to trace back nearly all the elements of the girl's fugue to their causes, and finally to diagnose the case as one of compulsion neurosis. The dissociative assumption of a pseudo-Oriental role was the result of a very strong desire, no doubt engendered by an unhappy home, to run away with some gypsies who in her early childhood had put up their tents for fourteen days near her home, during which time she had spent many hours with them. There was also an anti-German feeling, due to the contempt in which, as a German, she had been held in her Swiss childhood. The mysterious Buddha cult was clearly shown to have been the result of the grafting of a suggestion (the showing of a statuette of the Buddha in the early days of her highly suggestible dissociative condition at Stuttgart) on to a strong, though unorthodox, Roman Catholic feeling. The incomprehensible language was explained in the same way as that of Helene Smith: it was a re-arrangement and distortion of her own German with a few foreign elements picked up during her childhood in Switzerland. Thus the words with which she addressed the Buddha were *batuu nustree*=*pater noster*. In the following also note the similarity in sound: *rische*=*Reis* (rice), *borum*=*Parfüm* (perfume). In the next examples we have simply artificial prolongation: *iwengo*=*ich* (I, in dialect only the first letter is pronounced), *ermio*=*er* (he). Echoes from foreign languages: *ferrowia*=railway (Italian), *beschtru*=knife (Spanish *bisturi*).

All this is of great interest to psychical research as presenting not a few parallels with certain phenomena observed with mediumistic Controls. But even more significant from this point of view are certain negative aspects of this case. It does not appear that the slightest trace of anything supernormal was observed in it. But is it not a legitimate reflection that if this girl had fallen into the hands of such spiritualists as those Helene Smith came into contact with, instead of into those of people interested in the East, she would probably have adopted some form of spiritualistic disguise (not consciously, of course) instead of a pseudo-Oriental one?

Professor Oesterreich is to be congratulated on a most able, patient and useful piece of work.

THEODORE BESTERMAN.

Einführung in die neuere Psychologie, edited by E. SAUPE. Osterwieck-Harz: A. W. Zickfeldt, 1931. Price M. 10.

To the new edition of the above work Professor Oesterreich has contributed an article on psychical research, with special reference to experiments conducted in institutions of university status. At first sight this would appear to narrow the field almost to extinction. But Professor Oesterreich has succeeded in covering the ground fairly exhaustively by including accounts of work done by professors outside their universities. Professor Oesterreich seldom commits himself, but it is clear that he accepts the mental phenomena (including psychometry) and also many of the physical phenomena. Thus he appears to accept the genuineness of Willi Schneider's phenomena (pp. 445-6), and to be very sympathetically inclined towards the Goligher and *Margery* mediumships (pp. 447-8). Professor Oesterreich also enters into theoretical discussions of both the mental and the physical phenomena, but it appears to be impossible to throw much light on the subject, in view of the very small number of phenomena which are generally accepted even by students of psychical research.

Professor Oesterreich laments the apparent impossibility of establishing a German S.P.R., and puts it down to lack of funds. The desirability of such a society cannot be too strongly stressed. There is in Germany no lack of able investigators and of material for investigation. It is difficult to believe that the necessary monies would not be forthcoming if the investigators themselves could be brought together. After all, in the early days of the S.P.R. the membership was very small and the funds still smaller: it was the single-minded and laborious co-operation of a group of investigators which successfully established the Society on a permanent basis.

TH. B.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Psychic Research, November 1930.

In *Proceedings* for May 1929 (xxxviii. 399-408) I published a review of the *Margery* cross-correspondences, in which I criticised at some length the account of them published in *Psychic Research* by Dr Richardson. After an interval of eighteen months Mr Bligh Bond has printed in the present issue an article entitled "Varieties of Cross Correspondence," in which he states that my criticisms are the only ones "remaining until now unanswered"; and he then proceeds to enumerate certain points in my review.

First (I adopt Mr Bond's numbering) he says that he is unable to agree with "the suggestion that there is a remote resemblance" between the S.P.R. cross-correspondences and those published in

connection with the *Margery* mediumship. What I suggested was precisely the contrary. I wrote (*loc. cit.*, p. 400): "It is proper to point out at the outset that the *Margery* cross-correspondences are very different from those of the S.P.R."

Second, Mr Bond says that he has no interest in "the further suggestion that criticism of work done outside the S.P.R. should be as unsparing as that aimed at the work done within the Society" until "this writer [that is, Th. B.] applies *exactly the same sort of criticism* [Mr Bond's italics] to the work of members of the S.P.R. whose position with regard to their Society is the same as that of our own group of 'Margery' investigators in relation to the American S.P.R." This remark is meaningless under present circumstances, but I assure Mr Bond that if the time should ever come when members of the S.P.R., however distinguished, print in our publications reports even remotely comparable in weakness to that published by Dr Richardson of the *Margery* cross-correspondences, I shall unhesitatingly apply to them "exactly the same sort of criticism" as I applied to the *Margery* phenomena.

Third, Mr Bond writes: "It must be obvious to any unprejudiced reader . . . that it was Dr Richardson's aim so to order matters that the question of *bona fides* should not arise. In this he succeeded." What Mr Bond says was certainly "obvious" to me, since it was the chief object of my review to emphasise this very fact and to show that Dr Richardson had failed in his aim. Mr Bond, on the other hand, dogmatically asseverates that Dr Richardson succeeded. Mr Bond may be right, but my view, at least, is not dogmatic, but was arrived at after a close analysis of the published evidence.

Fourth, Mr Bond quotes my statement (*loc. cit.*, p. 402) that "it is quite impossible, by any such procedure [that is, by the supposed post-hypnotic influencing of *Margery* by her Control Walter], to prove the independence of Walter"; and he observes: "No such claim had been made on the basis of the evidence presented at that stage. The criticism is therefore irrelevant." Mr Bond may be right, but what Dr Richardson himself wrote in the report I was reviewing (*Psychic Research*, xxii. 256) was that "if we really succeed in proving post-hypnotic influencing of *Margery* by Walter, we shall have gone a very long way indeed towards proof of Walter's independence."

His fifth point Mr Bond divides into three parts: (a) is a reply to my remarks on the obscurities in the original text in regard to the time of a sitting and to the time of despatch of a telegram reporting that sitting. Mr Bond states that the time of despatch is shown on the original telegram. If that is the case I can only regret that the original telegram has not been reproduced either in the report I had before me or since, and that the information now given by Mr Bond was not given in the original report.

Next, in (b) Mr Bond proceeds, in his own words, to administer his final kick to "this very dead horse." In Dr Richardson's report it was stated that an automatic script of five letters and one figure, produced in a meaningless way on two sheets of paper, was, in the telegram reporting that script, put together in such a way as to make sense in itself and also in connection with scripts produced elsewhere. I remarked on the strangeness of reporting the script telegraphically "by starting with the lower part of the first sheet, proceeding to the second, and concluding with the top part of the first." Mr Bond replies that this was the order in which the medium (in trance) wrote the message. This fact is strange in itself, but I will of course accept Mr Bond's statement if it is so set down in the original record of the sitting. And I reiterate my regret that this important fact was not disclosed in the report I had before me (nor elsewhere till now).

Finally, in (c) Mr Bond answers my suggestion that what is reported in the article I had under review as intended for a multiplication sign might, if necessary, have been taken for a plus sign, by declaring that the "diagram was not interpretable as the 'Plus' sign as he [Th. B.] would know if he had seen it." I accept Mr Bond's statement, and once more reiterate my regret that I, in common with other readers, was not given the opportunity of seeing a reproduction of the diagram, since it neither appeared in the report I had before me nor has appeared since.

In short, in each of his specific criticisms Mr Bond complains that I did not take into account evidence which he knows it was impossible for me to take into account, since it was, and remains, unpublished.

Having concluded his five points Mr Bond adds further criticisms under the heading "Some Modern Mediums," referring to my book of that name. I am not here concerned, of course, with Mr Bond's remarks on that book as such. But in his observations he refers to two further criticisms of mine of the *Margery* cross-correspondences, these criticisms also having originally appeared as part of the above-mentioned review in *Proceedings*, and these I must therefore deal with. Mr Bond complains that my statement with regard to a particular sitting that "the box was opened at the sitting and the lights turned out," is untrue, and he adds that I do not give the reference to the source of this statement. I do not know why Mr Bond should, on this particular point, quote from my book and not from my original review, unless it is because in *Proceedings* he would have found that I do give two exact references, and that at the second reference Dr Richardson wrote: "J. H. Brown had charge of the box of cards. He removed the paper covering just before the lights were turned off. . . ." It is true that at the first reference the

light is stated to have been first turned off, and if the word "and" in the sentence quoted can be held to imply a *sequence* of events, then I freely admit that I was guilty of a half-inaccuracy, due to directly contradictory statements by Dr Richardson.

Mr Bond sees fit to make great play with my criticism of the suppression of the identity of Captain X, in connection with which I pointed out that Captain X (on whom a crucial cross-correspondence experiment rests) is one and the same person as a gentleman on whom also the ease for the *Margery* thumbprints largely rests. This statement showed that I was aware of the real identity of Captain X, and Mr Bond indignantly remarks that I was careful "not to reveal it [the real name] to his readers." Captain X's name was given to me by Dr Crandon during his visit to London in 1927, and as the name had not been published in the meanwhile I clearly had no right to publish it myself. What would Mr Bond have said had I committed so flagrant a breach of confidence?

I would point out in conclusion that Mr Bond has selected these few points from the large number brought forward in my review, and that he makes no attempt to answer the remaining points nor to meet the ease I made as a whole. THEODORE BESTERMAN.

Revue Métapsychique, November-December 1930.

This number begins with an obituary article by Dr Osty on Professor Santoliquido, President of the Institut Métapsychique International.

M. C. de Vesme has the beginning of a paper on stigmatised persons in the past. The ease of St Veronica Giuliani (born 1660) appears to have been particularly remarkable in connection with the investigation (partly purely experimental investigation) pursued in 1714 by a learned Jesuit, Father Crivelli. It seems to me to confirm my standpoint that it is *perhaps* in the religious domain that we are after all most likely to obtain striking evidence for supernormal phenomena.

Questions connected with hypnotism are discussed by MM. Peseal, Osty and Desoille. Dr Osty adduces statements made by very competent investigators (Professor Riehet included) which tend to show that persons apt to be hypnotised are growing more and more scarce. No explanation is offered.

M. Delevsky, a mining engineer, discusses the part possibly played by suggestion at a distance in "scientific creation." As a rather plausible instance he quotes the simultaneous researches on non-Euclidian geometry of Gauss (Germany), Lobatchevsky (Russia) and Bolyai (Hungary). Other cases are set aside as susceptible of a simpler explanation; among them I miss the well-known instance of Charles Darwin and A. R. Wallace.

“Mediumistic comedy” is the sub-title given by Dr Osty to the recent sittings for physical phenomena with Stanislaw P. at the Paris Institute, during which sittings the medium was thoroughly exposed. (The late Dr von Schrenck-Notzing repeatedly experimented with Stanislaw.) Very characteristic is the attitude of the medium’s husband after the exposure in regard to the money paid to her for the Paris sittings (p. 526).

In the “Chronique” M. Maire is very hard on the protagonist of the Vandermeulen apparatus (see above).

I have left for the end of my Notes Dr Osty’s preliminary and very brief statement as to the recent sittings at the I.M.I. with Rudi Schneider. The ectoplasmic “phenomena,” it appears, were absent, the telekinetic very poor; but on the other hand, the use of infra-red rays revealed the presence at a certain distance from the medium of an invisible substance, not capable of being photographed, “localised in space,” and rigorously depending on the medium’s psyche. We are promised further details later on. Meanwhile, Dr Osty asserts, a process has been found revealing with “perfect precision” and “perfect security” the movements of the invisible substance in question, thereby making such a demonstration “as cogent as the purest and simplest experiment in physics.”

Bulletin du Conseil de Recherches métapsychiques de Belgique, January 1931.

This number opens with another instalment of M. Rutot’s monograph on the Henri Vandermeulen *avertisseur*; it also contains papers giving the text of numerous messages of an absolutely non-evidential character, among them communications from the “Spirit of Jesus” and from that of a man who died 6358 years ago. The paper containing the latter is entitled “Typtology with a scientific tendency.” The *avertisseur*, or, to be exact, its component parts, can be commercially obtained, it appears. We are also promised, before long (from “the other side of the veil”) a telephone which is to enable the “entitics” to communicate direct.

Zeitschrift für metapsychische Forschung, October-December 1930.

The “phenomena” of Hilda Zwieselbauer are again described by Herr Wratnik. It is almost superfluous to add that the whole looks most suspicious and that Herr Wratnik is obviously one of those witnesses whose testimony would not go far towards establishing the genuineness of any marvels whatsoever.

Herr Rolf Reinisch narrates a series of incidents of various kinds connected with the demise of his wife and her promise to “come back.” Professor Kasnacich pursues his account of sittings with Frau Maria Silbert in 1919-1922. Herr Albert Langer has a long

paper on "experiments" with Kordon Veri. The first three instalments of the paper deal with card experiments which look suspiciously like card tricks. As a precaution the medium was blindfolded, whilst experience conclusively shows how insecure this method of control is.

Dr Chr. Schröder has the beginning of a paper written in vindication of the claims of Lajos Papp and Tibor Molnar, the Budapest "psychitives" (*sic*) investigated by Mr Besterman (*Proceedings*. xxxviii. 450-465) who is taken to task in a rather discourteous fashion. Such methods are unfortunately very common on Dr Schröder's part, but if this gentleman imagines that he enhances the value of his criticisms by his rudeness, he is, I am afraid, mistaken. It may be worth noting that Dr Schröder has recently married the daughter of Frau Rudloff, the medium with whom he has long been associated.

Dr Carl Bruek brings to a close a paper (begun in the September number) entitled: "Does there exist telepathic pressure at a distance?" (*Fernzwang*). The question, as was to be expected, is answered in the affirmative.

Dr. Chr. Schröder prints a further instalment of a paper (also begun in the September number) describing alleged visions of the future by a Frau Bartsehat. The prophecies are given by means of painting and automatic writing. Frau Bartsehat is believed by Dr Schröder to have thus foreseen such events as a mine explosion in Silesia, a railway (or tramway) catastrophe in Buenos Aires, and a typhoon in the Far East. I am afraid prevision of the future is generally speaking both one of the most unlikely *a priori* branches of psychical research and one of the most inadequately attested. And yet we have in this domain an alleged case of a permanent character, accessible to all and having undoubtedly preceded the event to which it is commonly supposed to refer: I have in view the seventy weeks prophecy in the Book of Daniel (Chapter 9). May I suggest that a discussion of it in the *Journal* might prove very fruitful? For my part I should be ready to let some of the weightiest moral and intellectual issues which mankind has to face, not to speak of prevision in general, stand or fall with this prophecy.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, January 1931.

This number opens with a paper by Frä. Gerda Walther on the Norwegian medium Mrs Ingeborg, daughter of Judge Dahl of Fredriksstad. This medium's specialities are automatic writing, book-tests, sealed letter reading, etc., unfortunately also apports (a most suspicious phenomenon). Incidentally we learn that the "spirits" manifesting through Mrs Ingeborg have repeatedly declined to give a test-word previously agreed upon as a proof of identity, alleging

that there is in the Beyond a "law" which prevents them promising at sittings such *Stichworte* as tests. Hitherto we knew nothing of so deplorable a "law." Apports are again to the front in a short paper by Messrs C. Blacher and E. Keuchel, dealing chiefly with the medium Eugen F.K. (*Paleas*).

Dr Süner describes his sitting with Rudi Schneider in the late Baron von Schrenk's laboratory in September 1924. The sitting was a very successful one. Dr R. A. Reddingius of the The Hague reverts to the experiments with thinking animals, which he explains by telepathic "possession."

I omit mention of several other papers of minor interest. Let me note, however, *à titre de curiosité*, the "plastic hallucinations" hypothesis as championed by Privatdozent Dr E. Barthel, in which hypothesis this gentleman seeks an explanation of phenomena such as haunting and apparitions of the dead. I confess I am doubtful as to the adequacy of this explanation. P.-P.-S.

THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE
CIRCULATION.

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on a definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only." The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY,

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 29 April 1931, at 5.30 p.m.

WHEN A DISCUSSION ON

POLTERGEISTS

WILL BE OPENED BY

MR W. H. SALTER

AND

MRS BRACKENBURY

N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.30 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.

NEW MEMBERS

- Bret, Dr P. Thomas**, 23 Avenida Cinco de Outubro, Lisbon, Portugal.
Findlater, J. W., Aydon, Cutenhoe Road, Luton, Beds.
Forrest, Mrs L. W. R., Holkham, Wimbledon Common, Surrey.
Editor, "Luce E Ombra," Via Carducci 4, Rome, Italy.
Murrell, Mrs A. W., 7 Lawford Road, London, W. 4.
North, Sidney V., Ousedale House, nr Lewes, Sussex.
Pickard, Mrs Fortescue, 51 Cornwall Gardens, London, S.W. 7.
Sweeney, Hubert J. P., 3 Plowden Buildings, Temple, London, E.C.4.

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 280th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Thursday, 26 February 1931, at 2.45 p.m., Mr J. G. PIDDINGTON in the chair. There were also present: The Earl of Balfour, Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P., Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Miss Ina Jephson, Mr G. W. Lambert, Sir Oliver Lodge, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr Sydney C. Scott, Mrs Henry Sidgwick, Mr S. G. Soal, and Dr V. J. Woolley; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

THE 281st Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Thursday, 26 February 1931, after the Annual General Meeting, SIR OLIVER LODGE in the chair. There were also present: The Earl of Balfour, Miss Ina Jephson, Mr G. W. Lambert, Mr J. G. Piddington, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr Sydney C. Scott, Mrs Henry Sidgwick, Mr S. G. Soal, and Dr V. J. Woolley; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

Dr Walter Franklin Prince was re-elected President of the Society for the year 1931.

Mrs Henry Sidgwick and Mr W. H. Salter were re-elected Hon. Secretaries; Dr V. J. Woolley was re-elected Hon. Research Officer; Mr W. H. Salter, Hon. Treasurer; and Mrs W. H. Salter, Hon. Editor.

Committees were elected as follows:

Committee of Reference and Publication: The Earl of Balfour, Sir Oliver Lodge, Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr J. G. Piddington, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs Henry Sidgwick, Mr W. Whately Smith, and Dr V. J. Woolley.

House and Finance Committee : Miss Ina Jephson, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr Sydney C. Scott, and Dr V. J. Woolley.

Corresponding Members and Honorary Associates were elected for the year 1931 as follows :

Corresponding Members : Professor Henri Bergson, President Nicholas M. Butler, Dr Max Dessoir, Professor Dr Freud, Professor Pierre Janet, Dr C. G. Jung, Count Carl von Klinckowstroem, Maurice Maeterlinck, Professor T. K. Oesterreich, Dr Eugène Osty, Dr Walter F. Prince, Professor Charles Richet, Dr Rudolf Tischner.

Honorary Associates : Miss H. A. Dallas, Frederik van Eeden, M.D., Rev. A. T. Fryer, David Gow, Edward Grubb, J. Arthur Hill, Professor J. H. Muirhead, Miss F. Melian Stawell, Dr A. Tanagra.

THE 282nd Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 18 March 1931, at 3 p.m., MR J. G. PIDDINGTON in the chair. There were also present : The Earl of Balfour, Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Miss Ina Jephson, Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs Henry Sidgwick, Mr S. G. Soal, and Dr V. J. Woolley ; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last two Meetings of the Council were read and signed as correct.

The Report of the Annual General Meeting was read and accepted.

Eight new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

The following were co-opted as Members of Council for the year 1931-1932 : Dr C. D. Broad, Dr William Brown, Mr J. Arthur Hill, Professor Julian Huxley, The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Mr W. Whately Smith, and Mr S. G. Soal.

Professor Dr Hans Driesch was elected a Vice-President of the Society.

Warm thanks were accorded to Mr Scott for the trouble he had taken and the expense he had saved the Society in connection with a change in their tenants, and for general legal advice.

Thanks were accorded to Mrs Currey for her generous gift of books to the Library.

Permission was given to M. C. de Vesme to quote two cases from the *Journal*, vols. iii and viii.

The Council heard with regret of the death of M. Sage, who had been an Hon. Associate of the Society since 1904 and had done much useful work for the Society. They expressed their sympathy with M. Sage's family in the loss they had sustained.

The Monthly Accounts for January and February 1931 were presented and taken as read.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

[*This Report has been approved by Sir Oliver Lodge, the Chairman of the Meeting.*]

As mentioned in the *Journal* for March, time did not permit, in that issue, of more than a very brief note of the Annual General Meeting held on 26 February 1931, with SIR OLIVER LODGE in the chair.

The following Members were also present: Mrs Baldwin, The Rt Hon. The Earl of Balfour, Mr F. Barlow, Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P., Mr Theodore Besterman, Mrs Theodore Besterman, Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Mrs Brackenbury, Mr G. B. Brown, Mrs Carpenter, Miss Carruthers, Lady Currie, Mr De Brath, Mr B. W. A. Dickson, Mrs B. W. A. Dickson, Mr E. J. Dingwall, Mrs E. J. Dingwall, Mr J. R. K. Duff, Dr C. J. Earl, Mrs F. V. Enthoven, The Hon. Everard Feilding, Mr C. B. Fernald, Mr J. A. Findlay, Miss Fleming, Mr N. C. Fonnereau, Mrs Frith, Mr H. Gatliff, Miss Gibbes, Mrs A. P. Goldney, Lieut.-Colonel E. F. Gordon-Tucker, Dr Hester M. Henderson, Mr H. L. Hervey, Miss Boucher James, Miss Ina Jephson, Baroness de Kakucs, Mrs Kingsley, Mr G. W. Lambert, Mrs Leaning, Mr W. A. Legg, Mrs Lloyd-Jones, Mr C. A. Moss, Mr A. W. Murrell, Mr A. E. Odell, Mr A. S. Owen, Miss Parsons, Miss M. Phillimore, Mr J. G. Piddington, Mr E. M. Preston, Mr Harry Price, Mr C. E. Bechhofer Roberts, Mrs Robertson, Mr F. J. Romanes, Dr Montague Rust, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr Sydney C. Scott, Mrs Henry Sidgwick, Mr W. S. Montgomery Smith, Mr S. G. Soal, Miss F. M. Sterling, Miss M. Swainson, Lieut.-Colonel F. G. Talbot, Miss E. W. Taylor, Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, Mr N. H. Vinen, Miss Margaret Wallace, Mr M. West, Miss R. Wilson, Mr S. R. W. Wilson, and Dr V. J. Woolley.

The Secretary having read the notice convening the meeting, Sir Oliver Lodge said that the Annual Report of the Council and the audited Statement of Accounts had already been circulated to Members, and he proposed that they should be taken as read. This was agreed to.

Treasurer's Statement.

The Hon. Treasurer, making the usual financial statement, said that he proposed to be brief as the meeting had much other business to transact. The Society had ended the year 1929 with a very small balance in hand, and even so had had to defer payment of a printers' bill then due, amounting to nearly £300. It ended 1930 with a credit balance in the General Fund of £87, without any outstanding accounts. During the year the Society had received a few windfalls, but even apart from these the Society had improved its

position to the extent of about £90, and in view of the world-wide economic depression he thought that this was a most satisfactory result.

The main cause of the saving was the improvements carried out by Mr Besterman in the preparation and printing of the *Journal* and *Proceedings*. The quantity of matter contained in *Proceedings* during the last year was rather below the average, owing to the fact that some papers which might have been printed in 1930 were not ready for issue until 1931; the coming year would redress the balance.

The Society sent three representatives to the International Congress at Athens, and not a penny of the cost of sending them fell upon the funds of the Society. In view of this fact, he thought that members might be more ready to buy copies of the *Transactions*, which had been published by the Society on behalf of the Congress organisation; so far, the sales in this country had been somewhat disappointing, though there was no reason to anticipate that any charge would eventually fall on the Society's funds for this publication.

By the generosity of Mrs Frederic W. H. Myers the capital of the Myers Memorial Fund had been raised to £1,000. The second lecture under this foundation would be delivered by Dr T. W. Mitchell in the course of the year 1931.

Summary of Chairman's Address.

On the motion for the adoption of the Report, the Chairman made a statement. He said the Society was passing through a critical time, such as many Societies had to pass through. In some cases there had been a split which did harm to the cause. It was not the first time that there had been differences of opinion in the Society. He referred to the disagreements long ago of such men as Alfred Russel Wallace and Stainton Moses, who were annoyed with what they considered the slowness and scepticism of the Society.

He did not in any way wish to minimise the present dissatisfaction. The grounds of complaint seemed to be chiefly two, first rudeness, second inertia. Taking them in order, he had been struck himself with the comparatively curt manner in which questions were sometimes answered at meetings, as contrasted with the polite methods of the old days. Some questions might be foolish, but it was always possible to discover some ground on which useful information could be given, and the foolish part ignored. In particular, however, he referred to the contemptuous criticism of foreigners and their methods of enquiry. There was a good deal of scepticism about ectoplasm; and he knew that some people disliked the

pictures in Schrenck-Notzing's book. But ectoplasm was a name devised by Richet as involving a minimum hypothesis to explain certain physical phenomena such as telekinesis and materialisation. It was not yet accepted : it needed investigation by biologists and physiologists, and then its unpleasant character would disappear. The activity on the Continent had greatly increased since the S.P.R. was founded. It was not likely that eminent men should in their reports come up to S.P.R. standards. If phenomena occurred in their presence which they could testify to, they were apt to consider that sufficient. They ought to be careful about their criticism of eminent foreigners. Some of the critiques objected to in the *Journal* might occasionally have been irritating, but their reviewer of foreign periodicals, Count Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo, a member of the S.P.R. for more than forty years, was not only a good linguist, but had had much experience in psychical research, and they could not expect him entirely to suppress opinions he might form on some of the articles he reviewed.

With regard to the inertia of the Society concerning physical phenomena, they could not help scepticism. All they demanded was that a phenomenon should be studied ; a student then had a right to his own opinions. Mr Besterman was a student from whom they hoped good things in time. On the whole it might be said that physical mediums just then were or had been rather weak. The experiments were not really under their control : the conditions were often dictated, or had to be approved, by an intelligence associated with the medium under investigation. Scientific men would never put up with so unusual a circumstance. Some day a really strong medium would be vouchsafed to them, and then the scepticism might be an asset.

Concerning Mr Price's proposal, the Chairman said he wished to speak respectfully of Mr Price, who had devoted time and energy to the investigation, and was an expert conjurer. But his methods were different from those of the S.P.R. He attained a certain amount of publicity, and called his privately managed laboratory a "National Laboratory." Moreover he seemed in impulsive haste : for instance, he circulated members generally on a proposal that had been submitted to the Council, and while it was still *sub judice*. The members voted without understanding the exact terms of the proposition.

The Society must adhere to its ancient methods, which had already contributed so greatly to its prestige. At the beginning the Society received the interest of many eminent Victorians, for instance, Tennyson, Gladstone, and Ruskin. It had attracted distinguished names ; and the atmosphere in which it began was very different from the atmosphere now, as could be illustrated by a quotation

from *The Observer* of 1882 (22 October), reproduced by Mr Besterman on page 120 of his paper to the Athens Congress. Its prestige on the Continent was illustrated by a letter from Professor Driesch printed elsewhere in this number. It had some forty volumes of *Proceedings* to its credit, and it was worth preserving. Members could destroy the Society if they chose, and release the Council from their work and pecuniary sacrifice. The work would continue whether in the Society or otherwise. Much more than was known had all along been done privately, sometimes with positive results and sometimes not, and much expense had been incurred by individuals. The apathy of the Society was only apparent. There were times when rapid progress on doubtful ground would be injudicious. "They also serve who only stand and wait."

The Chairman then invited questions and discussion.

Mr Dingwall commented on the small sum in the accounts devoted to research. It was pointed out in reply that many other items on the expenses side of the Society's accounts in fact covered expenditure on research, and also that, as had always been the case in the Society's history, a great deal of research work was done by members at their own expense.

Mr Drayton Thomas thought that the Society might train its own mediums, and also suggested that experiments in hypnotism, which had played a large part in the earlier history of the Society, should be revived. Miss Jephson pointed out, in reply to the former suggestion, that for several years the Society had carried on a series of experiments in telepathy and clairvoyance with a large number of persons claiming to have supernormal faculties.

Mr Findlay said that in his opinion the Society threw away useful opportunities for investigation. About eight years ago, having had sittings in Glasgow with Sloane, whom he regarded as a medium above all suspicion, he had offered to the Society to bring Sloane to London at his own expense for investigation, provided that the Society would engage Sloane as caretaker. The Society had however—he thought unreasonably—refused on the ground that it was undesirable to allow a medium free run of the premises at all hours of the day and night. Sir Ernest Bennett said he had had some experience of Sloane and could not agree with Mr Findlay's estimate of him. Dr Woolley thought that the Council's objection to having a professional medium as caretaker was justified.

Mrs Kingsley referred to a private conversation with Mr Besterman, in which, according to her account, Mr Besterman had said he would never advise any one to have sittings with mediums because he thought it was dangerous. Mrs Salter said that at one time she used regularly to see people at the Society's Rooms, and there were many occasions when she had given advice, which might have been

(erroneously) reported in that way ; it was not always wise to recommend sittings with mediums for some people and in some circumstances. The subject having been further dealt with by Mr Bechhofer Roberts, Mr Besterman said he did not accept Mrs Kingsley's version of the incident ; it was not reasonable in a meeting of that kind to quote, divorced from its context, what was said in a private conversation.

The Chairman then moved that the Report and Accounts be accepted, and this was carried *nem. con.*

The Chairman then read the names of the six members of Council who retired in rotation and offered themselves for re-election. No other candidates having been nominated, he declared the retiring members duly elected. Their names are as follows : Mr G. W. Lambert, Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr Sydney C. Scott, and Mrs Henry Sidgwick.

The auditors, Messrs Hartleys, Wilkins, Avery and Flew, were elected for the year 1931.

Mr Dingwall then moved the following Resolution : " That this Meeting views with grave concern the decline in the prestige of the Society both at home and abroad, and is of the opinion that a change in the administration is desirable." He prefaced his remarks by saying that although he moved a Resolution he did not intend to have it put to the vote. He agreed with Sir Oliver Lodge that politeness and energy were desirable ; he was not concerned with these matters, but with the question of honesty and competence. As regards honesty he adversely criticised the sending out of proxy forms with an accompanying circular before the Annual General Meeting of 1928, which he said had been done at the Society's expense. He also criticised the way in which the new Articles of Association were passed, and he commented at length on what he said were inconsistencies in certain statements as to whether Mr Besterman proceeded to Budapest in 1928 as the Society's representative or not. Opposite statements could be found in a letter written by Mr Besterman's lawyers to the founder of a psychological Society in Budapest, Mr Röthy, and in what he claimed and reported to Mr Röthy that Mr Salter had said to him (Mr Dingwall) during an interview in October 1929. On the question of competence Mr Dingwall criticised a passage in an article by Mr Besterman in *The Link*, and a case of premonition recorded in the February *Journal*.

Mr Guy B. Brown formally seconded the Resolution.

Mr Drayton Thomas, Mrs Goldney, and one or two other Members criticised the action of the Council in inviting Members to fill up proxies in the Council's favour without circulating copies of the Resolutions.

In reply it was pointed out that since the Resolutions contained

what in the opinion of the Council were in substance mis-statements of fact, the Council were on that ground unwilling to give them unnecessary publicity.

Miss F. M. Sterling said that in her experience it was customary for governing bodies to ask for proxies in their support simply as a matter of confidence, and she was quite prepared to support the Council on that basis. The names sent out on the proxy form were in her opinion a sufficient guide to Members.

Mrs Dingwall having also spoken, Mr Salter in reply said that the discrepancy alleged by Mr Dingwall was to be found between a letter written by Mr Besterman's lawyers, and statements said to have been made by Mr Salter to Mr Dingwall at an interview, after which Mr Dingwall wrote a letter to Mr Röthy, a portion of which had been read. Mr Salter had himself written neither of these letters, and one of them he had never seen. For the general purport of the lawyer's letter, the intention of which was to keep Mr Röthy's attack on Mr Besterman within the bounds of decency, he took full responsibility, but not for its verbal inspiration. For the second letter, Mr Dingwall's letter to Mr Röthy, he took no responsibility whatsoever. It was not written with his knowledge or approval, and did not fairly represent what he had said to Mr Dingwall at the interview in question. There was no doubt as to the capacity in which Mr Besterman went to Budapest, though there might be some difficulty in defining in a few words the extent to which he represented the Society.

Mr Salter then described the situation arising out of Mr Besterman's report of his sittings in Budapest, the correspondence with Mr Röthy, and Mr Dingwall's intervention in the dispute. He also dealt with other matters raised by Mr Dingwall, pointing out that the circular inviting proxies in 1928 had not, as Mr Dingwall had suggested, been sent out at the Society's expense.

Mr Dingwall then said that he proposed to withdraw his motion, but several Members protested against his being allowed to do so in view of the nature of his opening speech. The Chairman then put the motion to the vote by a show of hands. There appeared for the motion 7 votes; and against the motion, practically the whole number of other Members present.

The Chairman declared the motion lost by an overwhelming majority.

Mrs Goldney then moved the following Resolution: "Resolved that this meeting approves of the amalgamation, proposed by Mr Harry Price and supported by an overwhelming majority of S.P.R. voters, of the National Laboratory of Psychological Research with this Society; and requests the Council to appoint a Committee to discuss the details of the suggested plan with the Administration of the

National Laboratory." She explained in some detail the circumstances under which the proposal for the amalgamation of the National Laboratory of Psychological Research with the Society had been laid before the Council and as to how the voting papers issued by Mr Price had been circulated to Members and Associates. She explained however that the circumstances as regards the National Laboratory had fundamentally changed since the proposal was made. Mr Price had now acquired new premises which would accommodate his Library and apparatus, so that no question now arose of their being moved to the Society's premises. Moreover, the membership and general organisation of the National Laboratory was being reconstituted.

Mr Price seconded the Resolution and said that, if he individually were considered any obstruction to the amalgamation, he was willing to delete himself entirely from any scheme.

A further discussion followed, in which Lord Balfour, Mr De Brath and Mr Bousfield took part. In the course of this discussion it was suggested that, in view of the changed circumstances, the best course would be for Mrs Goldney to withdraw her motion and for Mr Price to submit further proposals to the Council. Dr Woolley expressed the hope that the new proposals would be sufficiently detailed to enable the Council to deal with them.

The motion was accordingly withdrawn by general consent ; and the meeting adjourned.

Professor Hans Driesch and Dr Walter Franklin Prinee, to whom, as the leading representatives of psychical research on the Continent and in America, copies of Mr Dingwall's Resolution had been forwarded, sent to the Council the letter and cablegram which are printed below.

The Council wish to thank the 234 Members of the Society who sent proxies in support of the Council as a vote of confidence.

Letter from Dr Hans Driesch

12 February 1931.

May I ask you to bring what follows before the Annual General Meeting of the S.P.R. to be held on February 26th.

The London S.P.R., in my opinion, is not only the first in time but also the first in rank of all Psychological Societies existing. And this is not my personal conviction only, it is the conviction of all those who are interested in Psychological Research in a critical way. I regard it as a great honour to have been president of the S.P.R., and I know that all scholars of foreign countries, who have been presidents, are thinking in the same way.

Psychical Research, if it intends to be really scientific, must always follow the old method of the scholastics that "*entia non sunt creanda praeter necessitatem.*" In other words: it must proceed slowly and very carefully. For our subject is the most difficult and complicated of all subjects of science.

I repeat what I have said in the Congress at Athens: Better reject 99 genuine cases for lack of good conditions, than accept one single case as true which is not genuine but fraudulent.

We always have (and probably shall have) two classes of enemies: the dogmatic sceptics, few in number at the present day, and the "believers"—the second class is the more dangerous one.

[Signed] HANS DRIESCH,

Dr phil., Dr med., LL.D.

Cablegram from Dr Walter Franklin Prince.

20 February 1931.

Prestige Society not declined in America save few members confused by one sided communication from England occasional complaints for years from correspondents here and abroad that standards too rigid fewer that too lax.

W. F. PRINCE.

A NOTABLE BOOKTEST OBTAINED AT A SITTING WITH MRS LEONARD.

BY THEODORE BESTERMAN.

THE following booktest is a very good one evidentially and presents some unusual and interesting features. I have therefore thought it useful to report and analyse it in some detail.

In the relevant extract from the sitting, which appears in the left-hand column below, passages in which Feda appears to be quoting the communicator (Mrs Irving) are placed in inverted commas. Recent investigations into the *modus operandi* of Mrs Leonard's trance phenomena appear to make it desirable to bring out this distinction. Words in round brackets were spoken at the sitting by Mr Irving. Editorial comments in the text are in square brackets; those distinguished in addition by my initials show variations between Mr Irving's record and mine. The punctuation and division into paragraphs have of course been supplied by me.

Extract from a sitting with Mrs Leonard on 27 January 1931.
Sitter : Rev. W. S. Irving. Recorder : Theodore Besterman.

Notes by Th. B.

[Feda :] [1] Dora says I have to ask you a question here because of that little problem of not being sure, not being sure, as to what is present or immediately past or immediately future. I want to know have you been doing anything with red books [book. Th. B.] thinking of books [book. Th. B.] with rather particularly vivid shade of red on the cover or covers? You need not answer particularly (I don't know) but she had to tell you that. It was in the form of a question in case you remembered having seen one, after. Let him write it! [repeated 6 times]. Wait a minute, Dora! "Well," she says, "I have an impression of a red book. I see you looking at it.

[1] I had arranged to act as notetaker for Mr Irving at two Leonard sittings, on 27 and 29 January 1931. On the afternoon of the 26th Mr Irving asked me to put a book into a box with a view to a booktest. That evening I did so, taking a book at random from my shelves and putting it into an attaché-case, which, of course, remained in my flat. Mr Irving intended to mention this arrangement to his communicator at the sitting of the 27th, with a view to a booktest on the 29th. But at the very beginning of the former sitting, immediately after the usual greetings, Feda spoke as shown in the next column. (The idea of putting a book in a box for test purposes was first suggested to Mr Irving by his communicator through Feda on 21 November 1929; but the method of doing so was different from that used in the present case; and the medium had no reason to anticipate that such a test would be tried on this occasion).

The book I had put away was, as I discovered before putting it into the box but after having chosen it at random, the second volume of the 1907 impression of *The Poetical Works of Alexander Pope*, edited by G. R. Dennis, in Messrs Bell's Aldine Edition of the British Poets (London). The covers are a vivid red, very close to the colour of the covers of

[2] It's about a medium size. I should say it might have 250 to 300 pages, which I s'pose you'd call a medium size." Now, wait a bit!

[3] "I feel that you are going to see this book, I think you're going to. I don't think that it is a book that you have used, I don't think it is a book that you have used. That's right! I see you with it in your hands, but I feel that as you take it in your hand, you take it from someone else's hand. I feel the recent touch of another [someone else's. Th. B.] hand on it.

[4] This book is not a treatise on psychical" treatise, not tortoise "on psychical matters, but it touches on them. I feel throughout the book various touches of a psychical kind." Wait a minute!

Hans Driesch, *Mind and Body* (London 1927), but smooth and therefore more vivid than the latter.

[2] The volume is of medium size, 4¼ in. × 7 in., and has 323 pages, plus vii preliminary pages.

[3] It is true that Mr Irving had not seen the book, that he was going to see it, that he afterwards took it from someone else's hand (mine), and that it had the recent touch of another hand on it (mine again, from the previous evening).

[4] It is a volume of poetry, but frequently touches on psychical matters. The first poem in the volume is the *Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady*, which begins (p. 1) :

What beckoning ghost along
the moon-light shade
Invites my steps, . . .

One of the last (p. 313) is the translation of the dying Hadrian's lines to his soul. There are "throughout the book" various other "touches of a psychical kind." For instance, on p. 304 occur the lines (*Ode on St Cecilia's Day*, IV) :

But when through all the infernal
bounds
Which flaming Phlegethon surrounds,
Love, strong as Death, the
Poet led

To the pale nations of the dead,
What sounds were heard, . . .

And cries of tortured ghosts !
But, hark ! he strikes the golden
lyre ;

And see ! the tortured ghosts re-
spire,

See, shady forms advance ! . . .

And the pale spectres dance ! . .

[5] "You're going to see this book at once, at once, during the next two or three days." Wait a minute ! "Don't look for it. I want it to happen naturally as I have described to you." That's right, described to you.

[6] Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! What's that Dora ? On ? On the book ? "On the book there's a funny sign. It isn't a star, but its rather shaped like a star." Dora ! It isn't a bit like a star ! No, it isn't pointed ! A star's pointed ! Look, Mr Bill, I'll have to describe it. She says like a star, this has got more like a curve. [Feda draws in the air, and Mr Irving's sketch of her gesture is reproduced below in facsimile].

[5] I handed the book to Mr Irving the morning after the sitting.

[6] The sign in question is Messrs Bell's mark, which appears on the spine of the book and is reproduced below. The description is very good, and the outline drawing also given below shows the peculiar aptness of the expressions "like a star . . . more like a curve," the "petals of a flower," and the "scallops round the edge."

It is not "just a little ordinary design," that is, a mere ornament



FIG. 1



FIG. 2

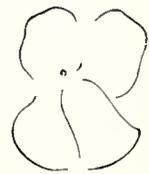


FIG. 3

More like what Feda thinks the petals of a flower. All right, Dora ! Dora says, "What I mean is a more or less round shaped thing, and it has either points or what you might call

without appropriate meaning. It is a sign, a symbol, being Messrs Bell's mark and alluding to their name : hence appropriate only to a book published by them.

scallops round the edge." Dora says "This is not just a little ordinary design, I feel it's a sign, or symbol, specially suited to the book. It has something to do with the book."

[7] Wait a minute ! Oh ! "The book itself seems to contain a great many references to the mind, mentality. Whatever page I turned over I got something about thought or mind.

[8] But I particularly noticed eighteen, eighteen, page eighteen eighteen, eighteen." That wasn't Dora whispered, it was Feda. "One eight, and on this page eighteen there were words that I think were rather beautiful words, worth speaking about." Bars, b-a-r-s, bars, Dora, b-a-r-s, bars, bars, bars, not sheep's baas, but bars like barriers. [An irrelevant witticism of thirteen words, referring to Mrs Leonard, is here omitted]. Dora says, "Something to do with bar, barriers, that I thought was very true, and to a certain extent would be applicable, applicable to you." Mr Bill [Feda touched Mr Irving] to you. Now ! Have you got all that Mr Bill right do you think ? (Yes).

[7] This is perhaps peculiarly appropriate to Pope, who is more concerned with the mind and the reasoning processes of human beings than perhaps any other of the major poets.¹ It is perhaps enough to say that in the present volume appear the *Essay on Man* and the *Moral Essays*, both of which are full of reflections on the mental faculties.

[8] Mr Irving is under the impression that his communicator has recently adopted a new method of counting the pages in booktests, that is, by counting from the beginning of the book, ignoring blank pages. There is no definite statement to this effect in the records of the sittings, but the new method would appear to apply to recent tests. It is borne out by the present one to the extent that the actual p. 18 is blank, while the eighteenth page on the new method is p. 11, on which occur lines 187 to 217 of *Eloisa to Abelard*, which treats, of course, of the famous story of the two parted lovers. The whole poem turns on the bars or barriers preventing their reunion, though there is no reference to bars or barriers on that

¹ After completing this report I turned to Stainton Moses's *Spirit-Identity* (London 1879) to refresh my memory of his booktests. There I found, at p.80, that one of his tests referred to the following passage : "Pope is the last great writer of that school of poetry, the poetry of the intellect, or rather of the intellect mingled with the fancy."

particular page in so many words. The whole poem, again, is applicable to Mr Irving and "Dora" as parted lovers, as Mr Irving fully agrees. On the assumed testpage (p. 11) occur the lines :

Of all affliction taught a lover
yet,
'Tis sure the hardest to forget! . . .
Unequal task! A passion to
resign,
For hearts so touched, so
pierced, so lost as mine.

The statement that the passage is applicable "to a certain extent" is true. For, although the lines apply perfectly when taken out of their context, it will be remembered that in the context it is not by the barrier of death that the lovers are separated.

[9] Mr Bill! Dora feels that the place in which you'll see this book is either a rather dark room, a shaded room, or that you'll be seeing it in the evening. She gets the impression of shade, of shade. "May I explain here" she's awful polite "may I explain here that I have to be careful I'm not picking up someone's thought of shade or of this being a dark room. I'm learning to do so" she says "to differentiate, to differentiate, between the thoughts of someone about the room, and my own thoughts about it. I can tell sometimes [here a voice said 'always'] and I think I can learn to do so always." Wait a minute! "You're going there soon" Mr

[9] I handed the book to Mr Irving, on a dull morning, in the back room of the Society's Library, which is always a rather dark room. It is of course true that Mr Irving found the book interesting and spoke of comparing and examining it.

Bill, she says, "soon. It'll be under circumstances in which you can discuss the matter. You'll be able to say 'Oh! This is interesting. I must compare and examine this book, so and so, so.'"

The ungrateful task of attempting to estimate the statistical value of this booktest must now be attempted. I will take it paragraph by paragraph.

1. This is not an ordinary booktest, where the sitter is given instructions to look in a specified place. Fedra spoke of Mr Irving doing something in the immediate past or immediate future (later the immediate future was definitely given) in connection with a book. This is true, but it cannot be given any value, since it would be true of almost everybody at almost any time. The book was then described as having a particularly vivid shade of red. I had great difficulty in finding a book of a colour similar to that of the Pope; but, allowing for all types of books, it may be very modestly estimated that one book in five has vivid red covers. An examination of average bookshelves will show that the proportion is actually much smaller.

2. No value can be attached to this, for, although there are very definite odds against any given book being of medium size, the estimate given was not literally correct.

3. The odds against this statement are considerable, since only a few of the books from which booktests are usually given, whether in Mr Irving's own house or elsewhere, would have the recent touch of a hand on it. This might, however, be a reasonable assumption if the medium were "aware" (see below) that a special kind of test was involved. Let us therefore give the statement a modest value of 1 in 2.

4. A vast majority of books are not treatises on psychical matters, and very few of them have touches of a psychical kind in them. Let us say, to be moderate, 1 in 10.

5. No value; being a forecast, it would be impossible to prove that it had been confirmed quite spontaneously.

6. This series of statements must be given a high value. A small minority of books have any kind of "sign" on their covers. Only a small proportion of this minority can be described as having "a sign, or symbol, specially suited to the book." Many publishers have no marks at all; no publisher puts his mark on all his books; and only a few, such as the Oxford and Cambridge University Presses, and Messrs Bell themselves, put their marks on a large proportion of their books. A considerable proportion of all marks on books are those of the University Presses, and most forms of these marks are

simply adaptations of the University arms. These, it must be remembered, would not be "specially suited" to a book published by the University Press, since the University arms of course appear on all kinds of other objects. A very small number of books indeed have other kinds of symbols on their covers (such, for instance, as a wheel on a book dealing with engineering). Bookcase no. 17 at the S.P.R. (which has been chosen as it contains miscellaneous books) has 243 volumes on its shelves (February 1931). Eight of these, or 1 in 30, have some kind of symbol on their covers. But this proportion is higher than it would be in a general library, since novels hardly ever bear symbols, and of course there are no novels on our shelves. However, let us give this statement a value of 1 in 25.

Of the various symbols to be found on the covers of books, I do not think that Feda's description would apply to any but to this particular one of Messrs Bell. It would not even apply to the other forms of this firm's "bell" mark. It certainly does not apply to any other sign that I can find on my own shelves or on those of the Society or on the open shelves in the Reading Room of the British Museum. The question, therefore, is what proportion of books bearing any kind of symbol on their covers would bear this particular one of Messrs Bell's? After a careful examination of the many thousands of books in the various libraries to which I have access, I think that this proportion would be very greatly over-estimated at 1 in 100.

The whole of paragraph 6 is therefore given a total chance probability of 1 in 2,500, which is undoubtedly extremely conservative.

7. Few books contain "a great many references to the mind, mentality." Let us put it at 1 in 10.

8. In what proportion of books would the eighteenth page contain so relevant a passage? The proportion must clearly be very small, and would be ludicrously over-estimated at 1 in 100. But there is some doubt whether p. 11 is the one intended; we thus have a choice between two pages (11 and 18, though in the present instance the latter happens to be blank). We ought therefore to halve our odds; but let us be on the safe side and divide by ten, thus obtaining a chance probability of 1 in 10.

9. No value; see 5 above.

We thus get a total maximum chance probability, by simple multiplication, of $1 \text{ in } 5 \times 2 \times 10^3 \times 2500 = 1 \text{ in } 25,000,000$. It must be remembered that every constituent of this figure has been greatly under-estimated; a true valuation, without prejudice either way, would give us an even more remarkable figure. Even so, a chance probability of one in twenty-five million trials drives us to the conclusion that some extra-chance factor operated to bring about this result.

I have fully discussed these calculations with Mr Saltmarsh, who

agrees that they are all very definitely on the conservative side. He goes further and is of the opinion that paragraph 2, to which I give no value, should be given a score of 1 in 2. On the method of Messrs Saltmarsh and Soal¹ and allowing for this view of Mr Saltmarsh's, we obtain the following formula (for help with which I am indebted to Mr Saltmarsh and to Mr Soal).

Score :

$$-2(1 - 1/2) \log 1/2 - (1 - 1/5) \log 1/5 - 3(1 - 1/10) \log 1/10 \\ - (1 - 1/2500) \log 1/2500 = 6.956$$

Standard Error :

$$\sqrt{2/2(1 - 1/2) [\log 1/2]^2 + 1/5(1 - 1/5) [\log 1/5]^2 + 3/10(1 - 1/10) \\ \sqrt{[\log 1/10]^2 + 1/2500(1 - 1/2500) [\log 1/2500]^2} = .630$$

Value :

$$\frac{\text{Standard Error}}{\text{Score}} = \frac{6.956}{.630} = 11.0$$

The result on this basis is so immensely far above chance that it goes beyond the ordinary probability tables, and would thus not be expected to appear by chance alone more often than once in thousands of millions of trials. It is interesting to see that a refined mathematical calculation produces even more favourable results than the ordinary method of simple multiplication.

It will be useful to emphasise one or two points which distinguish this booktest. (1) The test was not, as is usual with booktests, given from a specified place. In the experiment tried by Lady Troubridge, where she selected a particular book for the purpose of a test, Feda was informed of the experiment beforehand and was told where the book had been put.² In the case of an experiment in which a book was made into a parcel by a person not present at the sitting the sitter's communicator was similarly informed.³ In the present instance the absence of references to the place where the book was to be found, in view of the medium's ignorance of the experiment it was hoped to make, and in addition to the definite statements in paragraphs 1 and 3, suggests an awareness by, we may say for convenience, the medium, of an unusual circumstance in this aspect of the test. This is the more striking since the test was given at the very beginning of the sitting, thus ruling out any possible unintended leakage from the sitters. It must also be remembered that, no place being

¹ *Proceedings* (1930), xxxix, 266ff.

² Mrs Henry Sidgwick, "An Examination of Book-Tests obtained in Sitzings with Mrs Leonard," *Proceedings* (1921), xxi, 300.

³ Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, *Some New Evidence for Human Survival* (London 1922), p. 50.

specified, the medium had the whole world of books to choose from, poetry and mathematical textbooks, ledgers and detective novels, tables of logarithms and Coptic dictionaries, any of which might have been chosen, at random, as a test-book.

(2) It was the first time that a Leonard booktest has been given from my flat, and my identity is still, to the best of my knowledge, unknown to the medium. She could therefore have obtained no help from these possible sources of information.

(3) It would be unreasonable to regard the statement that the book "might have 250 to 300 pages" as more than a general indication of size, so that I do not regard the actual size of 323-330 pages as a mistake. In paragraph 8 there is also some doubt, but this may be our fault. Apart from these points every statement made by the medium in connection with this booktest was perfectly accurate.

An attempt at interpretation must now be made. Some of the information given was actively present in the minds of both Mr Irving and myself. All of it was or could conceivably have been at one time, in my consciousness. Hence it is impossible definitely to assume the presence of more than thought-transference. At the same time, taking a little less than the extreme view, it is difficult to suppose that even in the remotest fastnesses of my subconsciousness did I know what sentiments were to be found, not on the actual page 18 of the volume, but on an arbitrary page 18 calculated on a method most distasteful to my bibliographical passions. To accept the extreme view it would be necessary to suppose that when handling this volume of Pope, which I have certainly had in my hands fairly often, I noticed how many preliminary pages there were in the book and which of them were blank; and that this knowledge enabled me subconsciously to work out that page 11 in the book, previously selected owing to my recollection of the sentiment appearing on it, should be given as 18 in order to give the statement the air of a message from Mr Irving's communicator, since it is assumed that this would have been the latter's way of giving the reference. To this must be added that this supposed method of the communicator's was unknown to me when I last opened the book before the sitting. In short, it seems to me, even in the light of what we know about the powers of the subconsciousness, that the attribution of this booktest purely to thought-transference presents very great difficulties.

The question therefore arises whether any part of it is reasonably capable of being regarded as evidence for survival or for clairvoyance. Here we enter a region where idle speculation is least profitable. It is enough to say that such knowledge as we possess seems to suggest that clairvoyance is the more likely hypothesis, since the volume of Pope had no associations with Mr Irving or with his communicator. I therefore suggest that the least unlikely notion is that a telepathic

communication from the sitters directed the medium to the source from which the booktest was to be taken, and that the test itself was obtained by a clairvoyant perception.¹

It is only right to add that this opinion is not shared by Mr Irving himself. To make this quite clear Mr Irving has kindly written the following postscript: "It is my view, and I think a not unreasonable view, that the communicator was the clairvoyant, and that, having made herself acquainted beforehand with the fact that Mr Besterman had selected a book for test purposes, she chose passages from this book suitable to herself and to me. The other booktests given at this sitting were, I think, taken in the same way and with the same method of counting pages. Although, in this particular case, there is little in the material selected that can be said to point to the agent being the surviving memory of one particular person, i.e. of my wife, in some of the other cases of booktests taken from houses unknown to me there have been what I consider definite signs of this in the material chosen, so that to me it is simpler to attribute the present test to the same possible agency."

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

The Monist, July 1930.

In an article entitled "Psychology and Psychical Research," Dr F. C. S. Schiller discusses the relation of philosophy and psychology to psychical research, and in particular the precautions which must be taken in drawing conclusions from the phenomena.

In the author's view, the bankruptcy of philosophic psychology leaves the coast clear for psychical research. But in his view the difficulties in the way of effective psychical research are stupendous and greatly exceed those which ordinary science has to encounter. These difficulties arise from a bias due to an emotional element in the mind of the observer. The hypotheses of psychical research arouse an intense emotional reaction which produces an emotional bias which may lead perfectly respectable and otherwise credible witnesses to give false evidence. Hence it is not so much against fraud and trickery that one has to guard, as against self-deception.

Another difficulty is that modern science has lost the conception of "soul" as an efficacious principle. But, says the author, "We have good reasons for reconsidering the assumption that 'soul' must be an inefficacious impotent 'epiphenomenon' that has no power over 'body'."

This article suggests to the reviewer that the author is particularly free from either of the two kinds of bias which are most often encountered. These arise from the materialistic complex and the

¹ Cp. Mrs Sidgwick, *op. cit.*, xxxi. 377.

spiritualistic complex. The materialist complex leads a careful observer like Professor Richet to reject any theory which is inconsistent with his *a priori* view that "mind cannot function without brain." This view-point of Professor Richet is a subject of an article by the reviewer in the *Hibbert Journal* (April 1924) and the materialistic complex has been discussed at length by the reviewer in *A Neglected Complex*. It must suffice to say here that its effect on the judgment is such as to turn aside the strongest evidence of supernormal events or to provide fanciful explanations of them.

The bias due to a spiritualistic complex has equally to be guarded against. It may lead to the acceptance of supernormal theories for facts which are obviously open to explanation on normal lines. The difficulty for psychical students is that they have to find their way between Scylla and Charybdis so as to avoid both perils.

W. R. BOUSFIELD.

Zeitschrift für die gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie, vol. cxix.

Under the title of "Über die seelische Struktur einer 'Hellseherin,' zugleich ein Beitrag zur Klinik der Halluzinose und zur Psychologie der Denktätigkeit," Dr Fünfgeld, of the Psychiatric Clinic of Frankfurt University, analyses the mental structure of *Mina Müller*, a woman supposed by herself to be clairvoyant. After a detailed account of her heredity and personal history, the writer proceeds to an account of the investigation he conducted into her clairvoyant claims. This part of Dr Fünfgeld's report is lamentably inadequate. First he wrote words (? common nouns) on slips of paper, on which he then concentrated. In a second experiment he fixed his thoughts on various objects in the room. In both cases we are told that the subject completely failed to discover what Dr Fünfgeld was thinking of. But we are given no information whatever as to the number of trials made, as to the conditions under which they were made, as to Dr Fünfgeld's definition of a failure; in short, nearly all the details that are considered essential in the report of an investigation into supernormal faculties are lacking. (It is most convenient to retain the word clairvoyance, *Hellschen*, but it will be observed that Dr Fünfgeld uses it very loosely to indicate any kind of supernormal mental faculty.)

Next *Mina M.*'s claim to be able to foretell the results of horse races was investigated. As a result the subject obtained thirty to forty per cent. of success. Dr Fünfgeld discounts this success on the ground that racing experts customarily obtain equally good, and even better, percentages of success. It may be so, but it is a statement that could so easily have been tested that it should not have been made without some evidence. I would suggest that the forecasts in, say, six newspapers for the dates in question should be

consulted, and the results compared with the subject's statements. Unless newspaper tipsters are wiser in Germany than they are in England, I should be surprised to find them able to give so large a proportion of successful forecasts. Finally, the subject failed to find a lost earring. From *Mina M.*'s general history and psychology it seems very probable that her claims to the possession of supernormal faculties are delusive, but as evidence for this these experiments of Dr Fünfgeld's, as reported by him, are quite inconclusive.

The remaining part of the paper is much more important. In it the writer endeavours to ascertain how the subject arrived at her conviction that she is clairvoyant. Dr Fünfgeld rejects the view that the subject is suffering from some serious mental disturbance, and is also unable to find evidence for the presence of definite hallucinatory trends (though it seems difficult to exclude this possibility in the case of the voices heard by her). The chief elements which Dr Fünfgeld discovered in the subject's psychological make-up which would explain the presence of her belief, are a general tendency to paranoia, a pronounced incapacity for taking up a critical attitude towards her own mental processes (evidence makes no impression on her, the subjective feeling of "rightness" overruling everything else), and a remarkable capacity for putting together minute indications (what Dr Fünfgeld conveniently calls *Kombinationsfähigkeit*). These are the mental constituents which, as it were, provide the mechanism of the subject's hallucinosis. But the driving power of this mechanism Dr Fünfgeld finds in *Mina M.*'s overweening ambition (which is of course bound up with, or the cause of, her paranoia). In connection with the subject's *Kombinationsfähigkeit* Dr Fünfgeld gives an amusing account of the experiment in which he fixed his thoughts on objects in the room. The subject detected and acted upon the very slightest movements of his head, eyes, etc., but was so devoid of critical faculty that she followed these slavishly even when Dr Fünfgeld, having discovered what she was doing, counterfeited these movements.

I have given only the barest outline of Dr Fünfgeld's valuable paper, but I have given enough to show once more how very greatly it is to be desired that some mental medium with acknowledged supernormal faculties should submit to psychological analysis. I am strongly inclined to believe, from such observations as it has been possible to make without formal analysis, that a genuine mental medium would not show the same abnormal or even near-abnormal traits as are shown by such subjects as Dr Fünfgeld's.

THEODORE BESTERMAN.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, February 1931.

The first article in this number is an elaborate and conscientious account by Herr R. Lambert of some experiments with the clair-

voyant Max Moecke. Herr Lambert thinks that in what Moecke said to two of the sitters, the percentage of success was respectively 45 and 52; whilst in attempts by Professor Max Dessoir making haphazard statements to strangers about their circumstances only five statements in a hundred were correct. I am impressed by an observer of Herr Lambert's calibre arriving at a positive conclusion; nevertheless I feel somewhat sceptical as to the general value of such performances as Moecke's. We want names and dates, not statements which like caps will fit many a head; we want also fewer mistakes.

Dr Wendler describes what he calls an attempt at levitation: four persons put their forefingers under the knees and shoulders of the person to be "levitated" and all the five breathe simultaneously as deeply as possible twenty times, after which the experiment succeeds quite easily. It does not succeed with an inanimate object nor if the person who is the object of the experiment does not take part in the deep breathing.

An account of some mysterious knockings occurring at Oppau, in the Landeshut district in the presence of a nine year old peasant girl is quoted from a newspaper. They seem to have created quite a stir in the region, were observed by several persons occupying an official position and gave rise to various hypotheses, including some rather unexpected ones (*e.g.* underground water). There seems to have been no exposure, but apparently the observers were unaware that similar raps can be produced and have been produced by the toes. *A propos* of this Oppau case similar incidents occurring nine years ago at Oberspier are reprinted from another newspaper.

A dialogue "For or Against Spiritism" between two members of the Berliner Aertzlichen Gesellschaft für parapsychische Forschung broadcast a few months ago, is reproduced, Dr Bergmann championing the spiritistic hypothesis and Dr Schmidt the animistic. Seeing that for the latter the authenticity, *e.g.* of materialisation is beyond doubt it seems that this dialogue might have been made much more instructive and Dr Bergmann's position much less easy to defend.

The Baroness Kulmer of Vienna has the first instalment of a paper on Baron Hellenbach (1827-1887) "as thinker, researcher and philanthropist." Professor Blacher replies somewhat acrimoniously to Prof. Anton Seitz's criticisms (in *Phänomene des Spiritismus*) directed against some alleged levitations of the medium Frau Ideler. Various "parapsychical" incidents narrated by Caesarius von Heisterbach are quoted by Herr Wagner of Linz. Some "critical remarks" on Heinrich Melzer's sittings in Holland and Dr van Holthe tot Echten's reply are not calculated to favour the hypothesis that the apparitions were genuine, but rather the reverse. as was to be expected.

P.-P.-S.

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY,

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 27 May 1931, at 5.30 p.m.,

WHEN A DISCUSSION ON

BOOKTESTS

WILL BE OPENED BY

MR THEODORE BESTERMAN

N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.30 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.

IMPORTANT NOTICE CONCERNING MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY.

MEETINGS of the Society will, from April 1931, be held monthly, except in July and August. These meetings will provide opportunity for the usual formal papers, and also for informal addresses and conversaciones. Notices of the meetings will be printed as usual in the *Journal*, and it will be advisable always to consult these, as special additional meetings may be arranged from time to time.

Members and Associates are particularly asked to note that all future meetings (unless specific notice to the contrary is given) will be held at 5.30 on the last Wednesday of each month. Tea will be served from 4.30, to which Members and Associates are invited.

It will be observed that the months in which no meetings are to be held are July and August, and not August and September, as originally announced. It has been found that the new arrangement will be more convenient for the majority of members.

OBITUARY.

MONSIEUR M. SAGE.

WE have to report with much regret the death of Monsieur M. Sage, who had been an Honorary Associate of the Society since 1904. Monsieur Sage was a valuable worker, enthusiastic, but at the same time cautious and a good judge of evidence. He co-operated with the Society in several interesting investigations. In 1908, for example, he enquired on the Society's behalf into the "Alleged Miraculous Hailstones of Remiremont" (*Proceedings*, xxi. 405); he also contributed some valuable knowledge locally acquired to the review of *An Adventure* (*Proceedings*, xxv. 353), and in conjunction with Count Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo made some enquiries into the alleged exposure of D. D. Home (*Journal*, xv. 274).

M. Sage was also of considerable help to the Society by making its work better known on the continent, especially in France. He published several books on psychical research, of which the best known (published in 1902) is called *Madame Piper et la Société Anglo-Américaine pour les Recherches Psychiques* and has been translated into both English and German.

A SERIES OF MEDIUMISTIC STATEMENTS MADE TO FOUR SITTERS.

THE following case, which is a record of incidents occurring at sittings with mediums, chiefly with Mrs Annie Brittain, has been sent to us by Mr E. S. Thomas, a Member of the Society, to whom the various

sitters are known, being connected with him by marriage. Their names have been communicated to us, but pseudonyms are used here.

The reader will be better able to follow the case in detail if a short synopsis of events and persons is given first. Four sitters are involved :

(a) Mrs *Atley*, who had her first sitting with Mrs Brittain on 17 May 1929. One of the ostensible communicators was her daughter Dorothy who had died in the previous March as a result of influenza.

(b) Mrs *Grant*, a niece of Mrs *Atley*, who had her first sitting with Mrs Brittain on 23 August 1929. Mrs *Grant's* daughter Molly had died in the previous June of severe head injuries resulting from a motor accident.

(c) Mrs *Fowler*, Mrs *Grant's* daughter, who had her first sitting with Mrs Brittain on the same day as Mrs *Grant*, but about two hours later. It should be noted that Mrs *Grant* and Mrs *Fowler* sat anonymously, as did also Mrs *Atley*. The only reason Mrs Brittain had for connecting the two sitters of 23 August was that their appointments had been made by Mrs *Atley*. From a comparison of the statements made at the three sittings, and especially the number of recurrent names, it seems clear that the close connection between the sitters was apprehended.

(d) Mr *Grant*, Mrs *Grant's* husband, who had a sitting with Mr Glover Botham about 20 March 1930. Only one incident is reported from this sitting ; it is with sitters (a), (b) and (c) that the case is mainly concerned.

The record printed here has been compiled from statements sent to Mr Thomas by the various sitters, who took their own notes. It should be observed that on several occasions clear and veridical references seem to have been made to matters of which the sitters had no normal knowledge at the time. This is a point of some importance where the record of an independent note-taker is not available, because inexperienced sitters—not able to write shorthand—may without any intention to deceive record the points in a statement which strike them as veridical rather than those which do not. The original documents of the case are in the Society's possession.

Extracts from Mrs Atley's first sitting with Mrs Brittain, 17 May 1929.

[1]. Mrs *Atley's* husband accurately described—very tidy, austere-looking—sitter's name given correctly, and her husband's as Ted, Teddy, or Edward.

[1]. Details not recorded by sitter. Correct name of late husband.

[2] Some one with him called Jim.

[3]. Sarah and Mary mentioned as with sitter's husband.

[4]. There is a girl (with Edward) with such a sweet face, and a very beautiful disposition. I feel she has not gone over long, and hardly knows how to communicate. The name sounds like Dorothy or Doris.

[5]. She says (regarding her death) "I thought I was falling asleep and my heart just stopped, and I found myself here (and) was just going to write to you."

[6]. She has a very sweet clear laugh.

[7]. She says "I never thought I would go first; we always thought C—d (husband) would."

[8]. (Dorothy is) looking after little children who were arriving over there, especially (those) who have been unhappy on earth.

The name M—ie is given. I can't quite understand what . . . they want to give. Was there a little child died? Misarrriage or something like it? There's something about a second child—was another expected?

[9]. Something about E—ie.

[2]. His brother, father of Mrs W. Grant.

[3]. Two of his deceased sisters.

[4]. A good description of sitter's deceased daughter Dorothy.

[5]. She died suddenly and quietly while convalescent from pneumonia after influenza in March 1929.

[6]. True.

[7]. True; confirmed by her husband; he died seven months after her.

[8]. The sitter is great-aunt of a M—ie who had a stillborn child a month before this sitting. Mrs *Atley* replied, "Oh no, there was nothing of that kind," quite forgetting (assuming she had already heard) the above news. This incident (the reference to M—ie followed the reference to Dorothy looking after children.¹ It was only on re-reading her notes much later that the meaning struck her and she wrote to M—ie's mother on 15 October following. She cannot be sure whether she had heard the news at the time of the sitting or not.

[9]. The very uncommon name of a (living) cousin of Dorothy's was given, daughter of Susan (see below).

¹ On 20 October 1930 Mrs *Davis*, mother of M—ie and sister of Mrs *Grant*, was told at a Spiritualist Church near Birmingham that a beautiful baby was near her in spirit in charge of its nurse. Her thoughts turned to M—ie's

Extract from Mrs Atley's second sitting with Mrs Brittain, 6 August 1929.

[10]. Molly is here ; she had an accident, something to her head. She sends her love to her mother.

[10]. This was in answer to enquiry about Molly, daughter of Mrs *Grant*, who died after a motor accident in June 1929. No note of this incident was made at the time by the sitter as sitting was disappointing. But her letter about it to Mrs *Grant* led to the latter's sitting with Mrs Brittain.

Extracts from Mrs W. Grant's first sitting with Mrs Brittain, 23 August 1929.

[11]. A beautiful spirit named Elizabeth, fond of you . . . glad to pass over . . . died of cancer a long time ago.

[11]. Aunt and godmother of sitter ; true regarding cancer.

[12]. Fine face of a man . . . fine features, deep-set blue eyes, good forehead, small side-whiskers, dent in chin . . . says his name is William.

[12]. An accurate description in all details of sitter's uncle, Edward William *Atley* (see [1] above).

[13]. There is John (sitter could not place John and said so), perhaps it is James, or a little word like Jim ; and there is Emily and Florence. Florence is Emily and Jim's daughter.

[13]. Sitter's father was named Jim (see [2] above), her mother, Emily ; and Florence is a sister who died young. The rest of the family are all living.

[14]. Emily is not large any more, and quite well and much younger . . . A good manager.

[14]. She was rather portly in later life and suffered in health from the effects of a fall. It is only partially true that she was a "good manager," though she was a woman of strong character.

[15]. True details.

[15]. Jim has blue eyes that twinkle and a round face, merry.

[16]. Emily wants to talk and Jim has taken Florence by the arm and says, "Let her have it her own way, we'll trot round a bit."

[16]. Characteristic remark.

child and to her own old nurse (deceased). In answer to her question the voyante said in effect that the nurse was not old but young and beautiful and her name was Dorothy. This statement is certified by Mrs *Davis* to be correct.

[17]. There is another mother much quieter than yours.

Is there a Charles ?

She is not like your mother, taller and quieter . . . She gives her love and says Charles and Alfred both living have had a difference of opinion . . . she would like to see them friends again.

[18]. Now Emily says, "She isn't your mother and she has had long enough."

[19]. She says when she passed over Florence met her and she soon got her health.

[20]. There is a Sarah and a Mary and they are trying to send a message to Ellen still living and Elizabeth. There are three somehow together.

(At this point the medium woke and asked sitter if she was satisfied. She said yes, but she had not got what she really came for. Medium apparently relapsed into trance, and said :)

[21]. I forgot to tell you—a beautiful girl has been sitting with you in your chair with her arm round you ; . . . she is so excited and pleased to see you—she can't build herself up properly . . . she is taller than you and the arm hanging over your shoulder is a big beautiful arm : a well-shaped hand, but rather sporting-looking wrists. She liked sports.

Her hair is beautiful : light and dark gold-brown. Her eyes are blue.

Sitter : Blue ?

No, perhaps wall-flower colour.

[17]. Sitter's mother-in-law evidently meant—a quieter person and taller than Emily—as Charles is her son, sitter's husband.

True regarding Charles and his brother Alfred at the time.

[18]. Characteristic remark

[19]. See above note [13] on Florence.

[20]. Aunts of the sitter (see also Mrs *Atley's* first sitting, note [3]). Ellen alone is living. Ellen, Mary and Elizabeth lived together (see above note [11] on Elizabeth). Sitter is sure the meaning was "and (there is) Elizabeth," not "and (to) Elizabeth."

[21]. These details are accurately descriptive of sitter's daughter Molly : her hair was gold-brown. She wore bracelets, because she thought she had "hefty" wrists. She was good at games, very strong and agile.

Her eyes were brown.

[22]. She is about twenty-two, I should think.

[23]. She is laughing and says Winnie and Charles, and says, "That is for evidence."

That is not what she calls you, but Mum (sitter assents) or like that and Dad, she says.

[24]. I don't think she is as old as twenty-two, as she is trying to blow a little wheel ornament in your hat round, and says, "What a funny thing to wear in a hat."

[25]. She says she is with Dorothy, helping . . .

[26]. Dorothy passed over early in the year and left a little boy and little girl (sitter dissents).

(The communicator also sent her love to everybody, giving the names of three girls friends and of her six living brothers and sisters).

Extracts from Mrs Fowler's sitting with Mrs Brittain, 23 August 1929, about two hours after Mrs Grant's sitting.

[27]. There's Emily, that's your Grandma . . . She says she can run about like she used to do before she got big here (showing waist), she's respectable now.

[28]. She got big because she had something the matter—inside.

[29]. She has rather nice hair for a Grandma.

[30]. She must have been very religious because she used to like you to come to her house and read from the Bible "In my Father's house are many mansions."

[22]. She was nearly twenty-one.

[23]. Winnie and Charles are her parents' Christian names. True.

[24]. A very characteristic touch.

[25]. Dorothy was her second cousin, daughter of her great-uncle Ted (see above, Mrs *Atley's* sitting).

[26]. She died in March 1929 leaving a baby girl.

[27]. Correct name ; see above note [13].

[28.] Not known to the family.

[29]. She had very thick hair for her age (76).

[30]. All true ; she was very religious, and this was a favourite passage of hers.

[31]. A beautiful young girl has come in. She went over suddenly a little while ago . . . She's taller than you.

[32]. "Hallo," she says, "have you got on her stockings? Because you used to pinch her stockings."

[33]. She says you ought to have gone first, you're the eldest. That's a joke, she's laughing.

[34]. Anyhow now you won't have to give her a twenty-first birthday present . . .

[35]. There is her blue nighty, she'd like you to have her blue nighty . . .

[36]. She is worried about some shoes just before she passed over: her feet are so big no one else can wear her shoes.

[37]. She said she was . . . looking forward to seeing you, and you were just too late weren't you? And it was that baby kept you wasn't it?

[38]. Oh, she hated that awful place, she'd never been back there; she was not dead, dead . . . is going to help you all. My goodness, she will have something to do looking after all the family.

(After several attempts to get her name the name Molly was obtained suddenly and written in her characteristic way in the air: round, detached o, straight l's, and "gamma" y.)

[31]. Molly (sitter's sister) died in June 1929. True; sitter is also tall.

[32]. A very interesting statement, but inverted. She was the borrower.

[33]. Sitter is the eldest of the family.

[34]. She died shortly before her twenty-first birthday.

[35]. Sitter lives abroad and knew nothing of this blue sleeping-suit, for the existence of which Mrs *Grant* vouches.

[36]. Her mother had recently bought her an expensive pair of lizard-skin shoes, they were too small and were soon trodden out of shape and spoilt. Sitter knew nothing of this and thinking a purchase had not been paid for said she would see about it.

[37]. Sitter's visit to England was delayed by her baby's health and she arrived just too late.

[38]. Clearly the hospital where she was taken. There are six brothers and sisters living; see above, end of Mrs *Grant's* sitting.

[39]. She says you must take care of Winnie and Charles, Mum and Dad . . . And Geoff, you must help Geoff. Why didn't you bring Geoff with you? She was very fond of Geoff, though they used to quarrel a lot at home. Geoff would always argue all wrong. She was going to mend some music for Geoff, didn't get it done, and bind the back of a book, something like a schoolbook he used to work from.

[40]. She would like Geoff to have her books.

[41]. And what about her little bus in the stables—no good leaving it there doing nothing . . .

[42]. She left some bags behind, only there were some things missing from them.

[43]. She says you have it—the little bus. Take it to a place like Malvern and they will tune it up for you . . . she'd be happier if you used it.

[44]. And the "creature," that's a joke—someone they used to call the creature.

[45]. Who is Geoff going with? Benson. (Do you mean Henson?). Yes, H E N S O N . . .

[46]. There is a couch; have you a musical couch in your house? Or perhaps with a spring broken that squeaks. She says it is out from the wall . . . and that she used to come down on it and you used to tell her not to . . .

[47]. When you feel lonely you think, "I'd like old Moll to come and take me out in her little bus."

[39]. See [23] above. Her brother Geoff; true regarding affection. They were fond of arguing. A way she might have regarded it. She was going to bind a music book for G.; sitter was not aware of this.

[40]. G. would appreciate a gift of books.

[41]. She always called her car the "little bus." The garage at home is the stables.

[42]. True; handbags with fittings missing.

[43]. Molly often took her car to Malvern to be tuned up.

[44]. Significance not understood.

[45]. The name of one connected with the organising of a tour (orchestra) on which Geoff was going: he did not go himself.

[46]. All true.

[47]. Characteristic of what sitter might think and say.

[48]. She doesn't like the photograph of her looking like a boy—one with a big collar and neck that goes down; it makes her look like a schoolteacher. She likes the one she had taken at the beginning of the year with her head looking out.

[49]. She does love that baby; give him a big hug from his Auntie Moll.

[50]. Somewhere earlier she said, "Wasn't it funny I went over in some one else's nighty and oh I had such a headache."

[51]. There is Dorothy who went over earlier in the year and left a little girl and she is helping Dorothy with the babies.

[52]. (Regarding helping another sister to find a suitable "partner"); she doesn't want to get mixed up in any matrimonial complications.

[53]. She says give her love to Tom, Belle, Percy and your husband.

[54]. Thank Dorothy's mother for telling Mum.

Extracts from sitting of Mrs Atley and her daughter J., with Mr Glover-Botham, 26 October 1929, in France.

[55]. (Jim described clearly, but details not recorded). He was a religious man, fond of going to church and singing hymns, but he's very jolly too—joking now—different to his brother who is serious.

[56]. (Dorothy described as having a lovely complexion, soft curling hair, very sweet face, lovely eyes).

[48]. A large photograph answering to this description was taken. Early in the year a smaller one with a high neck was also taken. [I have seen this "large photograph" with the "big collar." *Hon. Ed.*]

[49]. The sex of the child is correctly given.

[50]. Sitter would hardly have known of this, although a natural inference. The head injuries were very severe.

[51]. See above, Mrs Atley's sitting.

[52]. Characteristic remark.

[53]. Tom and Belle are an elder brother and his wife. Percy is perhaps meant for Nancy, another sitter. Sitter's father-in-law's name was given for her husband's.

[54]. See above, Mrs Atley's second sitting.

[55]. See [2] and [13] above. This characterisation of Jim is striking. His love of and lustiness in singing hymns were notable traits. Regarding his brother Edward see [1] above.

[56]. The name was not given, but sitters exclaimed it at the correctness of this description.

[57]. Who is Elizabeth ? Dorothy is speaking of Elizabeth.

[58]. (Dorothy tells her sister J. to play old songs and the one about roses and she will sing it).

[59]. (She tells J. she was with her when she took gloves and that rose with no smell which was with them out of a drawer).

[60]. (References to Mrs *Atley's* photographs of Dorothy with flowers under them. Dorothy had heard her mother speak to them and say "Good morning, Dorothy".)

[61]. (To request for something about Molly, reply was) Molly is here in the spirit-world, (with statement about an accident and her head badly hurt. Described as young, very handsome, pretty colouring, very pretty teeth).

[62]. (Some one called Thomas described ; elderly, grey and serious-looking ; with sitter's mother.)

[57]. The name of Dorothy's little daughter. She went on to express satisfaction at the arrangements made for the child.

[58]. She used to sing "Roses of Picardy."

[59]. An artificial rose was, with gloves, given her by Dorothy, when J. did as stated. The medium made a motion of opening a drawer.

[60]. True description and statement. Sitter had said this that morning (Dorothy's birthday).

[61]. See [13] and [21] above. Descriptive details correct.

[62]. Remembered after the sitting as the name and an apt description of an elder brother of the sitter, not seen for many years. He lived abroad and had died a few months before. Sitter was concerned that in her eagerness to avoid side-issues her memory had been so distressingly at fault.

Extract from sitting of Mr C. Grant (Mrs Grant's husband) and his son G. with Mr Glover Botham, about 20 March 1930.

[63]. (Describing a communicator), Look in the third page of the old album. She was a woman of average height, nothing to indicate cause of passing ; she died unexpectedly from an

[63]. Mrs *Grant's* Aunt Susie (sister of Edward, Jim, Mary, Sarah, see [3] above), was not quite average height. She died from the effects of over-activity after the birth of a child. She

internal complaint, and was apparently fond of music, as she was building up an harmonium.

used to play the harmonium in church. An old album belonging to Mary had on her recent death passed into the hands of Mrs *Grant's* sister. It proved to contain two photographs on the third page, one of which was of "Aunt Susie." The sitters had no idea of the existence of this album, of which Mrs *Grant* was at once reminded on hearing of the above. She immediately telephoned her sister who lives at no great distance from her, and the statement was verified forthwith. The rest of the sitting was interesting, but not evidential.

A factor which lends a special interest to this case is that we have here a group of sitters connected by various family ties. The connection between them seems to be clearly recognised (this is by no means always the case, even where the medium might be thought to have some normal reason for assuming a connection), and the statements made at the different sittings form a consistent whole. The sitters were persons of education and intelligence, not convinced spiritualists and with a good grasp of evidence. Mr Thomas writes :

"All the ladies knew about telepathy and were chiefly impressed by statements made unknown to the sitters . . . They were anxious all of them to get at the truth. . . ."

"I have heard a great deal about or known all the persons concerned in these scripts living and dead, and have been greatly struck by the livingness of the 'personifications' of the communicators, like the rest of us."

REVIEWS.

C. J. WRIGHT, *Miracle in History and in Modern Thought*. 8vo, pp. ix. 433. London : Constable & Co., 1930. Price 18s. net.

This book is divided into two Parts. The first deals with the general question of miracles and the miraculous ; the second applies the results gained in the first to the miraculous element in Christianity.

Chapter I gives an account of the development of European thought on the subject in the recent past. A profound difference of

opinion has gradually disclosed itself. There is, on the one hand, the traditional view that a miracle is an event which cannot be accounted for by the laws and agents of Nature and must be ascribed to the direct action of God. On this view the occurrence of miracles is an essential premise, without which the existence of a God who governs and directs the world cannot be established. On the other hand, there is the view that "miracles," in the sense defined above, can never be known to happen; that their occurrence is not necessary in order to establish the existence of a governing and directing God; and that, if they did occur, they would be a positive embarrassment to theism.

Mr Wright takes the second view. He carefully distinguishes with regard to any event which has been alleged to happen and has been called a "miracle" the two questions: (a) Did this event in fact happen? and (b) Supposing that it did, was it inexplicable by finite natural agents and the laws of nature, and must it be ascribed to the direct action of God? To the first question he answers that there is no event, however startling and unusual, with regard to which it is impossible that there should be such good evidence as to make it reasonable to believe that it happened. In this connection he discusses Hume's theory in Chap. II. He rightly concludes that Hume's contention that *no* evidence could suffice to make it reasonable to admit the occurrence of an event which contradicts a hitherto uniform experience is quite worthless. But he recognises that Hume did good service in pointing out the many sources of weakness which infect *most* evidence for the occurrence of such events. After allowing for this, he concludes that, among the enormous mass of strange events which have been reported in connection with various religious and magical practices, there probably is a residue of genuine fact.

In Chapter III the author describes the relation of natural science to miracle. Here the above distinction becomes highly important. When it is said that natural science cannot admit miracles, what is true is that it cannot admit that there are any events which are in principle incapable of that kind of explanation by natural agents and natural laws which science always seeks to give. "Explanation" in this sense is, of course, merely subsumption under *de facto* general rules, and it is a postulate of science that this is always theoretically possible. But natural science has no right whatever to assert of any alleged event, no matter how startling and unprecedented, that it could not have happened. The scientist who asserts of an alleged event that it could not have happened, and the theologian who asserts of it that it is a "miracle" in the traditional sense, are guilty of precisely the same kind of unwarranted dogmatism. Both are assuming that we know *all* the laws and *all* the agents in nature: for it is only on this assumption that the former could be

justified in denying that such an event could have happened, and it is only on this assumption that the latter could be justified in denying that it could be explained by natural causes.

In Chapter IV Mr Wright gives a sympathetic account of psychical research and kindred subjects, and uses their results to reinforce his contention that many alleged events which have been called "miracles" may well have happened, and yet may not be "miracles" in the traditional sense. It is plain that human minds have many latent powers; and it would not be surprising if great personalities, like the founders of religions, had these powers to so high a degree as to generate by natural causation very singular phenomena in the mental and even in the physical realm.

Mr Wright brings his argument to a head in the long chapter which ends Part I. This is entitled "The Idea of God and the Miraculous." He holds that belief in God is not something which has to be inferred from and justified by either the general order of nature or alleged "miraculous" interferences with it. Religious experience is a form of *knowledge* which does not need external support, though it has to be reconciled with the deliveries of other alleged sources of knowledge. To the theist who has this knowledge the whole order of nature is a manifestation of God's character and workings, though certain features in it may exhibit the character of God more clearly than others. To rest one's belief in God on "miracles" in a traditional sense is dangerous to theism in two different ways. In the first place, no event could possibly be *known* to be a "miracle" in this sense. At most the theist could *suspect* the presence of miracles at those points at which scientific explanation has so far failed. As scientific knowledge advances this kind of theism must continually defend positions which it will eventually have to abandon. Secondly, if God performs "miracles" in the traditional sense at all, his choice of the occasions for performing them, and his omission to perform them on other occasions, presents a most formidable ethical difficulty.

I do not propose to discuss the second Part, which is concerned with specifically Christian miracles. In conclusion I would say that Mr Wright has provided a most interesting and sensible discussion of a difficult subject. His range of reading is very wide, and he appends a useful bibliography of fifteen pages. I think that the book might have been shortened with advantage by the omission of some of the enormous mass of quotations, but this is a matter of opinion.

C. D. BROAD.

PIERRE QUERCY, *L'Hallucination. I. Philosophes et Mystiques. II. Études Cliniques.* 8vo, 2 vols. Paris: Félix Alcan, 1930. Price 100 fr.

The first of these volumes is historical: it contains an account of the various theories of perception and its relation to our mental life

put forward by such philosophers as Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Taine and Bergson. The volume concludes with a detailed discussion of the psychological experiences of St Theresa, and especially of her visions. Dr Querey's point of view may be inferred from his conclusion that such visions are hallucinatory, but are not wholly the product of the unconscious mind; they are the joint outcome of an individual volition and "the direct influence of God upon our soul."

It should be stated that Dr Querey considers such experiences as St Theresa's very rare and to be distinguished from the various types of hallucination which he discusses in his second volume. St Theresa's hallucinations were, in fact, what a student of psychical research would call "veridical," although Dr Querey does not anywhere discuss this aspect of the problem, or consider the possibility that in persons less gifted than the saint an hallucination may sometimes have a supernormal source.

In his second volume Dr Querey describes and discusses all the various kinds and degrees of sensory illusion and hallucination occurring either in a more or less normal state, or in highly abnormal states, as in various forms of insanity, under the influence of drugs and so forth. He includes an account of some personal experiences of his own during illness.

The conclusion to which he comes is that our sensory experiences may be grouped in three classes:

(1) We may perceive an object which is actually present (normal sensory perception).

(2) We may perceive an object which is not present (externalised hallucination).

(3) We may have quasi-sensory impressions of an object which is neither present nor actually perceived (visualisation and sensory illusions of various kinds, including hypnagogic illusions).

H. DE G. S.

T. FUKURAI, *Clairvoyance and Thoughtography*. 4to, pp. 247, 119 ill. London: Rider and Co., 1931. Price 21s. net.

This is a report of numerous experiments carried out with several Japanese mediums. The results were in many cases very striking (far beyond anything that can reasonably be attributed to chance), but unfortunately the conditions in which most of the experiments were carried out were not altogether satisfactory.

In the experiments in clairvoyance with Chizuko Mifune, for example, the medium, and especially her hands, were on most occasions under very imperfect observation owing to her persistence in sitting with her back to the observers. On the occasion of his last experiments with her Dr Fukurai persuaded her to sit facing him and obtained some success (the naming of the uppermost face of dice

lying in a closed cigarette case), but unfortunately the medium died shortly after this promising development.

With another medium, Ikuko Nagao, experiments in "thoughtography" were tried, that is, the impressing of a letter or figure on an undeveloped photographic plate by concentration of thought on the part of the medium. Many successful results were obtained, but the precautions taken against fraudulent manipulation or substitution of plates appear to have been inadequate. In the case of a special experiment devised by Dr Yamakawa (of Tokyo University) with elaborate precautions against fraud, some very suspicious circumstances were observed, though it must be admitted that the experiment was not well carried out, and the result therefore confused.

In 1928 in the course of a visit to England Dr Fukurai had two sittings with the Crewe circle at which some typical and unconvincing results were obtained.

H. DE G. S.

THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE
CIRCULATION.

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on a definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only." The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

JOURNAL
OF THE
Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

The Second
Frederic W. H. Myers Memorial Lecture

WILL BE DELIVERED BY

Dr T. W. MITCHELL

AT THE

CONWAY HALL

(RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1)

ON

WEDNESDAY, 24 June 1931, at 5.30 p.m.

N.B.—Admission will be by Ticket only. Full particulars are given on the following page.

NEW MEMBER.

Bruck, Dr Carl, Prenzlauer Allee 25, Berlin N.O. 55, Germany.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 283rd Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1, on Wednesday, 29 April 1931, at 3 p.m., MRS HENRY SIDGWICK in the chair. There were also present: Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Miss Ina Jephson, Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr W. H. Salter, Mr S. G. Soal, and Dr V. J. Woolley; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

One new Member was elected. His name and address are given above.

Professor Charles Sage was elected an Hon. Associate of the Society.

THE SECOND MYERS MEMORIAL LECTURE.

THE Second Frederic W. H. Myers Memorial Lecture, entitled *Beneath the Threshold*, will be delivered by Dr T. W. Mitchell in the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1, on Wednesday, 24 June 1931, at 5.30 p.m. Admission will be by ticket only. Tickets can now be had by Members and Associates on application to the Secretary, S.P.R., 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1. Should any tickets remain unallotted after the 20th of June they will be distributed among interested members of the public. Members and Associates who, having received tickets, find later that they are unable to attend the meeting, are requested kindly to transfer them to a friend or to return them to the Secretary as soon as possible.

Red Lion Square is in the angle formed by the junction of Southampton Row and High Holborn. The nearest Underground stations are Holborn, British Museum, and Chancery Lane. Buses 19, 38, 138 pass the north entrance of the Conway Hall in Theobalds Road.

N.B.—This will be the last Meeting of the present Session. The usual meeting on the last Wednesday of the month will be resumed on the 30th of September.

PRIVATE MEETING.

THE 106th Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Library of the Society, 31 Tavistock Square, W.C.1 on Wednesday, 29 April 1931; at 5.30 p.m., DR T. W. MITCHELL in the chair.

MR W. H. SALTER opened a discussion on poltergeists, and said, in part :

The importance of poltergeists to the study of parapsychical phenomena need not be stressed at length. It is sufficient to recall that the whole of the modern spiritualist movement can be traced back to the Hydesville rappings in 1848. Podmore somewhere calls poltergeists the *ferae naturae* of spiritualism : they might perhaps with equal appropriateness (and better grammar) be described as its *enfants terribles*. There are many problems of the *séance*-room whose solution can be facilitated by the study of poltergeists, problems relating to the phenomena themselves, problems of evidence, and especially problems concerning the psychology of mediums.

Mrs Brackenbury, who has a very extensive personal experience of investigating poltergeist cases, has recently been engaged in looking through the Society's collection of cases, which after nearly 50 years of continual research, is a very extensive one. Some of these cases have been printed in *Proceedings* or the *Journal* ; others have never been printed at all, and I feel sure that a careful stock-taking will bring to light many points of great interest.

The last time the Society had a stocktaking was in 1896, when Podmore contributed to *Proceedings* (xii. 45-115) a detailed analysis of all the cases (eleven in number) which the Society had up to that date investigated, together with notes on some other cases reported to but not investigated by the Society. Podmore summarised his findings as follows (p. 114) : “ (1) In the eleven cases which we have investigated in detail, direct proofs of trickery have been found in several instances. (2) Where the phenomena have been recorded shortly after their occurrence by educated persons, trickery is found—moral considerations apart—to be an adequate explanation. (3) Where the phenomena have been described by illiterate persons, or recorded some time after the event, this explanation becomes difficult ; and the difficulty is found to increase directly with the length of the interval and inversely with the education of the witnesses. (4) But these eleven cases are fairly representative of their class.”

This paper led to a lively controversy between Podmore and Andrew Lang (*Proceedings*, xvii. 305-36). Lang held, relying almost entirely on the classic cases of ancient date, such as the Drummer of Tedworth, that there was more in it than trickery. In 1911, shortly after Podmore's death, Sir W. Barrett reopened the question with a paper (*Proceedings*, xxv. 377-412) in which he analysed six cases, two of which he had himself investigated in Ireland. On the strength of these he maintained “ that fraud and hallucination are inadequate to explain all the phenomena.” That is, I think, the last occasion on which the general poltergeist problem, as distinct from particular cases, has been discussed before the Society.

The question whether there is any supernormal element in poltergeist cases is not one on which general agreement can ever be expected. In a few cases actual trickery, or preparations for trickery, have been observed, but in the majority of cases there are so many doubtful factors that the observer's or reader's judgment is likely to be determined by his general attitude to parapsychical phenomena. The evidence in poltergeist cases is rarely of a high order. Much of it is circumstantial: things happen, or are alleged to happen, in one place while all the independent observers are elsewhere. If they happen in the presence of observers, it is rarely that the whole phenomenon is seen from start to finish: to take a common instance, the supposed movement of objects without contact: the objects are seen in motion and coming to rest: the beginning of the movement is not often seen by any independent observer. If to these difficulties is added the fact that the only witnesses are often uneducated persons in a state of excitement, whose statements are only recorded some time after the event, it becomes obvious that a wide diversity of opinion as to the supernormality of any case is highly probable.

If however opinions differ as to the interpretation of the facts, it is all the more striking that there is a strong resemblance between the facts reported by the different S.P.R. investigators, notwithstanding that these have throughout the Society's history included men and women of the most divergent views as to the reality of supernormal phenomena, from out and out spiritualists to case-hardened sceptics. I do not mean that there is not a considerable variety as regards the phenomena produced, noises, movements of objects and so on; but that there emerges from a reading of the cases a fairly definite type of situation, which is sufficiently uniform to make it a not unreasonable inference that causes which can be definitely proved in some cases are probably operating in the others.

It is impossible to read a number of poltergeist cases without coming to the conclusion that in investigating such cases education and general intelligence are not enough: some specialised knowledge of the problems of psychical research is essential. The recorded cases may be classified under four heads in a steeply descending scale of evidential value as follows:

- (1) cases where a trained investigator has been present during the occurrence of some of the phenomena;
- (2) cases where a trained investigator, without actually witnessing any of the phenomena, has obtained first-hand reports from witnesses shortly after the occurrence of phenomena, and has cross-examined the witnesses;

- (3) cases where phenomena have been witnessed by persons of good education without specialised training ;
- (4) other cases.

There are several problems, including that of supernormality, on which it seems to me that the evidence supplied by the first group of cases enormously outweighs that contributed by all the other groups, the fourth group (*i.e.* cases resting solely on the reports of untrained and uneducated witnesses) being practically worthless.

Apart, however, from the question of supernormality, on which opinions differ, there are several points on which there seems to be a consensus of opinion, as will be seen if the conclusions appended by Podmore and Sir W. Barrett to their respective papers are compared.

Thus it may be taken as fairly well established that the phenomena are associated with some particular person : they do not occur " out of the blue," so to speak. A few cases can be traced to impersonal natural causes, loose tiles, dripping drain-pipes, rats and so on : for the most part, however, cases of this type do not get reported to us. Occasionally it appears that there is more than one medium concerned in their production, or that when once poltergeist phenomena have been started, other persons besides the medium deliberately exploit them for their own ends by faking additional phenomena.

A second point of agreement is, to quote Sir W. Barrett, that " the disturbances are usually though not invariably, associated with the presence of a child or young person of either sex."

The geographical distribution of poltergeists has perhaps not received adequate attention. Cases of course occur all over the world, but although the S.P.R. collection includes cases from several foreign countries, I am considering for the present their distribution within Great Britain. In going through our collection recently, I was struck by the comparative rarity of cases occurring in large towns. Our country is a highly industrialised one and by far the larger part of our population is concentrated in large towns and cities. Out of all our cases, London indeed contributes a fair proportion. But the other big cities of Gt Britain do not between them contribute one. A few come from medium-sized towns, but the largest number come from small towns or villages. If therefore our collection is representative, and there is no reason to suppose that it is not, it is clear that the villages and the small towns are the poltergeists' spiritual home. This is probably due to a combination of two causes : (1) there are more distractions for the young in large towns and consequently less boredom, and boredom seems to be a condition favourable to the development of the poltergeist psychology in the adolescent ; (2) country folk (I speak as a rusticised Londoner) are

more inclined to belief in the supernatural, especially when it takes a form as traditional as the poltergeist.

That imitation plays a considerable part is certain. If a case is made much of in the press it is almost certain to be followed at a short interval by other cases, especially in the neighbourhood.

Of such cases, providing verifiable evidence of intelligence, I do not think we have a full report of any later than the Derrygonelly case, investigated by Sir W. Barrett in 1877. In that case Sir William reported that he several times asked the raps to say how many fingers he had open in his pocket, and got correct answers each time. But more evidence than we so far possess seems to be needed before we can safely assume that the possession of supernormal knowledge goes with poltergeist phenomena.

Intelligence is of course shown where the phenomena have an obvious motive, *c.g.* to get the medium out of uncongenial surroundings, or to frighten away someone whose presence is distasteful, but that is another matter.

In conclusion a word must be said as to the ethics of poltergeist investigation. Poltergeist cases, whether supernormal or not, are certainly pathological, and the first duty of the investigator, transcending even his duty to increase our scientific knowledge, is to see that nothing occurs to make the child-medium's mental or physical state worse than it already is. These cases inevitably attract publicity: a generation ago this was merely local publicity. The village neighbours were all agog and the local papers wrote the case up. That was bad enough, but modern journalistic methods have made things much worse. The cheap London press gets on to the job, and unless a particularly enthralling murder happens to coincide, exploits the case to the fullest, regardless both of the child's welfare and any serious scientific interest. Any investigator who cares to join in the journalistic hue and cry can of course get his share of the limelight.

This, I need hardly say, has never been the practice of the S.P.R. or of our investigators, who have habitually followed the line of allaying local excitement, getting the child's parents to understand what the cause of the disturbances is, and giving such advice as will prevent these unhealthy occurrences being renewed. Tactful handling of such cases has undoubtedly in the past led to the restoration of the child to normal mental health. For an example see vol. xvii. 85-95 of the *Journal*, one of the rare cases in which the child medium came from an educated household.

But it is possible that this practice has had a curious result. The child who produces poltergeist phenomena is likely, especially if encouraged rather than checked, to develop into a regular medium, as happened to the Fox sisters, the authors of the original Hydes-

ville rappings. Now poltergeist cases have ever since the Society's foundation, been more carefully followed up in England than anywhere else, and with more consideration for the medium's welfare. During the same period our country, the birthplace of Home and Stainton Moses, has been curiously infertile in the production of physical mediums. Are these two facts quite unrelated or may it be that if we had allowed the poltergeist phenomena to run riot in their infancy, we might now be enjoying as creditable a crop of adult physical mediums as any country in central or east Europe can boast?

MRS BRACKENBURY read a more detailed account of the case already summarised in the *Journal* (xxvi. 104-5).

Mr A. W. Trethewey referred to certain Indian poltergeist phenomena of which there had been some recent discussion. A detailed account of the case in question was given by Mrs Goldney, who had personally investigated it. The Rev. J. W. Hayes gave his personal impressions of the phenomena reported by Mrs Brackenbury. The Rev. W. S. Irving, Mr A. H. Strawson, Dr V. J. Woolley, and Mr J. Hettinger also contributed to the discussion.

A CASE OF APPARENT HAUNTING IN MOSCOW.

BY COUNT PEROVSKY-PETROVO-SOLOVOVO.

IN the Russian daily paper *Vozrojdenie*, printed in Paris, there appears, in the number of 17 December 1930 and under the title of "Ghosts I did not notice," a narrative by M. Nicholas Tchebysheff (now living at Meudon near Paris), who is well known to me.

M. Tchebysheff was, when Nicholas II was overthrown (March 1917), attorney to the Court of Appeal in Moscow. The Provisional Government appointed him Senator. Under General Denikin he was from January to July 1919 at the head of the Home Department; and his last official post was, I believe, that of manager of General Wrangel's political chancery at Belgrade. I think I may also call him a pressman.

The *Vozrojdenie* narrative is picturesque and interesting, but too long to be translated *verbatim*. I will therefore content myself with summing it up.

"It is the only instance [in my experience]," M. Tchebysheff says, "when I am ready to swear on the Gospel that ghosts, phantoms, powers from the Beyond there were, the fact that I did not perceive them notwithstanding: the marvellous [element] that was near me did not pay attention to me, did not reveal itself to my sight and hearing. . . . This story I will relate as it actually occurred, like a *procès-verbal*, not adding one word. Let my narrative serve as document."

In January 1909, M. Tchebysheff pursued, he was transferred from Smolensk to Moscow. He put up at an hotel and began to look for a flat. He soon got a letter from a lady unknown to him (she subsequently turned out to be pale and good-looking "with big, sad eyes"), offering him to take her flat in Kounin's house—a brand-new five storied building at the corner of Pretchistenka and Smolensky boulevard. M. Tchebysheff called on the lady and liked the flat, which comprised four rooms, a bath-room and a kitchen. He had the impression that the lady looked rather ill at ease and wanted to tell him something, but dared not. She mentioned that she now lived at her mother's and had not stayed in the flat long. "I do come sometimes in the day," she added.

M. Tchebysheff moved into the flat where nothing unusual happened up to August, when he moved into another apartment for financial reasons. More than once, he tells us, he did afterwards regret the Smolensky boulevard four rooms.

Later in the same autumn he met the lady at a concert. He did not at first recognise her. "I am much in fault towards you," she said. "It is impossible to live in that flat."

M. Tchebysheff informed the lady he had moved into another house. Whereupon she said: "Of course you could not live there too and so you went away. I could not stand it even a week: it was something incessantly terrible."

He explained he had left the house because the landlord had raised the rent. Here the conversation rather abruptly terminated, M. Tchebysheff being with a few friends. To the lady he said he would ring her up.

On thinking the matter over, he recollected in connection with the flat in Kounin's house the following incident. Nothing at all had happened there to himself, but once in July P., a friend of his, came to stay with him for a few days. The very first night (apparently), M. Tchebysheff felt himself awakened: it was P., pale, nay white, his eyes wide with fear, his chin trembling.

"It is impossible to sleep there. I cannot sleep there," he said.

He had been spending the night in the sitting room. M. Tchebysheff took his place and slept soundly till the morning. On waking up he learned that P. had left for the country.

He was unable to telephone to the lady as he had forgotten her name. But meeting P. a couple of days later, he asked him to explain what had happened. In spite of much insistence he failed however to obtain an answer satisfactory to him.

He had as man-servant a Pole named Augustine who had been with him a fortnight in Kounin's house, and questioned him. "Did you not notice, Sir," the Pole replied, "that in that flat you had constantly to change servants?" In fact, M. Tchebysheff recollected

that such had been the case. Now a cook would go away, now a man-servant. Twice people left without warning, leaving no address. As to the cause of such a behaviour Augustine (he was unable to express his thoughts adequately either in Russian or in Polish) merely stated these people had said it was "too frightful" there. He admitted when hard pressed that he had never spent there the night himself—though apparently for reasons of quite a "mundane" character.

As stated to M. Tchebysheff by an old inhabitant of Moscow, a church and cemetery had once existed on the spot where Kounin's house was subsequently built.

M. Tchebysheff concludes his account by expressing the hope that maybe the "lady" is now somewhere out of Russia too and will communicate with him. Hitherto, so far as I know, this hope has not been fulfilled.

In a letter to me dated 21 December 1930, M. Tchebysheff writes that the *Vozrojdenie* "had neither added nor changed anything in my protocol-like narrative." The latter has not been adorned by him, he says, in any way, being a conscientious description based on memory, in which M. Tchebysheff mentioned only what he firmly remembered.

Though unavoidably very incomplete his account seems to me valuable. It is likely that something like "haunting" was in fact at the bottom of the whole occurrence, though absolute certainty on this point obviously fails us. The most curious point is of course M. Tchebysheff's apparent and complete "unreceptivity." Surely it detracts nothing from the value of the opinion: rather the reverse. For if the fear to which the little flat gave birth was due to some natural but undetected cause, it is very strange that M. Tchebysheff should not have shared in the impression. It would be interesting to know whether there are on record many other more or less well attested cases of alleged haunting presenting the same characteristic and puzzling feature.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ENCHANTED BOUNDARY.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—I do not desire the printing of this letter unless what is stated therein has intrinsic interest for psychical research, since it would be repugnant to me that it should be regarded as a repercussion to criticisms made in the gracious review, printed in the last *Proceedings*, of my book, *The Enchanted Boundary*. Indeed, I think the reviewer has grounds in the form and appearance of

certain features and passages of the book, for every one of these few criticisms. Some things which are to be made very manifest in the book now preparing, which presents the case-results of the questionnaire, should have been at least hinted in its predecessor.

Superficially it would seem, although this point is not brought up in the review, as though directing the questionnaire only to persons listed in *Who's Who in America*, were also "an interesting illustration of American standards," but the reasons and justification for this, I think will be made apparent. Turning to the purported illustration which *is* mentioned, I doubt if it is characteristic of cultured Americans to rate a person's testimony according to whether or not he belongs to a church, and am quite certain that this is no standard of mine. But there is a scientific superstition, not entirely circumscribed by American boundaries, that opinions as to the existence of psychical facts, and especially the experiencing of purported psychical incidents, are largely conditioned on the presence or absence of religious belief. Included in the forthcoming Report will be several classifications of respondents to the questionnaire, which will have some though limited value, and one of them will be for the purpose of testing that issue. Entering church affiliations among the biographical data in the volume already printed without explanation does, indeed, easily lead to an erroneous inference.

I also readily acknowledge it regrettable that I, in some instances, "improved" my own letters to correspondents, for the purpose of publication, that is without making it clearer why and how I did so. Let us consider the matter, for it is an important point in literary ethics. Certainly it would have been most reprehensible to alter or add a word to a letter of my correspondent. It would be an offence to change anything in a letter of mine if anything afterward written by that correspondent and published by me hinged upon it.

But when I print a correspondent's letter with his consent, I may reply to it, *for the sake of the public*, if I choose, in entire disregard of what I happened to have written in my letter to him personally. I think we will all agree on that, provided that I make no claim that I am giving the original letter. That being the case, what possible objection can there be to the presentation of my argument made for the benefit of the public, in part, and only in part, be that part great or small, in the language of the original letter, provided I declare that this is being done? My original responses were made to correspondents without the idea in mind of printing them, and they involve, as amongst themselves, many repetitions. What possible objection can there be, so long as there is no secret about it, to saving time by using the original responses in whole or part, but

“improving” the wording of certain infelicitous phrases, omitting paragraphs rather than print them again and again, and even sometimes substituting another case-illustration for one already too frequently used? I may not improve my opponent’s style or argument—all I can do is to give him fair warning and incite him to do his best; but my own argument, made to readers of the book, I may “improve” with impunity as much as I choose, even to entire disregard of what was written to the person himself. If any differ with this opinion, I hope to hear from them in the *Journal*.

The reviewer has certainly pointed out defects in another passage. But while I did unfortunately follow the question whether all psychical researchers agree that any types of phenomena are supernormal by the answer “yes,” I afterward and somewhat inconsistently modified this answer by the expressions “practically unanimous agreement,” “generally agreed,” and “practical agreement.” It should not be forgotten that the term “psychical researcher” was carefully defined and limited in its application. But even at that it was not limited sufficiently to represent my meaning, as I have stated elsewhere in print but forgot to do by footnote in the book. The psychical researchers I had in mind as being generally agreed, not absolutely but “practically” unanimous, were those who not only have had much experience in “this field,” but also have had personal experience with the particular type referred to, in connection with exponents of reputation. I doubt if any veteran psychic researcher has been quite convinced regarding *any* particular type unless he has had considerable personal experience with such psychics as are capable of it. Psychometrical psychics capable of impressive work are very, very rare, as I stated. Can the reviewer “name several” (*i.e.* more than two) psychical researchers, as defined, who have themselves had numerous experiments with psychometrists that have convinced any whom they regard as their peers, and who are not themselves convinced? If he can I shall never again say “practically unanimous agreement” or “generally agreed” in reference to psychometry, and as it is shall more carefully guard its terms hereafter. It may be that the employment of the word *practically* in the sense of “approximately, as a general rule of practice, with negligible exceptions,” and the use of the word *generally* in the sense of “approaching universality, on the whole,” are Americanisms. If so I want to know it, being desirous of employing words only according to such definitions as are intelligible to English-speaking people everywhere.

Naming types of psychical phenomena is one of the most difficult things to do satisfactorily. I usually employ names which as little as possible convey in themselves a theory of origin, terms which are descriptive of the outer appearance of things, even if they are

drawn from popular usage. "Telepathy" is a word which may announce a theory, but in so entitling one of the four named types I simply refer to those sets of facts which *look like* thought-transference. Veridical apparitions (not limited to those of the dying) may be all telepathically caused, but are a quite different class of *phenomena*. I did not say whether I thought that they demonstrate anything more than telepathy because it was not germane for my purpose to discuss, in that place, theories of causation. By "mediumistic deliverances" (one rather shrinks from the term "message mediumship" as that seems to announce a theory) I of course was understood to refer to those deliverances, vocal or written, purporting to be from the spirits of the dead. For once, I must distinctly differ from my friend the reviewer, and declare this a type of *phenomenon* in itself. It is what, in its *appearance*, is different from what I classed as "telepathy," "apparitions," and "psychometry." Theoretically, of course, all four might be telepathic in their nature.

Mr Besterman says "it would have been interesting to have been told whether Dr Prince believes in any forms of psychometry beyond such as can be explained by telepathy." I am very willing to answer the implied question. I do not know by what interior process the psychometrical results which I have witnessed, and which I am convinced were supernormal, in the work of Sra. de Z and Mrs *King* were produced; but I very much doubt if all could be explained by what we at present know, or have any scientific right to assume, about telepathy.

Take the experiment with Mrs *King* referred to on pages 145-6 of *The Enchanted Boundary*, fully reported in the *Proceedings* of the A.S.P.R. for 1924, pp. 204-18, and discussed in *Bulletin XI* of the B.S.P.R., pp. 10-14. Certainly of the 34 statements tested, 33 of which were correct and the remaining one partly so, many were known to me, so, theoretically, could have been obtained from me by thought transference. Even at that, the result would surpass that of any experiments of which I know, instituted for the express purpose of testing telepathic ability. Nine of these facts were not known to me at the time, and several never were known to me, as that the church was built of "grey stone." (The stone was covered with plaster painted brown, and I would have supposed that bricks lay beneath.) But let us put all these facts aside. I had certainly formerly known that the writer of the letter had made a journey to Boston and New Haven, and had known that he mentioned these places in a letter. But at the time of the experiment, more than four years later, I had no knowledge nor thought that I had brought that very letter. I had taken the letter which, folded small, was to be placed between the flat palms of the psychic and, in bright

sunlight, so remain until the experiment was over, out of a file of some eighteen letters by a clergyman, in no chronological order, and I had *carefully refrained from looking inside it*. But, while most of her true statements (which, taken together, exceeded chance expectation about five quadrillion times) could not have been divined by reading the whole letter, the mention of a journey, naming of Boston, and terms describing another city and applying to New Haven as it would not to one city out of a hundred, showed knowledge, somehow derived, of a part of the contents of the letter itself. I have shown *ad nauseam*, in the publications named above, the absurdity of supposing that the woman could have glimpsed a word in the letter.

But I did not know that the references were in the letter. To suppose telepathy from me is to suppose that I subconsciously not only remembered so much of the contents of this letter but also the very creases of the white outside pages, through the several years since I had read it, and thus was able, still subconsciously, to identify it. For *something or somebody* was able to select three references, correct for no other letter from that correspondent. We get no help by imagining that the telepathic wave came 190 miles from the clergyman who wrote the letter, who knew nothing about the experiment, and could not himself have known that I took the letter or what letter I took unless by another telepathic wave to his subconscious, from my subconscious endowed with genius to identify an old letter and to rejuvenate its contents by reference to creases or other obscure marks on its blank outside.

I have no other solution how the thing was accomplished, but for all that, I do not yet believe that *my* subconscious has that degree of demideific endowment. I really wish that some one would study this case in detail, and, if only as an exercise in dialectics, or in the capacity of *advocatus diaboli*, would argue that all its items were telepathically derived, and attempt to point out what were probably their several sources, and the avenues by which they reached their destination in the consciousness of Mrs *King*. I am inclined to give preferential attention to every claim of telepathy which can be made even plausible to the intelligence, but am not disposed to employ the word as a mere talisman to exorcise the perplexing problems of psychical research.

Nothing in this letter is to be taken as controversial, in the invidious sense of the word. I am even more grateful to Mr Besterman for pointing out obscurities and infelicities of statement, to which I (and he) could add other examples, than for his commendations.

Yours, etc.,

WALTER FRANKLIN PRINCE.

[I am more than gratified with the gentle and instructive reproof the criticisms on which I ventured have drawn from the President. On two points only I must beg leave to remain obstinate. Dr Prince claims the right to improve his letters under the circumstances he has outlined above. But let Dr Prince put himself in the position of one of those correspondents he so scientifically excoriates. Would such a one not be entitled to say: "It is very easy for you to make me look a fool when you've touched up *your* letters; if you had only given *me* the same opportunity how easily I could have turned the tables on you!" We may not believe for a moment that any of Dr Prince's correspondents could have turned the tables on him, but still! Could not the difficulty have been met, I wonder, by dropping the letter form altogether?

The more important point is Dr Prince's implied assertion that only a student of psychical research who has had much experience of a particular phenomenon is entitled to a hearing on that phenomenon. Surely this is a revolutionary principle in scientific work? Have I no right to be sceptical about the rope-trick because I have never been in the East, or to believe in phantasms of the living because I have never experienced one? I think that a fuller statement of our President's views in this matter would be welcomed by our members.—TH.B.]

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Revue Métapsychique, January-February 1931.

M. and Mme Magrou of the Pasteur Institute print a paper on the action at a distance exerted by living organisms. The paper, which deals with various bacteria such as *Bacterium tumefaciens* on the one hand, and such organisms as sea-urchins on the other, is interesting, and its contents could be regarded as constituting something like a *trait d'union* between psychical research and bacteriology were not its publication one more rather discouraging sign of how little positive evidence of "metapsychical" phenomena in the strict sense of the word we now dispose.

M. de Vesme pursues his study of various cases of stigmatisation, beginning this time with Lucia of Narni (15th-16th centuries) and ending with Theresa Neumann. Lucia, by the way, was both accused of fraud and subsequently beatified.

M. Delevsky prints the first instalment of a paper on "The Riddle of Premonitions." Some cases of alleged predictions by clairvoyants are tentatively explained by the hypothesis of "eternal return" (*retour éternel*), according to which "cycles" of events are repeating themselves in times almost *ad infinitum*. If we postulate such a theory (championed among others by Blanqui and Nietzsche) we

can "easily admit in principle that a subject endowed with an extraordinary gift of clairvoyance can contemplate the future of a man, of a race or of a globe in the past of another identical globe." In which case "the very mistakes in the premonitions would be susceptible of an explanation, the subject perceiving a copy which was not identical with the future event in spite of an approximate resemblance." Speaking for myself I will say that however ingenious such a "theory"—which I am amazed to see put forward in all seriousness—I am convinced that the real explanation of the alleged premonitions is a much less complicated one, whatever it may be.

In the *Chronique* M. Maire is very hard on the Henri Vandermeulen apparatus and the attitude of the Rutot circle in Brussels, I think rightly.

Bulletin du Conseil de Recherches Métapsychiques de Belgique, April 1931.

This number opens with a paper by M. Rutot on "Life, Survival, Reincarnation according to the Cosmogonic Energetic Theory."

* Another instalment of the paper on the Henri Vandermeulen apparatus follows, then two papers containing various "typtological" messages. All or almost all seem to have been quite non-evidential. King Leopold II expresses in a few lines his views on the linguistic question (French and Flemish) now so very much to the front in Belgium, and Professor Charles Déperet, who died in 1930, informs us that he will soon leave for "Syrius" (M. Rutot thinks it "qucer" that all "entities" speaking of Sirius should always spell it in this way).

Etudes, March 1931.

Father Roure, S.J., discusses the "Crisis of Hypnotism" (for there is apparently such a "crisis"). He recalls Charcot's experiments on hysterical women in the seventies and the vogue thereof. But some of Charcot's subjects were convicted of simulation; the Salpêtrière thesis that every hypnotisable person is also an hysterical person was violently assailed and so the experiments as well as hypnotism itself were discredited. And since then we note that hypnotisable subjects grow more and more scarce; in 1884, according to some statistics, some 84-87 per cent. of all peoples could be hypnotised; today the hypnotic sleep can apparently be induced only exceptionally.

Father Roure thinks that now "the laboratories have forsaken the séances of provoked sleep," that "physicians, the healers excepted, no longer appeal to them as to a therapeutic process." This crisis, he thinks, is due to the fact that after having worked in order to establish the reality of the unconscious, hypnotism "unduly and indefinitely extended its domain and its possibilities as well as its therapeutic virtues." A reaction was sooner or later unavoidable.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, March 1931.

This number opens with a translation of Dr Osty's statement on his recent experiments with Rudi Schneider in the November-December number of the *Revue Métapsychique*.

Professor J. Dörfler has a lengthy paper on the Eggenberg *Spuk* (Frieda Weissl). Some of the "phenomena" were observed by the writer himself. One rather striking incident (a looking glass flying out of a closed drawer where it had been placed in Prof. Dörfler's presence after a first spontaneous "flight") reminds us very forcibly of the extremely important part played in such episodes from the standpoint of their evidential character by the personality of the observer.

Dr Ludwig prints a lengthy and very interesting account (first-hand) of a case of haunting which lasted three years and a half, the narrator being a deceased cousin of the priest Ritzinger of Oberlindhart (Lower Bavaria). The "phenomena" culminated in Herr Kammermeier seeing an apparition which he subsequently identified with the former owner of the house, the conditions of the identification being tolerably good.

Prof. K. C. Schneider of Vienna, has a long paper (read at the Athens Congress) on the "Psychological field of energy as bearer of sensuous and super-sensuous experience." Baroness Kulmer concludes her study of Baron Hellenbach (1827-1887). In *Kleine Mitteilungen* Dr F. Quade has a short article on Professor Hans Driesch's recent lecture on "Belief in Spirits in the Light of Science" in Berlin. In connection with Dr Christian Schröder's sixtieth birthday, his work in the domain of "Parapsychophysics" is recalled by Herren Haslinger and Zeller. In a short statement *à propos* of Herr R. Lambert's account of his sittings with this medium, the clairvoyant Max Moecke maintains that he took part in the sitting in question in a state of complete exhaustion. P.-P.-S.

THE JOURNAL IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE
CIRCULATION.

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on a definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only." The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY,

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 30 September 1931, at 5.30 p.m.,

WHEN A PAPER ENTITLED

“ A Consideration of a Series of Proxy Sittings,
with special reference to the Sources of Veridical
Information and to the Method of its Recep-
tion ”

WILL BE READ BY

THE REV. C. DRAYTON THOMAS

N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.

NEW MEMBERS

(Elected 27 May 1931)

Beresford-Peirce, Lt-Colonel Noel, D.S.O., R.A., Army and Navy Club, St James's Square, London, W. 1.

Bovill, Mrs Karslake, 57 Marloes Road, Kensington, London, W. 8.

Hart, Hornell, Ph.D., Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pa., U.S.A.

(Elected 17 June 1931)

Mayberry, James B., 12 Place Denfert-Rochereau, Paris, France.

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 284th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 27 May 1931, at 3 p.m., SIR LAWRENCE JONES, BART., in the Chair. There were also present: Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P., Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Professor E. R. Dodds, Miss Ina Jephson, Mr G. W. Lambert, Sir Oliver Lodge, The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Professor W. McDougall, Mr J. G. Piddington, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mrs Henry Sidgwick, Mr S. G. Soal, and Dr V. J. Woolley; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Three new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

Mr L. S. Fletcher and Mr H. F. Saltmarsh were co-opted Members of Council for the year 1931.

THE 285th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 17 June 1931, at 3 p.m., THE EARL OF BALFOUR in the Chair. There were also present: Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P., Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Sir Lawrence J. Jones, Bart., The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Professor W. McDougall, Mr J. G. Piddington, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Professor F. C. S. Schiller, Mrs Henry Sidgwick, and Dr V. J. Woolley; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

One new Member was elected. His name and address are given above.

Lord Charles Hope was co-opted a Member of Council for the year 1931.

The following Resolution was carried *nem. con.*: "The Council desire to place on record their appreciation of the work done by Mr Besterman as Editor and Librarian and in connection with research."

The Librarian reported that the last instalment had now been received of the grant of £1000 made to the Library by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. The Council expressed their appreciation of the generous help given to the development of the Library and requested the Hon. Secretary to convey their thanks to the Trustees.

PRIVATE MEETING.

CONTROL EXPERIMENTS IN BOOKTESTS.

THE 107th Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Library of the Society, 31 Tavistock Square, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 27 May 1931, at 5.30 p.m., PROFESSOR W. McDUGALL in the Chair.

MR THEODORE BESTERMAN read, in part, a paper entitled "Further Inquiries into the Element of Chance in Booktests," in which he described two series of control experiments in booktests. The paper is published in Part 121 of *Proceedings*.

The Chairman congratulated Mr Besterman on a very interesting piece of research and asked Mrs Salter to describe the way in which she gave her booktests.

Mrs Salter said that she wrote down these booktests in the Society's library after putting herself in the same sort of frame of mind as that in which she did her automatic writing. She was very much surprised that she had scored some lucky shots and did not see any reason to suppose that she had any of the curious faculty that apparently lay behind booktests. In reply to a question by Professor McDougall, Mrs Salter said that she did not think that her booktests were written automatically. Mr Besterman pointed out, however, that they were not in Mrs Salter's ordinary handwriting.

Professor E. R. Dodds suggested that Mrs Salter's success might be due to her knowledge of the sort of books likely to be found on Mr Besterman's shelves. In his own case he had some general knowledge of this kind and had been tempted to make use of it for the booktests he sent in, but he had actually done them by a process akin to free association. Mrs Salter, referring to her best hit, said that she had no special reason to suppose that Mr Besterman would possess anything bearing on pottery. Mr Besterman said that he had to confess that Professor Dodds was one of those deliberately asked to take part in the experiment in view of the greater likelihood in their cases of obtaining successes. It had been the special purpose of this particular experiment to load the dice as heavily as possible in favour of chance. But none of the persons so chosen had obtained any success.

The Rev. C. Drayton Thomas suggested that a point in favour of Mrs Leonard's booktests, and one which was not capable of statistical evaluation, was the special appositeness of the tests. For instance, in one case known to him Feda gave an indication to a particular place where a reference to a certain person would be found. The person in question was the son of a wine merchant, and when the reference was verified it was found to be, "I am truly a son of Bacchus." Mr Thomas gave other examples of a similar kind. He thought that Mr Besterman's paper had shown conclusively that the booktests received from Mrs Leonard were not the result of chance coincidence. Mr Besterman said that he appreciated the value of Mr Drayton Thomas's point. He did not think, however, that he could fully agree with Mr Thomas's contention. In his opinion a simple and concrete reference was more valuable than a symbolical or allusive one. Thus, "He is truly a son of Bacchus" was a statement which required interpretation and one which could be interpreted in several senses. Had the reference been, "I am truly the son of a wine merchant," it would have been a definite and unequivocal hit.

Mr Salter said that no doubt Mr Besterman agreed that the peculiar appropriateness of a booktest to the sitter receiving it was an essential part of such a test and one which would be taken into account in the statistical evaluation of it. Mr Besterman assented.

Dr Hornell Hart suggested that when an actual booktest was verified the book indicated by the medium should be placed among a number of other books, and that the sitter should then be asked to pick out the book which he thought corresponded to the medium's indications. Mr Besterman agreed that this was a good plan, but was doubtful whether most sitters would agree to it. There were also practical difficulties.

THE SECOND MYERS MEMORIAL LECTURE

The Second Myers Memorial Lecture, by Dr T. W. Mitchell, has now been published under the title *Beneath the Threshold*. Copies may be obtained from the Secretary, Society for Psychological Research, 31 Tavistock Square, W.C. 1, price 1s. each; remittances should be enclosed with all orders.

Copies of the First Myers Memorial, *Conviction of Survival*, by Sir Oliver Lodge, are also obtainable as above, price 2s. each.

A NOTABLE BOOKTEST OBTAINED AT A SITTING WITH MRS LEONARD

I regret that I omitted an evidential detail from the report printed in the *Journal* for April last (xxvii. 59 ff.). The attaché-case containing the volume of Pope was first opened after the sitting, and the booktest verified, in Miss Newton's presence.

TH. B.

CORRESPONDENCE.

*THE ENCHANTED BOUNDARY.**To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.*

SIR,—I will respond to the suggestion that I express myself more fully on the points in relation to which Mr Besterman conceives that we disagree (see page 102 of the *Journal*). I am inclined to think that, on the contrary, we agree when the facts are understood. That Mr Besterman has not quite understood them is due in part to my failing, in my letter which you have printed, to express myself as clearly as I thought had been done. Let us take up his two points in turn.

1. The first is put in the form of a question whether my correspondents have not a right to complain that they might have made a better showing had they been given an opportunity to touch up their letters, as I “touched up” mine. My answer is Yes, were the facts such as Mr Besterman supposes them; No, since the facts are as follows:

(1) Every correspondent was aware that his replies were subject to publication. (2) Every correspondent was asked whether or not his name could be printed therewith, and unless he expressly assented it was suppressed. (3) Every correspondent was pursued with appeals to “improve” and develop his thesis to the point that he failed to answer, or else his letter is the last in the particular series to be printed. In such circumstances I maintain that I could with perfect propriety, *for the sake of my readers*, improve even my argument; exactly as there is often printed an “open letter” ostensibly written to a person who never saw it until it appeared in a newspaper.

But, in fact, I never once improved or changed any *argument*. The changes, which in a general way the reader was notified might occur, and which did occur in but a small percentage of my letters, were limited to the following species: (1) the clarification of certain obscurities or correction of actual ingrammaticisms resulting from too hasty dictation, (2) omission of paragraphs too often repeated to my various correspondents, and of formal or irrelevant matter, (3) substitution of case-illustrations for some also so often repeated that they would have been tiresome to readers of the book, and one more, unstated in my previous letter, (4) corrections of erroneous punctuation. None of these, it will probably be agreed, put correspondents to any disadvantage. The whole object of pursuing them with letters was to draw them out to the fullest, and get their opinions put in the best possible shape. The only person from whom I feared

any complaint was Mr Chauncey Thomas, and that because compelled to condense and paraphrase his lengthy letters. But he expressed his entire content with his treatment, and no whisper of dissatisfaction has come from any other.

The rock of offence—and it is a real one—was the careless use of the word “improve” without explaining what it meant and how limited was its application. Yes, and one other, which it is almost incredible that I have but just now observed, and of which the reviewer made no mention. My books for years show that my practice has been to designate long citations, not by quotation marks but by distinguishing characteristics of typography. How in this book they came also to be enclosed in quotation marks, and how it was possible for me not to have been conscious that they had been so typed, I do not know.

The two principles, that what professes to be a literal quotation should be immaculate and that an academic opponent should be treated with absolute fairness, are so incumbent that any appearance of delinquency in regard to either should be put to question.

2. Mr Besterman's second point is that I have made an “implied assertion that only a student of psychological research who has had much experience of a particular [species of] phenomenon is entitled to a hearing on that [species of] phenomenon.” If that is a correct understanding of anything written by me, it is more than a “revolutionary principle,” it is fatuity and fanaticism. But perhaps I can demonstrate that I wrote nothing which ought to be so construed.

Let us start at the bottom. In the Clark University lecture I defined my understanding of the term “psychical researcher” or my concept of the person deserving it, thus: “A person of evident intelligence and cultivation, whose writings reveal acquaintance with and employment of critical method, and who has had much experience in this field and who is interested in the fixation of facts and not in propaganda.” That was *my* definition, be it correct or incorrect, and I have not departed from it or narrowed it. The psychical researcher, however, is one thing, the psychical researcher convinced is another thing. A man who measures up to the particulars enumerated, in my judgment, deserves the title, and has the right to be listened to with abounding respect, and his arguments are of course worth exactly what their own content make them worth, whether or not one is arguing about a type or case of phenomena with which he himself has had personal contact. But when it comes to the dry statistical question what types of phenomena, if any, psychical researchers in the main *accept*, it was necessary to add as a matter of fact that, at this stage of investigation, it seems as though a psychical researcher must, in order to become thoroughly convinced of *any* type of phenomena, have had adequate personal contact with it.

I was asserting, tentatively, not a point of ethics or propriety, but one of fact, a fact of our common human psychology. I did not defend the fact any more than in case I had ventured the assertion that the majority of people on shipboard in a storm became seasick, this would have meant that I approved of their becoming seasick. It might be quite reprehensible for them to be seasick, but that would be aside from my point.

My statement is of a sort whose application is not peculiar to the field of psychical research. Every major discoverer, such as Copernicus and Galileo, met the same inability to win full acceptance on the part of any one, except and until persons themselves patiently retraced their footsteps and, as it were, came into personal contact with the phenomena. That remained true until by this process a sufficient number of full converts, so to speak, had been gained so that others surrendered to the influence of authority. The early demonstrations of hypnosis, even up to past the time of Braid, were unable to convince scientific minds save the few curious enough to acquire personal experience with the phenomena.

It was such a fact which I asserted, without either approval or reprehension, and quite without any reference to respective rights of discussion. At least, I never had any such implication in mind, and cannot yet see how any sentence of mine bears such an interpretation. Though I think that probably, in this period, no man has become entirely assured, for instance, that some automatic writing exhibits knowledge never normally acquired by the writer, unless he has had some personal experience in testing the conditions and watching the work of an automatic writer of that grade. I do not hold that this final and satisfactory state of assurance to *him* is communicable or is to be taken into account at this stage, by any other man. I agree with Mr Besterman, most emphatically, that every student of psychical research who has any good argument, drawn from whatever source, is entitled to a hearing. And I concede to him his right to believe in the phantoms of the living though he has never seen one, but must remind him that the experiencing of phantoms, as such, had been well established by the authority of psychologists without waiting for psychical research, and I may still doubt if he could feel fully satisfied that such hallucinations were not merely coincidental but telepathically caused, short of some personal contact with what seemed to be actual cases of spontaneous or experimental telepathy. If he could, I congratulate him on his independence of the *Zeit-Geist*.

Yours, etc., WALTER FRANKLIN PRINCE.

[I am very grateful to the President for his further elucidations, and I agree that our differences are more apparent than real. The first

point requires no further comment. In the second it now appears that my mistake was in supposing that Dr Prince approved of the implication in the following sentence from his first letter (p. 99): "The psychological researchers I had in mind . . . were those who not only have had much experience in 'this field,' but also have had personal experience with the particular type referred to. . . ." With Dr Prince's explanation that he merely stated the fact without giving it his approval, my criticism falls to the ground. But I am glad that I made it, for the President's two letters have thrown clear light on a most interesting point.—TH. B.]

THE MEDIUM FRAU SILBERT.

[*The following letter has been sent by Mr Rudolf Lambert to Mr Besterman, with a suggestion that it should appear in the Journal. It contains matter of considerable interest to psychological research and we therefore gladly print it. As our members are probably aware, Mr Lambert is an Assistant-Editor of the Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie and has shown himself to be a man of open mind in regard to parapsychical phenomena.*—HON. ED.]

DEAR MR BESTERMAN,—I have been following with increasing indignation the purely personal attacks which have been made on you in various quarters, and, most recently, by Professor Haslinger in the *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*, because, like Dr Prince, you have stated, in accordance with your duty and in the mildest possible way, that you detected Frau Silbert in fraud. This persecution angered me the more as I myself observed this medium's frauds in three sittings at the end of March 1929. I therefore consider it my duty to throw my testimony into the scales, although I find it very hard to write against Frau Silbert's protectors in Graz. I am in fact in this dilemma, either to break a promise far too easily given to Messrs Haslinger and Walter, or silently to look on while the deluded admirers of a fraudulent medium bait an honourable man. Before setting out on my journey I wrote to Professor Walter, without having been asked to do so, that "even if I were to think that I had observed Frau Silbert's feet performing improper manipulations, I would publish nothing, since I am coming as a friend, who cannot afterwards attack those who have received him as such." I was the more determined to keep my word because I was unwilling to make my investigation of other physical mediums impossible by the publication of an unfavourable report on Frau Silbert. Unfortunately I enlarged on this error by a second one, in that I did not tell Messrs Haslinger and Walter after the sittings exactly what I had observed. The sittings had in fact left me no doubt about the nature of the pheno-

mena produced, but I could not bring myself to tell these gentlemen, who regard the medium as a saint, that the woman they honour is a swindler. I only sent them some hints on my observations, and thus my considerate letters to them are to some extent contradictory of the report I finished writing on 15 April 1929. Although the report was not intended for publication, I showed it at that time in confidence to three parapsychologists.

When I read the manuscript of Prof. Haslinger's attack on you I at last wrote to him to inform him of my observations, and pointed out to him the unfairness of his controversial methods, which were only possible "because besides myself there are others who are prevented by personal considerations from publishing their observation of Frau Silbert's untrustworthiness." It would certainly have been better if I had told Herr Haslinger in this letter that if he published his trivial attack I should no longer be able to keep silence. There were two reasons why I did not do so: in the first place I had not yet persuaded myself to take this course, and in the second place I expected that under the circumstances Herr Haslinger would spontaneously release me from my promise. As he did not do so and as he did not withdraw his attack, I at last made up my mind to write and tell him that I could no longer continue the silence I had maintained for two years. Nor could his protest against my breach of our agreement persuade me to support by silence the unscientific attacks of the fanatical defendants of Frau Silbert. I regret the necessity for these personal explanations: but they can serve to help the cause of scientific psychical research. For all these consideratenesses, of which I present a notable example, falsify science. I know that in a report favourable to Frau Silbert suspicious movements of the medium, which, it is true, seemed unimportant to the writer, remained unmentioned, because the observer was unwilling to grieve the medium and her friends. I also know that another of those who has reported on Frau Silbert in a completely positive sense, is persuaded of the genuineness of only some of the phenomena, and has observed other things which appeared to him highly suspicious. So long as we report in this one-sided way, parapsychical phenomena will never be taken seriously. I hope that the printing of my own sins will persuade other parapsychologists that it is our solemn duty to publish without touching up *all* our experiences: any other procedure is a crime against the spirit of true science. We must refuse any proposal by a medium involving the non-publication of unfavourable results, even if we are then allowed to see nothing.

It is impossible to communicate the whole of my material in a letter, and a selection from all three of my sittings might appear one-sided. I therefore send you the report of my second sitting,

omitting only some repetitions and other unessential details. The following report of the sitting on 28 March 1929, at Professor Haslinger's, is based on twelve pages of notes, mostly taken during the sitting.

Haslinger's very heavy table has a strong cross-piece under it. To my astonishment Haslinger, before the sitting, increased the size of the table top by adding leaves. Under these circumstances Frau Silbert, who was to sit at one of the narrow ends, would have been so far from the feet of the table and from the cross-piece as to make it much more difficult for her to lift the table with crossed knees and to use the cross-piece or feet of the table fraudulently as a lever or as a sounding board. According to the impressions formed at my first sitting I expected that Frau Silbert would ask to sit in the middle of the long side of the table or would object to the lengthening of it; she took the latter course. At my request the tablecloth was removed. In addition to myself, the following were present: Frau Silbert, an aunt of Haslinger's, Professor Haslinger, his father, Frau Walter, Professor Walter, and Frau Kroner. Frau Silbert sat alone at one of the narrow ends of the table, with myself on her right and Haslinger's aunt on her left. After we took our seats we heard raps. Frau Silbert thought that they came from the wall behind her, which I was unable to corroborate. Of a rap on the table in her immediate neighbourhood she declared that it came from the other end of the table. Each sitter greeted the Control Nell with a "Gott zum Gruss" and three knocks on the table. Each time there came answering raps from Frau Silbert's neighbourhood. The aunt's foot was touched eleven times. Walter proposed that we should sit closer to the table, which troubled me, as I sat far back to facilitate observation. Frau Silbert pointed behind her and spoke of raps from outside; I did not hear them there. Haslinger advised that the lamp standing on a table behind me should be removed, because it threw light under the table! There was now a lamp only on the *séance* table. Haslinger, next to his aunt, was touched on the knee. The table moved, but it was very dark under it, though after a little time the eye became accustomed to this. The aunt had put a little bell on the floor near Frau Silbert, and this bell now rang. I put a bigger bell near my foot, where I could see it. Frau Silbert said, "Strange that to-day everything is happening on the left side," that is, on the side of the aunt. The little bell between the aunt and Frau Silbert moved, but when I rose to see this phenomenon nothing happened, though the movement began again when I sat down. Raps on wood in the immediate neighbourhood of Frau Silbert; renewed raps were interpreted by some as a wish for darkness, which I supposed to be due to the fact that I was constantly looking under the table. The wish, however, was not obeyed. Alleged

laps in the wall always appeared to me to come from below Frau Silbert. One after the other we asked Nell whether we were satisfactorily seated, and each one accompanied his question with three raps on the table, which Nell answered. Walter thought that Nell's replies were rapped close to each sitter, but I always heard the raps in the immediate neighbourhood of Frau Silbert. The little bell was heard again, and Frau Silbert declared it to be out of her reach, although it stood practically next to her feet. At Haslinger's request, following an order from Nell, I changed seats with the aunt. Hitherto all the phenomena had taken place on Frau Silbert's left, and he wanted to move me closer to them. This change of seating appeared to me suspicious, for the lighting on the aunt's side was worse, since the lamp stood nearer my edge of the table.

Nell asked for darkness, Frau Silbert contradicted this, but we obeyed Nell. In complete darkness we heard many raps and also the bell under the table just as Haslinger mentally asked for a phenomenon. The lamp on the table was again lit. I put the bigger bell near me on the cross-piece, and Frau Silbert showed me how she held her feet in the dark during the phenomena! The small bell, which was now near the aunt, was heard. After this Frau Silbert again showed how she had held her feet during the phenomenon; Haslinger directed the light of a pocket lamp on the now quite innocent feet! Then the bell near me fell from the cross-piece; some thought it had been swung, which would have required the use of both the medium's feet. While I happened to be looking away the bell again fell. As if in reply to my unexpressed suspicion Frau Silbert picked up the bell with both feet and dropped it with the words, "Like this it falls at once"!

I put my watch on the cross-piece. Many touches were felt by the aunt while the medium's feet were quite near her (the aunt). Haslinger announced raps everywhere, which to me, however, all appeared to come from the cross-piece. I looked quickly under the table and saw Frau Silbert's foot on the cross-piece, from which it quickly withdrew. It was arranged that the aunt and I again exchange our seats. While we were doing this there were strong movements of the table. I now again sat at Frau Silbert's right. There followed a luminous phenomenon under the table. But the medium now had one hand under it, whereas till now her hands had practically always been on the table. There were several table movements, but when I looked under the table nothing more happened. In order to dissipate the resulting suspicion, the medium explained that such lifting of the table could not be produced even with both feet. As I wrote this down the table was again lifted a little. Such movements are easily produced with crossed knees. I again looked under the table; nothing happened. Then I pretended

to be quite inattentive, whereupon I noticed Frau Silbert's foot on the cross-piece, from which it quickly withdrew; the medium again explained that it is impossible to lift the table with one's feet. The little bell was heard between Frau Silbert's feet, and she tried to give the impression that it had been moved backwards. I thought that she had put the little bell in her left skirt pocket and wanted to verify this. As this was impossible from my place I pretended that the bell might have flown behind a clock which stood behind the aunt. I walked round the table in order, apparently, to search behind the clock. As Frau Silbert thought me occupied I saw her manipulate the bell, though I was unable to discover the pocket I had suspected. Frau Silbert appeared to have seen my glance and adroitly threw the bell at Frau Krones, who stood next to the chair I had left. As the bell fell near her Frau Krones said that it had hit her fairly high on the thigh under her skirt, and had fallen from there. The explanation is apparently as follows: Frau Krones was hit on the thigh, looked down, saw the bell, which had in the meantime fallen to the edge of the skirt, and consequently thought that it had fallen from within the skirt. As I made notes of this occurrence the table again rose, but this never occurred when I looked under the table. There was now an interval for tea, with cessation of the phenomena.

When the sitting began again the lamp was on the table. Frau Silbert thought that there were raps on the carpet behind her, but I did not hear them. The little bell fell from the cross-piece, and Frau Silbert showed by stretching her foot almost as far as the place at which the little bell had previously stood, that she could not reach so far with her foot. Now I heard raps of somewhat different kinds under the table, but Frau Silbert said that the raps were behind her. I saw her foot on the cross-piece moving back from it, whereupon the raps ceased. Walter put a fiddle and bow on the floor under the table. We heard raps, and when I looked under the table I once more saw Frau Silbert's foot withdrawing from the cross-piece. The violin bow, one end of which was at Frau Silbert's feet, moved. I heard boots rubbing against each other. Frau Silbert explained that the movements of the bow could not have been produced by her feet, which was absurd in view of their position. Walter said that he was delighted that I was having such a good sitting. Frau Silbert pointed behind her, but the raps came from below her. During further raps I glanced twice under the table and twice saw the medium's left foot (that further from me) withdrawing from the cross-piece. Nell asked for darkness, and, as is always the case in darkness, we had to form a chain, whereas in light the sitters' hands remained free on the table. This can hardly be explained otherwise than by Frau Silbert's desire to know that all hands are controlled.

This is the more probable as Haslinger had prepared a pocket lamp which I was to have used unexpectedly, which was made rather difficult when Frau Silbert held my left hand and Frau Krones my right one. The medium gave me her feet to control, but she did not clasp my left foot with both her feet. She put the points of her feet against one side of my foot, possibly hoping that I would not notice the removal of one of her feet. But I moved my foot in such a way that I was able to feel in succession the pressure of each of her feet, so that I at once observed when she removed one of her feet. As she did so I was touched on the knee and then the curtain immediately behind Frau Silbert was moved. As she noticed that I was feeling for her foot it came back, whereupon the phenomena ceased. During the curtain phenomena Frau Silbert declared that she saw the beginning of a phantom, but nobody else saw it. During the same period of darkness a light appeared suddenly to come from the same curtain behind the medium ; but before this she had released her hands from the chain and had moved them to about a yard from the curtain.

Towards the end of the period of darkness my watch appeared in Frau Silbert's hand ; immediately before this we had observed a light coming from the same hand. But as before this the chain had been broken for a minute she could in this time have taken the watch, previously moved from the cross-piece with her feet. On this the sitting ended.

I must observe that my notes on the period of darkness were written partly after the sitting, partly the following morning ; their sequence is therefore possibly not so accurate as that of the earlier part of the sitting. As a curiosity I add that once, as Frau Silbert noticed that I saw her foot leaving the cross-piece after raps had been heard, she knocked on the foot of the table to show the difference between genuine and fraudulent raps. But this hardly impressed me, since Frau Silbert can vary the raps as she pleases. How low an opinion this woman must have of her investigators when she offers them such childish comparisons ! To the objection that I allowed Frau Silbert to cheat instead of really controlling her I reply that one person is not enough for this purpose.

Unless it be suggested that I have fabricated the above described indicia and direct observations of fraud, which are substantiated by the testimony of Dr Prince and yourself, everybody will agree that Frau Silbert frequently gives purely fraudulent sittings, and many will no doubt be inclined to regard the whole case as farcical. But the problem is not so simple as that ; an English expert in conjuring told me that for some time it was difficult for him to penetrate Frau Silbert's tricks. I cannot think that such transparent sittings as mine were then in question. Further, a continental

conjurer of international reputation, who does not believe in physical phenomena, told me that he has obtained engravings of objects and has heard raps whilst himself controlling Frau Silbert, and that all normal explanations fail him. As Dr Tischner's experiences (*Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*, lv. 322 ff.) also are not to be explained by means of childish tricks, it may be worth investigating whether such phenomena are genuine, or whether they are produced by subtle tricks, with or without accomplices. This can only be decided by means of numerous sittings with adequate control above and below the table. The supporters of the mediumship must recognise that there could be no stronger argument against the existence of genuine phenomena than the fact that since the publication of Dr Prince's report (January 1928) obviously no such sittings can have taken place, since Herr Haslinger in his article restricts himself to general considerations and to personal disparagements of you.

Finally, I congratulate you on your reserve in face of the coarse attacks of Frau Silbert's disciples and on your refusal to take any notice of these personal polemics, and I join myself to you in this determination, while I remain willing to give the reports of further sittings unprejudiced consideration.

With the expression of my warmest sympathy,
I remain, yours very sincerely,

RUDOLF LAMBERT.

[Translated by TH. B.]

REVIEWS.

MAX DESSOIR, *Vom Jenseits der Seele : die Geheimwissenschaften in kritischer Betrachtung*. 8vo, pp. xiv. 562, 4 plates. Sixth, revised edition. Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke, 1931. Price M. 16 unbound, M. 18 bound.

The previous edition of Professor Dessoir's well-known book was reviewed in the *Proceedings*, xxxii. 146. The present sixth edition has been very extensively revised and enlarged, though the index has unfortunately been very badly pared down. (It is rather odd, by the way, that notwithstanding the comparatively restricted interest in Germany in scientific psychical research, a book such as this, which maintains a high critical standard, should have gone into six editions in about fourteen years.) As Professor Dessoir's general attitude and treatment have already been described by Professor Schiller in the above-mentioned review, it is perhaps only necessary to refer to a few points of special interest.

At pages 78-9 Professor Dessoir discusses the experiments in thought-transference with Professor Gilbert Murray, and suggests that the successes obtained may be due to cryptomnesia. Since the

subject chosen for telepathic transmission is not selected, of course, by Professor Murray himself, it is a little difficult to follow Professor Dessoir's suggestion. In view of the almost universal tendency amongst serious students of psychical research to reject a physical explanation of telepathy, it is interesting to find Professor Dessoir (p. 86) proposing a physical explanation based on the possible transmission by the human organism of as yet unknown radiations of a structure sufficiently complex to enable them to convey even involved ideas.

The reader may be excused for feeling some alarm at being confronted with yet another term, and such a term !, for psychometry : palaeoaesthetic clairvoyance (pp. 112 ff.). If Professor Dessoir is content to use the word *Hellsehen* (clairvoyance) in senses by no means always corresponding to the literal meaning of the word, on the ground, presumably, that it has now attained historical respectability, is it not more convenient to allow the same considerations to apply to the word psychometry, which is also of fair antiquity ?

In a brief discussion (p. 137) of dowsing, Professor Dessoir very judiciously explains the difficulties in the way of a physical explanation. The author gives a lengthy account of clairvoyance in the service of medical diagnosis, with special reference to Frau Elisabeth Frankl (pp. 152 ff.). Dr Kröner was good enough to give me a demonstration of Frau Frankl's faculty in 1928, but although I thought highly of the results I did not feel competent to report on them. I therefore note with special interest that Professor Dessoir is impressed by this lady's performance.

Professor Dessoir's attempt (pp. 187 ff.) at a theory of clairvoyance follows, in its temporal aspects, the lines of Professor Broad's doctrine of the specious present. To his chapter on Mrs Piper the author has added in the present edition one on Mrs Leonard (pp. 196 ff.), in which he discusses her mediumship in some detail. Of the White case, in particular, he gives a full and very just account. Professor Dessoir suggests that there is sometimes to be found, in the analysis of mediumistic records, a desire "to find a correspondence at all costs." And he cites, as an example, the notice printed in our *Journal*, xxv. 49-50. Here, it must be confessed, the author has too hastily jumped to a conclusion. A reference to p. 160 of the same volume of the *Journal* would have shown Professor Dessoir that the purpose of the notice to which he refers was not so naïve as he fears.

Professor Dessoir also discusses at some length the S.P.R. cross-correspondences (pp. 214 ff.). Unfortunately, the case he selects for detailed consideration, "One Crowded Hour of Glorious Life," is by no means the best that has been printed. The author quotes Mr A. F. Hall's ideal case, though not without showing appreciation of the impossibilist nature of Mr Hall's demands. In his discussion

(pp. 226 ff.) of the spirit hypothesis, Professor Dessoir comes very definitely to the conclusion that the case is not proven.

Turning to the parapsychical phenomena, Professor Dessoir has added to his previous chapters on Slade, Eusapia Palladino and Anna Rothe, further chapters on Heinrich (a German wartime poltergeist medium), Maria Silbert, Willi and Rudi Schneider, Guzik, Kluski, Eleonora Zugun, Mirabelli, and *Margery*. With all these mediums, except Mirabelli, the author has had personal experience, and with all of them he comes to an adverse conclusion, though in the case of *Margery* his views are only hinted at (p. 336). Professor Dessoir has somewhat enlarged his chapters on fraud, conjuring, mediumistic psychology, etc., but they remain substantially as they were. His theoretical application of the psychology of testimony to psychical research (pp. 339 ff.) is particularly interesting.

The remaining portions of Professor Dessoir's book deal with historical and philosophical questions (the Kabala, Christian Science, anthroposophy, magical idealism) with which we are only indirectly concerned.

Professor Dessoir, who has been a Corresponding Member of the Society for over forty years, has spent nearly half a century in the active study and investigation of psychical research. This new edition of his book is a practically complete survey of the subject, written in the light of the author's exceptional knowledge and experience, and from a consistently impartial and critical point of view. It is probably the best modern textbook we have, and is certainly one that should be read by all who can follow the author's simple and lucid German. A translation into English is greatly to be desired.

THEODORE BESTERMAN.

“EPHESIAN” (C. E. BECHHOFFER ROBERTS), *The Mysterious Madame: a Life of Madame Blavatsky*. 8vo, pp. vii. 241, portrait. London: John Lane, 1931. Price 7s. 6d. net.

The compilation of a short biography of Mme Blavatsky presents exceptional difficulties. For the first forty years of her life, roughly two-thirds of the whole, the verifiable facts are most incomplete. She herself discouraged inquiry into them, and such accounts as she from time to time vouchsafed to her followers proved on examination to be largely unverifiable and often untrue. For the latter part of her life, that is, from her arrival in New York in 1873, the facts are clearer, and the biographer's principal task is to arrive at a fair estimate of her complex psychology.

Mr Bechhofer Roberts may be congratulated on the way in which he has discharged both parts of his task. The reader's interest is well sustained throughout the book. The narrative of H.P.B.'s earlier life is as lucid as her mystifications permit it to be, and the

estimate of her motives and character in the concluding chapter shows an evident desire to be fair, and may with some qualifications be accepted.

It would have been better if Mr Bechhofer Roberts had more often given us chapter and verse for the conflicting statements as to H.P.B.'s life before the foundation of the Theosophical Society; and in dealing with H.P.B.'s relations with the S.P.R. he is guilty of a few inaccuracies. F. W. H. Myers was never "Professor," and we should like to know Mr Bechhofer Robert's authority for the statement that he was at any time a theosophist.

In his concluding chapter the author pays a just tribute to H.P.B.'s courage and resource in the face of long continued poverty and illness. He is probably right in acquitting her of mercenary motives and of being an agent of the Russian Government; opportunity for this was lacking, if not inclination. On the question of her sincerity he is perhaps too charitable. She very possibly believed in the value of the doctrine she borrowed without acknowledgment from any handy source. But that she had any faith in the marvels by which she sought to gain acceptance for those doctrines, we find it hard to believe. Mr Bechhofer Roberts says that "many mediums who show themselves wholly upright in their ordinary life, resort to trickery to maintain their psychic prestige." We think this overstates the case; "trance-deception" and "subconscious fraud" are usually mere polite periphrases. Even, however, if we allow that they are sometimes more than this, there is no parallel between occasional acts of simulation done in trance or some similar state, and persistent trickery, involving careful preparation and collusion with other persons, carried out for many years while H.P.B. was in, for her at least, a "normal" mental state. W. H. SALTER.

ALFRED ADLER, *The Pattern of Life*. Edited by W. Béran Wolfe.

Svo, pp. 271. London: Kegan Paul, 1931. Price 8s. 6d. net.

The aim of this book is to give a summary of Professor Adler's "individual psychology," and to give students an opportunity of reading some case histories of difficult and problem children and of studying Dr Adler's therapeutic method.

A clear and sympathetic introduction by the editor will enable those who are unfamiliar with Dr Adler's psychological theory to realise its main outlines; and if the compression which was necessary in order to present a whole philosophy of human nature in 40 pages has led to an effect of over-generalization, it will still prove a stimulating introduction to Dr Adler's fruitful and illuminating science of human motives. The case histories which follow and which illustrate the theories that have been expounded in the Introduction, have been taken from the records of cases of problem children who

were brought to Dr Adler by physicians and teachers in New York and treated by Dr Adler during his visit to the New School of Social Research. Representative cases have been chosen by Dr Béran Wolfe to illustrate the "patterns of life" (that is, the methods of behaviour) unconsciously adopted by the children. These are of great interest. Many readers of works on individual psychology must have felt the need of further information on the practical application of the theory; till now it has been difficult to have access to such material as it has been confined to the German publications of Adler and his pupils. Readers therefore will be grateful to the editor for having realised this need and for having met it in a clear and attractive form.

Apart from its intrinsic interest the book is closely relevant to psychic research. Much possible light might be thrown on the otherwise puzzling motives behind dishonest mediumistic activities, if we compared them with the activities of neurotic children and with their mistaken methods of gaining attention and significance. Cases of so-called "poltergeists" would I feel sure resolve themselves very simply on analysis to a "pattern of life" (*i.e.* method of behaviour) adopted by a child at odds with his environment and anxious in some way to dominate or intimidate its personnel. No case of poltergeist is given in the present collection, but cases are mentioned of children with a mania for throwing things about so that they should in some way be the centre of disturbance and attention (p. 97). It is a very short step from openly throwing an object for an ingenious child to throw more unexpectedly and cleverly, and to impose on superstitious parents and friends the idea that he is in league with some spirit and not responsible. In this way he gains both prestige and immunity for his misdeeds, and there can be little doubt after studying these histories that these two motives are always the leading ones in neurotic solutions of the problems of life. The case (p. 74) of the boy with an invisible playmate, in connection with whom he takes on a different voice and manner, is also interesting from the point of view of psychical research.

The book can be warmly recommended to anyone interested in either psychology or psychical research. It is a pity that for the sake of brevity the editor omitted the exact form of the "protocol" or preliminary presentation of the cases, but it can be fairly closely surmised, and if a similar form could be adopted in all investigations into poltergeist and other so-called physical phenomena it might bring some orderliness into a research which has so far made too little use of the light given to us by orthodox psychology. INA JEPHSON.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Psychologische Rundschau, June, July, September 1930.

In these issues Dr Robert Schmitz reports on the Athens Congress. He is very critical of most of the papers read, and complains that much time was wasted on attempts to explain the phenomena, whereas only two papers (read by members of the English delegation), made any attempt to inquire into the status of the phenomena themselves. Dr Schmitz also criticises the Conference on the ground that no actual demonstrations of phenomena were given: as if, he complains, there were to be a conference of musicians without music. He strongly urges that this omission should be remedied at the London Congress of 1932. It may be suspected that Dr Schmitz does not fully appreciate the difficulties involved in his proposal.

Psychic Research, November 1930.

Early in 1930 the American S.P.R. issued a questionnaire to its members for the purpose of ascertaining their standing, beliefs, etc. Dr Geo. H. Hyslop (who has since withdrawn from the American Society's Board of Trustees) here reports on the 440 replies. Some of these replies are very interesting, as throwing some light on the great change that has taken place during recent years in the American Society's attitude and publications.

One of the questions asked related to members' views on "the occurrence of the phenomena studied by the Society." Of 440 persons whose replies are tabulated, 250 come under the heading of "Believer" and 168 are "Favourably disposed," a total of 418. Not a single member accepted the designation of "Disbeliever" and only 13 admitted themselves "Sceptical." It will be noticed that all supernormal phenomena are lumped together; it must therefore be assumed that a "believer" believes in all such phenomena, physical as well as mental.

The members were also asked whether they "accept the spiritistic hypothesis as an explanation of any of the phenomena." No less than 301 of those who replied do so accept it. The use of the word "any" is a little ambiguous in this question; presumably it is understood to mean "any one."

It is interesting to note that of those members of the American S.P.R. who replied 65 per cent. have had "personal psychic experience"; 80 per cent. have sat with mediums; 75 members have had more than 300 sittings; some have had a total running into thousands of sittings.

Psychological Bulletin, May 1931.

Mr Paul Campbell Young, of Louisiana State University, reviews 135 books and articles on hypnotism and suggestion. It appears from his survey that there is still great need for investigation in this field, and that the use of hypnotism is still suffering from its post-psychoanalytical decline. Under the elegant heading, "Occult Hold-Overs," Mr Young deplores the fact that in spite "of time and derision the old notions that hypnosis brings with it mysterious powers, such as clairvoyance, telepathy, and other manifestations linked up with the theory of animal magnetism, still persists." Among these manifestations the writer, for no apparent reason, cites the discussion of the fire-walk in our *Journal* for June 1928. Mr Young also refers to the refutation of Altrutz's views about the direct influence of mesmeric passes, but only mentions a brief preliminary report and not the full one published in volume xxxvi of *Proceedings*. It appears that an independent investigation in Russia by D. Polinkovsky also procured only negative results. On the other hand, there appears at the same time as Mr Young's survey a paper entitled "Biological Sources of Radioactivity" in the *Archives of Physical Therapy* (May 1931), xii, 272-8, by Dr R. A. Watters, of the Dr W. B. Johnston Foundation for Psychological Research. Dr Watters's investigations appear to suggest the presence of biological radioactivity in man, plants, etc. Further details will be awaited with interest.

Luce e Ombra, May 1931.

Signor Emilio Servadio contributes an article on the present state of psychical research, with special reference to what he calls the "Besterman—S.P.R. case." The writer states that he has no wish to dramatise the situation, but that he regards it as the first manifestation of a secret society propagating Bolshevism. This silly accusation is worth recording as a pendant to that made a few years ago to the effect that the Society was in the pay of the Jesuits.

TH. B.

ERRATUM

Vol. xxvii, p. 97, line 27 : for *opinion* read *episode*.

JOURNAL
OF THE
Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY,

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 28 October 1931, at 5.30 p.m.,

WHEN A PAPER ENTITLED

“ IS PROOF OF SURVIVAL POSSIBLE ? ”

WILL BE READ BY

MR H. F. SALTMARSH

N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.

THE SECOND MYERS MEMORIAL LECTURE.

THE Second Myers Memorial Lecture, by Dr T. W. Mitchell, has now been published under the title *Beneath the Threshold*. Copies may be obtained from the Secretary, Society for Psychical Research, 31 Tavistock Square, W.C. 1, price 1s. each; remittances should be enclosed with all orders.

Copies of the First Myers Memorial Lecture, *Conviction of Survival*, by Sir Oliver Lodge, are also obtainable as above, price 2s. each.

TWO INCIDENTS.

We are indebted for this case to Mr E. S. Thomas, a Member of the Society, who reported it to us on 21 September 1930, as follows:

"1. My cousin, Mr L. T. Parry Jones, headmaster of a school near Birmingham, was taken ill on the evening of July 29th at the end of the summer term (1930) after dismissing his servants preparatory to going away. His sister Beatrice who kept house for him was still with him. He went to a neighbouring nursing home. On August 6th he became delirious, developing a complaint which left little hope of recovery. He died on the night of Thursday, August 8th, without regaining consciousness. Mr F. B. Thornton, an intimate friend and father of a pupil, had been to see him and knew of the seriousness of his condition. He and L.P.J. had often in light conversation talked of 'Crossing the Styx.' On the night of my cousin's death he dreamt that he saw him crossing the Styx with tall trees like totem poles on the opposite bank. He was dressed in his ordinary clothes, and as he stepped ashore he turned and waved, calling 'I'm over.'

"Later the same night he had a vivid dream-vision of L.P.J. standing in the doorway with his mother. Mr Thornton had never seen my aunt, nor a photograph of her. There was no photograph of her in the living-rooms of the schoolhouse. He described her to me as shorter than her son and with greying sandy hair. Both items are correct, but the second is of more interest,¹ as L.P.J. was a tall man. The next morning Mr Thornton told his wife of his experiences before hearing of L.P.J.'s death. Mr Thornton had many mediumistic experiences physical and visionary before his

¹ [In reply to a question as to whether Mr Thornton could have any normal reason for thinking Mrs Parry Jones's hair was likely to be sandy, Mr Thomas writes on 2 October 1930: "I don't think Mr Thornton had any reason to think my aunt had reddish hair. He met three of her daughters who kept house at different times for P.J. The eldest certainly has dark auburn hair, but the second's hair is dark brown and the third's black. P.J.'s hair was light brown."]

marriage, since which he has deliberately discouraged such phenomena on the grounds of health. My aunt died in 1924 at the age of 75."

To this statement was appended the following corroboration :

"The above facts are correct as far as they concern me."

[Signed] FRANK B. THORNTON.

BEATRICE L. THORNTON.

August 26th 1930."

Mr Thomas then continues :

"I heard of Mr Thornton's experiences when I was at Tenby from L.P.J.'s sister Laura. He and his family had arranged to go there with L.P.J., and I met them and obtained the above signatures from him and his wife personally. He consented to try and recognise my aunt, whose appearance was quite unknown to him, from photographs. A number of old family albums were available at Tenby. From these I selected 15 photographs of contemporaries, mostly relatives and acquaintances, of my aunt at various ages. Among them were two of her. She was of stoutish habit, but became very thin in body and face before her final illness. One of the photographs was taken shortly before this change.

"I took the photographs in an envelope to Mr Thornton on the beach and sat about two feet from him. I asked him to go through them and see if any of them resembled her. I did not say that a photograph of her was among them. I said there was a certain family likeness common to the five sisters at all ages, and that was why some of the photographs were of young women. I took care not to see the faces of the photographs when he handled them. It was drizzling and he began by going through them without removing them from the envelope. Before examining them all he handed me one. I took it and asked him to take them out and go right through them. He took them out. I turned away, and he very quickly gave me a second. The first was of an elderly woman, who I could see bore a certain likeness to my aunt. My cousin tells me she is very like her in life. Mr Thornton did not think it was a photograph of my aunt, because the original was shingled and my aunt was not. This he told me afterwards. The second was of a very hollow-eyed person in whom I saw no likeness, but my cousin saw a likeness in the eyes (when I last saw her she was thinner, but not hollow-eyed). I again asked Mr Thornton to go through the cards before making his decision. After a much longer interval, during which I turned away from him as before, he remarked, 'That's the one,' and handed me the last photograph ($\frac{3}{4}$ face) taken of my aunt. As he did so he withdrew the second photograph from my knee. When I asked him the reason later, he did not remember doing so.

"It is regrettable that he should have proceeded to make his decision before going through the photographs.

"After this he gave me details of his vision: that he saw my aunt in profile and with a hand on her son's arm. He also told me for the first time that she had a shawl on. This only struck me after leaving Tenby. Enquiries from L.J. [daughter] elicited the fact that latterly she nearly always wore something over her shoulders, as she had spasms of chill and would use anything handy for a shawl. Apparently Mr Thornton told his wife it wasn't exactly a shawl but a covering of some sort.¹

"2. On August 22nd, 1930, my cousin Laura shewed me a copy she had just made of a letter before returning it which Clementine X, an Irish maid (R.C.) on the school staff had written to her sister Beatrice from Glasgow. She had left at the end of term before L.P.J. fell ill. In this letter (undated) she says:

"I am writing to see if there is anything the matter at the school. . . . I can't resist it, somehow. Every night as soon as ever I fall asleep I dream about Mr Parry Jones. He seems to be with me and he seems all changed, not like himself at all. So I wake up startled, they have to call to me. . . . As I should not like to think he would have an accident or anything while he is away on holiday, I am dreaming every night about the school I wrote to you. . . . I hope you won't think I'm mad writing you such rubbish, somehow I could not help [keep ?] it. If you have a spare moment, please write to me. Remember me to the Master."

"This letter was probably written about August 18th. My cousin L. wrote to Clementine at once, and at my request asked her for details as to when these dreams began, and whether she had felt anxious, etc. In her reply she apologised profusely for any pain her letter may have caused them (B. and L., his sisters), explaining her experience away as being of frequent occurrence and of no significance. She made no attempt to answer the questions. I learn from my cousins that Clementine had told one of her colleagues on the staff that she often had veridical dreams connected with deaths. They both regarded her as psychic. It seems likely that Clementine as a Roman Catholic obtained clerical advice before she replied. She wrote later in similar strain to B. She had left the school to be married, and felt it very much on parting. I learn that although L.P.J. looked pale his friends attributed it to the stress of the term's work and had no anxiety about his health.

[Signed] ERNEST S. THOMAS."

¹[These statements were contained in a letter from Miss L. Jones dated 16 September 1930. She writes: "Mrs T. told me it wasn't exactly a shawl her husband saw but a covering of some sort."]

Subsequently Mr Thomas wrote again on 18 October 1930, as follows :

“ Ll. Parry Jones Case. I send you some further details *re* above. Another sister of P.J., who had kept house for him, wrote to the maid Clementine when she heard of her letter to my cousin B.J., and asked her (quite independently) if she could give her the dates of her dreams.

“ She received an answer (copy enclosed and undated) about Sept. 21. C. had apparently regained her original feelings regarding her experience.

“ This cousin (Mrs Alkin) gives me the interesting information that P.J. suffered from very bad (‘ terrible ’) dreams before the coma supervened and meningitis declared itself. As she suggests, this may have influenced the tone of Clementine’s vision : P.J.’s distress of mind perhaps still pervading his subconsciousness at first (when he ‘ impressed ’ Clementine). She also confirms (without my questioning) the statement I made that Clementine had a reputation for ‘ dreaming true ’ ; she ‘ would often foretell the type of letter she would [find] when she came down in the morning [from dreams overnight].’ She would ‘ know if there was anything wrong with any member of her family before she heard ’ [authority of a colleague maid].

“ In the letter enclosed she seems to distinguish between dreams she still has of P.J. (of which she takes no notice) and the particular experience when she woke shouting to which she refers in this letter. She seems a very emotional type and not a good witness for detail. [Signed] ERNEST S. THOMAS.”

The copy of Clementine’s letter to Mrs Alkin is as follows :

“ I hope you will forgive me for not writing sooner, but I was really so busy. . . .

“ I am wondering how the school will go on this term without the dear master. . . . Well it’s very funny how I should dream of him that time. I can’t remember what date exactly, but my dear master must have passed away at the time. I don’t care what any one says to try and convince me. He must have been near me, for I woke up shouting to my sister, and she asked me what was wrong. I’d been dreaming that he was in some trouble and he was asking me to help him. But oh his dear face I will never forget it, it seemed small and drawn somehow, and he was so changed. I dream now about him sometimes, but of course I don’t take any notice of dreams. . . . [Signed] CLEMENTINE.”

The evidence in the first of these two experiences is, as Mr Thomas himself points out, weakened by the circumstances in which the photograph was identified. Nevertheless, it seemed worth while to put the incident on record because, taken in conjunction with the

experience of the maid Clementine, it rather suggests that Mr Parry Jones may have been one of the people who have at some crisis of their lives an exceptional faculty of impressing themselves upon others in a supernormal way. A striking example of this type of case is quoted by Mrs Sidgwick in her report on phantasms of the living, *Proceedings*, xxxiii. 167 ff.

CORRESPONDENCE.

METHODS IN EXPERIMENTAL TELEPATHY.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—I have read with great interest Dr Gardner Murphy's review (in *Proceedings*, xl. 99-104) of the *Transactions of the Fourth International Congress for Psychical Research*, and I heartily endorse his plea for a higher standard in the quality of the reports issued by psychical researchers. I cannot think, however, that Dr Murphy has been quite happy in his illustrations of what he apparently considers to be sound scientific procedure. I refer especially to the experiments of M. René Warcollier in the domain of telepathy.

Let me say at once that M. Warcollier is one of my valued friends and if I am inspired to put on the gloves for a friendly bout with him I hope he will not take it amiss. Moreover, when the report of my own investigations appears, I shall welcome his criticisms in the same amicable spirit. Not the least of the bonds between M. Warcollier and myself has been our common interest in the subject of experimental telepathy. Our methods of approach, however, are so fundamentally different that I believe their relative merits and defects would provide a fruitful subject for a discussion to which I am hoping both Dr Murphy and M. Warcollier will be induced to contribute.

I will begin, therefore, by describing just what impression the work of M. Warcollier makes upon me who am neither a psychologist nor an experimental physicist but a mathematician. I recognise that M. Warcollier is extremely ingenious and fertile in devising experiments, and that he has a lively gift of exposition, which makes all that he writes of exceptional interest and peculiar charm. This power of facile experimentation he shares with the late Dr Crawford, and, though the two workers belong to widely different fields, their basic methods are not altogether dissimilar.

I remember some years ago lending Crawford's *Experiments in Psychical Science* to a young physicist of considerable distinction, who had, however, no knowledge of psychical research. He read the book carefully, and handed it back to me with remarks to the

effect that he thought Crawford's experiments quite ingenious and admirably arranged to demonstrate the mechanics of psychic levitation. And no doubt considered purely as experiments in applied mechanics, Crawford's experiments were excellent, but underlying all his work was a large fundamental assumption which Crawford never adequately verified, and which grew more and more tacit as time went on. This tacit assumption, of course, was the assumption that the levitating agency was a supernormal force and not a human leg. At the beginning Crawford may well have had his doubts, but under the imperious hypnotism of his own theories, these doubts soon faded into the background of his mind. But I can quite imagine that to a physicist who had somehow become a convert to the possibility of psychic levitation, Crawford's methods would appear far more promising and hopeful than say those of Dr Prince or Mr Besterman, whose entire energies would be devoted to verifying the actual existence of the phenomenon.

Now it appears to me that underlying all M. Warcollier's work is the tacit assumption that the mental coincidences he observes are the result of some special causal nexus of a supernormal character between two minds, and not the effect of that vast but indeterminate concatenation of normal events which, in our ignorance, we call chance.

We must note, in the first place, that the material with which M. Warcollier has obtained most success consists of a series of sketches made up of more or less complicated arrangements of curved and straight lines, frequently intended to suggest concrete objects. In the great majority of examples cited by him, success is claimed on the ground that pairs of drawings executed in different places at more or less the same time exhibit certain resemblances in shape. As a rule it appears to be the form rather than the idea that is the basis of coincidence. This resemblance is seldom exact but most often of a sketchy or fragmentary kind. Frequently there is nothing more than the embryonic suggestion of a similarity. This fragmentary nature of the resemblances M. Warcollier explains by postulating that there is selection and analysis of the drawing to be transmitted by the subconscious minds of the agent and percipient.

But if one goes on making vast numbers of experiments as M. Warcollier has done, extending over a period of years, it is certain that chance will produce coincidences of varying degrees of complexity, and a judicious selection from the more successful results would provide material for the illustration of any number of psychological theories. What, I wonder, would happen if all the drawings ever made by M. Warcollier's agents and percipients in France, Greece, England and America were copied on to similar slips of cardboard, and these slips were thoroughly mixed in a large bag,

and then a number of pairs or trios were drawn out at random? I think it probable that I, as a sceptic, might find myself furnished with enough material with which to illustrate the whole of M. Warcollier's theories of mental contagion, fragmentation of the image, influence of the imagination, etc., etc.

It is possible that the probability of occurrence of fragmentary resemblances between pairs of drawings is greater than M. Warcollier imagines, especially when the sketches are at all involved.

Moreover, there is a further complication. So far as I am able to gather from the somewhat scanty and inadequate records of the individual experiments, the agents are chiefly guided in their selection of the material of transmission by personal preference.

That is to say, one or other of the group chooses an object or design which has impressed him at about the time of the experiments, or which he selects as suitable for testing some psychological theory. Well, in a civilised community we are all subject to common influences. We read the same newspapers, listen to the same programmes on the radio, gaze at the same advertisements on the Metro., etc. Two persons, therefore, may produce drawings with features of resemblance merely because a day or two previously they had both been impressed by the same hoarding in a public place. When the evening of the experiments arrives the two persons may have forgotten what they had seen, but the impression made upon their minds may still be sufficiently active to stimulate similar trains of thought, and in the sketches which they produce they will not recognize the true source of their inspiration. Thus we may arrive at a normal explanation of the coincidences which have led M. Warcollier to his theory of "mental contagion."

Further, when the members of a small group of persons who experiment together for months and years are constantly comparing their drawings and impressions, they will tend to become tolerably familiar with each other's mental preferences and idiosyncrasies. Hence the members of such a group will produce sketches which show a greater and greater degree of similarity. The believer in telepathy will interpret this as the slow growth of "l'accord télépathique."

Again, there may be in the group pairs of persons with a similar artistic make-up in their mentalities. Such pairs may produce more than the average number of coincidences and this will give rise to the belief in "couples télépathiques."

The remedy, of course, for these latter complications would be the selection by hazard of the sketches to be transmitted from a very large number compiled by a great variety of types of mind, but it does not seem clear that M. Warcollier has taken this precaution in arranging his experiments.

Very significant and disconcerting is the fact that M. Warcollier's groups do not succeed in experiments with numbers, playing cards, etc., where the chances are definite and easily estimated. Psychological reasons based upon the interference of mental habit and individual preference may, of course, be invoked to account for this, but it is surely very strange that in the early days of the S.P.R. apparently most successful results were obtained with playing cards and numbers.

But a much more potent reason suggests itself to account for M. Warcollier's failure with numbers, capital letters, etc. It is that such material is perfectly clear cut, and does not permit of the experimenters claiming equivocal successes on the score that an associated idea has emerged in the mind of the percipient. If the agent thinks of letter *A* and the percipient sees an *S*, it is not at all easy to convince the reader that any telepathy has taken place. If, however, the American group thinks of a cobra and M. Warcollier has the impression of, say, exotic birds and climbing plants, how easy to explain this by saying that exotic birds were associated in the mind of the agent with the idea of a cobra.¹ The truth is, of course, that every human mind is a perfect network of associations, and it is possible by using a very little ingenuity to find occasion for linking together even the most incongruous ideas. What apparent connection, for instance, is there between mathematics and a tiger? But I can easily find one in my own mind. A tiger suggests to me Blake's poem, and the lines which I most readily recall are these :

“ What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry ? ”

And the words “ symmetry ” and symmetrical are constantly being used by mathematicians.

When, therefore, M. Warcollier tells us that in place of the actual image transmitted by the agent an associated idea may emerge in the consciousness of the percipient, unless that association is as obvious as “ sea ” and “ ship,” or “ Indian ” and “ wigwam,” I shall remain frankly sceptical.

But my main criticism must be that M. Warcollier has provided us with no scientific criteria by which to judge whether the coincidences he observes are due to telepathy or not. He does, indeed, sometimes in a casual way refer to percentages of successes, but he furnishes us with no control series with which to compare the results of his experiments considered in the mass. It is certain that he must have had large numbers of failures. This I can definitely vouch² for by the records of his two years' work with my own group.

¹ R. Warcollier, *La Télépathie à très grande distance*, p. 5.

What he has given us in his various reports is, for the most part, a selection of successful cases apparently chosen for the express purpose of illustrating and supporting certain ingenious psychological theories. To a professional psychologist like Dr Gardner Murphy these theories doubtless appeal just as Crawford's theories of *X*-matter and *Y*-matter interest a physicist. But to the mathematical mind, accustomed to think in precise terms and to express its beliefs in the language of the calculus of probabilities, the methods of my friend M. Wareollier will seem inadequate.

Outside the ideal abstractions of pure mathematics there can be no absolute certitude in our findings about facts in the concrete world but only varying degrees of probability, and the aim of a truly scientific method must be to reach a numerical expression of the degree of probability attained by our experiments. Only thus can we hope to rise from the region of opinion into that of real knowledge.

I have recently completed an investigation in long-distance telepathy with over 600 persons and lasting over a period of two years. I have experimented with many different kinds of material. I have examined hundreds of mental coincidences, and had I so chosen nothing would have been easier than for me to have "psychologised" over these coincidences much after the manner of my friend M. Wareollier. But the extensive series of control experiments which were interpolated among the genuine attempts at transmission and the subsequent evaluation of the results by the known methods of statistical analysis, have shown conclusively that the coincidences observed were not to be attributed to any supernormal faculty, but were to be considered as the work of chance and common environment.

Although my percipients have followed closely the passive methods of reception advocated by M. Wareollier himself, and although (like certain of M. Wareollier's own group) some 353 of these percipients claimed to have had interesting psychic experiences at various periods of their lives, I have been totally unable to confirm M. Wareollier's conclusions either as to the supposed fact of experimental transmission of thought from the group of agents to the percipients, or as to the supposed phenomena of "mental contagion" among the percipients themselves.

I am prepared to believe that a very few specially endowed people like Mrs Leonard possess the faculty of telepathic perception, and that it occasionally operates between persons who are for all apparent purposes of normal mentality, but I am not prepared to admit that it is so common a human faculty that it can be experimented with like memory or intelligence or attention. One of the most cogent reasons why official science has neglected these super-

normal phenomena is surely the extreme rarity with which they happen. I suppose in this country there are not more than a dozen persons who produce phenomena that would repay any sort of systematic investigation by a scientific man.

Now I ask Dr Murphy what hope there would be of discovering a cure for cancer if not more than, say, one person per five million ever suffered from it? And our problem is infinitely more difficult. The patient with cancer can at least be observed as long as he lives and experimented with, but in the case of your psychic you can never be sure even of getting any phenomena to examine.

In view of the astonishing discrepancy between my own experiments and those of M. Warcollier, I earnestly hope that M. Warcollier may see his way in the near future to undertake such a series of control experiments as will either confirm or confute his fundamental hypothesis of telepathy.

Yours, etc.,

S. G. SOAL.

MODERN SCIENCE AND "SURVIVAL."

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—I have been wondering if anyone would draw attention, for its bearing on our subject, to a passage at the end of Sir James Jeans's recent little book *The Mysterious Universe*. The passage I mean is the following :

"Many would hold that, from the broad philosophical standpoint, the outstanding achievement of twentieth century physics is not the theory of relativity with its welding together of space and time, or the theory of quanta with its present apparent negation of the laws of causation, or the dissection of the atom with its resultant discovery that things are not what they seem; it is the general recognition that we are not yet in contact with ultimate reality" (p. 127).

The "yet" in this passage seems as if it can hardly refer to the possible achievements of posterity—as so many scientific "yets" in the past have done—since posterity, occupying the same environment as ourselves, will not be in contact with reality either. Sir James Jeans had just previously said that our universe or space-time continuum was beginning to look like a sort of shadow in four dimensions of something in more.

Since this obviously leaves open the door to possible contact with reality in some circumstances, many may regard it as offering definite support of the survival hypothesis. To me it seems rather to raise a question whether "survival" may be quite the right

word, to suggest that we may, in fact, be living in a higher degree of reality, in more dimensions than four, though, in our immediate shade of consciousness, we are not aware of it—any more than in the dream shade we are aware of the waking shade. It is perhaps hardly possible to avoid the speculation that death, like waking, may make us aware, may enable us to perceive this as the shadow of that.

Be that as it may, it is at least manifest that twentieth century science has moved a long way from the old materialism, which used to be rather a stumbling-block in the way of our investigations.

Yours, etc.,

HUBERT WALES.

PHANTASMS OF THE BLIND.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—I should be glad to know if any of our Members have come across credible evidence of the phantasm of a blind man, either in his lifetime or after.

The question seems to me to be important as the theory that a man's wraith or ghost is a telepathic projection of what he thinks or thought his visual aspect to be is a plausible one and has some confirmation in experiments with hypnotized patients, but this explanation would hardly hold in the case of a man blind from his birth.

The test case would be that of a man blinded in youth, who could have no visual knowledge of the changes time had made in his appearance. Would his projected phantasm be still that of a young man?

I take it that most of us would welcome any evidence that the occasionally distressing aspect of phantasms of the dead had no real counterpart in a future existence.

Yours, etc.,

LEWIS C. POWLES.

MISS CUMMINS'S AUTOMATIC WRITING.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—In his recently published book, *The Messiah Jesus*, Dr Eisler brings to light a "censored" passage concerning the physical appearance of Jesus. Dr Eisler claims to have recovered these details from a repressed text in the "Slavonic" Josephus. So far as I know, the only translation from German into English of the passage referred to (before the publication of the work in England), appeared in *The Quest* for October 1929.

It may interest your readers to know that a similar description was written automatically by Miss Cummins in November 1926. This description appears on pages 72 and 73 of *Paul in Athens*, published last year. The translation of 1929 and the automatic script of 1926 run as follows :

“He was a man of plain appearance, ripe age, with dark complexion, small stature, three eels high, bent back, long face, longish nose, eyebrows grown together so that those who looked at him could be dismayed, scanty hair, with a parting in the middle after the style of the Nazirs, and immature beard” (*The Quest*).

“There was no marvel in the glance of his eye, no wonder in the shaping of his countenance. He was crooked of body, ill-pleasing to behold, with long woman’s hair divided in the middle of the crown. His neck drooped and his nose was like the beak of a bird. He resembled many score of lowly men whom you will encounter in the market place and in the streets of your town. . . .” (*Paul in Athens*).

Coming as they do from entirely different sources, it must be admitted that there is a curious resemblance between these two accounts.

The question now arises, how did the mind of the automatist pick up this entirely unexpected picture of a hitherto uniquely idealised and beautiful Figure? Miss Cummins knows no Russian, Greek, or Hebrew. Her German is limited to a knowledge of the meaning of a few words in that language. Until last June she had never set foot in Germany. Moreover, she has never studied Christian origins nor is she in the least interested in Church history. Her normal mind is entirely concerned with literature of a modern character, more especially the drama. Only Mrs Champion de Crespigny and myself were present at the time of this writing. Mrs de Crespigny assures me that she had never seen anywhere in print, nor had she ever conceived in her mind, such a description of Jesus as was written on that occasion. For myself, I can only affirm that my knowledge of historical facts pertaining to early Christian history is absolutely nil.

It would seem, therefore, that the only explanation possible (if we exclude the cryptesthetic faculty and the spiritistic hypothesis), would be that of telepathy from some outside source. In which case Miss Cummins would have to be in telepathic communication with Mr G. R. S. Mead, who had apparently studied the German text of *The Messiah Jesus*, with Dr Eisler himself, or with some other scholar cognisant of these details. I myself have had some startling evidence of the astonishing accuracy with which, at times, my thoughts have been picked up by other people, though never as the result of deliberate experiment.

But if we admit this theory as the explanation, it must also be asked, why was other information not as accurately derived from the same source and committed to paper on the same occasion? Notably when (page 76) Miss Cummins wrote an interesting variant of Dr Eisler's theory that Jesus was impersonated at the resurrection by a twin brother? In this instance, "Menehas" states his belief that Jesus was impersonated by his disciple John, who resembled him.

There are other points of agreement and disagreement between these two chapters (16 and 17) of *Paul in Athens* and *The Messiah Jesus*, but space does not permit me to deal with them here. Neither is it possible to discuss the interesting anti-Christian views as expressed in the interpretation of the "Slavonic" Josephus, which would seem to coincide with those of "Menehas," nor the claim made by the pro-Christian Paul that these were fabrications. However, in conclusion, I would like to point out that an entirely different description of Jesus to the one given by "Menehas" appears on page 90 of *The Scripts of Cleophas*. This view is the pro-Christian one. Also other allusions of the same character are made on pages 75, 128, 129, and 130 of *Paul in Athens*. It seems, therefore, that Miss Cummins's mind is capable of reproducing two entirely contrary views and is not obstructed by any personal inhibitions in this respect.

Yours, etc.,

E. B. GIBBES.

[It must be pointed out that the significance attributed by Miss Gibbes to the interesting parallels she quotes are to a certain extent based on a misapprehension. Dr Eisler does not claim to have produced for the first time the supposed statement of Josephus about the physical appearance of Jesus. Nor does this statement stand alone. Dr Eisler himself gives a number of references to other sources (*The Messiah Jesus* [1931], pp. 393 ff.) and even in so popular a book as Jacob de Voragine's *The Golden Legend* there appears a modified form of it. ED.]

THE MYSTERIOUS MADAME.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR.—Mr Salter, in an otherwise favourable review of my recent biography of Madame Blavatsky, suggests that I am "guilty of a few inaccuracies" in dealing with her relations with the S.P.R. The alleged "few inaccuracies," however, appear to number only two.

Mr Salter's first complaint is that I suppose F. W. H. Myers to have been at one time a theosophist. Well, Madame Blavatsky in

her published letters to Sinnett (no. 61) refers to Myers as a theosophist; and no less omniscient a personage than the Mahatma K.H. confirms this in his letters to Sinnett (no. 83). Olcott refers to Myers's resignation from the Theosophical Society in *Old Diary Leaves* (3rd series, p. 235). These three (or two) individuals were in a position to know; and, what is to the point in weighing their evidence, they had less to gain than to lose by mentioning that Myers had been a theosophist.

The second "inaccuracy" seems hardly worth inclusion in a serious review. It is that, like many other writers, I called Myers a Professor. I plead guilty to this heinous offence; Myers was technically a "Lecturer" at Cambridge and not a "Professor."

Yours, etc.,

C. E. BECHHOFFER ROBERTS.

REVIEWS.

An Adventure. With a Preface by Edith Olivier and a Note by J. W. Dunne. 8vo, pp. 104, 3 ill. and 4 folding maps. London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1931. Fourth edition. Price 7s. 6d. net.

The original edition of this book, published in January 1911, was reviewed at some length in the Society's *Proceedings* (xxv. 353-60). The only matter which seems to call for further comment now is a statement which appears in Miss Olivier's preface, pp. 23-4, as follows: "*An Adventure* was adversely reviewed in the *Journal of Proceedings* [sic] of the Society for Psychological Research, for June 1911. . . . It is, however, shown conclusively by the Bodleian papers that the evidence had not actually been 'examined' at all; and that the writer of the review had not seen any of these original and contemporary records of the research. . . . The papers in the Bodleian decisively prove that these documents were offered to the S.P.R., and were not accepted by them. . . ."

It is first to be noted that *strictly contemporary* written records of the experience with which *An Adventure* is concerned do not seem to have ever existed. It appears from the concluding paragraphs of "Miss Moberly's account of the first visit to the Petit Trianon" (p. 46) that it was in November 1901 that she and Miss Jourdain "resolved to write down independent accounts" of their expedition, which had taken place in the previous August.

Now as to the part played by this Society. (1) The case was first brought to our notice within a year or so of its occurrence and certain "original documents" were offered for our consideration. The opinion we then formed, from which we see no reason to depart, was that the evidence for the hallucinatory character of the experi-

ence was insufficient and that the case might be explained on the hypothesis that the percipients had subsequently ascribed a psychical significance to various actually existing persons and objects seen by them at Versailles.

(2) Shortly after the first publication of *An Adventure* and before the publication of our review, the authors submitted to the Society a MS. book of notes written from time to time in the course of their own investigations into the case. It was apparent from these notes that the records printed at the beginning of the first edition and reprinted in the present edition (pp. 39-51), were not the earliest records, in which many of the incidents upon which the authors laid special stress as evidence of the supernormal character of their experience were described very briefly and with far less detail than in the published version.

That the authors themselves attached importances to these earliest records at the time they were made, and then considered them the most trustworthy report of their experiences, seems to be shown by the fact that, as described above, they sent them to the S.P.R. Permission was asked to include these original records (still, so far as we are aware, unprinted) in our review of the book; we offered to publish at the same time any statement concerning these early documents the authors might care to send us. They refused, however, to allow us to publish them and we were therefore precluded from making any use of them in our review.

We put these facts on record here in order to show that the critical attitude of our reviewer cannot fairly be ascribed to a refusal on the Society's part to consider such evidence as was brought to its notice.

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JOURNAL
OF THE
Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY,

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 25 November 1931, at 5.30 p.m.,

WHEN A PAPER ENTITLED

“ Personalities of Controls and Communicators
bearing Ancient or Unknown Names ”

WILL BE READ BY

MR A. W. TRETHERY.

N.B.—*No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.*

TOWARDS A THEORY OF DOWSING

I

INTRODUCTION

BY THEODORE BESTERMAN

THE problem of dowsing falls into three parts. The first is evidential: Is it really possible to find water, metals, etc., by dowsing? Everybody who has conducted experiments with a good dowser or who has studied the evidence agrees that it is.

The second question is: What causes the movements of the rod? Here again there is general agreement. The movements of the rod are produced by the dowser's unconscious muscular movements. It follows that the rod is merely an index and that it is the dowser himself who "perceives"¹ the object sought.

The third question arises from the answer to the second: How does the dowser "perceive" the object sought? This is the crucial problem and there is no agreement on it. As there is not likely to be much progress until this question is settled, in however provisional a way, I have sought for an opportunity of discussing it in some detail. The publication of an English translation of a book by one of the leading exponents of the French school² and of a book by two of the best-known German students of the subject,³ seemed to present such an opportunity. I therefore invited the Vicomte de France and our Corresponding Member, Graf Klinckowstroem, to state their own and to criticise each other's views. They kindly agreed, and their discussion follows. Their first articles were written independently of each other. I have added to them these introductory remarks and a concluding summary and analysis.

Since this discussion was completed I have been glad to note the publication of a number of the *Revue Métapsychique* (Juillet-Août 1931) largely devoted to dowsing. The contributors are all French dowsers and investigators, and their articles display the usual and confusing diversities of opinion, but contain much of interest and value.

¹ This word is used throughout in a completely non-committal sense, for "becomes aware of" or the like.

² Vicomte Henry de France, *The Modern Dowser: a Guide to the Use of the Divining Rod and Pendulum*. Translated by A. H. Bell. 8vo, pp. xv. 135, 12 ill. London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1930.

³ Graf Carl von Klinckowstroem and Rudolf Freinerr von Maltzahn, *Handbuch der Wünschelrute: Geschichte, Wissenschaft, Anwendung*. 8vo, pp. ix. 321, 104 diagrams, maps, and ill. München, Berlin: R. Oldenbourg, 1931.

II

*THE ART OF THE DOWSER*¹

BY VICOMTE HENRI DE FRANCE

The art of the dowser goes back to the highest antiquity, but it is only in quite recent years that the scientific study of it has begun in France. In 1913 M. Henry Mager, colonial geographer, and M. Armand Viré, director of the Laboratory for Subterranean Biology at the Museum, took advantage of a psychical congress to bring together a few dowsers. These were submitted to various tests, searches for underground water currents, hollows, hidden metals, etc. The dowsers passed these tests brilliantly. As a result the phenomena of the dowsing-rod attracted the attention of a certain number of instructed and intelligent persons.

They observed first of all that it was not indispensable for the dowser to be endowed with a special "gift". The art of the dowser can be acquired like all the other arts, with the reservation that, like the other arts, that of dowsing calls for some aptitude and for a little patience and perseverance. At the same time, during the years after the war, the chief dowsers published books in which they explained their methods. We need mention only the works of M. Mager, Frère Padey, the Abbé Mermet, the Abbé Ferran, that of M. Capron on the Abbé Bouly, M. Christophe, and finally my own. Several of these books have been very successful and have gone into a number of editions. It will be seen that an important part has been played in recent development of the art of the dowser by our country priests. There has, in fact, appeared amongst them a number of dowsers of the highest merit. I have myself devoted a series of articles to their work in *Les Etudes*. As the result of these books and articles the number of French dowsers has been constantly increasing and has become great enough to justify the founding of a now flourishing society, the Association des Amis de la Radiesthésie and of a Journal, the *Chronique des Sourciers*.

The pre-war dowser concerned himself only with the search for water and sometimes for minerals. The dowsers of to-day have considerably extended the field of their investigations. Radiesthesia has become a science capable of innumerable applications. It is no longer content to indicate currents of water, but now specifies its mineralisation and radioactivity, it solves hitherto insoluble prob-

¹ [The Vicomte de France's views are set out at greater length in his book cited above, p. 142, n.².]

lems in geology, it helps archaeology by finding caves and foundations, agriculture by determining the best grains and by verifying whether they are suitable for the soil, and finally it invades the field of medicine with confidence and success, localising diseased organs, preserving from unnecessary operations, choosing remedies and diets. And we have so far only mentioned physical radiesthesia ! Others go further and are in process of founding a sort of psychical radiesthesia. They are no longer content to operate on the spot and make use of plans and photographs. For them distance no longer counts.

We are constantly learning new applications of our art and it is seldom that the results do not surpass our hopes. At the same time investigators are exercising their ingenuity in perfecting our instruments and in replacing them by automatic apparatus. None of these is as yet altogether satisfactory, but we may hope that before many years have passed the problem will be solved.

The greatest progress made in France by the dowsing movement is due on the one hand to the published works and the remarkable results obtained by some of the best dowzers, and on the other hand to the inventions connected with wireless, to which one is naturally inclined to assimilate the art of the dowser. It has to be remembered, in fact, that the dowsing novice can learn his art by practising with the rod and the pendulum over electric currents, magnets and electro-magnets, and wireless stations. With these last he can even regulate the length of the thread of his pendulum according to the wave-length of the transmission station with which he is in relation. The dowsing-rod, and still more so the regulable pendulum, operates exactly as if syntonisations were produced analogous to those obtained with wireless apparatus. It is also known that very curious results have been obtained on these lines with the Abrams apparatus, to which Dr J. Regnault in France has devoted important works, as well as to various other phenomena which throw light on dowsing.

There is thus a physical radiesthesia, related to the known sciences and based on geology and biology, for which it supplies reliable and practical diagnostic apparatus, which, however, requires for its successful use an adequate knowledge of the sciences. But apart from the ordinary dowzers, among whom everybody may aspire to be numbered, there are others whose exploits, to which we have already referred, are somewhat disconcerting : these it is who trace springs and the like on a plan or a map, and who diagnose illnesses from a photograph. In such cases explanations based on wireless and on telluric currents or on conductive atmospheric currents no longer seem to apply. We appear here to enter into an unknown region. We know that there exist persons called *clairvoyants*, who possess the singular faculty of seeing at a distance,

of penetrating the past and even the future, of diagnosing illnesses, of finding hidden objects, etc. All this has been studied and established. Successful results are often recorded, but no explanation is found. Ought we to have recourse to St Thomas's "Estimative" or faculty of perceiving in a sensible object that which is not apprehended by the senses? It is unquestionable that this faculty exists in animals. St Thomas considers that it must exist to a much greater degree in man, since it is directly related to the intellectual faculties. He describes it as belonging to inferior or particular reason and declares that "it unites in itself individual and concrete properties, as superior reason unites general properties".

However this may be, it is possible to compare our intuitive dowzers with clairvoyants. The former sometimes do not even use their rods and pendulums for strictly divinatory purposes. I know some who tell you in this way whether you are married, how many children you have, etc. They proceed rather like the clairvoyant who, instead of the pendulum, uses coffee grounds or a pack of cards. Nevertheless, these dowzers who read plans and photographs on the whole obtain satisfactory results to which other clairvoyants do not appear to attain. We do not think that we have yet given a satisfactory explanation of this phenomenon. But it should be observed that the differences between the clairvoyant and the intuitive dowser appear to be minute. On the other hand, it is difficult to trace a clear line of demarcation between the ordinary and the intuitive dowser. Some of the performances of the most "ordinary" dowzers make one incline to have recourse to the Estimative. *Natura non facit saltus*. We have here yet another illustration of this celebrated adage.

We have written of the movements obtained by electrical currents. These transformations of oscillations into gyrations for a given length of wire, serving to make certain nervous modifications perceptible, appear to be no more than simple effects of induction. We are on the borderline of automatism; even machines imitate us with more or less precision. Intelligence intervenes and directs our movements. Attention and abstraction play their rôles, which become more and more preponderant. By imperceptible transitions we pass from the known to the unknown. It is not known how to bridge the gap dividing normal from supernormal phenomena. Perhaps the "magic rod" will succeed in this task. In the meanwhile those who use it, instead of philosophising, prefer to investigate and to pursue useful and specialised ends.

The era of the "universal" dowser appears to be at an end. Nowadays one learns to use the rod and the pendulum as one learns to use the violin, the bistoury, or the brush. Some use our apparatus because they are well-sinkers or hydrological engineers, others

because they are mining engineers, others because they are doctors or veterinarians, others because they are agriculturists or gardeners. What I have put forward here is not a gratuitous assumption. The formal testimony is none other than my list of subscribers to the *Chronique des Sourciers* and my editorial correspondence.

The services rendered by the rod and the pendulum are constantly increasing in number and in accuracy, and one can foretell without any clairvoyance that before many years the use of the dowser will have become a current practice. Let us hope that we shall then remember those modest French country priests who will have contributed to a large extent to the development of a movement so fecund and so useful for France and humanity.

[Translated by Th. B.]

III

*DOWSING AS A PHYSICO-PHYSIOLOGICAL
PHENOMENON*¹

BY GRAF CARL VON KLINCKOWSTROEM

Sir William Barrett came to the conclusion that the phenomenon of dowsing was to be regarded as purely psychical. Continental investigators, on the contrary, consider that the dowser reacts to a physical stimulus. The old miners spoke of mountain atmospherics, metallic exhalations, etc. ; the Cartesians sought for the explanation in the emanation of minute particles (the corpuscular theory) ; Pierre Thouvenel developed in 1780 an electrical hypothesis, and this *mutatis mutandis* is still advocated by many to-day. On the discovery of the complex of radio-active phenomena these also were naturally drawn upon, and to-day the judicious defender of a physico-physiological interpretation speaks of radiation in general, without committing himself as to its precise nature. During the last decade geophysical investigations have developed a series of discoveries which in various ways throw light on the formation of the earth's crust. One of these achievements, the measurement of the radio-activity of the surface of the earth, has, according to Richard Ambronn, a bearing on the phenomenon of dowsing. Ambronn was able to establish that there were sudden changes in the degree of radio-activity at places where lodes come to light and at many other exceptional geological spots. Thus, where faults appeared there was always an increase in radio-activity, and a great decrease over iron lodes. Now according to Ambronn the dowsing-rod gives indications in precisely the same places as the registering apparatus shows variations in the degree of radio-activity, so that a connection appears to him to be established between geological peculiarities (zones of disturbance), the indications of the dowsing-rod, and the characteristic variations in radio-activity.

With this faculty of the dowser there is perhaps to be connected what may be called weather-sensibility, the fact that certain people are very sensitive to changes in the weather, storms, etc. Willy Hellpach considers this weather-sensibility to be directly paralleled by the sensibility of the dowser. There may in this connection be taken into account, with E. Bandl, the possible connection between

¹ [For a further exposition of Graf von Klinckowstroem's views see the book cited above, p. 142, *n.*³, and his articles in the *Journal*, xv. 329-34 and xxii. 54-60.]

meteorological phenomena and the radio-active emanations of the ground. It must be remembered that, for instance, a fall in atmospheric pressure is followed, among other things, by an increase of radio-active emanation and of ionised air from the pores of the earth. This cannot be without some influence on cloud-formation.

This leads us to a further fact that has been discovered, namely, that lightning is the best spring-finder. How is this to be explained? Lightning does not (*pace* Schiller) inevitably strike the highest objects, trees and towers; it chooses the path of least resistance, which is admittedly often that presented by the highest points. For this reason the lightning conductor, as is well known, must be taken down into earth until underground water is reached. And it has often been observed that lightning strikes the same objects again and again. Professor O. Hoppe had already remarked in 1906, in connection with the observations of the dowser Landrat von Bülow-Bothkamp, that "the electrical discharges of lightning only strike water or metal conductors which lead deep into the earth," and he pointed to the connection between atmospheric electricity and veins of water or metal. As lodes and "water-veins" are frequently connected with clefts, fissures, and faults in the earth, the choice of such places by lightning may be explained by the increased ionisation of the earth's atmosphere, due to its increased conductivity, over these places. It is also a well-known fact that storks only nest on roofs that are never struck by lightning, under which, that is, there are no water-bearing strata. The stork instinctively avoids the places which in some way make him feel uncomfortable owing to the change of the electro-magnetic field, owing to "radiations", or whatever else the reason may be. Similarly it is known that trees do badly over underground water.

This leads us to a further observation: many dowsers (for instance, von Bülow, von Uslar, von Graeve, von Maltzahn) have declared that they cannot sleep, or that they suffer some injury to their general wellbeing, when they are over "water-veins". Lately it has even been maintained in various quarters that to live for a long time over strong underground streams of water leads to serious injury to health. A Dresden dowser, Frau Hedwig Winzer, together with Dr R. Bach, has conducted a series of careful investigations into this question. According to Bach it appeared that Frau Winzer was able to locate underground streams wherever (unknown to her) such illnesses as cancer, gout, chronic rheumatism, neuralgia, heart diseases, etc., had occurred to a marked degree. Bach also cites other writers (Kolb, Prinzing, Werner) who, from quite different points of view, in the investigation of the distribution of cancer and the localisation of its occurrence in various districts have come to the conclusion that local influences play a rôle in the etiology of

cancer. Prinzing, however, had principally in mind the assumption, to-day no longer acceptable, that cancer is due to an infectious contagion. Werner describes it as remarkable that in some diluvial and miocene areas the number of localities in which cancer is common is particularly high, whereas in gneiss areas such localities are in general few. These questions are not yet ripe for discussion, particularly as the primary causes, in connection with which numerous possibilities can admittedly be put forward, are wholly obscure. At the same time, these facts also tend to support the idea of a physical cause. It is to-day generally assumed that cancer is produced by continuous stimuli of various kinds, and prolonged living over underground streams would be one such stimulus. Attempts are being made in medical quarters to clear up this complex of problems.

Another phenomenon also appears to be relevant here: the observation first made by Freiherr von Bassus in 1905 that in calm weather the whole system of streams and rivers on the surface of the earth is exactly reproduced by gaps in otherwise uniform clouds. Bassus was able to observe and to photograph this remarkable phenomenon from a balloon over a cloud 390 feet thick and 2250 feet high. For this phenomenon also a satisfactory explanation is still lacking. We have here a projection of the streams of water on to the clouds, exactly as the dowser indicates the perpendicular projection of underground running water or lodes.

If we analyse the phenomenon of dowsing into its basic elements we see that we are concerned with a comparatively simple process. The chief component is the primary cause of the dowser's reaction, which we seek in a physical stimulus of the nervous system of the dowser. In this connection there has to be studied the reaction itself, a good deal of light on which has been thrown, in particular, by Dr H. Haenel. In connection with the physiological mechanism of the movements of the rod we are concerned with a system in labile tension, represented by the hands and arms separated by the dowsing-rod, which can be easily brought out of equilibrium by any variations in the contractile state of the hand and arm musculature. According to Haenel this occurs by means of the relaxing of certain muscles within a system of other muscles which retain their tension and innervation. The impulse producing this relaxation can be quite minute.

Owing to the mysterious appearance of the phenomenon itself this simple fact has been frequently obscured and complicated by fantastic theoretical systems and uses, which have produced much mischief. To these erroneous systems belong for instance the numerical dowsing experiments of the late Professor Moritz Benedikt, who thought he was able to draw exact conclusions as to the nature and composition of the substances searched for from the degree of

the circular movements of the dowsing-rod. In this we can only see a serious self-deception, which can be very quickly shown to be such by means of exact tests. The complicated and in itself logically constructed system of Benedikt undoubtedly arose in a similar manner to the Mars language of the medium H el ene Smith, which Flournoy was able to trace to the unconscious capacities of the medium. Of the further mischief which has been worked in Germany with the dowsing-rod and pendulum—the diagnosis of illnesses, the investigation of eggs, the testing of the genuineness of pictures, etc.. I would rather say nothing.

What has been said about Benedikt applies also to the hypotheses and experiments which have recently been produced in France. Here M. Henri Mager, also on the basis of laboratory experiments, has developed a very minutely specialised system and thinks that he has discovered laws governing the polar attraction and repulsion of the rod over positive and negative poles. This fundamentally erroneous attitude to the problem has unfortunately obtained followers in France. Among these is the Vicomte Henri de France, for instance, who in his recent booklet, also on the basis of armchair investigations, which he calls fundamental investigations, and from which he draws far-going theoretical and practical conclusions. These appear to me to be just as mistaken as the experiments of Benedikt and Mager. At bottom the Vicomte de France agrees with the dowzers that physical influences, “earth-currents or waves”, are the primary causes of the reaction of the dowsing-rod. We will return to the question whether this agrees with the experiments described by him. He thinks further that a special disposition is not necessary for the dowser, but that anyone can acquire the art of dowsing. In this respect also our own investigations have led us to a different conclusion. Indeed, we regard it as a possible danger that the investigation of dowsing may be discredited by the work of unqualified and dilettante dowzers, if anyone imagines that he will be able to produce results after brief instruction. The use of the sidereal pendulum, which lends itself even more easily than the dowsing-rod to serious self-deceptions, appears to us to be in itself dangerous. The Abb e Bouly, who uses a pendulum, and who appears to be highly thought of in France, diagnoses illnesses. The Abb e Mermet is able by the same method to indicate the yield of springs to the decimal point of a minute-litre, according to the Vicomte de France. We have no doubt that these claims would quickly vanish under scientific examination. No dowser can produce such results. According to our investigations even the possibility of an accurate indication of depth is a very debatable point. We doubt equally the accuracy of the “sensational” pendulum experiments with eggs of Professor Bosset of Lausanne, as well as the

alleged ability of the late dowser Probst to make chemical analyses in the same way.

The Vicomte de France describes as a fundamental experiment one with a pendulum over an electrical pocket lamp, in which he attributes the movements of the pendulum to systematic reactions to zones of influence, etc. What he publishes are detailed theoretical discussions and observations, but no proofs. However much we acknowledge that the Vicomte de France requires dowsters to have considerable geological knowledge, we cannot see in these complicated investigations any way which leads to the solution of the problem of dowsing. Precisely as with the theory of Mager, we cannot see in the methods described by M. de France anything more than an erroneous system which can only lead to confusion. In our opinion we are concerned here only with a mental phenomenon: the pendulum plays the rôle of an ascension pipe from the subconsciousness (to use a phrase of R. Tischner's), as in the case of automatic writing, the planchette, or scrying. Only the views and expectations of the users of the pendulum are exteriorised. In brief, the complicated "physical" hypotheses and investigations of the French dowsters are simply the chimeras of laymen.

[Translated by Th. B.]

IV

REPLY TO GRAF VON KLINCKOWSTROEM

BY VICOMTE HENRI DE FRANCE

Graf Carl von Klinekowstroem is too well known for his learned studies on the dowsing-rod and for the high authority he has acquired for me not to be disturbed by his criticisms and for me not to take them into serious consideration. I hope for the rest that we shall be able to reach an agreement fairly easily, as we start from the same basis and the same principles. Like him I think that the movements of the dowzers are caused by the action on our nervous system of terrestrial radio-activity and atmospheric electricity. Like him also, I fear "unqualified and dilettante dowzers". It is for this reason that I insist so much on the necessity that dowzers should be perfectly acquainted with geology. I consider that the rod and the pendulum are the diagnostic instruments of that science. Consequently, in order to use them with success, one must begin by being a geologist, just as one has to be an astronomer in order usefully to employ a telescope.

I thought for a long time, like Graf von Klinekowstroem, that the art of dowsing could only be exercised by a very few exceptionally gifted persons. This would have been very regrettable, for the majority of those who need it, geologists, mining engineers, water engineers, etc., would have been unable to use it. Happily the recent discovery of the regulable pendulum, perfected by the Abbé Ferran, has convinced me that almost anyone can become a dowser, precisely because this pendulum is regulable, whereas the rod is not.

The experiments which I recommend with electric currents, accumulators, wireless sets, magnets, etc., are, above all, exercises for practice, which the dowser must perform every day in order to keep in form; in certain aspects the art of the dowser bears some resemblance to a sport, and daily practice is far from being useless. These experiments do not appear to me to be at all contradictory of the fundamental ideas of Graf von Klinekowstroem. It does not appear to me that there is any conflict between dowsing by means of telluric or atmospheric electricity and that which is done at home and at will. In a way these exercises recall a little those done by hunters and fishermen with their rifles and rods for the purpose of getting into form.

The only valid criticism that could be made against these exercises would be to demonstrate experimentally that they are impossible,

but I have good reasons for thinking that this could not be done. A number of dowzers actually perform these exercises. If they succeed in judging with their pendulums whether their accumulators are more or less charged, which can be easily verified ; if, in varying the length of their pendulum, they see on their wireless apparatus that they are in harmony with stations of short, medium or long wave lengths, lengths proportionate to that of the thread of the pendulum ; then I think that these dowzers will regard the phenomena of their art as more akin to the theories of induction and of oscillating circuits than to those of the subconscious.

Taking these considerations into account, I cannot see what objections Graf von Klinckowstroem could make against these exercises, which, in addition to their intrinsic merits, have the advantage of emphasising in the eyes of beginners the laws of modern physics, on which he, like myself, bases the movements of the rod and of the pendulum.

To deny *à priori*, as does Graf von Klinckowstroem, the medical diagnoses of the Abbés Bouly and Mermet appears to me to be acting a little hastily. Many facts which appear one day to contradict accepted theories have to be recognised as true the following day. Personally, not being a doctor, I have not concerned myself with the medical part of dowsing, but this part exists and is even developing rapidly. During the year following the foundation of the Association des Amis de la Radiesthésie the number of doctors who have joined it has increased to such an extent that there is a movement on foot to organise a medical commission. I know a veterinary doctor who is at this moment preparing a medical thesis on the extraordinary results he has obtained with the pendulum. I mention finally the work and the review of Dr J. Regnault, of Toulon, which Graf von Klinckowstroem certainly knows.

The truth is that the Abbé Bouly and the Abbé Mermet are dowzers of the first order, the former with the rod, the second with the pendulum. While others were feeling their way and hesitating they have been frankly in the vanguard, and this is the cause of the great fame they enjoy as much in France as abroad. Courage is a necessary quality in its cause, and it is very fortunate that we possess men of this kind. Without them it is more than probable that the art of the dowser would have continued in its century-old ruts.

There are at the present time in Europe many excellent dowzers. I may mention, without attempting to be exhaustive : in France, M. Mager, the Abbés Bouly and Ferran, Frère Padey, MM. Viré, Bidreman, Larvaron, Treyve, Mathieu, Turenne, Dr J. Regnault, Colonel de Marsay, Colonel Moreau, etc. ; in Switzerland, the Abbé Mermet, Professor Bosset ; in Germany and Austria, Herren von

Graeve, von Maltzahn, Dr Bayer, Dr Braun-Fernwald, Dr Claus ; in England, Mr Christie ; in Spain, Professor Darder Pericas, etc.

These gentlemen make no mystery, in general, of the means they employ. They often make known the extraordinary results they occasionally obtain, and sometimes in the most unexpected regions. I think that under these circumstances it is imprudent to assign barriers to the possibilities of dowsing. I think it is better to see which of the experiments can be easily reproduced by the average dowser. We shall then be able to see what is capable of being widely utilised. This attitude appears to be better than that which consists of an *à priori* denial, better even than the experiments of the inventors themselves, for we do not know, in the latter case, whether their experiments are capable of being reproduced, which is the important point in such a matter.

The easily reproduced experiment becomes a definite achievement and public property. It is well to seek for the scientific theory which explains the fact, but we must remember that it is more than probable that the theories we build to-day will be replaced by others in a few years, themselves also destined to be modified.

[Translated by Th. B.]

V

REPLY TO THE VICOMTE DE FRANCE

BY GRAF CARL VON KLINCKOWSTROEM

I regard as a fundamental error the assumption that anybody can develop himself into a dowser by practice. According to our experience the mere movements of the rod in an individual's hands are not in themselves any indication that he is a useful dowser, since these movements can be produced by ideomotor causes or suggestion. And there are certainly many such dowsers who are not in fact "true" dowsers. Their "successes" prove nothing. We even know some cases where excellent dowsers have lost their faculty, as, for example, the Munich dowser Kurringer, who at one time rendered valuable services to the Munich water board in connection with pipe-bursts, etc. To us the dowser is only an instrument. The scientific solution of the problem and the experimental investigations of dowsers is a scientific matter. The experiments and theories of laymen cannot advance the problem, but will rather confuse and discredit it. I cannot accept the instructions given in France for the education of dowsers. In my opinion they lead to serious self-deception and to the erection of theoretical systems which are also in the nature of self-deceptions, as in the cases of Benedikt and Mager. I consider the various capacities that are attributed in France to the dowsing-rod and pendulum to be mistaken, and I am convinced that they would very promptly be shown as such on exact investigation by experts. I have as yet heard nothing of such investigations. The use of "samples" is also based, in my opinion, on erroneous theoretical assumptions. On similar principles operated Schermuly's "polarisator", a pendulum-like apparatus with a capsule containing a specimen of the object for which search was being made. The worthlessness of this apparatus was demonstrated years ago by means of a series of careful experiments in the Psychological Institute of the University of Frankfurt. In 1913 Gustave Lebon briefly investigated the dowser Probst, whose ability to distinguish objects was alleged to approach a chemical analysis in accuracy. Unfortunately these experiments were not continued (cp. *Nature*, 1913, no. 2085).

Why is so little notice taken of dowsing to-day by official science and by the competent experts and local authorities in France? This lack of interest appears to me to be due to the fantastic claims and hypotheses of the dowsers. There are dowsers in Germany also

who make a great fuss about their alleged capabilities, but for the most part there remains very little of these claims after expert analysis or investigation. On the other hand, scientifically educated dowsers, free from fantastic theorising, allow their abilities to be expertly investigated in the strict possible way. Among these may be mentioned the investigation of Dr K. Osswald by the Stuttgart Geologist Dr Kranz, and of Freiherr von Maltzahn by the Freiberg Institute of Mines and Board of Mines. The records of these exact investigations form a sure demonstration of the usefulness of the dowsing-rod in the hands of competent dowsers who are conscious of their responsibilities, so that science can no longer dismiss dowsing as an ancient superstition. Only such a procedure can, in my opinion, be serviceable to the subject, only so can the interest and confidence of science be won. The rod and the pendulum as instruments of divination we have, admittedly, entirely excluded from our observations. Dowsing of eggs, photographs, etc., we consider a misuse which confuses the subject and which can only lead to the discrediting of the phenomenon. The solution of this problem is to be found by simplification and not by complication.

[Translated by Th. B.]

VI

THE PSYCHICAL AND PHYSICAL THEORIES OF
DOWSING

BY THEODORE BESTERMAN

It will be seen that there are two explanations of dowsing (I am writing here only of the dowser's "perception", that is, the third problem stated in section I above). Sir William Barrett maintained that dowsing is a purely psychological process, and to this view I subscribed, after an independent examination of the evidence, when compiling *The Divining-Rod* after his death. On the other hand the continental investigators maintain that dowsing is a purely physical process. Graf von Klinckowstroem gives this view his unqualified support; the Vicomte de France leaves a loophole for the psychological theory as an explanation of certain phenomena only, but as these phenomena (dowsing from maps, medical diagnosis, etc.) appear to be unsupported by evidence, M. de France may also be reckoned, as he says himself, an adherent of the physical theory.

This radical difference of opinion is aggravated by a partial absence of the relevant data. For while in *The Divining-Rod* and in Sir William Barrett's preceding reports some attempt was made to refute the physical theories and to substantiate the psychological, the supporters of the physical view have not produced any arguments in favour of their own theories and against ours.¹ Another difficulty is created by the vast differences between the various adherents of the physical theories: to these the foregoing pages must bear sufficient testimony.

Before the arguments for and against any physical theory can be stated, it is necessary to understand more clearly what such a theory involves. As different writers, and even the same writers at different times, advocate varying physical theories to a considerable number, it is impossible to enter into all of them. Let us take two typical ones. I find no details of any of the theories in the *Handbuch* or *The Modern Dowser*, and I have therefore tried myself to put the matter into concrete terms.

¹ My friend Graf Klinckowstroem will forgive me for pointing out that although he (*Schriften des Verbands zur Klärung der Wünschelrutenfrage*, x. 39-40) severely criticised *The Divining-Rod* for what he considered the inadequate attention given in it to the physical theories (his complaint about the reference to himself was perfectly justified), in the *Handbuch* neither he nor his collaborator makes the slightest attempt to deal with the psychological theory, which is simply rejected *de plano* (pp. iii, 46, 71, 72).

First, the electrical theory. Electrical currents are set up in the earth by natural electro-chemical activity, as by the oxidation of sulphide ore by water. The importance of this fact for geophysical prospecting lies in the varying conductive properties of rocks, minerals, water, etc. If the currents are measured at different places in a given area, the varying degrees of conductivity are ascertained, and the nature of the subsoil is thus determined. This process, however, is very difficult owing to the inhomogeneity of most areas: the presence of cleaved rocks or of mixed masses of highly conductive and less conductive substances, to give only two examples, infinitely complicates the work.¹

Second, the magnetic theory. The earth's magnetic field presents certain anomalies. Some of these are due to the differences in the magnetic susceptibilities of various substances. Thus, limestone or chalk may be up to ten times as permeable as coal². The measurement of the anomalies in the earth's field thus enables the nature of the subsoil to be determined.

Both these processes involve the use of complicated and sometimes of massive apparatus.³ The physical theory of dowsing assumes that this apparatus is replaced by the dowser, who makes the necessary observations direct.

The arguments for the physical theory may now be stated thus:

(1) There is some conceivable affinity between it and so-called weather sensibility. If it is true, as seems likely, that some people become aware of changes in the weather, they may do so by being sensitive to electrical disturbances in the atmosphere. On the other hand, there is no evidence that they are and the facts are capable of explanation on different lines, as by sensitiveness to atmospheric moisture. There is also no evidence, so far as I am aware, that weather sensibility is more common among dowsers than among other persons.

(2) It is less liable to the reproach that the unknown is being explained by the unknown.

(3) The belief almost universally held by dowsers that a physical process is involved. This argument, however, is practically valueless; first, because of the fact that the physical processes so advocated vary immensely from dowser to dowser and from generation to generation, following the latest fashionable view; secondly,

¹ Chiefly based on C. Schlumberger, *Etude sur la prospection électrique du sous-sol* (1920).

² American Institution of Mechanical Engineers, *Geophysical Prospecting* (1929), pp. 239 ff.

³ See the valuable Report of the Imperial Geophysical Experimental Survey entitled *The Principles and Practice of Geophysical Prospecting* (Cambridge 1931).

because the dowser is usually (by no means always) unqualified to express an opinion.

I need mention only one argument against any physical theory: the complete absence of evidence for the existence in the human body of any organ capable of detecting, discriminating between, and measuring various electrical, magnetic, and/or radio-active currents, emanations or properties, and then of communicating the result to the neuro-muscular system, and the inherent improbability that the human organism should be capable of doing work outside itself of so complex and delicate a kind.

The psychical theory is that the dowser "perceives" the object dowsed for by some supernormal¹ means, conveniently but perhaps misleadingly described as clairvoyance or cryptesthesia.

The arguments for the psychical theory may be stated thus:

(1) It is the simplest theory, in that it offers a clear and uniform explanation of all the phenomena.

(2) There is good evidence for the possession by many dowsers of some supernormal faculty apart from their dowsing. Thus, Jacques Aymar was apparently able to trace criminals (*The Divining-Rod*, pp. 27-31). Sir Herbert Maxwell gives a careful account of a similar feat by an amateur dowser, Mr R. Howson (*ibid.*, pp. 255-6). The same gentleman is said to have been able to identify pieces of crockery by dowsing (*ibid.*, p. 256). There is a certain amount of evidence on record for the finding of lost and hidden objects by dowsing (*ibid.*, pp. 256-60). Miss Miles was able not only to find lost and hidden objects, but spoke of "seeing" them (*ibid.*, p. 261; cp. pp. 160-6). Miss Miles also, as is well known, took part in successful experiments in thought-transference (*Proceedings*, xxi. 60 ff., xxvii. 279 ff). The amateur dowser Mr F. J. Young conducted a few experiments in clairvoyance by automatic writing, in which he was decidedly successful (*The Divining-Rod*, pp. 264-6).

(3) The descriptions given by some dowsers of their procedure and sensations strongly suggest a psychical process. Thus, like Miss Miles, the boy dowser Guy Fenley was spoken of as "seeing" the water (*ibid.*, p. 261). Another young dowser was similarly reported by Professor R. F. A. Hoernlé (*ibid.*, p. 261). Among older examples may be mentioned the case reported by Dr Ashburner, the remarkable cases of Katharina Beutler and Anna Maria Briegger, and those of Pedegacha and Jean Jacques Parangue (see references in *ibid.*, p. 263), and, most notable of all, the Spanish Zahoris (*ibid.*, pp. 277-82).

¹ It is worth noting that some adherents of a physical theory dismiss the psychical view on the ground that it is "supernormal", but the view that a dowser can become directly aware of terrestrial magnetism, for instance, is just as supernormal.

The only specific argument against the psychical theory that I can suggest is inherent in its supernormal nature : we ought not to explain the unknown by the unknown if we can help it.

It appears to me that, so far as we have gone, the evidence and the probabilities are emphatically on the side of the psychical theory, and that the adherents of any physical theory have yet to produce evidence justifying the further investigation of their views.

JOURNAL
OF THE
Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY,

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 30 December 1931, at 5.30 p.m.,

WHEN A PAPER ENTITLED

“A HISTORY OF GEORGE VALIANTINE ”

WILL BE READ BY

MRS W. H. SALTER

N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.

NEW MEMBERS.

(Elected 30 September 1930.)

- Bowles, Mrs.**, The Old Mill House, Ewelme, Oxon.
Fletcher, A. B. W., Heatherdene, Jennings Road, St Albans, Herts.
Grant, Malcolm R.
James, Mrs Bayard, 405 East 54th Street, New York, N.Y., U.S.A.
Mackenzie, Mrs J. O., 15 Lyndhurst Gardens, London, N.W. 3.
Macnamara, Rev. A., St Edward's School, Oxford.
Morris, Miss Helen L., 6 Fore Hill, Ely, Cambs.
Mure, The Lady Georgiana, 19 Cliveden Place, London, S.W. 1.
Singh, Gurdit, Kandhari Kothi, Agra, U.P., India.
Sowrey, Wing-Commander John, R.A.F., R.A.F. Station, Uxbridge, Middx.
Waters, R. C., 11 Westbourne Terrace, London, W. 2.

(Elected 28 October 1931.)

- Bossom, Mrs Alfred C.**, 5 Carlton Gardens, London, S.W. 1.
Librarian, University of Illinois Library, Urbana, Ill., U.S.A.

(Elected 25 November 1931.)

- Dotimala, Dr Nariman A.**, Mombasa, B.E. Africa.
Reutiner, Miss Alice H., 38 Harley Street, London, W. 1.

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 286th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 30 September 1931, at 3.45 p.m., SIR OLIVER LODGE in the chair. There were also present: Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Lord Charles Hope, Mr J. G. Piddington, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Professor F. C. S. Schiller, Mr S. G. Soal, and Dr V. J. Woolley; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Eleven new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

Knowing that for some time Mr Salter had wished to be relieved from the duties of Hon. Treasurer, the Council accepted his resignation with regret; and on his proposal, which was seconded by Mr J. G. Piddington, they appointed Mr L. S. Fletcher his successor.

Permission was given to the Editor to relax the rule of privacy in the case of the *Journal* for November 1931.

THE 287th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 28 October 1931, at 4 p.m., PROFESSOR F. C. S. SCHILLER in the Chair. There were also present: Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Professor C. D. Broad, Professor E. R. Dodds, Mr L. S. Fletcher, Lord Charles Hope, Miss Ina Jephson, Sir Lawrence J. Jones, Bart., Mr W. H. Salter, Mr H. F. Saltmarsh, and Dr V. J. Woolley; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Two new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

THE 288th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 25 November 1931, at 3.15 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair. There were also present: Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Lord Charles Hope, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Mr J. G. Piddington, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr S. G. Soal, and Dr V. J. Woolley; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Two new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

PRIVATE MEETINGS.

PROXY SITTINGS.

THE 107th Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Library of the Society, 31 Tavistock Square, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 30 September 1931, at 5.30 p.m., DR V. J. WOOLLEY in the Chair.

THE REV. C. DRAYTON THOMAS read a paper entitled "A Consideration of a Series of Proxy Sittings, with special reference to the Sources of Veridical Information and to the Method of its Reception," of which the following is a summary:

The sittings he referred to were those he had taken on behalf of bereaved persons who had written to him for help. Such persons were in most cases quite unknown to him and in all cases to the medium, Mrs Leonard. In the records so obtained he found both failures and successes. Some of them he had sent to Mrs Salter, Mr Saltmarsh, and Mr Besterman, who agreed that they presented good evidence of a supernormal nature. Whence came the veridical information? The adoption of the telepathic hypothesis involved very great difficulties, for there was in most cases a complete absence

of link between the medium and the Communicator. Indeed, in one case in which the conditions were more favourable to the operation of telepathy than they were in most of these proxy sittings, the result was a failure.

The same reasoning applied to clairvoyance, for in twelve cases where the conditions favoured clairvoyance he obtained two successes, three doubtful cases, and seven failures. Passing briefly over other still less likely theories he came to the conclusion that the veridical information did in fact come from the purporting Communicator. When the results were examined from this point of view it was interesting to observe the wide differences in the degree and kind of success obtained by the different Communicators. It appeared that young, well-educated Communicators were the most successful in transmitting evidential information through the medium. These conclusions were tentative and he would continue his investigations on those lines.

THE CHAIRMAN questioned whether we really knew so much as Mr Thomas had implied of the conditions favourable to telepathy.

Mr J. W. Findlater described his co-operation with Miss Nea Walker in a proxy sitting which failed. He felt that insufficient attention was given to the possibility of chance-coincidences in these cases, and gave illustrations from his own experience.

The Rev. J. W. Haycs asked what was known about the identity of Mrs Leonard's Control Feda.

Mr A. W. Trethewy emphasised the difficulty of applying the telepathic hypothesis to the results obtained in proxy sittings, since they did not know what conditions were favourable.

Mr Besterman said that Mr Thomas's analysis of the different types of Communicators with reference to the degree of success obtained by them was a valuable contribution to the theory of spirit communications. He suggested that the analysis might be extended to the applicants.

THE REV. C. DRAYTON THOMAS, in reply, said that he accepted the identity of Feda as what Feda claimed it to be. He agreed that the nature of telepathy and its conditions were still unknown, but considered that after making all possible allowances, telepathy would not cover the facts.

PROOF OF SURVIVAL.

THE 108th Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Library of the Society, 31 Tavistock Square, W.C. 1, on Wednesday 28 October, at 5.30 p.m., PROFESSOR F. C. S. SCHILLER in the Chair.

MR H. F. SALTMARSH read a paper entitled "Is Proof of Survival Possible?", which will be published in Part 122 of *Proceedings*.

THE CHAIRMAN said that he was not sure whether different parts of Mr Saltmarsh's paper were quite consistent with each other. He began very correctly and soundly by pointing out that there was a good deal of dispute about the nature of proof and whether there was actually such a thing as what used to be called conclusive proof. He wanted to underline that statement of Mr Saltmarsh's because he believed it could be shown that the critics of conclusive proof were certainly right, in all probability, that was. Proof existed as what used to be called logical certainty and also existed as psychological certainty. He did not himself see why in psychical research they should expect to get any greater kind of truth. He would ask Mr Saltmarsh whether he believed or denied that there was such a thing as proof by accumulation of evidence, indefinitely prolonged but sooner or later capable of becoming, psychologically at any rate, convincing. If he did not deny that it seemed to him that it was possible for pieces of evidence which were quite inconclusive in themselves to support each other and to strengthen the case in favour of an hypothesis. These cases taken separately had certain weaknesses, but taken together they supported each other because the combination of them would not have those weaknesses. He thought that was a possibility. Risks had to be taken in psychical research just as they had to be taken in other sciences. There was no such thing as absolute certainty.

Mr G. R. S. Mead pointed out that the theory of the spiritual or etheric body had a great deal to be said for it and that its rejection would involve any theory of survival in considerable difficulties.

Mr Besterman said that the case Mr Saltmarsh had put forward was even stronger in practice than in theory, since most of Mr Saltmarsh's ideal cases did not in fact exist.

Dr V. J. Woolley suggested that that would be equally true of any science.

The Rev. C. Drayton Thomas referred to the distinction between objective and subjective proof, and pointed out that whether or not the former was attainable, the latter clearly was.

Other members took part in the discussion, and Mr Saltmarsh briefly replied.

THE LOURDES CURE.

We print below extracts translated from some correspondence concerning cures at Lourdes which has passed between Count Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo and Dr Monnier, whose book *Etude médicale de quelques guérisons survenues à Lourdes*, he reviewed in *Proceedings*, xxxix. 369-75.

Dr Monnier to Count Perovsky, 13 February 1931 :

“ If I understand your conclusions rightly, you are of opinion that an enquiry concerning Lourdes scientifically conducted might be fruitful, but you have doubts as to the possibility of such an enquiry.

“ Let me point out to you the existence at Lourdes of a ‘ Bureau de constatations médicales ’ open to all physicians of whatever nationality and whatever be their faith or agnosticism ; a member of a scientific society wishing to conduct an enquiry would, I think, be admitted to it (Dr Vallet is its director).”

Count Perovsky to Dr Monnier, 17 February 1931 :

“ I know that there does exist at Lourdes a ‘ Bureau de constatations médicales ’ and that Dr Vallet is its director. You *think* that a member of a scientific society would be admitted to it.

“ In my opinion that is not enough. I had in view an independent commission acting in a parallel way, but outside the ‘ Bureau,’ a commission in which Catholics might most certainly take part, but which would have chiefly and first of all a scientific and non-confessional character.

“ I am far from rejecting the Lourdes cures just as I am far from rejecting stigmata, but I note—and this is proved by the instance of Konnersreuth—that most unfortunately many Catholics do not realise what an impartial and objective investigation, worthy of the name, must be in this sphere nowadays. I acknowledge that they have the most absolute right to address themselves to their co-religionists only, not leaving the sphere of faith ; but at Lourdes as well as at Konnersreuth they often appeal to the scientific and critical spirit, nay, to sceptics. Well, if that be so, so far as Theresa Neumann is concerned, very little has hitherto been done to give satisfaction to those who are competent to conduct such kinds of researches outside of all confessional considerations ; nor am I sure that the Lourdes standard is always of such a nature as to content this last category of researchers.”

Dr Monnier to Count Perovsky, 9 March 1931 :

“ It seems to me that a commission of enquiry such as you suggest would do fruitful work at Lourdes. Would it be the first to come and work there ? I do not think so. Quite recently Mgr Gerlier, Bishop of Lourdes, referred before me to the presence at Lourdes of a group of Protestant physicians who had come with this very object of making an enquiry.

“ As to the method to be pursued, the commission might find inspiration in that adopted by Dr Goret, whose name is connected

with the third observation referred to in my thesis, that upon Emilie Cailleux. He obtained in Paris the list of the sick persons leaving for Lourdes and examined them, then betook himself to Lourdes to observe what happened to these *malades*. He thus found standing and walking E. Cailleux, who had been treated for Pott's disease, complicated by paraplegia, which made it impossible for her to walk, under Prof. Lecène in the St Louis hospital. . . .

"The *Presse médicale*—the most widely read French medical periodical—published on 24 May last a paper on Theresa Neumann. . . . From the documents quoted by the author it follows that Theresa Neumann was observed at leisure by one non-Catholic at least, Doctor Fritz Gerlich."

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MYSTERIOUS MADAME.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—Before I wrote my review of Mr Roberts's book, I made inquiries from persons who had been closely associated with F. W. H. Myers during Madame Blavatsky's lifetime, and was informed that though he, together with some other members of the S.P.R., was at first favourably disposed towards Madame Blavatsky, he had not at any time been a member of the Theosophical Society. I therefore asked Mr Roberts for his authority for the statement that he was at any time a Theosophist, and he refers me to Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, neither of whose testimony can, I think, be considered of much weight. Further inquiries fully confirm the information I had earlier received.

Mr Roberts considers the description of Myers as a Professor too trivial an inaccuracy to deserve attention. I do not believe that Mr Myers himself would have so regarded it.

Yours, etc.,

W. H. SALTER.

THE MEDIUM FRAU SILBERT.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—Concerning the account of the sitting which Studienrat Rudolf Lambert had with Frau Maria Silbert in Graz, on the 28th March 1929, and which he published in the July number of this *Journal*, we beg to be permitted to bring out the following short counter-declaration.

Studienrat Rudolf Lambert's report is rather at variance with our observations, which are accordant with those of the other four sitters. In spite of Herr Lambert's subjective conviction of the unguineness of what he saw, we cannot grant him the right to speak publicly of fraudulent phenomena on account of so few sittings (three, perhaps more correctly two and a half). That is a point of view which already such researchers as Sir Oliver Lodge and Prof. Dr Richet supported and to which, moreover, Herr Lambert himself consented *expressis verbis* in his letters directed to us.

Which of the two subjective opinions is also objectively true will have to be decided by—psychic science.

Yours, etc.,

FRANZ HASLINGER.

DANIEL WALTER.

[The above letter, which is printed as received, was forwarded to Herr Lambert, who replied: "I agree with Messrs Haslinger and Walter that it may often be difficult to judge the nature of a medium's phenomena after only a few sittings. Still, my sittings with Frau Silbert were overwhelmingly convincing for one who sat, carefully observing, next to her. Those who refuse to believe this must not forget that Dr Prince and Mr Besterman also had two sittings each, and that Mr Dingwall, who came to the same conclusion as we did, also had sittings with Frau Silbert. Finally, Messrs Wahrlich, Gierke, Alter, Linhart, and Somogyi had sittings, on the reports of which Professor Benndorf based his accusations against this medium. So that the view that Frau Silbert often produces fraudulent phenomena is based on over a dozen sittings in which took part nine independent sitters, most of whom were originally very favourably inclined towards the medium and who came to the conclusion that she is untrustworthy. Would it not have been a falsification of the scientific investigation of Frau Silbert's mediumship if all these careful reports had been suppressed?" (Translated)].

REVIEWS.

DAME EDITH LYTTTELTON, *Our Superconscious Mind*. 8vo, pp. v. 285. London: Philip Allan, 1931. Price 10s. 6d. net.

Like many others interested in psychical research, Mrs Lyttelton has felt the need of further subdivision of our mental strata; more classification becomes desirable as facts accumulate. "Subliminal" has been and may remain a useful term, but it has been rather too

inclusive. Myers himself said that it was part rubbish heap and part king's treasury, for he attributed to it not only the pork-pie-engendered nightmare, the psychic processes underlying bodily functions, and the causation of diseases such as neurasthenia, but also the inspirations of genius and the manifestation of faculties which we call telepathic, clairvoyant, and the like. Andrew Lang used to say that, sooner or later, we should have to divide the subliminal into Subliminal One and Subliminal Two; the former for the lower phenomena, and Number Two for the higher. But the idea was not carried out until now. Mrs Lyttelton divides our mental strata into subconscious, conscious, and superconscious; a useful and suitable classification. The subconscious is the "aboriginal in the basement," while the superconscious is concerned with higher psychic faculty and with inspiration, "which is another word for a message from the superconscious part of mind, which has contact with a wider world than has the conscious mind" (p. 41). The author refers to Freud, Jung, and other psychoanalysts, with respect for their work but without going into detail or expressing an opinion on their theories; then proceeds to a description of various forms of automatism such as dreams, hypnagogic visions, visual and auditory hallucinations, automatic writing, crystal vision, and so on. Instances are given of veridical dreams or other veridical experiences, a few of these being hitherto unpublished, but many of them being quoted from *Phantasms of the Living* or volumes of our *Proceedings*. However, most readers have forgotten them or have not read them in their original place, so it is well that they should be repeated. The selection is made merely with descriptive intent, or at most as showing the occurrence of supernormal events; the question of communication with discarnate minds is not discussed.

Further chapters deal with the inspiration of the Hebrew prophets, mysticism, genius; what Myers called a subliminal uprush is here called a percolation from the superconscious, which indeed may receive its inspiration from an external source.

The purport of the book is to show that supernormal things do happen—that knowledge is received in some unknown way, concerning events distant in time or space; and to relate modern evidence to other and older and higher inspirations. The introduction of the term "superconscious" is a good idea, though Mrs Lyttelton of course knows well enough that all spatial symbolisms for a non-spatial thing—the mind—is sure to be inadequate and perhaps misleading. But it is useful to make these images, and there is a good deal to be said for the "superconscious."

J. A. H.

H. DENNIS BRADLEY, . . . *And After*. Svo, pp. 400, ill. London : T. Werner Laurie, Ltd., 1931. Price 10s 6d. net.

This book is a record of Mr Bradley's various psychical experiences since 1925. In the earlier chapters he gives a report of sittings with a number of mediums for mental phenomena, such as Mrs Osborne Leonard, Mrs Barkell, Mrs Garrett and Mrs Hester Dowden. The results were of the usual type and afford some evidence for knowledge supernormally acquired. In particular the German "psychometric medium" Frau Lotte Plaatz (*sic*) described with some accuracy the physical and mental peculiarities of the former owner of a gold cigarette-case handed to her by Mr Bradley (pp. 50-3).

It is to the last part of the book that most readers will turn with special interest. Mr Bradley here describes in detail his exposure of the well-known "direct-voice" medium, George Valiantine. This exposure gains additional weight from the fact that Mr Bradley has been, and to some extent still is, one of Valiantine's most convinced adherents. Briefly, what Mr Bradley proved beyond all reasonable doubt is that on various occasions alleged supernormal finger-prints, obtained in some cases on smoked paper, in others on wax, were fraudulently produced by Valiantine himself. For details the reader must turn to Mr Bradley, but one point is worth noting here for its possible bearing on results obtained with other mediums : in producing these prints Valiantine was found to have used three parts of his body, his fingers, his elbow joint and his great toe.

Mr Bradley still maintains that the direct-voice phenomena observed with Valiantine at earlier sittings were genuine, and enters into furious controversy with Dr Kröner (pp. 107-74), and with Mr Rossi and Mr Castellini (*sic*) in regard to suspicious circumstances noted at sittings in which these various observers took part (pp. 182-8). To sceptical readers the following question (amongst others) may occur : If the spirit voices are genuine, how did it happen that at the sitting of 27 February 1931 (pp. 351 ff.) two of Valiantine's regular communicators, "Pat O'Brien" and "Bert Everett," manifested in the usual way—Mr Bradley notes that Pat O'Brien's voice was "characteristic" and his words "delivered in a natural manner"—and apparently vouched for the genuineness of an alleged finger-print of the late Sir Henry Segrave, afterwards proved to be a print of Valiantine's right middle finger ?

But whatever uncomfortable doubts such questions may raise we can at any rate compliment Mr Bradley on the ingenuity he and his friends showed in trapping Valiantine and the frankness with which their discoveries are set forth.

To this Society, as was perhaps to be expected, Mr Bradley has no compliments to offer !

H. DE G. S.

GLADYS OSBORNE LEONARD, *My Life in Two Worlds*. With a Foreword by Sir Oliver Lodge. Svo, pp. ix. 300, portrait. London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., 1931. Price 7s. 6d. net.

All those who have had the opportunity of working with Mrs Leonard agree that her honesty and sincerity are above suspicion. This enviable reputation will be enhanced by the present book. For although some of the stories told by Mrs Leonard could no doubt be explained on less satisfactory lines than those dictated by her charitable judgment, it is always clear that Mrs Leonard herself is quite convinced of the reality of what she is describing.

As Sir Oliver says in his Foreword, Mrs Leonard's book "represents fairly and truly the feelings and interpretations of a sensitive's experiences, and contains material for psychological study." Some of the most interesting of such material is contained in the remarkable and horrible experience gone through by Mrs Leonard, when, after having some teeth extracted under an anaesthetic, she lived through the whole process night after night in sleep (pp. 48-9). Clearly, it is not all fun to be a medium!

It is pleasant to read Mrs Leonard's tribute to the S.P.R. "The Society for Psychical Research," she writes, "the officials and members of which always showed me the greatest sympathy and consideration, were all delightful sitters with whom it was a pleasure and satisfaction to work" (p. 59). And, emanating from the source they do, the following words on the same page merit careful attention: "How greatly the sitter can help one's mediumship to develop! The wise, cautious, even sceptical sitter, if he has an *open* mind, gets the best results, and is a great factor in definitely building up, little by little, the psychical and mental forces of the medium, and even of the control. The credulous, 'I'm willing to believe anything, my dear. I don't want tests,' kind of sitter does not improve the quality of one's mediumship, nor get the best results."

Mrs Leonard is to be congratulated on a most interesting, modest, and admirably written book, which no student of the subject will read without profit.

TH. B.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Revue Métapsychique, March-April 1931.

This number opens with a warmly worded obituary notice by Dr Osty of M. Jean Meyer, the founder and benefactor of the Paris *Institut Métapsychique International*, who died on 13 April last. Incidentally we learn from this notice that the Institute's present labours are about to give a new impetus to the researches bearing

on "the creative power of thought." We wish these researches every success.

The same writer has a lengthy paper on "How to discover, to develop and not to pervert the faculty of supernormal knowledge." Incidents connected with Pascal Forthuny's alleged powers are briefly narrated, some, undoubtedly, very striking (p. 106). Much to be commended is Dr Osty's advice to researchers to apply the subject's supernormal faculties only to realities, which can be controlled (p. 113). Though to many of us such advice will appear superfluous, it is, I am afraid, very useful so far as the average investigator is concerned.

M. Delevsky pursues his study of "The Riddle of Premonition." He gives hardly any facts, only very abstract discussions, many of which lie quite outside our sphere of research. It almost staggers one to see such imposing edifices of speculation erected on so slender a basis of fact. The paper is still unfinished.

M. de Vesme brings to a close his very instructive study of stigmatised persons, including "luminous" or perfumed stigmata, "plastic" ones, stigmata in the heart, etc. The evidential value of the cases (also of the categories of alleged "phenomena") differs widely. Of peculiar interest is the chapter dealing with stigmata in connection with non-Catholics. The impression left by this chapter can, I think, be summed up thus: the difference is so tremendous that one almost hesitates to say that it is not so much qualitative as quantitative. On the other hand, Roman Catholics themselves have acknowledged that *per se* stigmata are not evidence of holiness. A characteristic instance occurs on p. 137, where a case of stigmatisation occurring in the lifetime of St Ignatius of Loyola is quoted which the founder of the Jesuits put down to *diabolical* intervention, on account of the girl's by no means virtuous behaviour.

I may add that a case of apparently quite authentic stigmatisation seems to have just been medically attested at Naples, where, on the death of Madre Maria Landi, a Franciscan nun who had a great reputation for sanctity, the presence of five stigmata on her hands, feet and left side was officially registered after examination of the dead body by four physicians and Cardinal Ascalesi, Archbishop of Naples. A *procès-verbal* was then drawn up, we are told, and sent to the Vatican (my authority is the *Kölnische Zeitung* of 13 April 1931).

Revue Métapsychique, May-June 1931.

Dr Héricourt, a veteran of hypnotic research, reproduces a case of (apparent) somnambulism at a distance, presented by him, as far back as 30 November 1885, to the *Société de psychologie physiologique*, and supplements it with particulars hitherto unpublished.

M. Delevsky concludes his paper on "The Riddle of Premonition," on which paper Dr Osty comments with approval. He is quite certain however, he says, that the attitude of the scientific world towards premonition will be in no way modified by M. Delevsky's line of argument: with which statement I thoroughly and very willingly agree.

In a short paper on "Cosmic Rays," Professor Richet hints at "memorable results" to be soon made public, obtained by Dr Osty at the Institut Métapsychique. It is to be presumed these have something to do with Rudi Schneider, who, as the same number of the *Revue* informs us, has been awarded by the Institut a prize of 5,000 francs.

M. César de Vesme has an interesting paper on crystal-vision among Moslems. In the *Chronique* M. Maurice Maire is somewhat sarcastic about M. Tanagras's "psychobolic" theory.

Revue Métapsychique, July-August 1931.

This number opens with a paper by Dr Osty introducing "An Inquiry into gift or science of the dowser"; it is followed by a series of detailed statements by various French dowzers. All are of a thoroughly positive character, though most deny that we have to deal here with a special "gift." One of the rhabdomancers, the Abbé Mermet, asserts (p. 270) that he is able to operate successfully over a plan of the locality to be investigated, thousands of kilometres from the locality itself.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, April 1931.

Dr Wilhelm G. Herz has a short paper on the mental processes and sensations produced by peyotl. It has no direct connection with our researches.

Dr Erich Kindborg discusses the "Principles of parapsychical research" and narrates another *apport* (flowers) in the presence of his medium Frau S. Though differing widely from the author on most points, I find myself in agreement with him when he attempts to show the absurdity (my expression) of controlling *all* the sitters taking part in a sitting and not the medium alone.

My thanks are due to Dr Süner, the Editor, for criticising my "Notes on Periodicals" in the January number of the *Journal* and for bringing in this way to Dr Albert Hellwig's knowledge the expression of my sympathy (in connection with the Frenzel trial in Potsdam) which might otherwise have remained unknown to him. This editorial note introduces an article by Dr Haslinger, of Graz, who attacks Mr Besterman at length chiefly on account of his criticisms of Frau Silbert, the Graz medium. To Dr Haslinger's paper are appended translations of two similar articles by Mr De Brath and Mrs Barbara McKenzie.

In *Kleine Mitteilungen* Dr Morell has a few lines on the case of the clairvoyant Fred Marion. He thinks that this clairvoyant's performances are based partly on tricks, partly on a genuine supernormal power.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, May 1931.

Professor E. von Liszt, of Vienna, describes some experiments in the "clairvoyant" reading of letters with a certain Franz Reissig. Chance-coincidence appears quite excluded (a welcome feature!), seeing that Reissig repeatedly mentioned names both of people and of places; on the other hand the method of blindfolding adopted seems to have been quite inadequate. However, in one case, we are told, Reissig gave a name which was not in the letter.

An extraordinary case of a *Poltergeist*, going as far back as 1738 and occurring in a priest's house, is narrated by Herr Hans Hänig. The writer admits that some of the phenomena may have been produced by a person closely connected with Father Heydrich; for others he is inclined to postulate a transcendental origin.

Dr Martin Wagenschcin has a paper on "Everyday parapsychology," in which various small occurrences are described suggesting community of thought between husband and wife, etc. Mme Camilla Lucerna relates various spontaneous episodes in her own experience which she supposes to have been of an "occult" nature.

Dr Mannheimer, of Vienna, discusses "Transcausal Physics and Parapsychology." "Causality," he thinks, "has ceased to be a *conditio sine qua non* for parapsychology, since it has ceased to be one for physics itself." The article exemplifies once more that curious disregard of what is the essence of the problem. For surely but few intelligent and learned men will nowadays reject alleged supernormal phenomena merely on account of their contradicting some scientific law. If such men often choose to remain sceptical, it is chiefly because the conditions under which these phenomena too frequently occur are such as not to compel us to brush aside laws for the reality of which there is after all very impressive if not overwhelming evidence.

Professor L. Jahn, of Cologne, has a paper on "Spirit-seeing," in which several cases are related, mostly at secondhand. One connected with a "clairvoyant" medium, Frau W., and observed by the writer himself, is striking and seems, as described, to exclude a normal explanation.

In *Kleine Mitteilungen*, Baroness Anna von Dalwigk describes very strange happenings in connection with a pearl necklace worn by her sister. Mysterious knots were tied in this necklace; the Baroness saw it one day move by itself, then stand upright "straight as a candle"; when she put her hand upon it, it offered some resis-

tance before sinking down. On the same evening it suddenly fell to pieces, leaving a wide red mark on the neck of the Baroness's sister. If not "written up" the account is certainly remarkable.

An apparently premonitory dream is described at secondhand by Dr Hans Brümmer. Dr Freudenberg in a short article contrasts "personal" and "impersonal" psychometry, a phenomenon in which, he thinks, the medium's individuality is a factor of peculiar importance.

Zeitschrift für metapsychische Forschung, January-May 1931.

In the January number Herr Florizel von Reuter has a short paper on the American "clairaudient" medium Arthur Ford. Herr von Reuter has no doubt of Ford's powers.

Dr Chr. Schröder pursues (January-March) his vindication of the physical mediumship of Lajos Papp and Tibor Molnar, both of Budapest. Mr Besterman is violently taken to task. A passage is quoted from an article by Prof. Kasnacich in the *Neues Licht* where, *à propos* of Frau Silbert, Mr Besterman is stated to be probably an emissary of the "atheistic International"!

This Prof. Kasnacich pursues (January-February) and brings to a close his paper on sittings with Frau Silbert in 1919-1922. He alleges to have seen with her a full-form materialisation. In the March number there is a series of articles on Prof. Schröder *à propos* of his sixtieth birthday.

The latter gentleman informs us that in the forthcoming first number of the *Mitteilungen* of his Institute for Metapsychical Research a detailed description will be printed of a new method for obtaining cinematographic films in total darkness by means of ultra-violet rays.

Baroness Ottilie von Bistram narrates an extraordinary case of a prediction made to her some three years ago by a Miss Chesten, "undoubtedly the greatest English *clairvoyante*," in which prediction, some fourteen days before the Bazar de la Charité fire (Paris), the catastrophe was predicted and the name of the Duchess d'Alençon mentioned as that of the chief victim. The *Westminster Gazette* is said to have been privately informed of the matter beforehand and to have acknowledged the fact in print. Various references to the S.P.R. betray a certain lack of accuracy on the narrator's part, but this would not justify us in dismissing the Baroness's account *de plano*. (The fire in question occurred, so far as I can remember, in May 1897.)

Count Rehbinder prints the first instalment of a paper on will-o'-the-wisps, which he considers as an "unsolved riddle" in nature. Herr Albert Langer attempts to refute objections raised against Herr Kordon-Veri's "experiments" with cards, which seem much to resemble card tricks.

Omitting various other articles which either seem to me unimportant or have already appeared in other publications, I come to a very remarkable case of hallucination connected with a death alleged by a Herr R. Reinisch to have occurred to Herr Rudolph Greinz, a Munich poet. The hallucination seems in this case to have taken the form of a newspaper announcement, a most unusual feature. The case is secondhand. I trust I may be allowed to appeal through the *Journal* to our German and in particular to our Munich members to attempt to bring this incident to a higher evidential level.

P.-P.-S.

Psychic Research, February 1931.

Mr Carrington has a very useful and interesting article entitled "What Constitutes a Psychical Researcher." There are some things in the article with which one cannot agree, such as Mr Carrington's almost Humian remarks on the connection between the quality of evidence required and the relative incredibility of the phenomena. Again, Mr Carrington by implication finds lycanthropy more incredible than any phenomenon accepted by students of psychical research. Personally I find lycanthropy very much less incredible than the dematerialisation and rematerialisation of a human being, a phenomenon which is accepted by many students. Lycanthropy *could* be explained on the same lines as Gurney's explanation of witchcraft: for the "impossible" phenomena there is probably no evidence, and the residuum is probably due to isolated and extreme forms of atavism. But how can one even begin to explain the de- and re-materialisation of a living being? However, apart from one or two such points Mr Carrington's article is very sound. How one agrees with his remark that "whatever attitude one may assume, it is sure to be 'wrong' in the estimation of a large number of persons"!

TH. B.

THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE
CIRCULATION.

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on a definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only." The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

JOURNAL
OF THE
Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY,

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 27 January 1932, at 5.30 p.m.,

WHEN A PAPER ENTITLED

“ON THE EVIDENCE FOR SUPERNORMAL
OCCURRENCES IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY”

WILL BE READ BY

PROFESSOR E. R. DODDS

N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.

PRIVATE MEETING.

ANCIENT OR UNKNOWN CONTROLS.

THE 109th Private Meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday, 25 November, 1931, at 5.30 p.m.. SIR LAWRENCE JONES, BART., in the Chair.

MR A. W. TRETHERWY read a paper entitled "Personalities of Controls and Communicators bearing Ancient or Unknown Names", which is printed below, slightly abridged.

It is difficult to frame a short title for this paper. May I give an explanation? Firstly the paper is written for believers in super-normal phenomena, physical and mental, for those who are convinced that genuine cases do occur though there have been instances of deception. In the cases to be considered I take the good faith of the medium for granted. My object is to initiate a discussion of "Controls", including "Communicators", who do *not* claim to have been associated on earth with any person now living. By narrowing the field in this way a large class is excluded, chiefly consisting of deceased relatives and friends of sitters. I deal only with "Controls" whose description of themselves cannot be checked by reference to the memories of persons still alive. I have in view mainly historical characters and the bearers of symbolic names such as Truth, Power, etc., who give no further indication of their identity. Let us consider the historical characters first. They are well represented in the mediumship of Stainton Moses by such figures as Grocyn, John Dee and Elizabeth Barton, the Holy Maid of Kent. who quoted incidents of their lives on earth in support of their claims to the characters they assumed. These details were checked by consulting biographies. Where the information tallied with the literary authorities it could be attributed to the subliminal mind of the medium who might have read or heard the account and his recollection have faded. It might also be ascribed to the clairvoyance of the medium on the lines of a book-test. Rector did actually quote the words of a book to Stainton Moses as an experiment. Other "Controls" might have consulted their biographies in the same way, and indeed were said to have done so to refresh their memories. On the other hand if there was no record corroborating the statement it was hard to say whether the soi-disant spirit had invented the story, or the biography was incomplete. So the question of identity cannot be settled on these lines. It is even more difficult to come to a conclusion about entities who are silent about their antecedents or claim a character of whom there is no record.

It will take us a step on the way if we can decide whether the professed spirit is a subliminal creation of the medium, including

in this term a secondary personality, or is a being external to the medium. Let us take the case of the Holy Maid of Kent. She began to write an account of her life through the hand of Stainton Moses, but as her writing was hard to read, she made way for the "Control" Doctor who wrote for her what she wished to say. As long as she used the pen she made correct statements, but when she made over charge to Doctor he made a serious inaccuracy. It certainly does look as if there were two personalities, the Holy Maid who knew all the facts, and Doctor her guarantor, who had got up his case badly.

Another incident to be considered is the simultaneous manifestations of Grocyn and Catherine Speer. Grocyn was making some extraordinary musical sounds, and was so engrossed in his work that he forgot to regulate the power, and the oversight had dangerous consequences for Stainton Moses who was found doubled up on the ground. As the séance was in the dark his condition was not observed till Catherine gave repeated warnings that something was wrong. A light was then struck, and the meeting closed. The most plausible explanation of this incident is that Grocyn and Catherine were separate entities who used Stainton Moses's organism at the same time for independent purposes. This seems much more likely than that such a scene was part of the plot of a subliminal drama.

A similar situation, but less convincing, may be found in the Piper records. Rector gives teaching to a sitter, G. B. D., whose relations are said to be present in spirit. The by-play between them and Rector looks very like the talk of separate entities. [A passage is here omitted relating to G. Geley, *Clairvoyance and Materialisation* (1927), pp. 258-260].

Other instances of the apparent independence of "Controls" are the cases in which mediums, speaking in trance or with the direct voice, or writing automatically, exhibit knowledge or qualities which they do not seem to possess under normal conditions. There have been many occasions on which a language unknown to the medium has been spoken by the control.

This part of the argument may be summarised by the statement that there have been cases in which the probabilities seem to be in favour of the "Control" being an entity independent of the medium, rather than a subliminal creation. This conclusion does not commit us to the recognition of the truth of the "Controls" claim to the alleged identity. Some of Stainton Moses's "Controls", though they displayed no traits actually at variance with their alleged antecedents, failed to show knowledge and qualities appropriate to their parts. Perhaps their unfamiliarity with the processes of communication furnished them with a reasonable excuse for their defects. If they were not the persons they professed to be, were

they simply personating spirits deceiving the circle for purposes of their own? There seems reason to suppose that such personation does occur with some mediums. But Imperator, the head of Stainton Moses's band, made a very good defence against such a charge. He argued that it was unjust to suppose that spirits with teaching to give like theirs could start their mission with lies in their mouths about their credentials. There certainly is a good deal in this contention. It is difficult to believe that, with their motives being so good as they appeared, the Controls gave false names in order to ensure a hearing.

The position of Mrs Piper's "Controls" is even more uncertain. They seem to have been independent of her, but they signally failed to establish their claims to be identical with Stainton Moses's "Controls" bearing the same symbolical names such as Imperator, Rector, etc. They gave different names for their lives on earth, and their stories not only fell short of proof, but showed the claims to be untrue. There is nevertheless the same difficulty in believing them guilty of wilful deceit. They did excellent work with Mrs Piper, managed her powers well, and gave some fine teaching. Such spirits are not likely to have lied for the sake of getting access to the medium.

A possible solution seems to me that when a "Control" says he was a particular person in his life on earth, he does not signify just what we should mean by such words. Personality may not persist after death with unchanged nature, it may become more complex. At first there is apparently not much difference, but in later stages the constitution may change and combine with other spirits. Or it may be that the personality even on earth is more complex than it seems to us, but only part of it is revealed, the remainder lying under the subliminal level for subsequent development. The consideration of such questions must be speculative in that there is no experimental knowledge, and no source of information, except perhaps the teachings of religion and philosophy, and the communications from spirits. I may refer to two recent messages among several, which have been published on this subject. There is an article by Miss Gibbes in the magazine *Psychic Science* for July, describing two simultaneous visits of Myers to different mediums, and his explanation of his use of two personalities at the same time. In the paper *Light* of 14 August, Power, the Control of Mrs Morris, is quoted as saying that the spirit realises personality after passing from physical life, being different from what it was on earth. Power said that he himself had become so identical with those spirits of the higher state who were working for the evolution of mankind, that even the name he had given was simply one which represented a great store-house, or register of power; the

message which he gave came from many. This statement resembles the group theory of the spiritualists that the higher spirits blend into groups and have a corporate existence in that union. The word group must not be construed literally, it is only the nearest way to approach the idea in human thought and language. The Theosophical belief in a greater self embracing many individual souls is of much the same kind. Perhaps some such theory will go some part of the way to help us to understand the "Controls" point of view regarding his antecedents on earth. [A passage based on Mr Trethewy's *Biblical Criticism and Psychical Research* (1930), pp. 58-64, 88, 89, is here omitted.]

Now, let me state my conclusions. I have dealt mainly with the work of Stainton Moses and Mrs Piper, because these are the two mediums whom I have studied most. As to the former, there is good reason to suppose that his historical "Controls" had an external and independent entity. Even so, it is of course conceivable that the characters assumed by them were not those of their real past, but fictitious garbs forced on them by the subliminal fancies of the medium. There is, however, no indication of such influence; the names were not what he expected, and were extracted from the "Controls" with difficulty. Most of them played their parts fairly well, and some of them seemed to know more about the lives of the persons they professed to have been, than did the medium and the sitters. Making due allowance for changes of personality after the expiry of long periods, I think it not unreasonable to believe that there *was* some connection between, say Emperor and the prophet Malachi, though they were not identical in the same sense as a person recently deceased and his spirit. To turn to the "Controls" of Mrs Piper, the case for their independent existence is hardly so strong, and one cannot feel that the claims to identity with the spirits inspiring Stainton Moses were not due to her subliminal fancies. I would, however, acquit the "Controls" (if they had an independent existence, as is quite likely) of any dishonest intention in the way of false personation. If they had no right to the assumed characters, the claims were made for them, unconsciously of course, by the medium and not by themselves. The good work they did for her, and the high tone of their messages furnish a sufficient reply to any charge of wilful fraud.

Though I am not prepared to argue that the "Controls" of Stainton Moses and Mrs Piper were the same entities, it does seem possible to me that the same "Control" may work for two mediums and give to each of them a different account of his life on earth. As perhaps in the case with ourselves also, he may have a more complex constitution than we realise. He and we may be governed by several influences which are parts of ourselves, but in another

sense independent of us and not restricted to ourselves, capable of affecting others at the same time. If such an influence was part of the composition of Stainton Moses's *Imperator* it could conceivably have inspired Malachi long ago, and Mrs Piper's *Imperator* in these days, besides other beings at the same times. I can also imagine that *Imperator*, instead of being governed by the influence, was that influence itself, personified temporarily for Stainton Moses and Mrs Piper. This is merely an attempt to indicate in a general manner an example of the lines on which an explanation may be sought. My point is that we should always keep our eyes open to the possibilities of there being conditions which we cannot appreciate, but which, if we could realise them, would throw light on puzzling situations. Was it not William James who argued that the universe was truthful, and that we were not always at the mercy of a monkeying subliminal?

Much of what has been said above about historical "Controls" applies also to "Controls" who bear only symbolical names (*e.g.* Power), and do not mention any particular character for the life on earth. They may be regarded as having been associated with one or more persons who once lived on earth, unless some other explanation appears more likely, *e.g.* a secondary personality of the medium. There have been instances, especially with planchette in China, of "Controls" assuming the names of characters of fiction, but I have never studied such cases. They might originate in subliminal creation, or in personation hardly false, or even from previous existences on earth if the character was taken from life by the author of the work of fiction. Perhaps some member who has considered such "Controls" can contribute to the discussion.

The CHAIRMAN, the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, Mr J. Hettinger, Mr G. R. S. Mead, Mr W. H. Salter, the Rev. J. W. Hayes, Mr J. W. Findlater, and Dr V. J. Woolley took part in the discussion.

A PROPHECY IN OLD MOORE'S ALMANACK.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Sunday Times* recently drew attention to a prophecy in Old Moore's Almanack¹ for 1931. This prophecy reads as follows: "The Government will be hampered and the Autumn may witness a General Election, resulting in the return of a Party with a strong working majority. Politically, Britain will get a Committee of National Progress, not an obsolete three-Party system of Government." This forms part of a general forecast for

¹ There are several Almanacks with this name. That here referred to is the one published by Messrs W. Foulsham and Co., Ltd. The copy in the British Museum was received on 14 August, 1930.

1931. More specifically, as part of the forecast for October 1931, appeared the following passage : " The celestial aspects indicate a political crisis of the first magnitude, followed by a fall of the Government and a General Election in which a new National Party will be returned. Foreign and Empire trade will be one of the main issues upon which the Election will be fought." The coincidence between the facts and the isolated extracts from the Almanack is close ; and it accordingly seems worth while to inquire further into the matter.

Although these forecasts err in detail (*e.g.* foreign and Empire trade was hardly one of the main issues of the Election), still, they are substantially accurate ; and it seems desirable, therefore, to inquire whether they were merely an isolated hit, or whether they form part of a series of successes.

Restricting ourselves to similar political events during the past ten years we find that Governments fell or took office in October 1922, November 1923 (Parliament dissolved), January 1924, October 1924, November 1924, May 1929, June 1929. Not one of these was forecast by Old Moore. On the other hand falls of governments, general elections or the formation of new governments were forecast for March 1923, November 1923 (" new Cabinet "), March 1927, December 1927, January 1928, April 1929, July 1929, August 1929, October 1929, October 1930. In addition there are such ambiguous prophecies as (August 1922) : " The Government will be subjected to censure and strong criticism and the voice of the people will prove effectual for good." It is remarkable that none of these forecasts should have come off even by chance, especially when ordinary political knowledge is assumed. Thus it was known that the Conservative Ministry of 1924 would come to an end in 1929 ; Parliament was actually dissolved in May of that year and the Labour Ministry took office in June. Old Moore made four attempts, but unluckily plumped for April, July, August and October. It seems clear that the successful forecast for October 1931 is an isolated hit, reasonably to be expected by chance alone, for, while the forecast of a National Party stands alone, Old Moore forecast the victory of a Reform Party for March 1923 and of a Coalition Government for October 1930.

Let us now see whether the forecast for October 1931 formed part of an accurate prevision of the situation as a whole. For November 1931 Old Moore prophesied " a month of great prosperity for Old England. Payment of foreign debts will be received, and internal trade conditions will improve. The export trade will be satisfactory. . . ." For Mr MacDonald Old Moore foresaw " a serious political reversal which will be completed in November." Both of these prophecies could hardly have been less accurate. TH. B.

CORRESPONDENCE.

*AN INTERESTING HALLUCINATION.**To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.*

SIR,—On Saturday morning (28 November 1931) I received a letter from my lawyer saying that he enclosed a cheque for £10.

As I was away from home, and too busy to have any opportunity either to reply to the lawyer or to send the cheque to my bank, I carried it about whilst I was talking to some friends, peering into the envelope occasionally to see whether the cheque was safely there (as I had a good many papers with me and was anxious not to lose it). It was finally packed with special care, and I had pleasing memories throughout the day of seeing the marbled pale colours of the cheque and the look of the writing on it.

I got home late that evening, and next morning when I looked inside the envelope, to my extreme surprise there was no cheque. Completely puzzled I spent the morning looking through all my papers and into the lining of my trunk and into every imaginable crevice. Finally in despair I decided it must somehow have slipped out of the envelope and I sadly wrote a letter to the lawyer to confess my carelessness and to ask them to stop the cheque. My lawyer replied by return saying he had looked through their counterfoils but could find no record of the cheque, and that he must somehow have omitted to send it; he made good the oversight with apologies.

My memory of having seen the cheque in the first letter was so clear and persistent that it amounted, I think, to an hallucination. I find that even now I find it very hard to accept this statement, though commonsense naturally assures me it must be true. This case, I think (though it does not reflect on my powers of observation in at all a flattering way) is of interest to psychical researchers as evidence for the entire unreliability of memory under the strong influence of expectation. If cross-examined in a court of law I would have said with complete and absolute conviction that I had seen and handled the cheque in the first letter, and yet, when analysed, that sense of conviction rests on nothing stronger than an hallucination prompted by emotion and expectation.

Yours, etc.,

INA JEPHSON.

[Miss Jephson adds, in reply to a question, that there was nothing in her bag resembling a cheque. This hallucination gains in interest from the fact that in a recent experiment in the psychology of testimony in the Society *séance*-room, Miss Jephson obtained higher marks than any other sitter.—*Ed.*]

REVIEWS.

SIR OLIVER LODGE, *Past Years : an Autobiography*, 8vo, pp. 364, 16 portraits and ill. London : Hodder and Stoughton, 1931. Price 20s. net.

All who know and appreciate Sir Oliver Lodge, and not least members of our Society who realise what he has done for psychical research, will welcome this book and read it with much interest. It is not of course in the main occupied with psychical research, which was never his principal subject of investigation and of which he practically knew nothing till he became acquainted with Gurney and Myers in the eighties. The book, after describing his family history, his educational opportunities and difficulties, his struggles in early manhood to combine reading by himself for examinations with earning a livelihood as assistant lecturer in various institutions, and settling him as Professor of Physics at Liverpool, goes on to his own scientific work which has brought him so much fame. A great deal of space is naturally occupied by this, and much of it will probably be skipped, though popularly written, by readers who are not physicists themselves, nor have followed the problems which are and have been occupying physicists of recent years. The part of the book most interesting to psychical researchers generally will doubtless be the author's account of his own introduction to psychical research and the development of his interest in it, which will be found chiefly in Chapters XXII, XXIII and XXIV. For the effect on his own mental development in relation to it see Chapter XXVIII.

The book is well illustrated, chiefly by portraits, and I especially recommend readers not to overlook a photograph of Sir Oliver and Lady Lodge and their twelve children opposite p. 256.

E. M. S.

CHARLES RICHEL, *L'Avenir et la Prémonition*. 8vo, pp. 248. Paris : Editions Montaigne [1931]. Price 12fr.

In this little work Professor Richet has set himself one main task, that is to say to establish the fact that premonitions actually occur. He defines the term "premonition" as knowledge of the future by means other than the ordinary sensory channels, by intuitions which depend neither on perspicacity, reasoning or logic. The larger part of the book is occupied in giving condensed reports of some 140 to 150 cases of premonition. Professor Richet disclaims any attempt at a methodical order of classification of his cases, in view of his main object in writing the book. He has arranged them in six groups : A, his own personal observations ; B, those of his personal friends ; C, various observations (this is, of course, the

largest of the classes); D, monitions of approach, that is to say "arrival" cases; E, premonitions in games of chance, races, etc.; F, warning cases. Of these class D contains cases which, as he recognizes, might strictly be classed as monitions rather than premonitions, but as the line dividing the two sorts of phenomena is so vague and the data for making a decision so sparse, arrival cases may and should fairly be studied in any work dealing with premonition.

He also distinguishes between premonitions and auto-premonitions, the latter being cases where the foreknowledge shown may have been derived from a more intimate knowledge of the state of the seer's organism than is possessed by the normal supraliminal mind. Such cases would seem to be excluded by his definition.

Professor Riehet claims that all cases which he cites are well evidenced, either by documents or the testimony of reputable witnesses.

It seems an almost irresistible conclusion, in face of the mass of evidence adduced, that, if human testimony be capable of establishing the truth of any statement of fact, knowledge of the future is sometimes acquired by certain persons. In his Preface he enumerates these possible hypotheses to account for this knowledge. A, fraud and mal-observation; B, chance; C, an inexplicable lucidity on the part of the seer. The first, he claims, is disallowed by the character of the witnesses and the circumstances of the cases which he has chosen for citation. The second, viz. chance, he discusses in detail in many cases, giving numerical estimates where possible, and he comes to the conclusion that, while chance could *possibly* account for the facts, the probability against it is so large that the hypothesis may be excluded. There remains only the inexplicable lucidity.

As a collection of cases the book is wholly admirable, the accounts are brief but adequate, the style in which the whole is written renders it easy and pleasing to read. It lacks that ponderosity and dullness which is so often found in works of this character.

In the fourth section Professor Riehet gives some interesting discussions of various considerations connected with the subject, such as whether the phenomena found with professional mediums should be studied, the practical inutility of premonitions, and so on. He also replies to certain objections which have been raised.

It is only in the last section that any really controversial matter is to be found, that is to say, apart from the acceptance or rejection of supernatural knowledge of the future as actually existing. Professor Riehet arrives at several conclusions. He considers that the future is, in the main, unknowable in spite of the existence of the sporadic glimpses of it afforded by premonition. He considers

that premonition is not more mysterious and inexplicable than monition, under which heading he would include telepathy, clairvoyance and telaesthesia generally.

He states his opinion that the existence of premonition proves that the future is completely determined, but while his remarks on this point and on the connected matter of morals are of the greatest interest, it is permissible to point out that, in strict logic, the existence of occasional premonitions does not prove that *all* the future is determined; the most it could be held to prove, even if the argument be valid, is that those particular events which were foreseen were predetermined. Because a very few isolated events have been foreknown we cannot argue therefrom that all events could have been foreknown, yet that is what must be shown in order to prove the complete determination of the future.

It may quite well be that only those events which actually are predetermined are the possible subjects of premonition and, while one may dissent from the theory of complete determination of the future, few will be prepared to deny its partial determination. Moreover those somewhat rare "warning" cases where the premonition has enabled the actors in the affair to avert the foreseen happening seem to give direct testimony against the determinist theory.

Professor Richet has an evident repugnance for metaphysical speculation, but it is unfortunately the case that any theoretical discussion of premonition is bound to land one into metaphysics. In his Preface he says that this little book will probably be the last which he will publish. It is to be hoped that this, at any rate, will prove to be a false premonition and that Professor Richet may long continue to enrich the literature of psychical research with the fruits of his wide knowledge and the outpourings of his graceful pen.

H. F. SALTMARSH.

HARRY PRICE, *Regurgitation and the Duncan Mediumship*. 8vo, pp. 116, 41 ill. Bulletin of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research: London 1931. Price 5s. net.

In March 1931 Mr and Mrs Dunecan came to London to fulfil a contract with the London Spiritualist Alliance. Their contract was to give to the Alliance a number of sittings for a fixed remuneration and to hold no other sittings elsewhere.

Mr Price tells us that in April they approached him with an offer of one specimen sitting to be followed by others if desired. This offer he gladly accepted and in the end he appears to have made it worth while for them to allow at his Laboratory conditions which were far more rigid than any that had been allowed at the L.S.A. In particular he was allowed to take flashlight photographs

of the so-called teleplasm in all sorts of manifestations, and it is these devastating photographs which constitute the main interest of his book. No unbiased reader who examines them will have the slightest doubt that what the Duncans claimed to be supernormal substances were in fact materials of the most ordinary kinds. The supposed teleplasm was cheesecloth. The same holes and crease-marks appeared in the pictures evening after evening. The materialised hand was a housemaid's rubber glove. (It is much too clumsy for a surgeon, as Mr Price suggests.) In the original photographs, which Mr Price kindly showed me some months ago, there appear too an obvious safety pin and some kind of stiff structure supporting the glove and cheesecloth, but these are practically indistinguishable in the published prints. This is the more to be regretted since the photographs are by far the most important pieces of evidence here presented. The only non-photographic material secured was a portion of alleged teleplasm removed from the medium's mouth at the last sitting. This proved on analysis to consist of several layers of cheap paper stuck together with white of egg.

The nature of the "teleplasm", however, was only one half of the problem. The other half was to determine how Mrs Duncan brought it into the room, exhibited it, and got it out again. Here, unfortunately, the results obtained are far less satisfactory. Mr Price is now quite sure that it is done by the materials being swallowed beforehand, brought up during the sitting, and re-swallowed at its close. On the evidence at our disposal it is the most probable theory, and so long as we remember that Mrs Duncan was never seen to swallow or regurgitate anything, nor was any foreign substance found in her pharynx, we shall do no harm by believing it until a better explanation can be found. It depends entirely on the fact that Mr Price believes that he excluded every other possible method of concealment, and such a line of argument is a very unsafe one in discussing the *modus operandi* of any conjuring trick, as I think Mr Price would be the first to agree. It would however, be unfair not to mention that among the photographs are included two control pictures showing the extraordinarily small bulk occupied by an enormous sheet of cheesecloth when closely rolled up, and that the account given of the physical examination of the medium, in the search for concealed substances, is extremely complete and convincing.

Five sittings in all were held. After the fifth the photographs were shown to Mr Duncan with the suggestion that Mrs Duncan should allow a film to be made of the whole performance in return for a fee of £100. The offer was not accepted and the Duncans soon afterwards left for Scotland.

In conclusion Mr Price asks the reader a number of questions regarding the Duncans' motives, and concludes "it is all very puzzling". I do not think the puzzle is very difficult. They went to Mr Price because they wanted to make some more money in addition to their payment from the L.S.A. and because they thought that from their point of view Mr Price was on the side of the angels. Unfortunately for them they left out certain factors from their calculation, possibly not knowing of their existence, and never knew of their mistake until Mr Price produced the photographs after the fifth sitting.

In support of the regurgitation theory Mr Price has quoted a number of interesting cases, some illustrated, of professional entertainers who have earned a living by swallowing and returning a varied assortment of objects, including living animals. He might have said rather more of the people who do the same with their food in private for their own enjoyment. Numbers of cases can be found referred to in works of medicine under the heading of rumination or merycism. All these cases are of interest in this connection as showing the comparative ease with which voluntary control over the gastric and oesophageal muscles can be developed, and that it is quite unnecessary to suppose the existence of a double stomach or an oesophageal diverticulum.

On p. 27 Mr Price has made an unfortunate mistake in relating at second or third hand an incident at an L.S.A. sitting, where the "teleplasm" caught on the edge of Mrs Duncan's platform and she believed it was being held or trodden on by a sitter. This rough edge was later planed smooth. The only other matter which seems open to criticism is the rather contradictory wording both of the notes taken at the sitting and of the notes made afterwards. With a disarming frankness Mr Price says, "In the protocol it is stated that the teleplasm was 'issuing from her mouth', 'coming from her nostrils,' etc. This is a little misleading. Actually we did *not* see it coming in a stream from the medium's facial orifices as the protocol suggests". Then one can only say that the protocol should not suggest it. The only use of a contemporary note is to state precisely what occurs and what the sitters do see.

On the same page Mr Price in his own note (not the protocol) says, "The teleplasm . . . coiled itself and squirmed upon the floor; it entangled itself round the chair . . . it shortened itself and lengthened itself; it twisted itself up into a short, thick rope slightly damp and with an odour. Of course, all these transformations were caused by the medium who was manipulating it." But in that case it did not coil itself or entangle itself. The medium coiled it, and so on, and it seems only misleading to describe the process in any other way. In the present instance this method of

description is not important because the misleading description is corrected later by a qualifying clause. But supposing that the narrator is describing phenomena which he comes to believe later to be genuine, and uses the same picturesque inaccuracy, he will then not put in any qualifying clause and we shall get a most startling description which may be quite inconsistent with fact.

To sum up, however, the photographs speak for themselves and they teach us at least two things. First that the taking of flashlight photographs of alleged mediumistic phenomena may be of the greatest value in detecting fraud and so, by corollary, of establishing what is genuine, and second that the physical examination of a medium cannot be considered complete unless we are able to know that nothing is concealed in the stomach or oesophagus. Mr Price has not so far suggested any practicable technique for such a control and neither can I.

V. J. WOOLLEY.

EDMUND SELOUS, *Thought Transference (or What?) in Birds*. 8vo, pp. xi. 255. London: Constable and Co., Ltd., 1931. Price 7s. 6d. net.

This interesting book, by a well-known naturalist, seeks to find an explanation for the simultaneous concerted movements of flocks of birds. The author's argument is stated in the Preface as follows: "If birds, when together, act in the same way simultaneously, they must do so either in response to some extraneous event which affects them through the senses, as known to us, at one and the same time, or because influenced in some other way than this, known or unknown, or by coincidence merely", and is illustrated by records of observations of bird behaviour from 1900 onwards, with a running comment.

Coincidence we may, with the author, dismiss offhand. Mr Selous's observations clearly negative any theory that the flocks act on the word of command of an "avine drill-sergeant" or that the flock simply imitates the movements of one or two enterprising members. Sometimes a flock may be set in motion by a common stimulus perceptible to the observer, *e.g.* the report of a gun, but Mr Selous points out that in creatures so inquisitive as birds not all sources of danger produce immediate flight, and that many of the movements seem to result from pleasurable emotions rather than fear. He suggests as an explanation some community of mental process between each member of the flock, akin to telepathy between human beings.

He has no doubt, from his reading of the evidence published by the S.P.R., supplemented by his own investigations, of the existence of human telepathy, and suggests that, while in mankind this acuity is exceptional in its occurrence, in birds it is much more

frequent and "more perfect in its application to the needs and acts of daily life", normal in fact rather than supernormal.

The title of the book is not altogether happy, as what the author postulates is "collective cerebation" rather than the transference of thought from one bird to another. But before we can usefully speak of "collective cerebation" in birds, it would be desirable to define what kind and degree of "cerebation" is to be attributed to the individual bird. May there, for instance, be stimuli such as currents of air, light or heat, not perceptible to even so experienced a human observer as Mr Selous, but producing motions on the part of birds, whether individually or collectively, without any precedent act equivalent to what we call "thought" in ourselves?

W. H. SALTER.

A. F. WEBLING, *Something Beyond*. 8vo, pp. ix. 277. Cambridge: University Press, 1931. Price 10s. 6d. net.

This book, although not primarily concerned with our subject, should be of some interest to psychical researchers, in that it shows the effect of a study of the records of psychical research on a certain type of mind.

The author, whose autobiography it is, was the son of a horse dealer, and entered the church after beginning life as a city clerk. He traces his religious experiences through a staunch faith in Anglo-Catholicism to Modernism and doubt, and after passing through great mental turmoil finds in the records of psychical research a scientific confirmation of religious faith, being convinced of survival solely through a study of these records, and without any conscious psychical experience whatever.

The section devoted to the author's study of psychical research is interesting, but would be more so if we knew what books, in addition to Myers's *Human Personality*, had comprised his reading. He assures us that his critical faculty was not in abeyance during his study, but admits to "a will to believe" and appears to accept telekinesis, and even the "direct voice", without practical experience of either of these phenomena. The author's sincerity is apparent throughout.

S. R. W. WILSON.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, June 1931.

Under the title of "A contribution to the question of a connection between hysteria and mediumship" the Editor (Dr Sünner) has a paper on the supposed abnormal experiences of a married woman living in a village in Slovakia. Whatever may be thought

of her personal trustworthiness, it must be admitted that the results of the observations made by both Dr Sünner and Professor Hugo Szanto, of Bratislava (Pressburg) in this case were practically nil.

Dr Armin Mittelberger describes a sitting for physical phenomena with Herr Kordon-Veri. Since the latter's friend, Dr Albert Langer, was also present, as seems to be the rule on such occasions (and was even searched), I think the origin of the "phenomena" may be reasonably attributed, whatever their character, to both these gentlemen, not to Kordon-Veri alone.

Dr A. Fitz, of Pasocroean, Java, describes a sitting with a Chinese medium who spoke in trance in the name of various Javanese deceased persons. It is asserted, or at least implied, that evidence of supernormal knowledge was afforded by the medium, but Dr Fitz's account is far too insufficiently detailed to base upon it any positive conclusions.

Geheimrat Prof. Ludwig describes a case of a clairvoyant dream or vision which a father had in 1923 in connection with his son's murder (of a political character). The case is undoubtedly interesting.

Herr R. Lambert speaks of the present "crisis" in the S.P.R. and concludes by expressing the hope that a way out of this crisis, which according to him threatens to paralyse the progress of "paraphysics", will be found. Incidentally he admits his belonging, so far as belief in physical phenomena is concerned, to the "dubio-tivists" (to use Dr Schröder's terminology), whom he rightly considers to constitute a link between "parapsychology" and official science (which, he adds, is hardly ready to admit even telepathy). Should they be excluded from the researches, the work of the "positivists", even if these monopolise the mediums, may be completely sterile. A most judicious remark.

In a short obituary notice on the late M. Jean Meyer, the founder of the *Institut métapsychique international*, Dr Tischer regrets that hitherto Germany has not been fortunate enough to possess "so disinterested and magnanimous a patron": a characteristic admission.

Frl. Dr Gerda Walther attempts to show the utterly unsatisfactory character of the public performances of a certain Herr W. Gubisch who pretended to expose "physical phenomena".

A propos of Dr Osty's paper in the *Revue métapsychique* for November-December 1930, exposing the Polish medium Stanisława P., Dr Sünner prints a note admitting that suspicious circumstances had been already observed at Stanisława P.'s sittings last year in Berlin. "We did not by any means", he says, "regard this medium as genuine".

P.-P.-S.

JOURNAL
OF THE
Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

The Annual General Meeting of the
Members of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY,
31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 24 February 1932, at 3.30 p.m.

N.B.—*The formal Notice has been circulated to Members.*

NEW MEMBERS.

(*Elected 30 December 1931.*)

- Herbert, Benson**, Winskill, Low Fell, Co. Durham.
**Librarian, Case Memorial Library of the Hartford Seminary
 Foundation**, 55 Elizabeth Street, Hartford, Conn., U.S.A.
Story, Mrs, 6 Redcliffe Square, S.W. 10.
Turnbull, A. M. D., Le Chalet, Farnham Royal, Bucks.
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MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 289th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 30 December 1931, at 3.45 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTLETON, G.B.E., in the Chair. There were also present : Professor E. R. Dodds, Mr L. S. Fletcher, Miss Ina Jephson, Sir Lawrence J. Jones, Bart., Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr J. G. Piddington, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Dr F. C. S. Schiller, Mr S. G. Soal, and Dr V. J. Woolley ; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Four new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

Mr Piddington announced that, having completed thirty years' continuous service on the Council, he now wished to retire. The Council learned of Mr Piddington's decision with great regret, and appointed Mr L. S. Fletcher to be an elected Member of Council in his place.

THE 290th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Thursday, 14 January 1932, at 3.15 p.m., Mr L. S. FLETCHER in the Chair. There were also present : Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Miss Ina Jephson, Sir Lawrence J. Jones, Bart., Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr W. Whately Smith, and Mr S. G. Soal ; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

The Report of the Council for 1931 was considered, and adopted as amended.

A Committee consisting of Mr L. S. Fletcher, Sir Lawrence J. Jones, Dame Edith Lyttelton, and Mr W. H. Salter, was appointed to consider the celebration of the Society's jubilee.

THE SOCIETY'S SÉANCE-ROOM.

THE attention of Members and Associates is called to the fact that the Society's *séance*-room is available for experiments, on the understanding that a representative nominated by the Council should be entitled to be present on every occasion as an observer.

Applications for the use of the room should be made to Mrs W. H. Salter, S.P.R., 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1.

ECONOMIES FOR 1932 APPROVED BY THE
COUNCIL.

IN view of the need for economy (which all scientific societies have to face) the Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the Committee appointed in November, have been forced to curtail the Society's expenditure in several directions. In particular they have decided to discontinue the salary paid to Dr Woolley's personal assistant, and the payment for the reviewing of foreign periodicals. They have also been obliged to curtail the salary of the Assistant Secretary, but are very glad to be able to retain her services for half-time.

The Council greatly regret that Dr Woolley, who was not in agreement with some of these decisions, resigned from the Society immediately after the decisions were made. Dr Woolley had been Hon. Research Officer for eight years and before that was Joint Hon. Secretary (with Mrs Sidgwick) for some years, and Members will regret the termination of his long association with the Society.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1931.

The Society's Jubilee. By the time of our next Annual General Meeting the Society, which was founded in February 1882 and is much the oldest Society formed for Psychological Research, will have completed fifty years of activity. During its fifty years of life the Society has naturally encountered many obstacles, and the Council considers that its success in surmounting them has been due to the fact that it has resolutely pursued the policy and followed the methods laid down by the founders.

The financial position. The Council regrets that a time when all members of the Society would naturally wish to congratulate themselves on the Society having attained its jubilee, should coincide with a period of unprecedented financial stress. It would, however, be idle to disregard the fact that the most important feature of the year 1931 has been the world-wide economic crisis. This has seri-

ously affected the position of the Society, as it has other Societies relying on voluntary support, owing to the resignations of Members and Associates, who on account of financial stringency feel that they can no longer continue their subscriptions. In the Council's opinion the losses that the Society has sustained in this way are less severe, having regard to the losses sustained by other Societies, than might have been expected, but they are none the less serious.

The Council in November appointed a special Committee to review the financial situation of the Society and to make recommendations, and as the result has instituted certain changes which will to some extent relieve the financial situation during the year 1931.

It is possible that the Society might check, temporarily at least, this decline in membership by adopting a policy at variance with that which it has followed ever since its formation: if it were, for instance, in regard to the question of survival, to which the Society has devoted much work, to become a propagandist body, or if it were to endeavour to attract publicity by sensational methods. But the Council is not tempted even to contemplate a policy which, whatever temporary increase of membership it might bring, would in the end damage the Society irretrievably. It recognises that there has been a certain amount of dissatisfaction with the policy of the Society; but it proposes to adhere to its cautious and critical procedure, as likely to attain the best results in the long run. The Society is actively engaged in important, if not in sensational work, of a kind essential to the furtherance of psychical research, which no other Society is attempting to perform. The Council accordingly appeals with confidence to all Members and Associates to support the Society to the utmost of their abilities during the present economic crisis.

Spontaneous Phenomena. Two houses, in East London and Hampshire respectively, were visited by Mrs Brackenbury during the year to investigate the origin of noises for which the inhabitants could not account. In the Hampshire case the noises were found to be produced normally by a young member of the family, while in the other case nothing abnormal occurred during the visits of the investigators. Mr Besterman investigated a supposed case of haunting in Yorkshire, and was able to explain it satisfactorily to the persons concerned, who had invited him to look into it.

Research Work. During the year a number of visits were made to mediums by Dr Woolley and Mrs Brackenbury, and in addition a series of sittings was carried out by them with a young and little known medium who was brought to the Society's notice by a member. These sittings, though on the whole disappointing, gave some instances of probably supernormal knowledge.

Among the other mediums was Mrs Duncan, whose public sittings were attended twice, while Mrs Brackenbury was also enabled to attend one of her private sittings by the courtesy of the Research Committee of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

Experiments were carried out with a view to testing the theory of the late Dr Kilner on the perception of a so-called aura by an eye fatigued by a di-cyanin screen.

Experiments in telepathy were carried out for some time by Mrs Brackenbury with a lady who is not a member of the Society, but they were interrupted by the illness of the latter and have not yet been resumed.

A large number of experiments has also been made by the Research Department on the manufacture, by normal means, of "paraffin gloves" similar to those produced in the course of the sittings of the medium Kluski, and a further important series on the methods which may be used to make artificial reproductions of impressions and prints of human skin on such substances as dental wax.

Besides this experimental work, the Society's records and documents relating to the unpublished poltergeist cases have been re-filed and classified so that they can be readily referred to for study and comparison.

Among the cases examined was an account appearing in a daily newspaper of the alleged success of a medium in detecting and securing the arrest of a lunatic responsible for the "Whitechapel murders" of 1888. A prolonged investigation finally showed that the article had appeared, almost word for word, in a Chicago newspaper of 1895, while no confirmation of the alleged incidents could be obtained either from police officers who worked in Whitechapel at the time and were interviewed for the purpose, or from the present staff at Scotland Yard.

The work with regard to telepathy and clairvoyance mentioned in the Reports for the last few years is still being actively pursued, and as it proceeds it becomes increasingly evident that the proper understanding of these two subjects lies at the root of all other inquiry into the mental phenomena of psychical research. The present stage of inquiry is of necessity to a large extent statistical, and on that ground may appear to be uninteresting to those who are not mathematically minded, but it is difficult to see how any progress can be made without it.

To come to details, Mr Soal has now completed his very careful and elaborate report on the experiments in telepathy at a distance carried on under his supervision, and this report is now in the printers' hands.

Miss Jephson is continuing her researches in clairvoyance with cards. Parties for collecting data have very kindly been given by

Dr Broad in Cambridge, and by Miss Carruthers, and the Oxford S.P.R. has also contributed a large quantity of data. Points which may prove of considerable interest have arisen and Miss Jephson is continuing the series with a view to verifying and throwing further light on them.

Owing to the special nature of the booktests which have been so prominent a feature of Mrs Leonard's mediumship, it is not possible directly to estimate their evidential value. This can only be done indirectly by means of control experiments, that is, by comparing the results obtained by chance alone. Two series of experiments on these lines, carried out during the year by Mr Besterman, showed that the results obtained in true booktests were greatly superior to those obtained by chance, even under the most favourable conditions. A report appears in Part 121 of *Proceedings*.

During the year Mr Besterman has begun work on a careful analysis of all available records of sittings with Mrs Leonard. The principal object of this investigation is to study comparatively the characteristics of different Communicators as manifested in the records. In addition to the records of the series of sittings held under the Society's control in 1918, Mr Besterman is using for this purpose the records in the possession of Mrs Fernald, Lord Charles Hope, the Rev. W. S. Irving, Mrs Salter, Mr Montgomery Smith, the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, Mr John F. Thomas, Miss Nea Walker, and others, amounting so far to the records of over six hundred sittings. The opportunity of using still further records would be warmly welcomed.

On the invitation of our Hon. Associate, Dr Tanagras, President of the Hellenic Society for Psychical Research, experiments in long-distance telepathy have been begun between a group in London organised by Mr Besterman and one in Athens. Dr Tanagras has been very active in the past in promoting experiments in long-distance telepathy between Continental groups in different cities, and it is hoped that the present experiments will give useful results.

In last year's Report reference was made to preliminary work having been done with a view to a systematic study of the psychology of testimony as applied to parapsychical phenomena. Experiments to further this work, which have been organised by Mr Besterman, have been carried out during the year in the Society's *séance*-room, and a report has now been completed. Several psychologists and others have expressed their sense of the importance of these experiments.

The Council wishes to thank those Members and Associates who have co-operated in the different kinds of work above mentioned.

The Library. The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust has now paid the fourth and last annual instalment of the grant of £1,000 to the

Library. With the aid of this grant the Library has been more than doubled in extent and very greatly improved in value. The number of books and pamphlets in the Library now stands at about 7,100, an increase of 200 during the year.

Ninety Members borrowed 714 volumes, and in addition a considerable number of volumes was consulted in the Library. These figures show a slight decrease from last year, corresponding to the reduction in Membership, but they do not include the 104 volumes borrowed by the National Central Library, a considerable increase over last year. Members continued to a limited extent to exercise their privilege of borrowing from the National Central Library, through the Society, books not in the Society's Library.

The Society was again represented by Mr Besterman at the Annual Conference (at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford) of the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux, to which the Society is affiliated.

Myers Memorial Lecture. The Second Frederic W. H. Myers Lecture, entitled "Beneath the Threshold," was delivered by Dr T. W. Mitchell in the Conway Hall, London, on 24 June. Copies of the Lecture are obtainable at the Rooms of the Society, price 1s.

The Society's Presidents. Dr Walter Franklin Prince, the Research Officer of the Boston S.P.R., honoured our Society by consenting to be re-elected as President for the year 1931.

Prof. Hans Driesch, who was President of the Society in 1926-1927, and who is the recognised leader of psychical research in Germany, was elected a Vice-President of the Society.

Hon. Treasurership of the Society. Mr W. H. Salter, who had for a long time been anxious to retire from the Hon. Treasurership of the Society as soon as a successor was ready to take over the duties, retired in October and was succeeded in the post by Mr L. S. Fletcher, who had shortly before that date been co-opted a member of Council. The Council congratulates itself on having secured Mr Fletcher as an Hon. Officer of the Society.

Changes in the Council. In addition to Mr L. S. Fletcher, Lord Charles Hope and Mr H. F. Saltmarsh have been co-opted as members of Council; their names will be familiar to all Members and Associates as active workers for several years in psychical research.

Obituary. During the past year the Society has lost by death seven Members and 15 Associates, one Corresponding Member and one Hon. Associate, including the following, who by long membership or otherwise have been valuable supporters of the Society: Mr Edgar Baruch, Lady Battersea, Mrs Robert Bevan, Mr F. G. Bromberg, Colonel J. A. Edelsten, The Dowager Lady Farrer, General Sir Reginald Hart, V.C., Miss Mabel Holland, and Mrs Tait. Several of these had been members for upwards of forty years.

Brought forward	- £2,342 15 1	Brought forward	- £2,419 17 11
" <i>Rebate on Income Tax</i>	- 1 0 0	" <i>Income Tax on Interest from Consols and Annuities, and War Stock</i>	- 10 11 6
" <i>Contributions to Research (see Research Fund Account)</i>	- 30 15 0	" <i>Sundries</i>	- 11 3 11
" <i>Contributions to Library (see Library Fund Account)</i>	- 145 5 9	" <i>Commission on Sales, Cheques, etc.</i>	- 25 0 3
" <i>Redemption of South Staffordshire Tramways Co. 4% Debenture Stock (£175)</i>	- 182 0 0	" <i>Expenses of Transactions of International Congress</i>	- 192 18 8
" <i>Loan from Endowment Fund</i>	- 50 0 0	" <i>Purchase of 3½% Conversion Stock in place of redemption of South Staffordshire Tramway Co. Debenture Stock</i>	- 184 0 0
" <i>Overdraft, 31st December, 1931</i>	-	" <i>Balance, 31st December, 1931:</i>	
" <i>At Westminster Bank (General Fund)</i>	- £110 10 1	<i>In Secretary's hands (General Fund)</i>	- £20 3 1
" <i>At Westminster Bank (Research Fund)</i>	- 0 13 2	<i>At Westminster Bank on Current Account (Library Fund)</i>	- 9 4 6
	£111 3 3		29 7 7
			<u>£2,872 19 10</u>

* [In addition to £108 19s. 2d. held on behalf of the International Congress (See last year's Accounts).]

RESEARCH FUND.

<i>To Balance, 31st December, 1930:</i>		<i>By Experiments</i>	-	-	-	£7 11 2
<i>On Current Account at Westminster Bank</i>	-	" <i>Miscellaneous Sitings</i>	-	-	-	14 1 6
<i>Donations</i>	-	" <i>General Expenses of Research</i>	-	-	-	11 6 6
<i>Refunded by Professor Gardner Murphy as his share of the expenses of the Clairvoyant Card Experiments</i>	-	" <i>Instruments for Research</i>	-	-	-	1 18 6
<i>Overdrawn, 31st December, 1931</i>	-					
	£34 17 8					<u>£34 17 8</u>

LIBRARY FUND.

<i>To Balance, 31st December, 1930:</i>		<i>By Books</i>	-	-	-	£178 1 9
<i>On Current Account at Westminster Bank</i>	-	" <i>Binding</i>	-	-	-	14 3 10
<i>Grant from General Fund</i>	-	" <i>Subscriptions</i>	-	-	-	2 2 0
<i>Carnegie Trust Grant</i>	-	" <i>Fee and Expenses to A.S.L.I.B. Conference</i>	-	-	-	4 0 0
<i>Sale of Surplus Books</i>	-					
	£207 12 1					<u>£198 7 7</u>
		" <i>Balance in hand, 31st December, 1931:</i>				
		<i>On Current Account at Westminster Bank</i>	-	-	-	9 4 6
						<u>£207 12 1</u>

MEMORANDUM OF ASSETS.

GENERAL FUND

£58 11	2	2½%	Annuities.
£62 19	0	2½%	Consolidated Stock.
£219 8	7	3½%	Conversion Stock.
£750 0	0	5%	War Stock 1929/47.
£800 0	0	York Corporation 3%	Redeemable Stock 1916/41.
£250 0	0	New South Wales 5%	Stock 1935/55.
£1,200 0	0	Southern Nigeria Lagos Government 3½%	Inscribed Stock.
£937 0	0	London, Midland & Scottish Railway 4%	Debenture Stock.
£562 0	0	London, Midland & Scottish Railway 4%	Preference Stock.
£1,540 0	0	East Indian Railway Irredeemable Debenture	Stock.
£520 0	0	East Indian Railway Deferred Annuity.	
£100 0	0	Prescot Gas Co. 4% Preference "C" Stock.	
225	Consolidated Ordinary Shares of £1 each of the Prescot Gas Co.		
300	Deferred Shares of 5s. each of the South Staffordshire Tramways (Lessee)		
	Co. Ltd. (in voluntary liquidation).		

ENDOWMENT FUND.

£1,400	0	0	4%	Consolidated Stock.
£600	0	0	4½%	Conversion Stock 1940/44.
£616	15	0	5%	Treasury Bonds 1933/35.
£500	0	0	4%	Victory Bonds.
£850	0	0	5%	War Stock 1929/47.
£908	0	11	India 3½%	Stock.
£161	11	6	New South Wales 5%	Stock 1935/55.
£1,797	0	0	London & North Eastern Railway Co. 4%	Debenture Stock.
£1,055	0	0	Great Western Railway Co. 5%	Rent Charge Stock.
£2,258	0	0	London, Midland & Scottish Railway Co. 4%	Preference Stock.
£260	0	0	East Indian Railway 3½%	Debenture Stock.
£1,260	0	0	East Indian Railway 4½%	Irredeemable Debenture Stock.
F. W. H. MYERS MEMORIAL FUND.				
£750	0	0	5%	Conversion Stock 1944/64.
£250	0	0	3½%	Conversion Stock 1961.

Piper Trust Fund Securities held by Trustees.

We have examined the above Accounts and compared them with the Society's Cash Books, Receipt Books, and Vouchers, and certify that they are in accordance therewith. We have also verified the investments of the General, Endowment and Myers Memorial Funds as set forth in the above Statements.

70A Basinghall Street, London, E.C. 2, 2nd February, 1932.

HARTLEYS, WILKINS, AVERY & FLEW, Chartered Accountants.

Membership of the Society. The total resignations taking effect between January 1931 and January 1932 amount to 84 Members and 28 Associates. The majority of these are due solely to financial stringency, and many members resigning on this ground hope to rejoin later. In addition 12 Members and six Associates have been removed for non-payment of subscription.

The new Members elected number 36, and also one Hon. Associate ; and one Associate became a Member. The total membership of the Society is now, including, in addition to 18 Honorary and Corresponding Members and 10 Hon. Associates, 501 Members and 308 Associates. As mentioned in last year's report it is inevitable that the number of Associates should decline so long as the rule of not electing new Associates is maintained.

The 1932 International Congress. During the year the Council made various preliminary arrangements for the holding of the Fifth International Congress in London in the autumn of 1932, in accordance with the decision of the Athens Congress of 1930. The serious economic position, however, which developed during the autumn made it necessary for the Council to inform the International Committee that any arrangements made must for the time being be considered provisional. Since then the absence of any improvement has compelled the Council with great regret to request the International Committee to arrange for a postponement of the Congress. As the depression is world-wide, it is expected that the Council's request will meet with general approval abroad.

Monthly Meetings. In the spring the Council decided that it would be desirable that so far as possible the meetings of the Society should be held at a fixed time on a fixed day, and that more opportunity should be given to members to discuss the papers after they were read. Meetings have accordingly been held at 5.30 p.m. (after tea at 4.45) on the last Wednesday in each month from May onwards (except the holiday months), and have been well attended. The papers have been followed by interesting discussions.

It is not intended to limit the papers read at these monthly meetings to those offered for publication in full in *Proceedings*. When it is not intended to publish the paper in *Proceedings*, a summary of it, and of any interesting points raised in the discussion, is printed in the *Journal*.

The Council believes that these meetings are doing a useful work in keeping members in touch with each other and with the Society's work.

Publications. Five parts of *Proceedings* were published during the year : Part 117 and 120 in February, Part 118 in April, Part 119 in May, and Part 121 in July.

The Secretary's sales to the general public amounted to

£73 17s. 10d. (an increase of £33 15s. 4d. on last year's sales), and of the *Proceedings* and *Journal* to members of the Society, to £66 11s. 2d. ; the total returns from the Society's agent in America amounted, after deduction of commission, to £5 11s. 4d. The sale of the *Transactions* of the Athens Congress amounted to £55 14s. 2d.

Meetings. The following meetings have been held during the year :

- 26 Feb. Annual General Meeting.
- 29 April. "Poltergeists," papers by Mr W. H. Salter and Mrs Brackenbury.
- 27 May. "Booktests," by Mr Theodore Besterman.
- 24 June. Second F. W. H. Myers Memorial Lecture : "Beneath the Threshold," by Dr T. W. Mitchell.
- 30 Sept. "A Consideration of a Series of Proxy Sittings," by the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas.
- 28 Oct. "Is Proof of Survival Possible ?" by Mr H. F. Saltmarsh.
- 25 Nov. "Personalities of Controls and Communicators bearing Ancient or Unknown Names," by Mr A. W. Trethewy.
- 30 Dec. "A History of George Valiantine," by Mrs W. H. Salter.

CORRESPONDENCE.

METHODS IN EXPERIMENTAL TELEPATHY.

[In the *Journal* for October 1931 (xxvii. 130-5) appeared a letter from Mr Soal criticising the telepathic experiments of M. R. Warcollier, *à propos* of Professor Gardner Murphy's comments on them in *Proceedings*, xl. 102-3. M. Warcollier and Professor Murphy were invited to reply to these criticisms ; their answers are printed below. The former's letter, a personal one addressed to Mr Soal, is printed by M. Warcollier's kind permission.—*Ed.*]

... I unfortunately lack the time to reply to your letter as it deserves. I have no objections to make. I quite agree with you : my work is that of an amateur. Having occupied myself with telepathy during the past twenty-five years only in my leisure hours, I have never been able to do really scientific work and I am far from being satisfied. I have done what I could, but my work is not as positive as I could have wished, just as yours has been negative against your inclinations. The important thing is that we have both of us done something.

Unfortunately the critical period we are about to encounter (from an economic point of view) has compelled me to suspend our telepathic reunions. If one day I have the necessary time (and

much is needed !) it is my intention to begin again on new lines, in particular on those you suggest (prepared designs drawn at random, etc.), and I would publish the statistics that you very properly ask for. One table which would be very interesting would show the percentage of success obtained by each subject during the years of our experiments. It would show that the hits are obtained by only a few subjects, whereas the coincidences due to chance are found among all the subjects ; this holds good for such a period of time as a succession of months. Then these good subjects obtain no more successes, but their imaginations continue to "perceive" images, which, although just as numerous or even more numerous, no longer coincide with reality, whereas other percipients now obtain series of successes. The same thing is observed in a single sitting : a successful experiment is usually not isolated, two or three are obtained at the same time.

You criticize above all "mental contagion." You are quite right ; but allow me to remind you that I have not spoken of it for several years, although the results continue to be remarkable. But the phenomenon is too complex to be explained at present. It may be that it is largely due to a "psychic parallelism," but I am inclined to think that this is itself favourable to telepathy. I know that I shall appear ridiculous in maintaining this position, but it is the duty of those who, like you and I, do pioneering work, to take risks.

There remains one point about which I disagree with you. For me success in telepathy does not consist in a servile copy of the object transmitted, but rather in a translation, a schematic or symbolic interpretation which, I know, greatly complicates the task of the mathematician. But, you will reply, there are cards, numbers, etc. I can only repeat that in France such experiments are not liked. We have not the earnestness of the Anglo-Saxon, and I could not have maintained a group for ten years with such stodgy experiments : they are perfect from the mathematical point of view, but psychologically impossible.

Allow me to point out an omission in your "cobra" illustration. You refer to the association of ideas with birds, islands, etc., but please note that I first drew a serpent almost identical with the original and that I had a very clear and disagreeable impression of a reptile. This does not prove that telepathy occurred, but you will agree that this detail is not unimportant.

It appears to me further that your argument from the calculus of probability is not opposed to mine. Consider, for instance, a rifleman of mediocre skill. His shots are very uncertain. He has six shots. The first is not badly placed, the second is a little better, the third is a bull's eye, the fourth is very bad, the fifth a little less bad, the sixth fairly bad. This may be due, for instance, to the

fact that the rifle is too heavy for him. It might be maintained that his success was due to chance, but the rifleman himself would always question this.

I remember having examined a beginner in qualitative analytical chemistry. I introduced a little silver solution into a test tube and gave it to him for analysis. When he handed me his observations I saw with surprise that he had described the silver, but with it half-a-dozen other substances which were not in the tube. The number of substances that he knew how to describe not exceeding half-a-dozen, he would have had a good chance to hit on silver if he had obtained his results by chance, since he mentioned all the metals that he knew. Questioned, the student explained that he had really obtained the reactions of silver, but that he had no doubt diluted the contents of the test tube with ordinary water instead of distilled water. In fact, the substances that he found at the same time as the silver could well have been introduced by water from the tap, but I could not enter into such considerations, as you will agree, and I ploughed the apprentice chemist. We are little telepathists who dilute the messages we receive with the impure water of our imaginations. . . . [*Translated.*]

R. WARCOLLIER.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—The letter by Mr S. G. Soal in the October issue of the *Journal* strikes me as an especially lucid, thoughtful and dispassionate presentation of certain considerations which constantly disturb us in psychical research, and perhaps above all in the study of telepathy. It is suggested that I should “reply” to this letter. If by a “reply” is meant a “rebuttal” I would not reply if I could, and I could not if I would. I agree with a great deal that Mr Soal says, and I think the questions which he raises are timely and well stated. It is true that he and I have read certain materials which impress him one way and me another way, but it would take a great deal of space to clear up the issue and would involve reproducing in the *Journal* a very large number of drawings and many pages of material printed in French by M. Warcollier.

For in fact the case is the statement of an attitude towards a large mass of experimental material, none of which, as far as I can ascertain, is available to the readers of the *Proceedings* and the *Journal*.¹ This material, except for scattered fragments, has appeared in the *Revue Métapsychique*. To debate with Mr Soal

¹ [An abstract of a paper read before the Society by M. Warcollier in 1928 appears in the *Journal*, xxiv. 319-23.—*Ed.*]

regarding this extensive material, so to speak, "over the heads" of those who have not had time or opportunity to follow the original French publications month by month and year by year since 1921 would be discourteous both to the reader and to Mr Soal, and could not possibly convince anyone.

I am uncertain whether Mr Soal refers to this entire mass of material or only to certain selected fragments; and if the latter, to which ones he refers. Since it is not clear whether his comments apply to certain samplings or to the entire material, an attempt to meet him on his own ground would be fruitless. I do know, however, the unfailing clarity with which Mr Soal has described, both in print and orally, his own experiments and his own opinions, and I feel that the very fact that his own experiments have yielded results very different from those of M. Wareollier requires comment. The delightful combination of courtesy and sincerity which Mr Soal shows would call for a reply in kind even if his argument were not in itself a compelling one.

The first question seems to me this: has M. Wareollier's procedure led to results which are exactly like those produced by "chance"? *A priori*, one might expect so. Yet the expectation is not confirmed. In fact, a very large mass of material has shown that with ordinary persons under ordinary conditions, results like his fail to appear. I refer, of course, to the Stanford investigations, to Troland's investigations, to the broadcast experiments in England, Germany and America, etc. Mr Soal assumes that negative results of the kind which he has himself obtained will be obtained nearly always when one gathers together a few ordinary persons (that is, persons not especially sensitive to telepathic phenomena); on this point I am not only in complete agreement with him, but would express my conviction with somewhat more positiveness than he cares to use. It seems to me quite clear from the work I have just mentioned, as well as from the great body of published telepathic work ever since 1882, that genuine "sensitives" are exceptional. On the other hand, the material collected in *Phantasms of the Living* and in the "Census of Hallucinations" and in the many other surveys of apparitions and the like (such as those collected by Mrs Sidgwick in 1922) indicate that the phenomena are of an order of rareness which is comparable, let us say, with that of automobile accidents, rather than of the order of rareness of lunar rainbows. One would expect, nevertheless, that in a small group of twenty or thirty ordinary persons working for a year or two, the difference between the chance expectation and the actual results obtained with most kinds of material would be slight.

On the other hand, from the same sources one would expect that persons who are sufficiently sensitive to get brilliant telepathic

impressions rather often, say a dozen times a year, are not very hard to find. During most of the years that I was actively engaged in telepathic work, it was my rule to give most of my time to the hunting of good "subjects." I suppose I spent ten hours "hunting" in preparation for every hour of experimentation. During the three years I succeeded in finding four individuals who seemed to be capable of fairly consistent telepathic work—these selected from many hundreds who in turn were more or less selected from the general population through special interest in psychic phenomena or through reports of unusual experiences.

Now the difference between really getting results and merely persuading oneself that one gets results is in some ways a much more definite task than Mr Soal explains. In the first place, a person who is not sensitive usually goes for weeks or months without getting any results at all. It is easy to maintain *à priori* that some successes will happen; and yet, using the ordinary kinds of phenomena—pictures, diagrams, and so forth—such as Warcollier's group uses, I have seen subjects go through a whole winter of such experimentation without getting any clear results at all that would even comfort their own minds or revive their flagging interest. And if I had not seen phenomena obtained by "specially sensitive" persons, I should probably long since have given up interest in the subject, since during twenty years of intermittent experimentation and three of intensive work, I never personally got, as percipient, experimental results of a kind which would attract attention or which could possibly be played up as positive "successes." Empirically, then, I cannot grant that coincidence does the various wonderful things which are accorded to it.

In the second place, there are ways of calculating coincidence which seems to me somewhat better than those which Mr Soal has in mind. In the broadcast experiment from Chicago, all the items used had been chosen for use by a roulette wheel so that this matter of "parallel mental habits" might not be invoked as an explanation of such successes as occurred. In this experiment the number of *animals* listed among which the roulette wheel had to choose was thirty-five. The animal actually chosen by the wheel was a walrus. Not one single individual out of 2,500 got the walrus. Now shall we say in the language of pure mathematics that there was one chance in thirty-five for each person to get the walrus? ¹ If so, the attainment of a *zero* score is supernormal to an amazing degree. Of course, the point is that the *à priori* chances of getting a certain idea are not to be computed without reference to the details of the situation.

¹ [This would be true (leaving preferences out of account) only if the percipients knew which 35 animals had been listed. Otherwise the chance of getting a hit would only be one in the total number of all animals.—*Ed.*]

There were, for example, three hundred lions reported. If the machine had happened to choose a lion, this would have been a remarkably "supernormal" result. Now safety, of course, lies in large numbers of items. We calculated how many people actually got each item right and then calculated how much chance there would be of any person getting *two* items right, provided the "hits" were accidents. Taking the material not in terms of *à priori* expectation but in terms of the empirical fraction which showed how likely a person was to get a particular idea, the empirical chances of getting *two or more* things right during the series was 6 (in 2,500) while the actual number of such cases was 5. This means simply that we probably had enough material to permit the gross distortion introduced by the roulette wheel to be ironed out. I do not know whether the London broadcast material could be subjected to the same analysis, but I feel reasonably sure that exactly the same kind of results would be found, that is, that the vast majority of persons in any given experiment are non-psychie. (The present method is inapplicable to *single* "hits," but with numbers and letters our results were *below* chance.)

Again, let us return to Warcollier. Is it empirically true that masses of coincidences of the sort which he has published do really appear in the process of combining results from different telepathic series? Is it true that the results obtained in one series would match the materials used by the agents in another series just as well as they match the material actually used in the given series? Is it true that the same individuals who secure successes in some series which are so far ahead of chance expectation fall behind in others? Both Warcollier's data and my own convince me that successes are shared *very unevenly*, and that this unevenness maintains itself from month to month and from year to year. If the reader will follow through the Warcollier experiments by the initials of the percipients, it will be much easier for him to convince himself of this than it would be for me to convince him by argument. The longer the series is continued, the more definitely one can tell whether the bunching of success in the work of particular percipients is a chance affair or not. This is one of many reasons why a case like the present cannot be judged at all without considering the very long period during which the study has been continued. Surely, if any of Warcollier's group are really sensitive, he is *himself* sensitive; he has been at work on the problem for over twenty years and has published abundant material on his own results.

I agree that it is frequently impossible to tell to what extent the selecting of favourable cases out of a large mass of material may suggest telepathy when no such process is actually at work. My feeling is simply that Warcollier's best published results remain un-

affected no matter how many thousands of experiments he has carried out. In view of the fact that Warcollier's experiments are usually weekly, rather than daily, and that his publications are voluminous, I cannot see that the selection factor can be as serious as Mr Soal implies ; but even if Warcollier had experimented daily or hourly for twenty-five years it would not affect the logic of the situation. The much-quoted figure representing the likelihood of monkeys typewriting copies of all the books in the British Museum seems to me comparable to the probability that Warcollier in a lifetime could get, by sheer coincidence, what he has gotten ; and whether we give the monkeys a day or a million years, and allow them one error per volume or a thousand errors, will not affect our attitude. I cannot make this belief appear reasonable to the reader unless, by expressing it, I can induce him to read Warcollier for himself.

Mr Soal is, of course, absolutely right in protesting against the habit of allowing the agents to choose their own material for experimentation, especially if it is material noticed during the day. I think Warcollier agrees with this, and is trying as far as circumstances allow to decrease this source of error. How much can be explained by this fact I do not know. I can again only say that my own group, though often falling into this very bad habit, did not thereby get any such results as Warcollier has. In other words, I think it is a criticism with much *à priori* force but uncertain importance. I doubt its relevance in the long-distance work. But I would certainly agree that since it is easy to eliminate this source of error, it should be eliminated.

I was not aware of the fact that Warcollier completely failed while using numbers, playing cards, etc. I should be glad to have a reference to such experiments.

The middle paragraph on page 133 puzzles me. "If, however, the American group thinks of a cobra and M. Warcollier has the impression of, say, exotic birds and climbing plants, how easy to explain this by saying that exotic birds were associated in the mind of the agent with the idea of a cobra." This is the only sentence in his letter which is documented by a footnote, and since the point is concrete, it calls for a concrete answer. The object chosen in this experiment was a drawing of a cobra coiled (to strike) and with its head to the right, thus forming a figure which at a distance of six or eight feet looked like a large capital *S* tilted to the right as if in italics. M. Warcollier received on this occasion a figure like a capital *S* tilted to the right, and beside it he wrote, "mouvement de reptile." It will be noted among the mass of material published by M. Warcollier that the tilted letter *S* is at least very rare (I have run across no figure resembling the one obtained in this series), and

that although there is a fair assortment of animals, reptiles are uncommon. To get both the approximate form and the right characterisation would then be a very different thing from getting simply the idea of exotic birds and so on, to which Mr Soal refers. This is but one case among hundreds, and it would be absurd to lay stress upon it; but since this is the only case in which Mr Soal's critique has been specific, I think it only fair to M. Wareollier to point out that in this one specific criticism due attention was not paid to the actual results of the experiment. It raises, in fact, some question as to the possibility of demolishing M. Wareollier's case except by a very prolonged and exacting inquiry.

I am in entire agreement with Mr Soal as to the desirability of M. Wareollier's undertaking experiments under some of the controlled conditions Mr Soal outlines. Wareollier fully realises the desirability of this. In fact, during 1929 we planned out a considerable number of such experiments. It is, however, a matter for the experimenter to decide as to what is to be done at any given time, and I am not entirely sure that the division of labour will not be best served by having M. Wareollier following his own lines for the present, while others like myself whose groups of percipients are less successful (not *entirely* unsuccessful) find a way to supply the necessary control.

I must repeat that this letter *does not and cannot* touch the main point of Mr Soal's thesis. Whether M. Wareollier's results are supernormal or not is a question to be decided only after reading extensively in his published work; and the decision cannot at present be stated in terms of the theory of probability, but only with that kind of assent or negation which comes to us after any prolonged study of a complicated problem. I am certain that M. Wareollier shares my earnest hope that the more exact quantitative methods can be successfully applied to types of material such as those which he has published.

But since the discussion of M. Wareollier's experiments arose in connection with my plea for a higher standard for papers to be read at the London Congress, I think it perhaps worth mentioning that the great majority of Wareollier's hypotheses regarding telepathic interaction are but slightly altered forms of hypotheses which go back to the work of Podmore, Gurney, Myers, Mrs Sidgwick, and other pioneers. Most of his remarks regarding half-conscious or twilight states, regarding batteries of agents, regarding subliminal association, and so on, are to be found in literature which is classical if any of the literature of our subject deserves that name. If it be true that these hypotheses are unwarranted in relation to prolonged experimental work with subjects in a normal state, I am not fully clear as to why they should repeatedly have been invoked in the

study of exceptional phenomena occurring in the case of mediumship. If it be true that real mediumship is exceedingly rare, but, if found, exceedingly worth studying, and if hypotheses similar to those of Warcollier have actually been evolved by the pioneers in our field in an attempt to explain mediumistic phenomena, it would seem to me at least possible that the testing of these hypotheses on a large scale should be regarded as a major concern of the psychical researcher. If I were aware of anyone else besides Warcollier who is doing this, I should be interested in making a comparative study regarding the degree of success which each is attaining. What I personally hope will be accomplished by Warcollier's work is that in time there may be improvements in experimental and statistical method by which the mass of data collected by him may achieve the quantitative significance which he and I would both grant it lacks at present. It does not seem to me, however, that the failure of other experimenters to obtain results which are supernormal when using methods similar to those of M. Warcollier can be regarded as weighty, unless it can be established that the percipients used in the two series of experiments are equally endowed.

Yours, etc.,

GARDNER MURPHY.

ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR PARAPSYCHOLOGIE.

SIR,—Your readers may perhaps be interested to learn what consequences my letter on Frau Silbert in the *Journal* for July 1931 has had. On 20 November 1931 the proprietor of the *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie* wrote to tell me that he had received a command from his readers to dismiss me from the post of Assistant Editor which I had held for six years, in order that future conflicts (Besterman-Bozzano-Silbert) might be avoided. As the proprietor of the *Zeitschrift* is dependent on extremely credulous readers, he was obliged to obey their command.

[After referring to a parallel incident which has recently occurred in another country, Herr Lambert proceeds:] Thus the uncritical believers form everywhere, in Dr Sünner's touching words, a "community of brothers in the faith," whose members, as he forgot to add, protect each other from all criticism and who punish every departure from the dogma of the community by expulsion.

At bottom I am pleased at this solution, as I have for long been embarrassed to think that I might be regarded by the uninitiated as sharing the responsibility for the publication of the absolutely uncritical articles, which, notwithstanding my protests, were accepted in ever-increasing numbers. During the lifetime of

Schrenck-Notzing, who ruled the *Zeitschrift* behind the scenes, it at least maintained a certain standard. Since his death it has fallen lower and lower and has published articles which even Schrenck-Notzing rejected as being valueless. It is owing to this lack of critical spirit, to which Count Perovsky has so often referred in his Notes on Periodicals, and to the hostile and unfair attitude of the *Zeitschrift* towards writers of great merit, that Professor Driesch's recent withdrawal as an official collaborator in the *Zeitschrift* is due.

The only hope for scientific psychical research in Germany is that when the present unfortunate situation all over the world is improved it may at last be possible to establish a really scientific periodical in which every serious investigator would be able to express his views, whether positive or negative.

I congratulate you on working for a society which, since its foundation, has made unprejudiced investigation in our difficult subject its sole object. [*Translated.*]

Yours, etc.,

R. LAMBERT.

[Those of our members who keep in touch with psychical research on the Continent will deeply regret to hear that Herr Rudolf Lambert has recently ceased to be Assistant-Editor of the *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*. Herr Lambert has been a member of our Society for many years, and recently contributed to our *Journal* a letter on his experiences with Frau Silbert. While he has shown himself on occasions a frank critic of some aspects of our Society's work, there are very few psychical researchers outside the United Kingdom who have upheld with equal force and consistency the ideals and traditions of our Society. The severance of his connection with the *Zeitschrift* must be regarded as a serious setback to psychical research in the German-speaking countries.—W. H. S.]

THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE
CIRCULATION.

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on a definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only." The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

JOURNAL
OF THE
Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

ON

WEDNESDAY, 30 March 1932, at 5.30 p.m.

WHEN A PAPER ON

“SITTINGS WITH VALIANTINE AND
OTHER MEDIUMS”

WILL BE READ BY

LORD CHARLES HOPE

N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.

PRIVATE MEETINGS.

A HISTORY OF GEORGE VALIANTINE.

THE 110th Private Meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday, 30 December 1931, at 5.30 p.m., the HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTLETON in the Chair.

MRS W. H. SALTER read a paper entitled "A History of George Valiantine", which it is hoped to publish in an early part of *Proceedings*.

During the course of the discussion Dr V. J. Woolley agreed that in the type of sitting in which Valiantine sat at one end of the trumpet with the sitter at the other end it was impossible for the sitter to keep his eyes on the medium's lips.

Mr E. J. Dingwall expressed his gratitude for Mrs Salter's paper, with which he entirely agreed. In his opinion there was no evidence whatever that Valiantine possessed any supernormal faculties. The evidence for the medium's Chinese voices had been stated by Professor Giles to be valueless. The knowledge of Chinese sounds could have been easily acquired by the medium in America.

Mr G. R. S. Mead suggested that Chinese tones were very difficult to imitate.

The Chairman pointed out that this would not be the case if one had had the opportunity of hearing them.

Mr A. W. Trethewey said that Valiantine's alleged Hindustani voices were so blurred that they might have been anything.

SUPERNORMAL OCCURRENCES IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY.

THE 111th Private Meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday, 27 January 1932, at 5.30 p.m., MRS W. H. SALTER in the Chair.

PROFESSOR E. R. DODDS read a paper entitled "On the Evidence for Supernormal Occurrences in Classical Antiquity", which is printed below, considerably abridged, and with omission of the references to sources.

To avoid disappointment, it is well to be clear at the outset as to the sort of results which may be expected from such inquiries as the present one. It is certainly hoping too much to suppose that the authenticity of any phenomenon whose occurrence in the contemporary world is disputed can in any substantial degree receive *direct* confirmation from the records of past ages. It is safe to say that not a single narrative which has come down to us from antiquity reaches the evidential standard that would justify its publication as a case in the *Journal*. This was of course recognised by Andrew Lang, that remarkable polymath, who inaugurated the study of comparative psychical research nearly forty years ago; but what

impressed him was the wide temporal and geographical distribution of the testimony to certain phenomena : for example, the ascription of levitation to the Neoplatonist philosopher Iamblichus in Syria, the 17th century Italian St Joseph of Cupertino, and the 19th century medium Home in this country. The evidence, at least in the first two cases, cannot be called strong ; but why is the same supernormal happening associated with these three quite unconnected persons ? It is difficult, as he pointed out, to explain such a distribution on a diffusionist hypothesis.

Personally, I am not disposed to attach quite so much weight as Lang did to this type of argument. It is obvious that such uniformity of testimony may often be accounted for by the operation of a common psychological cause : for example, the alleged levitation both of Iamblichus and of St Joseph seems sufficiently explained by the idea, common to Neoplatonism and Catholicism, that the souls of the devout strain upward toward their heavenly home (and hence may be expected in extreme cases to carry their bodies a little way with them). Nevertheless, it would be hasty to conclude that comparative psychical research is concerned only with the history of opinion and can have no bearing upon questions of fact. I will venture to propound for your consideration two canons in this connection. The first is a negative one, namely, that if a particular supernormal phenomenon, alleged to occur spontaneously among civilised people in recent times, is not attested at other times and places of which we have adequate knowledge, the presumption is thereby increased that it does not occur as alleged, unless it can be shown that its emergence is conditioned either by an actual evolutionary change or by a shift in the focus of curiosity, such as might be produced by a new philosophical outlook. Thus if no case of telepathy had ever been recorded before, say, 1850, considerable doubt would be thrown on the reality of its occurrence since that date, unless clear reason could be shown for its remaining so long unnoticed. This canon must of course be used with great caution, since it involves an argument from silence, the strength of which will vary widely with the nature of the phenomenon and the character and amount of the general documentary evidence available for any particular period and region.

My second canon is this : suppose a phenomenon X to be accepted as occurring in modern Europe under conditions ABC and only under these ; if it be recorded as occurring at another time or place under conditions BCD , then there is a presumption that neither the presence of A nor the absence of D is necessary to its occurrence. Here the partial identity of the conditions described in the past with those under which the phenomenon is obtained to-day offers some assurance that the earlier narrative is not a piece of free

invention ; and on this assumption the element of difference may in certain cases be highly instructive.

I propose now to take some of the various types of supernormal phenomena alleged to occur at the present day, and to ask what analogues are discoverable in Graeco-Roman literature. I shall begin with occurrences which seem *prima facie* referable to telepathy. The earliest spontaneous case known to me is the familiar tale of the two travellers from Cicero's dialogue on Divination. I know of no further instances of veridical phantasms of the dying until we reach that vast treasury of edifying ghost-stories, the Dialogues of Pope Gregory the Great. Less sensational, and for that reason less suspect, are some of the examples of telepathy described by Augustine, who is a far better witness than Pope Gregory, and has indeed some claim to be considered the first serious student of psychical research. Particularly interesting is a case of apparent telepathic rapport between an hysterical patient and a priest who was in the habit of visiting him. The priest's house was twelve miles distant from the patient's, and the latter could always tell the exact moment at which the priest was setting out to visit him, and would describe exactly all the stages of his journey. He eventually recovered and his supernormal powers then disappeared.

It will be noticed that these instances of spontaneous telepathy come from relatively late authors. If it be asked why no case of the sort is recorded before the 1st century B.C., I think the answer is probably that until about that time no plausible theoretical explanation of such cases was available. It was Cicero's teacher Poseidonius who first gave general currency to the philosophical doctrine of sympathy, *i.e.* an underlying unity which was said to link every fractional mind and every particle of matter in the universe with every other and with the whole. The earliest extant author to use this general doctrine as a means of explaining telepathy and other occult phenomena is Plotinus in the 3rd century A.D. ; but there is some ground for thinking that the explanation goes back to Poseidonius himself. And once the theory was established, facts which would otherwise have been passed over as mere curiosities of coincidence acquired a possible significance and thus began to be recorded.

Experiment is in general a still later growth. There is indeed one celebrated early story which might be claimed as the first successful case of experimental telepathy. I refer to King Croesus' ingenious test of asking six different oracles to tell his messenger what he, Croesus, far away in Sardis, was doing at a certain hour. The messengers themselves did not know, but from the Delphic oracle the King's emissary received the correct answer that he was occupied in boiling a lamb and a tortoise together in a copper

cauldron. In later antiquity, various oracles laid claim to telepathic or clairvoyant powers, and there were also private clairvoyants. One feat in particular, the reading of sealed letters, gave rise to considerable controversy between believers and sceptics. Among professional clairvoyant mediums the one best known to us is Albicerius of Carthage, of whose powers several instances are related in detail by Augustine.

Belief in prevision was widespread at all periods, and the evidence is correspondingly abundant, though poor in quality. The philosophical difficulties which stand in the way of acceptance of this power to-day were not generally felt in antiquity. Its reality was especially championed by the Stoics, on *a priori* grounds. Scrying (usually by boy mediums, in a vessel of water or oil) was widely practised as a means of discovering the future; this may be an importation from the East. There is also one instance of the use of a device analogous to the "ouija-board".

Prevision and other manifestations of supernormal knowledge were often alleged in association with possession. Like most early peoples, the Greeks attributed to the intrusion of an alien spirit not only cases of multiple or alternating personality, but also such conditions as epilepsy, hysteria and many forms of mental and even of bodily disease—despite occasional rationalist protests, from Hippocrates to Plotinus. In the early period, so far as we know, the invading personality was always assumed to be a god or "daemon". The orthodox Greek view was that the dead were safely imprisoned in Hades. An exception was made for the unquiet ghosts of those who had died untimely or by violence, or had failed of due burial. These are they who prowl in graveyards and haunt the living. In the best-known ancient story of a local haunt, the one in Pliny's *Letters*, the ghost was laid as soon as its bones were discovered and buried. It was the revolutionary theory of Poseidonius, that the dead dwell not in an underground Hades but in the air, that made spiritualism for the first time thinkable. Tertullian tells us that in his day, while some possessing spirits called themselves gods, some professed to be the souls of deceased gladiators and others claimed to be the ghosts of relatives. We are never told that they gave evidence of identity.

From the notion of possession it is a short step to that of mediumship, the exploitation of which was until Roman imperial times mainly confined to certain oracles. At Delphi the prophetesses were thrown into trance states in which Apollo was thought to speak through them; the method of inducing the trance was a subject of dispute even in antiquity. Oracles of the dead existed at certain places, but we do not know whether these involved mediumship. Magical papyri give recipes for the induction of

trance; but the best ancient descriptions of this state are found in Iamblichus and Michael Psellus. Iamblichus says that the normal consciousness is sometimes entirely suppressed, sometimes survives side by side with the intruding personality. Psellus says that possession may be recognised "when the subject is deprived of all activity . . . but is moved and guided by another spirit, which utters things outside the subject's knowledge and sometimes predicts future events". Some of Porphyry's "oracles" seem to be based on actual trance utterances.

For the occurrence of physical phenomena at sittings the chief witness is Iamblichus. He appears to allege that luminous apparitions may be expected, that levitation may occur, and that spirit-forms may sometimes be observed passing into and out of the medium. Porphyry thought that these spirit-forms might be built up by the psychic activity of the medium out of "the material supplied" and especially out of "matter taken from living bodies." This comes near to a theory of ectoplasm. For telekinetic phenomena I can find no true parallel, just as I can discover no evidence that poltergeists were active in antiquity. The nearest approximation to either type of occurrence is perhaps in the stories told by Josephus and Philostratus of obsessing daemons who at the special request of the exorcist demonstrated that they had really left the body of their victim by overturning previously specified objects in his neighbourhood.

On the whole the resemblances between the phenomena described by the Neoplatonists and those recorded as occurring in the *séance*-room to-day appear sufficiently numerous and striking to afford *prima facie* ground for the assumption that the facts underlying the two sets of records are of the same order and referable to similar agencies. And in fact Iamblichus is often claimed as one of the most important historical witnesses to the truth of spiritualism. This seems to me rather odd. For with all the parallelisms I have enumerated there is associated one fundamental difference, viz. that what the spiritualists attribute to the activity of a disembodying human mind the Neoplatonists attribute to gods or daemons. We have, indeed, seen that in *spontaneous* cases of possession the "Control" sometimes gave itself out to be the soul of a deceased person; it is also true that deliberate evocation of the dead, though much rarer than the evocation of gods or daemons, was sometimes undertaken. But of evocation of the dead by means of a medium there is little evidence. Iamblichus admits that the evil souls of the earth-bound dead may occasionally intrude upon a *séance*, and he is said once to have detected a soi-disant Apollo as being really the ghost of a gladiator. But his spirit-forms and luminous phantoms are always those of gods or daemons; gods and daemons

were the objects of the invocations preserved in the papyri ; and the authors of Porphyry's oracles, when they describe themselves at all, invariably describe themselves as gods.

So far as I can see this circumstance puts the spiritualist in a somewhat awkward dilemma. Is he to regard the Neoplatonist phenomena as genuine or fraudulent ? If they are fraudulent, obviously they do not help his case ; and the sceptic may invite him to explain why in a society so abundantly equipped with potential mediums and ardent investigators as that of the 4th century A.D., the genuine spirits failed to make use of these admirable opportunities. If, on the other hand, the phenomena are to be accepted as genuine, he must decide whether they were produced by non-human spirits or by the dead masquerading as non-human spirits. If he adopts the latter hypothesis, the sceptic will wish him to explain why the dead of antiquity entered into so widespread a conspiracy to hide their identity and deceive the anxious inquirers. And if, finally, he accepts the agency of non-human spirits, a new problem presents itself ; how shall he account for the cessation of this agency to-day, and the substitution for it of an entirely different agency which nevertheless produces the same effects ? Once he admits the notion that any single *séance* phenomenon is or ever has been produced by a discarnate non-human agent, he is indeed lost ; for since we know nothing at all of the nature or powers of such agents, there can be no theoretical difficulty, once their existence is admitted, in attributing to them the whole range of phenomena associated with modern spiritism. Moreover, the Neoplatonic (and Catholic) " daemonist " hypothesis is, by its very vagueness, far less open to *a priori* criticism than is the spiritualist. The *a priori* objections to a belief in the continued activity of the dead are in the judgement of many modern persons, myself included, very strong objections indeed ; but these considerations do not apply to the activity of beings who have never experienced death. It would seem, therefore, that the spiritualist should think twice before he calls the Neoplatonists as witnesses for the defence. As for the sceptic, a comparison of ancient daemonism with modern spiritism will probably suggest to him the conclusion that in periods of religious decay men will invoke the aid of magic to support by ocular evidence whatever article of a crumbling creed is nearest to their heart's desire and least capable of defence upon philosophical grounds.

A discussion followed, in which the Chairman, Mrs Carpenter, Mr G. R. S. Mead, Mrs Kingsley, Mr G. W. Lambert, the Rev. W. S. Irving, Mr J. Hettinger, Lady Barrett, and Mr Besterman took part.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IS PROOF OF SURVIVAL POSSIBLE ?

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—After reading Mr Saltmarsh's interesting paper under the above title (*Proceedings*, xl. 105 ff.) it struck me that instead of attributing a number of theoretical potentialities to normal telepathic action in a general way, it would have been more fruitful to have analysed and compared some of the most cogent specific examples of evidence for survival and test them with this touchstone.

An example of such test-proof evidence to my mind, if we agree (as Mr Saltmarsh appears implicitly not to agree) that latency is hardly likely to endure for six months, is the Bowyer-Bower case (*Proceedings*, xxxiii. 167). Captain Bower's apparition was seen not only at the time of his sudden violent death, but also six months later (by his mother and again by his fiancée). The details of development and behaviour are strikingly suggestive of the operation of an external intelligence. Accepting the facts as truthfully reported the experience is surely utterly incongruent with any known case of spontaneous unveridical hallucination experienced by a person in either good or ill health, and there is no room for expectation as an explanation.

After studying the subject carefully I find that the evidence for expectation as a contributory cause of hallucination is extremely meagre: hallucination, *i.e.* as distinct from illusion. Most of the cases reported are illusory,¹ the result of an observed natural physical movement (*e.g.* a door opening) or of natural sounds. Where a phantasm of an expected friend is seen, we cannot be sure that it is not a spontaneously produced phantasm of the living person, and the cases reported are rare. In the famous Merton case the apparition was never seen when expected; Mrs Leonard never had her experience of "leaving the body" when she desired it: communications on expected themes and from expected sources are the exception at trance sittings. I myself, subject to hypnagogic hallucinations, never have them when I think of them and await them. The mental tension of expectation seems thus to be fatal to psychic experience of certain kinds and is probably the cause of failure in telepathic experiments. In successful series of experiments confidence (as distinct from hope or expectation) has probably

¹ Miss Jephson's phantasmal cheque (*Journal*, xxvii. 184) was probably illusory rather than hallucinatory; *i.e.* "built upon" some shadow in the envelope she looked into. From her account one assumes that she looked into the envelope for it and that the handling was an hallucinatory elaboration.

been born of experiments unemotionally and off-handedly carried out (by suitably endowed persons). There is clearly an element of doubt or irritation in expectation; sufficiently "ruffling" may we not suppose to disturb the "currents"? Were a medium to expect the trance to supervene rather than to be confident or impassive about it, failure would probably result. At a sitting with Mrs Brittain, which she had inconvenienced herself to give me, she commented distressfully several times on the delay of the trance. While we were engaged in conversation which interested her she suddenly said "Ah, that's better!" and "went off".

Yours, etc.,

ERNEST S. THOMAS.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—Mr Saltmarsh (*Proceedings*, xl. 105 ff.) puts forward many interesting theories and hypotheses which may or may not negative the proof of survival. It would, I think, be of interest to many if he would give his opinion on, and a solution to, the following case reported in *Light* for 26 May 1928, p. 244:

"... Mrs Dowden was the means of obtaining an important fact that nobody living knew, and it was subsequently verified. This case was connected with a legal dispute, so an assumed name must be given.

"About a hundred years ago a man died whom I will call Arthur Graham, but the year of his death was not known, nor his burial-place. The whole law case hinged on the date of his death. It was essential that his tomb should be found... the police failed to trace it.

"One interested in the matter came to Mrs Dowden with a letter that had been written about a hundred years previously by a woman related to Arthur Graham. The writer of the letter purported to communicate through Mrs Dowden and stated that the tomb of Arthur Graham was in a churchyard that had no church standing in it in a certain district in London, the name of which was given. Mrs Dowden was not acquainted with this part of London. The sitter doubted this information, but went in search of the grave as directed, and found that the information given was correct. He discovered the tomb of Arthur Graham, exactly as described in the sitting, and the information was used in the law case though its source could not be revealed."

It is, of course, easy to postulate that Mrs Dowden or the sitter might, on some occasion which had escaped their recollection, have visited the churchyard in question and there seen the tomb as subsequently described. Mrs Dowden is, however, quite convinced that she has not, at any time, visited the said churchyard. She

has a horror of them and always avoids them. Neither is she familiar with the district indicated. The sitter was quite positive, at the time, that the information given was incorrect and that no churchyard without a church existed in that part of London. It seems unlikely, therefore, that he could have conveyed the required information to Mrs Dowden as the result of a forgotten visit though, of course, this possibility must be taken into consideration.

Unconscious telepathy from some person unknown would hardly cover the case. For this would necessitate someone vaguely wandering through the churchyard who, consciously or unconsciously, noted the name and date on a certain tombstone yet was unaware of the search for the burial-place. But allowing for this it seems hardly credible that the information required could have been conveyed by some person unknown to Mrs Dowden just at the moment when she was searching the Ouija Board for the necessary details.

The case mentioned above would seem to dispose of the theory of latent telepathy. Nothing whatsoever was known to those concerned as to the locality of the grave of "Arthur Graham" and the information given through Mrs Dowden related to events of one hundred years ago. Moreover, the hypothetical communicator expressed much diffidence in alluding to her association with "Arthur Graham". She stated that she feared the scandal which was current in her lifetime in connection with the matter. It might be possible, however, to postulate some form of hereditary telepathy as an explanation.

Yours, etc.,

E. B. GIBBES.

[It has unfortunately proved impossible to obtain corroborative details of the above case. ED.]

CONTROLS AND PREMONITION.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—With reference to Mr Trethewy's paper in the January *Journal*, may I suggest two illustrations which, though they may have occurred to others, I have not seen in print? As to the identities of "Imperator" and others, and their inconsistencies, if you ring up Harrods, the reply will be "Harrods speaking": ask for detail and you will learn "Groceries", and (by a disregard of rules) further enquiry might disclose the speaker's name. Now the probability is, that in ten calls, you will be talking to ten separate individuals—yet all using (till pressed) the same "name".

As to premonitions, imagine a trained observer in a balloon viewing a cross-roads with high blind hedges. He sees two cars approaching, and by experience calculates that they will probably collide. Suppose, further, that he "telepaths" to one driver his situation of danger and causes him to slow down half-consciously. Having just escaped accident the driver will attribute his delivery to premonition. In a sense he is right: but no question of predestination arises, since his warning was due wholly to the use of ordinary intellectual prevision though reaching him abnormally. Note that authentic "prophecies" rarely reach far ahead.

Yours, etc.,

B. G. BOUWENS.

REVIEW.

P. THOMAS BRET, *Précis de Métapsychique*. I. *Subconscient et Métapsychisme*. [II. *La Parapsychique*.] 8vo, 2 vols. Paris: J. B. Ballière et Fils, 1927-1930.

In these two volumes and in a third not yet published the author sets out to give a complete account, theoretical and practical, of the science of "metapsychics", *anglice*, psychical research. He opens his first volume, after some introductory remarks, with a discussion on the vocabulary of the subject and a suggested glossary. For some of his proposals he will find difficulty in winning acceptance in this country. For example, Myers's definition of telepathy as "the communication of impressions of any kind from one mind to another independently of the recognised channels of sense" is generally accepted amongst English-speaking writers. Dr Bret wishes to limit its application to a particular class of phenomena typified by apparitions of the dying. Telepathic impressions in general he would describe as "télégnosie" or "métagnosie"; a telepathic link between two persons is a "metadesme".

Dr Bret is open to the general criticism that he overestimates his readers' powers of assimilating new words; a list of some two hundred technical terms, including such unfamiliar combinations of sound as "endométaplasmie" (transfiguration), "ichnognosie" (psychometry), "métallactobare" (supernormal changes of weight), "métaphongue" (supernormal sounds), "métarsisme" (levitation), may give rise to needless confusion and alarm! It is probably a drawback to any science to be too heavily encumbered with "jargon"; it must certainly be a drawback in psychical research, which derives much of its material from ordinary men and women and should strive therefore, so far as possible, to be intelligible to them.

Dr Bret's general classification and theoretical discussion of phenomena is based upon his first main division of the field into "métagnosie", supernormal perception, and "métergie", supernormal action. This implies that mental phenomena will be differently classified according as we assign the responsibility for them to an agent or a percipient; for example, telepathy, in Dr Bret's limited sense, is classified under "metergy", as a form of supernormal agency.

The philosophic theory upon which Dr Bret bases his survey may be summed up as follows: (1) Individual man consists of two elements, a normal or natural element, and a metapsychic or metetheric element, linked to the natural element in some unknown way, and by its interaction with it, frequent in mediums, rare in others, causing every kind of supernormal phenomenon. (2) The metapsychic element of our individuality existed before the natural element and will continue to exist after it. (3) Force and matter are two forms of the same thing. The difference between a supernormal mental image and an ectoplasmic materialisation is one of degree only.

To survival of death and communication with the dead as spiritualists and some others understand these terms, Dr Bret will have little to say, although he admits that certain "metapsychic remnants" may prolong their *post-mortem* activity for a time.

If, as some will think, Dr Bret is too ready to cut the knot of certain psychical problems which do not happen to fit his theory, as witness his references to Mrs Piper (i. 138, ii. 163), he may seem on the other hand too favourable to the claims of such phenomena as he feels himself able to explain, that is, the whole range of supernormal physical phenomena, including spirit-photography and full-form materialisations: he instances the pithecanthropus alleged to have been observed at a sitting with Kluski, and speaks well of Eglington (*sic*) and Mirabelli. The tendency to theorise on insufficiently established data has always been a danger in psychical research.

But even those to whom many of Dr Bret's conclusions are unacceptable, may find much to interest them in these two, mainly theoretical, volumes; the third volume, still unpublished, which is to contain a detailed examination of observed phenomena, is likely to be the most interesting to psychical research.

H. DE G. S.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, July 1931.

Dr Bernoulli and Herr E. K. Müller print a paper entitled "A new investigation of the properties of teleplasma", being an extract from the protocol of an "experimental *séance*" on 10 February 1931, and a statement of Herr Müller on his observations. Several enlarged photographs are appended.

Dr Kindborg of Breslau has a long paper on the Oppau *Spuk*, which he investigated personally and in whose genuineness he firmly believes. The phenomena appear to have consisted exclusively of rappings (barring a rather doubtful case of "direct" writing).

Professor Ludwig describes a very striking case of an apparition of a person recently deceased from the reminiscences of Don Bosco, the founder of the Salesian order (died in 1888, beatified by the Roman Catholic Church in 1929). The apparition was of a very unusual nature, was, it seems, perceived by many persons, and bore, from the religious standpoint, a thoroughly orthodox character, Ruigi Comollo's voice repeating three times the words: "Bosco, Bosco, Bosco, I am saved!" Prof. Ludwig thinks it however worth while to discuss at some length (and to discard) the hypothesis of a practical joke.

The Baroness Margit Veszi-Mantica narrates a case of spontaneous phenomena (heavy blows) occurring at Dunavarsany (Hungary) in 1908. Dr Lipschitz insists on the necessity of "teleplasmic nebulae" being submitted to spectral analysis! He is good enough to admit incidentally that such an experiment may well succeed but once in a hundred years (p. 345). Herr Wratnik narrates a case of a fire of an "occult" nature occurring in the presence of Hilda Zwieselbauer, for which fire he unhesitatingly makes an cvil (unseen) entity, by the name of Joscht, responsible.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, August 1931.

As was to be expected, Stanislaw P., who was thoroughly exposed at the *Institut Métapsychique* last year, has found defenders. In the present number of the *Zeitschrift* Dr Schwab undertakes to show that she has genuine mediumistic power: an old story which we have witnessed *ad nauseam* since modern spiritualism began.

Herr Hans Schubert describes some thoroughly non-evidential *séances* held in a castle reputed to be haunted. Herr Günther-Schwercin discusses *Spuk* and materialisation. Reference is made to a curious hypothesis put forward by a Professor Danmar according to which ghosts avail themselves when manifesting in places where there is no living medium of a particular substance accumulated there called by Danmar *medialum*. If the house is repaired, the

“stocks” of this *medialum* are accidentally destroyed and the phenomena cease!

Dr Bernoulli has a short paper on a lecture delivered at Zurich on “Occultism and Conjuring” by the conjurer Ottokar Fiseher. No attempts at duplicating “mediumistic” phenomena were made, but some of Herr Fischer’s statements appear to have been interesting, *e.g.* when *à propos* of Eleonora Zugun, he accused of collusion a lady closely connected with Eleonora. He also stated that the “phenomena” of Kordon-Veri are due to collusion.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, September 1931.

Dr Mattiesen prints the first instalment of a paper whose purpose is to put forward a new and hitherto, he thinks, a neglected argument in favour of the spiritistie hypothesis: the experiences of those who have felt themselves “out of the body”. Altogether 42 cases are quoted, of which several were published in our *Proceedings*.

Professor Blacher discusses the “Principles of parapsychical research”. His standpoint is, as we know, ultra-positive. In passing he informs us in a footnote that he views Mr Besterman with intense indignation!

Herr Kühnaupt, of Berlin, narrates at secondhand an interesting instance of what may have been a collective visual hallucination, though it is difficult to feel quite certain that the supposed ghost may not have been a real person after all.

Herr Haslinger has a few lines on the “front” which, he thinks, is forming itself in various countries against the “negativism” of a certain group in the S.P.R. Dr Konstantinides, of Athens, defends Dr Tanagras’s “psychoboulic” theory of premonition against some ironical remarks in a recent number of the *Revue Métapsychique*.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, October 1931.

The “ectoplasmic” threads which several years ago enjoyed a transitory notoriety occupy in the present number a prominent place owing to Mme Ideler, whose performances in this respect are described by Prof. Blacher. On two photographs we see the medium “levitating” in this way a small object (hands held on both sides of the object of course).

From Herr Josef Sell’s paper on “Parapsychological emanation and infra-red rays” it appears that the medium O. Sch. is again being experimented with. In a footnote the Editor informs us that the medium with whom sittings were recently held at Zurich by Dr Bernoulli “seems” also to have been O. Sch. The fact is significant seeing that this gentleman is identical with a medium once investigated by the late Dr von Schrenck-Notzing and then dropped because detected in trickery.

A judge, *Obergerichsrat* Ingruber, has a paper (favourable) on Frau Maria Silbert. In the *Kleine Mitteilungen*, Herren Haslinger and D. Walter decline henceforward, in view of some recent experiences, to introduce investigators to that medium. Dr Zenker narrates various "spontaneous" incidents savouring of *Spuk* out of his own and other people's experiences. Among them figures a guitar alleged to have been moved without contact at a sitting with "Miss" (?) [Annie] Eva Fay!

Mr Florizel von Reuter reproduces an interesting account of a *Spuk* case alleged to have happened at Dortmund in 1713, which account appeared in a Dortmund newspaper in 1926 and is stated to have been taken from a pamphlet by Dr Gerstmann (the chief witness) printed in 1714. Dr Mattiesen brings to a close his paper begun in the September number. An extract is quoted at the end from a letter of Professor Hans Drieseh's who says that to him too it seems beyond doubt that such "excursions" support very strongly the spiritistic theory. Our late President seems however to have a slight doubt as to the reality of the alleged facts.

"Superrealism and Parapsychology" is the subject of a paper by Dr Servadio. In *Kleine Mitteilungen* Countess Wassilko-Sereeki protests against some assertions made recently at Zurich at a lecture by Herr Ottokar Fiseher, a Vienna conjurer, as to the part played by her at a sitting of Eleonora Zugun, the Rumanian peasant girl "medium".

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, November 1931.

Dr Carl Bruek has a paper entitled "Sensitive or Medium" and reproducing *verbatim* statements made in Berlin in 1928 at a sitting of a "scientific character" by the Rev. Arthur Ford. Dr Bruek seems fully convinced that Mr Ford possesses truly telepathic and clairvoyant (or rather clairaudient) powers, as to which opinions will widely differ.

Dr Simsa, a Prague physician, describes some sittings for physical phenomena of an extraordinary kind held recently at Prague-Branik, with a "medium" named Wolf, aged 25. The "phenomena" had been of a spontaneous character at first (stone-throwings, etc.). Dr Simsa admits that the control used at his sittings "was not sufficient for strictly scientific purposes", and that "our experiments were not meant for all sceptics" (p. 532). These experiments are to be continued.

Dr Gerda Walther has a paper (first instalment) on spontaneous physical phenomena in England, dealing chiefly with observations of the late Mr and Mrs MacKenzie, of the British College for Psychic Science.

In *Kleine Mitteilungen* we are informed of the decease at Nürn-

berg, at the age of 60, of Dr Joseph Böhm, whom the Editor styles "a pioneer in the sphere of parapsychology". Prof. Blacher informs us that his sittings with the medium Mme Ideler have been provisionally interrupted owing to the "incompetent, *unkollegial* and especially inopportune intervention" of a Herr E. K. It is very unfortunate that the learned Professor should not express himself more clearly: as they are, his words lay themselves open, alas, to a rather sinister interpretation.

Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie, December 1931.

This number opens with a description by Dr Carl Vogt of some of Kordon-Veri's card "phenomena" witnessed by him at Graz in May. The article should be read in conjunction with a note by Dr Schröder entitled "Occultism and Conjuring" and printed in the October number of the *Zeitschrift für metapsychische Forschung*. From it it follows that Herr Ottokar Fischer, a Vienna conjurer, has expressed himself in a manner quite unfavourable to the genuineness of these performances, though this circumstance has of course failed to convince Dr Schröder, by whom the Kordon-Veri card "phenomena" were filmed, it appears. The discussion is likely to go on.

Dr Simsa brings to a close (provisionally) his paper on the Prague-Branik sittings and physical "phenomena". A curious—if sinister and unfortunate—feature of the latter was the wholesale killing of some sixty chickens and ducklings, which killing Dr Simsa "much suspects" to have been of "occult origin"! It is earnestly to be hoped that these awful Branik "manifestations" will remain unique in this respect.

Dr Gerda Walther brings to a close her paper on spontaneous physical phenomena in England—in which country Iceland is this time included. Prof. Ludwig Jahn has a paper on various occurrences supposed to have been supernormal which took place in 1930 in a village near Cologne.

P.-P.-S.

THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE
CIRCULATION.

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on a definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only." The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

ON

WEDNESDAY, 27 April 1932, at 5.30 p.m.

WHEN A PAPER ON

“THE RELATION BETWEEN PARAPSYCHICAL
AND PARAPHYSICAL PHENOMENA”

WILL BE READ BY

MR W. H. SALTER

N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.

NEW MEMBERS.

*(Elected 10 February 1932.)***Van Deren, H. S.**, Hume-Fogg Building, Nashville, Tenn., U.S.A.**Vesme, César B. de**, 3 Rue Laeretelle Prolongée, Paris, France.*(Elected 24 February 1932.)***De Lara, Madame A. S.**, 5 Hook Heath, Woking, Surrey.**Grosvenor, The Hon. Mrs Norman**, 2 Upper Grosvenor Street,
London, W. 1.

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 291st Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 10 February 1932, at 3.15 p.m., SIR LAWRENCE J. JONES, BART., in the Chair. There were also present: Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Lord Charles Hope, The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttleton, G.B.E., and Mr W. H. Salter; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Two new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

THE 292nd Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 24 February 1932, at 2.45 p.m., SIR OLIVER LODGE in the Chair. There were also present: Mr L. S. Fletcher, Lord Charles Hope, Sir Lawrence J. Jones, Bart., Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, and Mrs Henry Sidgwick; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Two new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

THE 293rd Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 24 February 1932, after the Annual General Meeting, SIR OLIVER LODGE in the Chair. There were also present: Mr L. S. Fletcher, Lord Charles Hope, Sir Lawrence J. Jones, Bart., Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, and Mrs Henry Sidgwick; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor; and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

Mrs Henry Sidgwick was elected President of Honour of the Society, and Sir Oliver Lodge was elected President, for the year 1932.

Mr W. H. Salter was re-elected Hon. Secretary : Mr Lancelot S. Fletcher, Hon. Treasurer : and Mrs W. H. Salter, Hon. Editor.

Committees were elected as follows :

Committee of Reference and Publication : The Earl of Balfour, Dr C. D. Broad, Sir Oliver Lodge, Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr J. G. Piddington, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs Henry Sidgwick, and Mr W. Whately Smith.

House and Finance Committee : Mr Lancelot S. Fletcher, Miss Ina Jephson, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, and Mr Sydney C. Scott.

Corresponding Members and Honorary Associates were elected for the year 1932 as follows :

Corresponding Members : Professor Henri Bergson, President Nicholas M. Butler, Dr Max Dessoir, Professor Dr S. Freud, Professor Pierre Janet, Dr C. G. Jung, Count Carl von Klinckowstroem, Maurice Maeterlinek, Professor T. K. Oesterreich, Dr Eugène Osty, Dr Walter F. Prince, Professor Charles Riehet, Dr Rudolph Tischner.

Honorary Associates : Miss H. A. Dallas, Dr Frederik van Eeden, Rev. A. T. Fryer, David Gow, J. Arthur Hill, Professor J. H. Muirhead, Professor Charles Sage, Miss F. Melian Stawell, Dr A. Tanagras.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE SOCIETY'S JUBILEE.

IT has been decided to hold the celebration of our Jubilee at the end of June and the beginning of July, this being the time of year most likely to be convenient to the greatest number of our Members.

The provisional programme is as follows :

29 June, 5 p.m. Presidential Address by Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S., D.Sc.

30 June, 9 p.m. Reception by the President and Council.

4 July, 3 p.m. Address on the History of the Society by Mrs Henry Sidgwick, D.Litt., LL.D., President of Honour.

Will all Members kindly make a note of these dates? Further particulars will be announced in the May *Journal*.

DONATIONS FOR THE SOCIETY'S JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS.

Mrs F. W. H. Myers	-	-	£25	0	0
Anonymous	-	-	20	0	0
Sir Lawrence J. Jones, Bart.	-	-	10	0	0
Sir Oliver Lodge	-	-	10	0	0
			£65	0	0

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

THE Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 24 February 1932, at 3.30 p.m., SIR OLIVER LODGE in the Chair.

The following Members were also present: Lady Diekinson Berry, Mr Theodore Besterman, Mrs Theodore Besterman, Miss Carruthers, Mr E. J. Dingwall, Mr J. R. K. Duff, Mrs C. B. Fernald, Mr J. W. Findlater, Mr J. Arthur Findlay, Miss Fleming, Mr L. S. Fletcher, Mrs Goldney, Lieut.-Col. H. F. Grant-Suttie, Lord Charles Hope, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Mrs Kingsley, Mrs Leaning, Dr T. W. Mitchell, Miss Isabel Newton, Mr I. B. Nieholl, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mrs Henry Sidgwick, Mr W. S. Montgomery Smith, Mr A. H. Strawson, Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, Mr A. W. Trethewy, Mr A. M. D. Turnbull, Mrs Vateher, Miss Margaret Wallace, Mr M. West, and Mr S. R. W. Wilson.

The Secretary having read the notice convening the Meeting, the Chairman observed that as the Report of the Council had already been printed in the February *Journal* there was no need to read it over again. He wished to draw attention to the paragraph (February *Journal*, p. 196) beginning "It is possible that the Society . . ."

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr L. S. Fletcher, presented his financial statement with the remark that it was not a very cheerful occasion for any one to take on the Hon. Treasurership. The Society had been suffering from the economic strain, like other similar Societies, particularly those dependent on voluntary subscriptions. He referred to the Special Committee appointed towards the end of 1931 to advise as to what should be done to make both ends meet, and to the economies which had been carried out in consequence. One of the largest items of expenditure was the printing bill, and the Council had very reluctantly decided that it would be necessary to make a cut of £30 under this head. He was glad, however, to be able to announce that he had received from an anonymous source an offer of a contribution of the amount of the cut.

Mr Fletcher also referred to the Jubilee celebrations which it was proposed to hold in the course of the year. Some expenditure would be necessary on these celebrations, and he had received from the same source a promise of £20 towards the extra cost which the Society would incur in regard thereto. He hoped he would not be going beyond the functions of an Hon. Treasurer in saying that perhaps other members would like to follow this example.

A discussion followed in which the following Members took part: Dr E. J. Dingwall, Mr L. S. Fletcher, Mrs Goldney, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr A. H. Strawson, and Mr M. West.

Mr Findlay moved a vote of thanks to Mr Salter, the retiring Hon. Treasurer, for his services, and this was carried.

The Chairman announced that there were no candidates for election to membership of the Council other than the six members who retired by rotation, and he declared those six members re-elected accordingly. Their names are : Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., F.R.S., Professor E. R. Dodds, Mr L. S. Fletcher, Miss Ina Jephson, Dr F. C. S. Schiller, and Dr Maurice B. Wright.

Messrs Hartleys, Wilkins, Avery and Flew were re-elected Auditors for the forthcoming year.

PRIVATE MEETING

THE 112th Private Meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday, 24 February 1932, at 5.30 p.m., SIR OLIVER LODGE in the Chair.

MR THEODORE BESTERMAN read a paper entitled "The Psychology of Testimony in Relation to Paraphysical Phenomena," which will be published in Part 124 of *Proceedings*.

A discussion followed in which the Chairman, Sir Lawrence Jones, Miss Macklin, Dr E. J. Dingwall, the Rev. J. W. Hayes, and Mrs Baggally took part.

AN EXPERIMENT IN LONG-DISTANCE TELEPATHY.

FOR some years Dr A. Tanagras, an Hon. Associate of the Society and President of the Hellenic Society for Psychical Research, has been conducting experiments in long-distance telepathy between a group in Athens and groups in Paris, Vienna, Berlin, and other places. In 1931 he was good enough to invite me to co-operate with him in such an experiment between his group and one to be formed in London, an invitation I was of course very glad to accept.

The two groups met at the same time, allowing for the difference in longitude. One group then attempted for five minutes to transmit an object telepathically to the other group, the process being repeated after an interval of five minutes. Two objects having been transmitted in this way the group now acted as percipient, two objects being transmitted in the same way by the other group. The objects chosen for transmission and the impressions received were recorded in duplicate by each group, one copy being put in the post to the other group as soon as possible after each sitting. In the present experiment each of the objects available for transmission was numbered, and a set of corresponding numbers was chosen from at random, the number being then replaced, so that the whole series was available each time.

In these experiments conducted by Dr Tanagras there had

hitherto been no limit to the range of objects chosen for transmission. This method is open to various objections, amongst them the difficulty of evaluating the results. On the other hand, I was anxious to avoid going to the other extreme and using numbers or playing-cards. I therefore suggested, as providing a means of making the results susceptible to statistical evaluation without losing the emotional element, that twenty subjects of quasi-universal appeal be chosen and that one of these twenty be transmitted each time by each group. To this Dr Tanagras agreed, and I therefore put together a set of postcards representing the following subjects: the Crucifixion, the Virgin and Child, the Prince of Wales, Julius Caesar, Napoleon, Nefert-iti, a mummy, an elephant, a horse, snakes, a butterfly, the Houses of Parliament (London), St Paul's Cathedral, an aeroplane, a railway engine and train, a steamer, a plate, a vase, and a chair, together, for control purposes, with a blank card. A duplicate set was sent to Dr Tanagras. Some of the cards were in colours, with a view to testing their relative efficacy in the event of a successful experiment.

Each group sat twelve times, between 5 November 1931 and 11 February 1932. The London group consisted of thirteen sitters and the Athens group of twenty-five sitters, a total of thirty-eight. The members of the London group put in 93 attendances and those of the Athens group 118 attendances, a total of 211. The number of guesses recorded was 226 by the London group and 448 by the Athens group (the members of which usually made several attempts for each object), a total of 674 guesses. The probability of obtaining a hit by chance alone being one in twenty, the successes obtained by the London group should have numbered 11.3, by the Athens group 22.4, or 33.7 in all. The actual hits obtained, on the most liberal estimate, were respectively 12, 17, and 29.

Thus the experiment unfortunately failed to produce any direct evidence of telepathy, and an analysis for deferred impressions was equally unsuccessful.

TH. B.

CORRESPONDENCE.

METHODS IN EXPERIMENTAL TELEPATHY.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—The courteous remarks of M. Warecollier which appeared in the February number of the *Journal* and Prof. Gardner Murphy's very interesting contribution to the same issue, call for some reply from me. I will first deal with M. Warecollier's letter. The choice of the "eobra" illustration I admit was an unfortunate one, though when I picked it out I was perfectly aware that the percipient had,

in addition to getting an impression of exotic birds and climbing plants, actually sensed a reptile. The example was not intended as a specific case for criticism but was merely cited as an illustration of the kind of thing I had in mind when I said that capital letters, etc., do "not permit of the experimenters claiming equivocal successes on the score that an associated idea has emerged in the mind of the percipient."

I still maintain, however, that when one experiments with "free" material a very wide connotation can be given to the word "success." For instance, on 28 March 1926 one of Warcollier's agents concentrated on a picture of one of H. G. Wells's Martians showing a pair of big eyes in an enormous head, and a bunch of tentacles (*Revue Métapsychique* [1927], p. 359). The percipient *draws* a fountain with four jets and *thinks* of a diver. M. Warcollier interprets the four jets of the fountain as a successful attempt at the tentacles, and remarks that there is an extraordinary resemblance between the head of the Martian and the head of a diver in his helmet. But is this really good enough? Personally it leaves me unconvinced. If for instance the percipient had drawn an onion with its roots hanging down I should have been much more impressed. I have recently been looking through all Warcollier's published sketches and I do not think I have found a single pair of drawings of which I could say with any conviction, "Here is a coincidence so exact in its numerous details that it is absolutely beyond chance." At most I have been able to say, "This is suggestive," or "This is interesting."

I do not quite see the point of M. Warcollier's illustration of the man firing at a target. If, for example, it was true that in a long series one tires, so that the first two or three shots were much better than the rest, a statistical series would, if carried out for a sufficient number of days, infallibly demonstrate the superiority of the early shots. What the marksman himself thinks as the result of a single trial is of no importance.

I am quite ready to agree with Prof. Murphy that Warcollier's experiments are voluminous, but I can scarcely admit that the published successes are voluminous. Let us take, for instance, one of M. Warcollier's longest reports, that of the work of his group in the year 1925 (see Institut Métapsychique, *Les Conférences en 1926*, pp. 36-51). Including four successes which are described in the *Revue Métapsychique* (1927), pp. 359, 362 and 369, and the American experiments for 1925, we have in all about 36 published successes for the year 1925. There may, of course, have been others, but these are all that M. Warcollier has thought fit to describe. These successes are shared among at least nine percipients. It is true, however, as Prof. Murphy states, that one or two of the percipients

(in this case M. Wareollier himself and M. Du.) seem to get an undue share of the successes. But what the true interpretation of this fact may be I am not clear. It might conceivably be explained on the supposition that these two percipients were more active than the rest of the group and managed to put in a bigger average of experiments per evening. It might even be because they attended the weekly sittings more regularly than the others. M. Wareollier simply does not provide us with the information we require in order to form a conclusion. In this report, as in many others, we are not even told who was present on any particular evening. We are not told the number of experiments done by each person. For the most part we are not even given the exact times at which the agents concentrated on their objects or the intervals between the recording of the successful impression and the time at which the agent concentrated.

Again, my own statistical experiments with large groups have definitely convinced me that in guessing at *free material* percipients who on an average make 3-4 shots per experiment do at the end of 20 or 25 experiments score an appreciably larger number of successful hits than those who average only 1-2 shots per experiment. In my experiments with the Wareollier group a single person would sometimes record as many as five distinct drawings in his attempts to guess the object shown. These are factors which have to be taken into account before one can decide that the uneven distribution of Wareollier's successes is due to superior telepathic power on the part of certain percipients.

Prof. Murphy has asked for references to experiments in which Wareollier's percipients have failed with playing-cards, numbers, capital letters, etc. There are references to experiments with playing-cards in Wareollier's book *La Télépathie Expérimentale* (1921). Though M. Wareollier appears to think that some of these experiments or card games were successful, on the evidence presented I can only conclude that they were probably negative. For instance, on p. 174, he mentions an experiment with playing-cards in which the chance of success was 1 in 13. In a series of 260 trials he tells us that 24 successes were obtained, which he interprets as a positive deviation of 20% from the chance expectation (20). But this positive deviation (4) is even less than the standard deviation (4.3) and can signify absolutely nothing. It is true that M. Wareollier goes on to say that he has *always* obtained a positive deviation with this game, but what is the precise meaning to be attached here to the terms "always"? It is of course normally an even chance whether the deviation from the expected number is positive or negative, and no one ought to be excessively surprised if a run of five or six positive deviations should occur from time to

time. For instance, if one does the game five times the chance expectation that all five trials will give positive deviations is 1 in 2^5 or 1 in 32, for six games 1 in 2^6 , and so on.

A series of seven or eight experiments with letters of the alphabet carried out at a distance of some hundred miles, in which M. de Sainville was agent and M. Warcollier the percipient, is described in the Institut's *Conférences en 1928*, pp. 298-302. Not one of these eight letters was guessed correctly, though it is to be noted that a considerable number of partial successes are claimed with free material in this same series.

As regards experiments with numbers I do not find very many in M. Warcollier's published work, but a certain number of experiments with three-figure numbers were undertaken by Warcollier's percipients in connection with my own group, though without success.

Prof. Murphy seems to be begging the question when in the concluding paragraph of his letter he says that he does not think "that the failure of other experimenters to obtain results which are supernormal when using methods similar to those of M. Warcollier can be regarded as weighty unless it can be established that the percipients used in the two series of experiments are equally endowed." If, for instance, I were to estimate the endowment of Warcollier's percipients on the basis of their two years' work with my own group I should be compelled to conclude that this endowment was very slight indeed. If on the other hand I were to judge the endowment of my own group of 600 by the letters in which they recorded their previous spontaneous experiences, I should be tempted to believe that at least a hundred of them constituted the psychic cream of the country.

In *Les Conférences en 1926*, p. 37, M. Warcollier tells us how he formed his group. He made an appeal to a selected public of about 500 persons in the year 1922. From these 500 he obtained 50 accounts of supernormal experiences. Twenty of these fifty persons agreed to take part in regular experiments.

Now all this seems very remarkable when compared with my own experience. Through a broadcast appeal I obtained not 20 but 350 cases of people who claimed to have had supernormal experiences and who agreed to take part in regular experiments. Yet it seems that with eighteen times as many "psychics" I was unable to find a single one who was really able to convince me in the subsequent tests that he or she possessed genuine telepathic powers. But out of a small group of twenty Warcollier seems to have been able to find at least six or seven genuine percipients! Frankly, I am sceptical, and the absence of any real control experiments and of adequate accounts of experimental details makes me search for the

secret of Warcollier's coincidences in other possible factors than the operation of telepathy. Of M. Warcollier's honesty of purpose and sincerity there can be no question, and no one who has had the privilege of knowing him personally could ever doubt it. Nor do I think it possible for anyone to *prove* that the best individual coincidences that he cites are *not* examples of telepathy. At the same time I believe that the factor of selection of favourable cases is far more important than Prof. Murphy believes it to be. My own work has convinced me that with free material if one goes on long enough one does now and then note a remarkable success and occasionally an impression is recorded by some percipient, which, while it does not fit the actual objects gazed on by the agents, would yet count as a notable success if it had only been recorded a fortnight earlier or a fortnight later. And is it really necessary to possess the unlimited time and untiring energy of typewriting monkeys in order to pile up the few hundred coincidences that M. Warcollier has recorded in his published work since 1921? I cannot help thinking that Prof. Murphy has rather exaggerated the actual amount of success obtained by Warcollier.

But I freely admit that the case puzzles me. I feel that if I could have been present at a few of the actual meetings of this group and studied the exact procedure I could soon make up my mind as to the part played by coincidence, psychic parallelism, multiple guesses, verbal amplification of impressions after drawings have been compared (if this ever happens), etc. But under the circumstances, while agreeing with Prof. Murphy that Warcollier has a real case that cannot be demolished offhand, however much his methods of presenting his reports may be criticised, I feel unable to come to any definite conclusion.

Prof. Murphy raises one other interesting point with regard to his own method of calculating coincidences (p. 210). In the case where a number of different objects are used in succession, even if they differ from one another as much as teapots and lions, is it really safe to assume that the operations of guessing at two classes of objects in succession are independent events? Let us assume for example that the percipients are told that the first object is one of ten animals whose names are given and that the second object is one of ten flowers whose names are also given. In order to find a chance expectation of a percipient getting *both* objects right I doubt very much if it would be correct merely to find the *empirical* probabilities of each separately and combine them by multiplication. For by doing so one is assuming that a person who thinks of a lion say for his first guess is as likely to guess any particular one of the ten flowers as a person whose first guess was a sheep. Now it may easily be that those who guess lions will tend to choose as their

second guess a yellow flower and those who guess sheep a white flower. Hence serious errors might arise—especially with large numbers of percipients—if one merely multiplied the *empirical* probability factors obtained from each experiment separately. And this may be true to a greater or less degree of all classes of objects.

In the B.B.C. experiment for instance, there were two playing-cards thought of by the agents. The first card resulted in about 56% of red guesses while in the second experiment the percentage of red guesses fell to 53%. This fluctuation in the popularity of red is far too great to be a mere chance variation. The first card shown was actually a black card and the second a red one, and here it would lead to serious error if one said that the probable number of people who ought to get the colour of both cards correct is $N \times .44 \times .53$, where N is the number of percipients (supposed the same in both experiments).

Yours, etc.,

S. G. SOAL.

IS PROOF OF SURVIVAL POSSIBLE?

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—May I trespass on your space to reply briefly to the points raised in the two interesting letters appearing in your last issue? Mr Thomas thinks that it would have been more fruitful to have analysed concrete cases. I agree; in fact, I intended to do so but found that any adequate analysis would have expanded the paper to an inordinate length.

The question of the limit to be assigned to the duration of latency is a peculiarly difficult one: we have so little data to go upon. If the deferred impression be a centrally originated hallucination, then exteriorisation of a subconscious memory might account for it and latency might extend almost indefinitely. If, on the other hand, the hallucination is provoked by some external cause, it is difficult to see how it comes to be deferred at all. Does the provoking cause remain in operation until it produces its effect—does it, as it were, continue knocking at the door until it is opened? Or if the effect on the recipient be produced immediately and passage from the subliminal to the supraliminal be deferred, where, if not in the subconscience memory, is the impressed stored? This seems to me to be another example of the difficulty which is so often encountered in psychical research of estimating the probability of various alternatives, and confirms me in the opinion that acceptance of any hypothesis is, in most cases, governed by individual idiosyncrasy.

Concerning expectation as a contributory cause of hallucination, I agree that by itself expectation may prove a hindrance rather than a help, but if the subject be in a highly suggestible state I think that vivid expectation may provoke hallucination indirectly by means of auto-suggestion.

Miss Gibbes is good enough to ask my opinion on a case reported in *Light*. I agree that it is extremely unlikely that Mrs Dowden should have preserved a subconscient knowledge of the location of the tomb derived from unconscious observation on the spot. It is, of course, possible that the sitter might have possessed the knowledge normally and forgotten that he had done so. There is, however, no evidence to show that this was the case, and it is a perfectly gratuitous supposition.

I think also that unconscious telepathy from some unknown person is, though theoretically possible, extremely unlikely, as the requisite linkage is so very complex and indirect. The hypothesis of clairvoyance seems even less acceptable: we can hardly suppose that Mrs Dowden would clairvoyantly search all the graveyards in London for a particular tomb.

Presumably the writer of the letter handed to Mrs Dowden was aware at some time during her lifetime of the place where *Arthur Graham* was buried, though there is no information on this point. However, assuming this, the supposition would be that, by means of the letter, the mind of the medium made contact with the surviving consciousness of the writer and derived the information therefrom. The part played by the letter is very mysterious. Personally I cannot accept as plausible the theory that an inanimate object sends out an emanation or radiation which gives information concerning persons who owned, handled or otherwise were connected with it in the past. If one postulates radiation some account must be given of its nature. Are the rays a stream of particles? If so what are these particles? Or are they waves, and if so in what medium and of what wavelength? And anyhow, how can an emanation or radiation convey information except by means of a code of symbols, such as Morse? And finally, can we suppose that this activity can continue for a hundred years as in this case? I suggested in my report on the Warren Elliott sittings a possible explanation based on a modification of the temporal conditions governing the subconscient mind of the medium. I must leave it to others to judge whether it is plausible and, if so, whether it is applicable to this case; personally I am inclined to think that the hundred years involved stretched the theory almost too far.

As the result of these considerations I am disposed to the opinion that this case, if the evidence is otherwise satisfactory, which, as I gather from the Editor's note, appears somewhat doubtful, gives

considerable support to the spiritistic hypothesis. There are alternatives but, to my mind, they are less plausible, though others may assess the probabilities differently. Yours, etc.,

H. F. SALTMARSH.

REVIEWS.

FREDERICK H. HAINES, *Nothing but the Truth : the Confessions of a Medium*. 8vo, pp. 322. Watford : The Pure Thought Press, 1931. Price 7s. 6d. net.

JOSEPH F. SNIPES, *Fifty Years in Psychic Research : a Remarkable Record of Phenomenal Facts*. 4to, pp. 483. Boston : Chapple Publishing Company, 1927. Price \$4.

In his early days Mr Haines was a rationalist ; in middle life he went to church, but without enthusiasm ; then he became interested in spiritualism, had good sittings with several well-known London mediums, developed automatic writing and trance, and reached full conviction that he received messages from his son who was killed in the war, also from friends and from high spirits who lived on earth long ago. The investigations were begun in a spirit of scepticism, and were conducted carefully ; Mr Haines took a stenographer, and had full notes taken ; he was careful not to give away information, and he studied the records in critical fashion, wishful only to get at the truth. The results seem to contain much that was supernormal, and some of them can hardly be accounted for by telepathy from the sitter.

In the exercise of his own psychic powers, a prominent feature was the finding of lost objects by the help of impressions or automatic writing ; and one at least of these seems to go beyond subliminal perception and memory, being apparently a case of true clairvoyance if we are to avoid the supposition of help from incarnate minds. As to the communicators who are of remote time, there can be no evidence of identity and the reader can form his own opinion ; they and their teachings are of the Vale Owen kind, and edification rather than evidence is their aim. The book is clearly an honest record ; the writer is a retired business man and would not claim that his book is a literary production of high order—there are many slips in grammar and the like—but he does give the impression of having tried to give an exact account of his experiences. And his interpretation of those experiences is reasonable enough. It is to be noted that he is aware of the various alternative hypotheses, and he maintains a critical attitude, not only to the sceptical explanations but also to some of the activities of spiritualism. The book has value as a psychological study of a medium's mind from within.

Mr Snipes's book is of the same character, but is more discursive and less evidential. The author has visited many mediums, and he and his wife developed psychic powers. The evidence, such as it is, is not given in scientific fashion, and large areas of the book are occupied with ostensible communications from Henry Ward Beecher, Horace Greeley, Thomas Paine, and other famous people: there is much repetition, and the matter is mainly of a sermonising but unimpressive character. Mr Snipes says he has seen table levitations without contact, and received what seemed to him evidential slate-writing with Slade; but the accounts are casual and chatty, not full notes made at the time. J. A. H.

J. ARTHUR FINDLAY, *On the Edge of the Etheric*. 8vo, pp. 177. London: Rider and Co., 1931. Price 3s. 6d. net.

The etheric theory of the survival of human personality is so widely held that a book giving fully and clearly what that theory implies is sure to be of interest to our members. In 1924 Mr Findlay, a member of our Society, published a small book containing a summary of his experiences with the Glasgow medium, John C. Sloan, with an introduction by Sir William Barrett: the present book contains a much fuller report of Mr Findlay's sittings with that medium. A large part of the book is devoted to explanations given through the medium of the etheric theory of survival and of the *modus operandi* of communication, together with comments by Mr Findlay in which he claims that this theory is in harmony with recent discoveries in physics. Mr Findlay himself emphasizes the fact that the theories of the physicists are continually changing, and it is to be hoped that the physicists will not be so inconsiderate as to produce new theories which will not harmonise with mediumistic explanations. This part of the book, although of considerable interest, can hardly be considered evidential.

In chapters VII, VIII and IX, however, Mr Findlay gives an account of several incidents which he claims as not only supernatural, but as incapable of explanation by any hypothesis except that of survival. Unfortunately, however, the cases are not reported in conformity with the standards followed by our Society. For instance, the striking case of "Eric Saunders" (the first of the evidential cases quoted by Mr Findlay) suffers from the fact that we are not given firsthand statements from Mr Findlay's brother, to whom the communication was given, nor from the man through whom the correctness of the communication was subsequently verified. It cannot be too often impressed on writers of books on psychical research that good cases gain enormously by being recorded in the way that cases are recorded in our *Proceedings* and *Journal*.

W. H. SALTER.

CAESAR DE VESME, *A History of Experimental Spiritualism*. Vol. i. *Primitive Man*. Translated by Stanley de Brath. [Vol. ii, *Peoples of Antiquity*. Translated by Fred Rothwell]. 8vo, 2 vols. London: Rider and Co., 1931. Price 10s. 6d. net each volume.

A comprehensive work treating of the supernormal beliefs of mankind in all ages and parts of the world was badly needed. It could only be attempted as the result of a lifetime of study devoted to the subject. This M. de Vesme has given it, and the progress of the work will be watched with sympathetic interest.

The French title of the book is *Histoire du Spiritualisme expérimental*, and the first volume appeared in 1928. The two volumes before us are a translation of about two-thirds of the first French volume. It will thus be seen that, when completed, the work will be on a very large scale, and it should occupy an important place in the literature of psychical research. In a note to the English edition the author explains that he is using "Spiritualism" in its most extended sense, and that "experimental" is to be given a wider meaning than it usually bears in English, and should be taken as including the results of observation as well as experiment.

The principal thesis of the first volume is that belief in spirits, and religious ideas generally, did not originate, as supposed by anthropologists, in the misinterpretation of natural (*i.e.* "normal") phenomena, but that they are based on the observation of supernormal phenomena, and on correct inferences drawn therefrom. This interesting hypothesis is supported by a wealth of instances, the *Journal* and *Proceedings* of the S.P.R. being quoted with gratifying frequency, and by ingenious arguments. Unfortunately not all the authorities quoted are of the highest standing.

In the second volume M. de Vesme modestly disclaims any attempt to produce an "erudite" book, and it would of course have been impossible to explain in detail the beliefs of persons belonging to so many civilisations, from Egypt to Peru, without making the book unwieldy. M. de Vesme is however to be congratulated on having in both volumes covered so much ground, and on having brought together so much material of interest to the student of our subject.

The translation of the second volume leaves a good deal to be desired, and there are numerous mistakes in names and in classical words: *e.g.* the Egyptologist "Flinders," Epiphanus, Naupakton, neknia (several times), Serapeums. An important passage of the *Odyssey* (xi. 219-222) is translated (p. 138) in such a way as to be barely recognisable. It is to be hoped that blemishes of this kind will be avoided in the translations of the rest of the work, for the successful completion of which we offer M. de Vesme our best wishes.

W. H. S.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Zeitschrift für metapsychische Forschung, June and July 1931.

Count Rehbinder brings to a close his study of wills-o'-the-wisp. He adduces interesting and somewhat puzzling incidents from his own experience. Baron Dr von Winterstein discusses "Chance coincidence and destiny". Dr Kuchynka has a paper on autoscopy (the seeing of oneself), a "phenomenon" which does not seem to me to be of peculiar interest, so far as there is nothing in it to distinguish it from a purely subjective hallucination. In one of the incidents described in the present paper there is however some very slight evidence that such may not have been altogether the case.

Professor Blacher has a paper on *apports* observed at sittings with various mediums, and Herr M. G. Brückner writes enthusiastically on the "wonders" of Frau Maria Silbert. Chiefly *à propos* of the same medium Dr Haslinger vehemently attacks Mr Besterman and is also hard on Mr Salter and the present supposed "negative" tendencies of the S.P.R. as a whole. It is curious to find in Dr Haslinger's paper the names of two learned Jesuits said to champion the genuineness of Frau Silbert's "phenomena".

Archiv zur Klärung der Wünschelrutenfrage, July 1931.

This review is to be the organ of the Verband zur Klärung der Wünschelrutenfrage, our Corresponding Member Count von Klinckowstroem, Baron Rudolph von Maltzahn, and Herr Erwin Marquardt being the Editors. It is of a strictly scientific character, and the introduction to this first number is excellent. We wish (unfortunately rather belatedly) the *Archiv* every success.

Monistische Monatshefte, August 1931.

Count Klinckowstroem discusses "Stage clairvoyants and pseudo-telepaths". The tendency of the essay is thoroughly negative. It should be read in connection with the same writer's article in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, 1931, no. 444, which deals with Herr Kordon-Veri's card "experiments". Count Klinckowstroem tells us, by the way, that the latter gentleman failed egregiously in 1930, in Vienna, when dealing with two experts in conjuring (Herren Ottokar Fischer and Martin Kirschen).

P.-P.-S.

 ERRATUM.

Journal, xxvii. 201. in the footnote to the Accounts, for "£108 19s. 2d." read "£101 5s. 5d."

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

ON

WEDNESDAY, 25 May 1932, at 5.30 p.m.

WHEN A PAPER ON

“THE RESULTS OF RECENT CARD-
EXPERIMENTS”

WILL BE READ BY

MISS INA JEPHSON

[P T.O.]

N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.

JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

1882-1932

REVISED PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY, 29 JUNE 1932, 5 p.m.

CONWAY HALL

Presidential Address by SIR OLIVER LODGE, F.R.S., D.Sc.

THURSDAY, 30 JUNE, 9 p.m.

LANGHAM HOTEL

Reception by the President and Council to Members
and Associates

FRIDAY, 1 JULY, 3 p.m.

CONWAY HALL

Address on the History of the Society by MRS HENRY
SIDGWICK, D.Litt., LL.D., *President of Honour*

MONDAY, 4 JULY, 8.30 p.m.

CONWAY HALL

(TO BE ANNOUNCED LATER)

Members and Associates are asked kindly to make a note of these dates.

Final particulars will be announced in due course.

An invitation to the Reception is enclosed.

NEW MEMBERS.

Duckworth, Mrs Arthur, 43 Catherine Street, London, S.W. 1.

Manuel, Alexander G., M.D., 10 West 58th Street, New York, U.S.A.

Maude, Mrs A., 14 Laneaster Gate, London, W. 2.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 294th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 30 March 1932, at 3.15 p.m., MR W. R. BOUSFIELD, K.C., in the Chair. There were also present: Lord Charles Hope, Miss Ina Jephson, Mr G. W. Lambert, The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, and Mr S. G. Soal; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last two Meetings of the Council were read and signed as correct.

The Report of the Annual General Meeting was read and accepted.

Three new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

Mr S. G. Soal was appointed an elected member of Council to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Dr V. J. Woolley.

The following were co-opted as Members of Council for the year 1932-1933: Dr C. D. Broad, Dr William Brown, Mr J. Arthur Hill, Lord Charles Hope, Professor Julian Huxley, The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Mr H. F. Saltmarsh, and Mr W. Whately Smith.

Dr Th. Wereide, of Oslo, was elected an Hon. Associate for the year 1932-1933.

The Monthly Accounts for January and February 1932 were presented and taken as read.

A SITTING WITH BERT REESE.

BY DR WALTER FRANKLIN PRINCE.

It may be of interest for me to relate the story of my only meeting with Bert Reese (sometimes spelled Ries). This man, as most persons interested in psychic research know, attained a very high reputation for his extraordinary performances which had the appearance of telepathy, when they were not supposed to be of the nature of messages from the dead, a theory which he sometimes encouraged. Most readers will remember the testimonies of more or less prominent people on the continent of Europe and elsewhere regarding him, and I need not refer to these. I myself was told, before I saw him,

stories of his marvellous achievements, by at least twenty persons of general good sense, including successful merchants and lawyers, and even a judge of a high court. As these persons told the story, there was no possible way to explain the feats performed, according to any normal process. More than one man said to me, when I ventured to express the possibility of doubt, "Then I must be either a liar or a fool. I am telling you what I saw with my own eyes". But, as the late Dr Morton Prince and I, shortly before his death, with the relation in turn of amusing examples, agreed, the eyes are, in certain situations, very uncertain and deceptive instruments.

Every one of these witnesses substantially stated as follows, before proceeding to further detail: "He told me what was on folded slips of paper before he ever touched them". If that were so; that is to say, if the slips remained folded and were not touched by Reese, and yet he was able to tell what was upon them or to make perfectly relevant replies to what was on them, there seems to be no escape from the conclusion that what he did was of supernormal character.

I am making, of course, no new revelation. Several persons have given more or less of an account of the way that Reese accomplished his successes, a way capable of a number of variations. But it may be of interest, nevertheless, for me to tell how he did it when he gave me a sitting. I do not, of course, make any point-blank denial that Reese ever had any telepathic results, and I say nothing of those cases where his procedure was different than it was with me, although I doubt that any variation of his procedure was less tricky than the one in my case. I wrote out my report, which has never been published, almost immediately after Reese had gone. That report remains in the files of the Society which I was then serving, so that I cannot tell the exact date, but it was a year or two before Reese's death. What I am to say is very clear in my memory. I shall show the high probability that every one of the men who told me their stories and who had witnessed a similar procedure (and it was almost precisely similar in most cases), when he said, "He answered what was on my folded slips before he ever touched them", although of undoubted honesty, was mistaken. I shall show also the very psychological groove, so to speak, down which he slipped into error.

Having heard so many stories with their categorical affirmations, I was naturally anxious to meet Reese. A mutual friend, who had seen him perform many times and who believed in him thoroughly, was also anxious that I should meet him. He used his influence with Reese, who one day unexpectedly appeared at my office, and told me that he was willing to demonstrate at that time.

I was seated at a roll-top desk in a well-lighted room, and rather expected that he would sit down by me there, but he wandered into

an adjoining room and suggested that instead we sit at a table in that room. He did not wish to sit on the same side of a piece of furniture with me, as he would be compelled to do at the desk, for so located he could not perform his manipulations unperceived.

As I readily assented, he asked for a sheet of paper and was given it. He proceeded, apparently, to tear this piece of paper into five fragments of about the same size. Although on the look-out, I did not see him conceal any fragment, but directly after the sitting was over and he had gone, I did what so many failed to do: fitted the five pieces together, and, as I expected, found that another was needed to make up the entire sheet. A piece having been abstracted and concealed must, logically, be intended to play an important part in what was to follow.

Reese asked me to write some question or sentiment on the pieces of paper, directed to five persons, "the most of them passed on", and to address the persons by name. He instructed me then to fold the slips separately several times.

We went into the room containing the table, and he asked if two ladies present could also sit, and I assented. Thereupon I sat at the right extremity of the long side of the table, Reese directly opposite me, and the two ladies, whom we will designate as Miss L. and Miss M., at the end between us.

It should be here stated that Reese, at that time a very old man but with all his uncanny cleverness undiminished, had a curious voice and a curious style of conversation. His articulation was indistinct, so that all three of us were more disposed to look at his face than we otherwise would have done, and the same tendency to look at his face was encouraged by his drawling volubility, intermitting now and then for a few moments, but ever beginning anew, and skipping from one subject to another, sometimes making an affirmation, sometimes indulging in a remark of quiet humour, and at times asking a question. I tried to resist this beguiling tendency to look away from the table to his face, but was afterwards obliged to acknowledge my lapses.

As I held the five slips of paper (let me hereinafter call them by the old term "billet") Reese asked me if I knew which message or question of mine was located on which billet. Before we really settled down to business, and while he was chatting, several times he broke off to ask this question again of me, and every time I answered truthfully that I did not. What difference did it make whether I knew or not, on which billet any particular writing of mine was to be found? This, that if I did know, and observed that he got back a billet from a person to whom he apparently had not given it, I should know that something was rotten in Denmark.

Presently Reese said, "Give Miss M. a billet". I instantly passed

one to her, so that my movement and his, as his arm was partly stretched across the table and pointed at her, were almost simultaneous. His pointing finger came perhaps one foot from the billet as Miss M. received it. First impression upon the spectator's mind—he did not touch the billet.

Reese chatted a bit more, then said, "Now give Miss L. one", and precisely the same procedure followed, though this time he did not have to extend his arm as he pointed, since Miss L. was next to him. Impression deepened—he did not touch the paper.

A little more chatting, and he directed that Miss M. receive another billet, and pointed as before, and probably his finger came a little nearer it. Again the psychological impression is deepened, until it becomes a groove—he did not touch the paper. Then Reese said, "Keep the other two yourself", and told an interesting story, which got us to smiling. The story finished, he casually and quietly added, "No, I think we'll let Miss L. have another one". I extended my hand toward Miss L. with the folded paper in it, and this time Reese intercepted the paper, when his hand was probably not more than six inches from that of Miss L. Here is where the twenty witnesses who had told me their stories fell down. Either, through the effect of the three instances where Reese did not touch the billet, the witnesses failed to observe that he did touch it in the fourth case, or having casually observed it, its very naturalness prevented its having any abiding place in the memory.

The fourth billet was taken by Reese, and the back of his hand and his curved fingers so held that the action of his thumb was invisible to any of the three witnesses. He was so fiendishly clever through long practice as to be able, in the moment when the billet was invisible, to shove his abstracted and folded slip of paper out beyond the tip of his fingers and to put it in Miss L's hand without the switch being observed.

I should have earlier said that both ladies were directed where to hold the billets, so that each had one in each hand. It was necessary for Reese to keep trace of the locations of the papers in order not to make any mistake in the subsequent steps of his performance.

He now had, therefore, one of my billets, while Miss L. held another in one hand and a dummy in the other. Reese waited a little while and went through the business of having some kind of a mediumistic spasm, put on the appearance of receiving inspiration, and drew a sheet of paper which was on the table toward him. Upon this sheet of paper, drawn close to his edge of the table, he proceeded with his right hand alone to make queer characters resembling Hebrew. This device was intended to, and did enchain our attention. I confess with shame that I thoroughly supposed that his message was being set down in that form, which he would afterwards trans-

late. While we were looking at the making of the characters, his eyes were naturally downcast—it would have been impossible to see whether he was looking at the paper or beneath the edge of the table, which he really was—while his left hand underneath the rim of the table unfolded my billet and he read it. (If I had had another sitting, I would have been on the look-out for this hieroglyphics business, but he probably would not have used it a second time with the same person. As I have learned from other sources, he had various devices to enchain the attention.)

Next Reese began to tell what was on the paper, and to answer it. The halting and imperfect way that he did it may have been partly the effect of my bad writing, but was certainly a bit of consummate art with which he imitated mediumistic business. There remained no question that he had become aware of what I had written. Having made his response, he said to Miss L., “Now let’s have the billet that is in that hand” (pointing to the hand which did not hold the dummy) “and we will see whether that is right or not”. He took the billet deliberately, drew his hand to his edge of the table, and apparently spread what he had received out upon the table, but, of course, another substitution had been made, so that what he really opened upon the table was the billet which he had just read, and he was provided with another one in advance. Were not the spirits kind, or did not his telepathy surpass any other ever heard of, that he not only learned what was on the papers, but also was able to tell exactly in which hand of which person the particular ones were to be found?

Of course, he proceeded in the same fashion with the other two billets, last of all getting back the dummy from Miss L.

Mind, I do not claim to have actually seen all the acts and movements which I describe. It was practically impossible to see a single substitution. Houdini said, in one of his books, that Bert Reese was the greatest “billet-switcher” that the world ever knew, and that without his own many years of experience he could not have detected what the movements meant. What I did was to observe, as minutely as I could, the utterances, the outstanding acts, the sheltering posture of the man’s fingers, and every possible detail, and immediately afterwards to sit down to gather these indicia, and to give the only possible rational interpretation for them as a whole. The main fact that I did observe, however, in itself largely tells the story and explains why a multitude of honest men look back to their experiences with Reese and erroneously declare that Reese told them what was on their billets before he ever touched them. I saw that he did not touch the first three of them, but that he very unobtrusively and carefully did intercept the fourth, and in that act is the key to the whole mystery of his performance. Add to this (in spite

of my not seeing any actual substitution) the damning fact of concealing one piece of the sheet of paper of equal size with the others and keeping silent about the fact that it was abstracted, also that curious and reiterated question whether I knew which writing was on which billet, a question which could have no earthly occasion other than as explained above.

As he told it, and as he believed that it occurred, there would be no normal explanation for the incident of Reese's work as described by the late Thomas A. Edison. But it was never told in the detail necessary to understand exactly what took place. Whether it is true or not, as Reese boasted to me, that Professor Muensterberg was bowled over by him and had proposed having a series of experiments in order to study the first psychical phenomenon of which he was convinced, but was prevented by his death, I do not know. But, remembering that Reese, as reported to me afterward, boasted to some friends that he had fooled me, before putting belief in the Muensterberg story, I should want to see those letters of the Harvard professor which Reese said he would show me but never did. After his performance with me, I grasped him warmly by the hand, uttering several such expressions as "It was very interesting—it was very extraordinary". I had hoped to have another sitting with him, but I could tell by Reese's manner as he went out that my remarks, for all their fervour, did not have the right wording to satisfy him, and he never would give me another sitting.

I repeat those words to-day, it *was* very interesting, and very extraordinary indeed. I have seen some of the cleverest magicians on the platform, but I never saw a whole programme that interested me so much as the marvellous art of this man, who could accomplish substitutions with three people present, none of whom were more than three feet from him, without it being possible directly to detect the acts of substitution, and do all in so calm, deliberate and nonchalant a manner.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A THEORY OF SURVIVAL.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,

In Mr Saltmarsh's paper (*Proceedings*, xl. 105 ff.), which effects such a valuable clearing of the ground for psychical research, one point is touched on which, I think, deserves more critical attention from psychical researchers.

On p. 108, the author speaks of the faces and finger-prints which are alleged to be formed out of some kind of teleplasmic or ecto-

plasmic substance during sittings with physical mediums. The physical characteristics, the forms of the face, the markings on the skin of the fingers, etc., he continues, "originally depended on the highly complex arrangement of the skin, muscles, nerves, etc., of the living body of the deceased person. This arrangement was broken up at death and the material scattered. In order to be reproduced this material must be reassembled in its original form or a facsimile made out of other material. Is there any reason for holding that the person who originally owned the body is the only or even the most likely agent who could do this reassembling? I am inclined to think that this is not so."

The point which I think requires discussion is the most likely interpretation of an identified finger-print of a deceased person, if proved to be genuine.

At death the material particles are certainly scattered, as Mr Saltmarsh says, and it is also true to say that their arrangement is broken up, if by "arrangement" is meant no more than their actual spatial distribution. But, if by "arrangement" is meant the system of forces or dispositions which (whatever they are and however they may act) determine this spatial distribution during life, then I do not see that there is any direct evidence which obliges us to assume its destruction. Such destruction is commonly assumed; thus, on p. 126 Mr Saltmarsh refers to "disembodied minds" in a way which suggests that disembodiment is the inevitable corollary of survival. This is the common assumption, but to my mind it runs ahead of the evidence. Personally, I should regard the production of a finger-print, indubitably recognised as that of a deceased person (fraud being excluded), as strong evidence of the survival of that person's *body*, meaning by the "body" an effective system of non-physical dispositions which in life determines the minute spatial arrangement of the cellular units or particles in the body—for example, of the skin-ridges forming the finger-prints. If we suppose such an effective organising system to exist and not to be included in the chemical and physical properties of the particles themselves, there appears to be no particular reason why it should not survive death. If it did so, and afterwards came into contact with any substance of a kind which it could influence, it might quite well rearrange this substance automatically in precisely the same way as that in which it had in life arranged the physical cell-matter of the organism.

I am considering that what is essential in the body is an organising system, analogous in a rough sort of way to a magnetic field, and that its visible appearance depends upon a supply of suitable material within its field of influence, much as a card sprinkled with iron filings is essential to make a magnetic field visible. Remove

the filings, and the field is no longer apparent to the senses ; bring the filings back, and the original pattern reappears.

Now, if the finger-print of a deceased person can be proved to have appeared impressed on paraffin-wax at a sitting, it seems much simpler to assume that it has not been produced by "thought" at all but by the actual presence of the deceased person's "body" acting automatically on some peculiar kind of substance.

It *may*, of course, be the case that the medium has only to think of X's thumb for a model of it in ectoplasm to be formed, complete in every detail of all the complicated lines ; but when looked into, this theory is very difficult to believe. Even granting an existing record of the finger-print of the deceased (such a record must be supposed to exist for purposes of identification), the theory demands an extraordinary concatenation of marvellous processes. (1) The medium must obtain clairvoyant access to this recorded impression. (2) She must either (a) retain a subconscious memory of it, perfect in every detail, while she is reproducing it in ectoplasm at the sitting, or (b) maintain a subconscious *rapport* with it during the sitting sufficiently close and minute to enable her to reproduce a complete replica. (3) Her thought influences the ectoplasm *directly*. The reproduction is of an *idea*, and intermediary mechanism is lacking, thus making the process semi-magical.

On the other hand, the theory of a non-physical "body" of formative dispositions has a certain *a priori* plausibility ; it is not altogether an *ad hoc* hypothesis coming directly out of the blue. Something of the kind would appear to be inevitable unless we accept a rigidly mechanistic form of biology. Without such a hypothesis, that is to say, those formative dispositions which are effective in shaping and maintaining the organisms in life must be assumed to reside entirely *within* the material particles themselves. That such a theory, consistently upheld as an ultimate or metaphysical scheme, is fraught with immense difficulties, can scarcely be denied. Such an eminent biologist as Dr J. S. Haldane has said, "A mechanism of hereditary transmission is simply a contradiction in terms." Neither need the rejection of mechanism necessarily involve vitalism or an instrumentalist view of the mind-body question. There is, I think, a possible *via media* ; but that is going too far afield.

What I wish to point out is that the existence of some such non-physical "body" is placed quite on the cards by biological facts alone, and that the hypothesis, if introduced into psychological research, would explain such a thing as a post-mortem finger-print far more simply and naturally than that of a mediumistic "thought-picture" reproduced in ectoplasm.

I do not say that a surviving "body" of this kind, even if proved to exist, would establish the survival of the personality. But, if it

were associated with appropriate and characteristic mental phenomena, it would go a long way in forming an important chain of evidence.

Yours, etc.,

G. N. M. TYRRELL.

MME KAHL-TOUKHOLKA : A CORRECTION

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,

Glancing through an old copy of *Proceedings* (xxxviii. 416), my eye was caught by Mr Besterman's account of his sitting in Paris with a Russian medium. Mme Kahl-Toukholka, who seems to have endeavoured to name his wife to him as "Genriette". Mrs Besterman's name being Henrietta. Mr Besterman suggests in his account that "Genriette" is the French version of it plus an initial G.

Actually, the matter is simpler. Russians always turn such an H into G, so that the Russian form of Henrietta would be "Genrietta". The difference in the final vowel of Mme Kahl-Toukholka's version seems a small matter—to be explained perhaps by the French termination of an otherwise uncommon name—compared with the accuracy (to Russian minds) of the initial consonant.

Yours, etc.,

C. E. BECHHOFFER ROBERTS.

[I am greatly obliged to Mr Bechhofer Roberts for his correction, which simplifies the incident I recorded and improves its evidential value. Th. B.]

REVIEWS.

LUDVIG DAHL. *We are Here*. Foreword by Sir Oliver Lodge. 8vo, pp. 256, 3 ill. London : Rider and Co., 1931. Price 7s. 6d. net.

"We are here", or actually "We here", is the introductory phrase used by two communicators who purport to be the sons of the author, a Norwegian Judge, in their talks with him through the mediumship of his daughter Ingeborg. Ludvig Dahl, the eldest son, met with a sailing accident on 29 May 1919 and was killed; Ragnar, the youngest, died of tuberculosis on 31 May 1924. Seven months after the eldest son's death the Judge and his family held a table sitting, at which his married daughter, Ingeborg, proved to be the medium, and by interpreting the tilts of the table in the usual way it was learned that the purporting communicator was Ludvig.

The difficulty of obtaining evidence where the medium is a member of the family is obvious, but Judge Dahl assures us as

regards "proofs of identity", that "these were readily and satisfactorily given, by way of little familiar reminiscences from Ludvig's early childhood" (page 27), apparently overlooking the fact that these, if familiar, would certainly be known to those present, including probably the medium. The name of a Swedish gardener to whom Ludvig was much attached when about four years old was given, however, the author remarking (page 27), "I am especially mentioning this example because that name was so far from our thoughts." On the following page he tells us that, as far as he and the family were concerned, they needed no further proof.

On the death of the youngest son, Ragnar, he too became a regular communicator, and from 1923 onward the ouija board was used instead of the table, Ingeborg being sometimes in trance, sometimes awake. The greater part of the book is occupied by descriptions of life after death received by this method, but an interesting feature of the mediumship from the point of view of psychical research, is the clairvoyant state which takes place at the conclusion of the ouija board sittings. In this state the medium apparently sees and hears her brothers, and is quite unconscious of the presence of the rest of the family. She becomes childlike in the clairvoyant condition, and it is only with difficulty that the communicators can get her to repeat what they wish to say. On awaking from this condition she is able, says Judge Dahl, to give interesting descriptions "supplemented by messages of significant and even evidential contents, directed to some stranger who happens to attend the *séance*. Then a name may be given, which she was unable to give during the clairvoyance, or an allusion to the earth life of the person concerned" (page 101). This would seem to have something in common with Mrs Piper's "waking stage", and it is regrettable that so few details or information received in this way are given.

Chapter 5, entitled "Miscellaneous Episodes", is devoted to incidents connected with various types of phenomena claimed for the medium, including reproduction of the handwriting of deceased persons, booktests, and apports. The handwriting phenomena are illustrated by photographic reproductions of the handwriting of various communicators while alive, of that purporting to come from them through the hand of the medium, and of the medium's own handwriting. The signature in the letter of the deceased English lady to her niece bears a quite striking resemblance to her signature while alive—more so perhaps than does the spirit-writing of Wiers-Jenssen to his original writing. The reproduction of the medium's handwriting shows no resemblance to any of the others, and we are assured in both cases that she had never seen the original handwriting. With regard to the letter from the English lady, the author states on page 227 that the medium's "knowledge of English

is limited to that of the average Norwegian girl who has attended a secondary school. An English letter she had never before written."

The booktests are of quite a different type to those obtained by Mrs Leonard, and from the description given by Judge Dahl it does not seem that normal knowledge on the part of the medium of the books and their contents can be ruled out. Briefly, the books were in a room in Judge Dahl's own house. There were apparently only two shelves of them, an upper and a lower. The communicators, Ludvig and Ragnar, said they would go into this room and read a passage from any book that the sitters chose. Thus the 7th book from the left on the upper shelf was selected (the total number of books on each shelf is unspecified). This turned out to be Wordsworth's *Poetical Works*, and several passages from page 316 were read correctly, apparently in English. Other successful tests of the same kind are given, but they would be more convincing if the sitters had been allowed to select the page, as well as the book, or if the books on the shelves had been thoroughly mixed up before the sitting.

Of the apport phenomena little can be said, except that their supernormal character depends entirely on the good faith of the medium, as she was not of course controlled in any way. The first phenomenon, however, took place in full light. In this case, a piece of paper, said to have been given to her by the invisible Ludvig, suddenly appeared in the medium's hand. In the second case two letters were produced in her hand after "a slight click" (page 240) when she was standing in the middle of a room "with hands outstretched and palms upward."

It is much to be hoped that further records of Fru Ingeborg's mediumship will be made from a more critical and evidential standpoint.

S. R. W. WILSON.

HENRI MAGER, *Water Diviners and their Methods*. Translated by A. H. Bell. 8vo, pp. xi. 308, 7 ill. London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1931. Price 16s. net.

ABEL ERNEST MARTIN, *Diagnostic Radiesthésique en Médecine-Vétérinaire*. 8vo, pp. 102. Paris: Librairie Le François, 1932.

Readers who followed the three-cornered discussion in the *Journal* for November 1931 (*Towards a Theory of Dowsing*) will be glad to have in an English translation one of the principal French books on the subject. Where so much is obscure it is gratifying to find an author who can boldly say, as M. Mager does in his Introduction, "My object has been attained. I have solved the enigma of the divining-rod and perhaps the enigma of matter."

The first half of the book is mainly historical. An account is

given of several famous dowzers, mostly French, and their methods. There is a long section, fully illustrated, on different forms of pendulum used in dowsing, but M. Mager distrusts the pendulum altogether as responding too readily to the conscious or unconscious thought of the dowser, whereas "the divining rod in competent hands refuses all such complaisance."

After describing the various types of forked rod used by dowzers, M. Mager enquires "Why the rod moves". Like other continental theorists, he does not accept the hypothesis familiar to English readers from Sir W. Barrett's work, that the movements of the rod are due to unconscious muscular action exteriorising a purely psychic perception on the part of the dowser. They are due, he holds, to a line of force coming up through the ground and impinging on the apex of the forked rod: the force travels along the right branch up the right arm, through the right side of the body, and discharges through the right foot into the ground, and a similar circuit is established through the left branch, arm and leg, there being an absolute division down the centre of the body. If either half of the body is insulated, *e.g.* by a rubber shoe, the circuit of that side is destroyed and the rod fails to function properly. Copper, he maintains, stops the current on the right side, but not the left: iron the current on the left, but not the right.

M. Mager's principal contribution to the theory and practice of dowsing is the use of rods of divers colours. These, he claims, respond in different ways according to the chemical composition of the substances whose vibrations cause the rod to move, so that it is possible by his method to tell not only the area of a subterranean field of water, its depth and force, but also its purity and potability. He describes in some detail the experiments that led him to this conclusion, and the successes which he claims to have achieved in putting his discoveries in practice.

What is lacking in the book is evidence that M. Mager's methods if followed by other dowzers would give similar results. Until this has been shown the objective validity of the methods must remain in doubt. It is to be hoped that M. Mager's very interesting, if speculative, book, will induce other dowzers to put his theories to the test.

A like criticism applies, as the author candidly admits, to the second book. Dr Martin, a veterinary surgeon, claims that it is possible by means of a pendulum to discover whether an animal is in a healthy condition or not, and if it is unhealthy, to locate the mischief: if the pendulum is held in the left hand and the right is stretched out as an "antenna" towards the animal, the pendulum will rotate counter-clockwise if the animal is healthy, and will oscillate without rotation in the neighbourhood of an unhealthy organ.

If the experimenter will place the beast between himself and the sun and will hold, in the same hand as the pendulum, a *témoïn* of the appropriate substance, he will discover the cause of the mischief, as the appropriate *témoïn* will now make the pendulum rotate. Thus by means of a steel *témoïn* Dr Martin discovered that a cow had swallowed a knitting needle, and so on. Dr Martin admits, however, that without pathological training, no results of value are likely to be obtained.

W. H. S.

OTTOKAR FISCHER, *Illustrated Magic*. Trans. J. B. Mussey and Fulton Oursler. 4to, pp. xiii. 203, 234 portraits, diagrams and ill. New York: Macmillan Co., 1931. Price 25s. net.

An American translation from a German original, admirably got up, containing descriptions and the *modus operandi* of a great number of classical conjuring tricks and illusions, with photographic illustrations of the details of apparatus and manipulation. Besides chapters on card magic, feats of dexterity, stage and optical illusions, the mystery of puzzles and of escapes, none of which, except for the existence of people who insist on the mediumistic capacity of that master of escapes, the late Harry Houdini, are of special concern to the S.P.R., there are discussions of such other subjects as stage mind-reading and clairvoyance and ghosts, and feats of fakirs, in which we may consider ourselves more directly interested. A good description of the codes used by stage telepathists is given. If more of the public had read this chapter before witnessing the performance of the Zancigs there would have been fewer to insist upon their possession of genuine telepathic capacity. In the chapters on fakirs an explanation is given of the mango-trick and of at least one variety of the famous rope-trick, as seen by Mr Dittmar, an engineer, in which "an ingeniously woven rope was used, which on a skilful toss by the fakir became stiff and stood upright. One coil of the rope rested on the ground offering enough support so that not a man, it is true, but at any rate a small monkey, could climb up and down." It seems impossible that a wretched trick of this kind could have given rise to the travellers' tales of the performance of which one so often hears, but eye-witnesses of which are so hard to find.

EVERARD FEILDING.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Mercur de France, 1 December 1931.

Dr Libert-Chatenay contributes an article on precognition. He accepts precognition as actually occurring, both in the states of waking and sleep, the only controversy being as to its nature and

cause. He lays it down that in both these states the individual maintains relation with the external world of time and space as well as with the infinite and eternal universe, the former being the phenomenon, the latter the noumenon.

Man has therefore the power to acquire knowledge of the past, present and future. Knowledge of the past is governed by the laws of logic, which laws have been discovered and stated. Knowledge of the future is acquired by the operation of the mind in another direction where the laws of logic cannot follow. The laws governing this operation have yet to be discovered.

All nature is subject to law, it follows that there is no such thing as fortuitous coincidence; what appears to be such is only what he calls "concordance". He therefore denies the existence of chance as an independent causative factor.

It may be questioned whether any instructed person to-day really holds the view attacked; surely all that is meant by chance is a concatenation of causes and circumstances so complex and so imperfectly known as to defy calculation.

Dr Chatenay quite rightly points out that there is no causal relation between the premonition and its fulfilment, there is no "fatalité de soi" only logically "en soi".

He quotes with approval Maeterlinck's phrase "les noces merveilleuses que célèbrent l'Espace et le Temps" and says that the solution of the problem of precognition must be sought in this concept.

The remainder of the article is a criticism of the view expressed by Auguste Lumière on the matter of a premonitory dream. Substantially this is that the number of dreams is so great that it must sometimes happen that apparent premonitions occur due simply to chance-coincidence, and he cites two examples of coincidence which, he says, are more extraordinary than the fulfilment of any dream. Dr Chatenay objects that the phenomena are of an entirely different order and argues against Lumière's conclusion, not altogether, in the writer's opinion, with complete success.

He ends by citing three examples of what he calls precognition in space. These, however, being simultaneous monitions, are irrelevant.

Though it cannot be said that the article throws any fresh light on the subject, it is worth studying by those interested in the problem.

H. F. SALTMARSH.

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

This month

The Society for Psychical Research

celebrates its Jubilee

1882-1932

★

The arrangements are set out on the next two pages

JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

1882-1932

PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY, 29 JUNE 1932, 5 p.m.

CONWAY HALL

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BY SIR OLIVER LODGE, F.R.S., D.Sc.

THURSDAY, 30 JUNE, 9 p.m.

LANGHAM HOTEL

Reception by the President and Council to Members
and Associates

FRIDAY, 1 JULY, 3 p.m.

CONWAY HALL

ADDRESS ON THE HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY

BY

MRS HENRY SIDGWICK, D.Litt., LL.D., *President of Honour*

MONDAY, 4 JULY, 8.30 p.m.

CONWAY HALL

LECTURE ON PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHICAL
RESEARCH

BY WILLIAM BROWN, M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P.

JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

1882-1932

THE officials of the Society will be At Home at the Rooms of the Society, 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Sunday afternoon, 3 July, and hope that Members and Associates will come in quite informally.

* * *

Invitations to the Reception on Thursday, 30 June, were circulated with the May *Journal*.

* * *

Tickets for the three meetings on 29 June, 1 July, and 4 July, are enclosed with the present issue of the *Journal* to enable Members and Associates each to bring one friend to these meetings. Members and Associates themselves will be admitted as usual on signing their names at the door.

* * *

DONATIONS FOR THE SOCIETY'S JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

Mrs F. W. H. Myers	-	-	-	-	-	£25	0	0
Anonymous	-	-	-	-	-	20	0	0
Sir Lawrence J. Jones, Bart.	-	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Sir Oliver Lodge	-	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
H. F. Saltmarsh	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	0
Lady Butt	-	-	-	-	-	2	0	0
						£69	2	0

NEW MEMBERS.

*(Elected 27 April 1932)***Ball, Mrs**, 11 Nevill Park, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.**De Janasz, Robert**, 5 Bryanston Street, London, W. 1.**Loach, Mrs**, 4 Lansdowne Road, Bromley, Kent.**Olliver, C. W.**, Zugerberg, Switzerland.**Rowntree, W. S.**, 15 Chatsworth Road, Brighton, Sussex.**Talbot, H. M.**, 102 Farley Road, Croham Heights, Surrey.**Tennant, Mrs**, Hams Plot, Beaminster, Dorset.**Wilkinson, L.**, Deepdene, Aldeburgh, Suffolk.*(Elected 25 May 1932)***Heard, H. F. Gerald**, 28 Portman Court, London, W. 1**Reeves, E. A., F.R.A.S., F.R.G.S.**, 85 Langbourne Mansions, London, N. 6.**Smith, Mrs M. A.**, 33 Dale View Crescent, London, E. 4.**Wood, Christopher**, 28 Portman Court, London, W. 1.

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 295th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 27 April 1932, at 4 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair. There were also present: Dr William Brown, Mr Lancelot S. Fletcher, Lord Charles Hope, Miss Ina Jephson, Sir Lawrence J. Jones, Bart., Mr W. H. Salter and Mrs Salter; also, Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Eight new members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

The Monthly Accounts for March were presented and taken as read.

THE 296th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 25 May 1932, at 3.45 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair. There were also present: Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Dr C. D. Broad, Dr William Brown, Professor E. R. Dodds, Mr Lancelot S. Fletcher, Lord Charles Hope, Miss Ina Jephson, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr W. H. Salter, and Mr S. G. Soal; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Four new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

The Monthly Accounts for April 1932 were presented and taken as read.

PRIVATE MEETINGS.

SITTINGS WITH VALIANTINE AND PHOENIX.

THE 113th Private Meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday, 30 March 1932, at 5.30 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTELTON in the Chair.

LORD CHARLES HOPE read a paper entitled "Report on Some Sittings with Valiantine and Phoenix in 1927," which is printed, somewhat abridged, in Part 125 of *Proceedings*.

In the discussion which followed Miss Fleming asked whether direct communications had ever been received through Valiantine from relatives who had died quite recently.

Mr C. A. Moss suggested that Valiantine might be descended from an Italian and that he might thus have a knowledge of the language.

Miss Reutiner said she had sat with Valiantine and understood that communications had been received through him in Hindustani.

Lady Barrett asked to what extent it was claimed that the foreign messages given by Valiantine and Phoenix consisted of consecutive sentences or words.

Mr Besterman added that Dr Whyman appeared to use the word "conversation" rather loosely. An exchange of words and phrases certainly appeared to have taken place, but unless each observation had some definite connection with the foregoing one, this could hardly be called a conversation.

Dr E. J. Dingwall agreed that this was a crucial point. In general he thought that Dr Whyman's observations were to be attributed to hallucination. But in regard to the Chinese he felt this assumption could hardly be made.

Mr G. R. S. Mead said that the sounds of Chinese were very difficult for a European to reproduce.

The Rev. J. W. Hayes, Mrs Carpenter, Colonel Dick, and Mr Strawson also took part in the discussion.

Lord Charles Hope, in replying, said that he had not himself received communications from recently deceased friends. There was considerable doubt whether Hindustani had actually been spoken in Valiantine's sittings. It was possible that the medium sometimes got telepathic impressions.

THE RELATION BETWEEN PARAPSYCHICAL AND
PARAPHYSICAL PHENOMENA.

THE 114th private meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday, 27 April 1932, at 5.30 p.m., SIR LAWRENCE JONES in the Chair.

MR W. H. SALTER read a paper entitled "The Relation between Parapsychical and Paraphysical Phenomena," of which an abridgment is printed below.

The question as to the nature of the relation between paraphysical and parapsychical phenomena is one which must have exercised the mind of every student of psychical research, but little light is thrown on it in the standard literature of our subject. Podmore's *The New Spiritualism* is probably the most helpful book. The object of this paper is to touch briefly on a few aspects of this question.

Is psychical research concerned with two distinct and unrelated subjects which by the accident of history have come to share a common name, or do paraphysical and parapsychical phenomena own some common underlying factor which unites them as naturally as zoology and botany?

Some persons, but probably no Members of our Society, might perhaps suggest that the question could be sufficiently answered by saying that all alleged supernormal phenomena are the products of deliberate fraud, but confining our attention to instances of both types of phenomena which, whether certainly supernormal or not, are not due merely to deliberate fraud, we have enough material to go on.

We start with a human predisposition to regard mental marvels as incomplete if unaccompanied by a marvel on the physical plane. This is an integral part of the popular conception of the supernatural, well established long before mankind began to suspect that much which passed as supernatural was in reality supernormal.

Coming to the beginning of modern psychical research we find in the Hydesville rappings in 1848 the mental and physical factors closely combined. The raps, it will be remembered, are reported to have given correct replies to questions, the answers to which were normally known only to the questioners. Whether or not the Hydesville phenomena were fraudulent is immaterial for the present purpose, as during the decades which followed them the association of mental and physical phenomena was confirmed in popular opinion by two types of phenomena, in which the physical factor, though we should not now regard it as supernormal, was not the mere product of fraud.

The first of these was table-tilting, which became popular in the 1850's. The notion that the movements of the table in themselves,

apart from any question of the content of the messages spelt out, were due to some supernormal force long survived Faraday's demonstrations that they were caused by unconscious muscular action. Even more important, perhaps, were the somatic conditions attendant on mediumistic trance. In the then state of medical science it was only to be expected that these should seem to be quite outside the ordinary course of nature.

Through D. D. Home's mediumship the traditional association of the mental and physical is carried over into the age of scientific inquiry. The records of Home's spirit messages are, however, so imperfect that it is impossible now to determine whether he possessed any real parapsychical powers; Myers, Barrett and Podmore were all inclined to accept them. But it is, of course, on his parapsychical phenomena, still so hotly debated, that Home's present fame rests. With Stainton Moses the association continued, but whether his physical phenomena was genuine or not, they were produced under very inferior conditions, and it is not for them, but for the *Spirit Teachings*, and for one or two cases of possibly supernormal knowledge, that he deserves consideration.

When however we come to the principal mediums of the next generation, such as Mrs Piper and Eusapia, the cleavage between the two types of mediumship becomes obvious, and has, with some exceptions, persisted to our day. In the line of succession to Mrs Piper we have Mrs Leonard, Mrs Warren Elliott and the S.P.R. group of automatists, while Eusapia's lineage includes Eva C., Kathleen Goligher and the Schneider brothers. The cleavage is not absolute. Mrs Leonard's recent autobiography makes mention of a few physical phenomena, but it is not clear that these were produced through her own mediumship. Mrs Thompson, during the earlier part of her mediumship, produced physical phenomena. Nor must the versatility of *Margery* be overlooked, although as long as her phenomena are produced under the same auspices as hitherto, results which would help us in our inquiry are not to be expected.

While the cleavage is not complete it may none the less be said that, during practically the whole of our Society's existence, all the physical phenomena that matter derive from one group, and all the mental phenomena that matter from the other. Can this cleavage between the two types of mediumship be paralleled in the sphere of spontaneous phenomena? Let us consider the three main types, the poltergeist, the "fixed local ghost" and the veridical phantasm.

The typical poltergeist is purely physical and unconnected with any display of supernormal intelligence. There are, however, a few apparent exceptions. In the Hydesville case already mentioned the raps were reported to have displayed supernormal intelligence in answering questions. The Derrygonelly case investigated by Sir

William Barrett in 1877 is another exception of the same kind (see *Proceedings*, xxv. 390). If a good number of more cases of the same type were forthcoming and were supported by good evidence, we might be led to the conclusion that this class of phenomenon had some linkage with parapsychical phenomena, but on the present scanty evidence we cannot assume more than a chance connection between the physical phenomena, which are typical, and the mental, which, assuming them to be well established, are very rare.

The type of haunting known as the "fixed local ghost" is hard to place. It is very rare, and to judge from our records, is growing progressively rarer. There seems very little evidence for imputing intelligence to it, but it would appear that somehow a physical *point de repère* is an essential factor as in psychometry, a form of mediumship accepted by so cautious a critic as Dr Walter Prince.

Veridical phantasms are generally accepted as purely psychological, subject to the reservation made by Myers and Richet regarding reciprocal and collective cases. Myers's views are not very easy to follow: equally with the other authors of *Phantasms of the Living* he rejected the view that the body has a rarified duplicate, a "meta-organism" capable of projection to a distant point in space: this would imply, to use his words, the existence of a meta-coat and meta-trousers. What he argued for was "the breaking loose of a psychical element . . . definable mainly by its power of producing a phantasm, perceptible by one or more persons, in some portion or other of space," and discussing a particular case he adds, "a certain psychical element so far detached itself from its organism as to affect a certain portion of space, not materially nor even optically, but yet in such a manner that to a certain kind of immaterial and non-optical sensitivity a phantasm became discernible" (see *Phantasms*, ii. 277 seq.). Notwithstanding the great weight which attaches to any considered opinion of Myers, the difficulties of this conception seem to outweigh those involved in supposing that collective hallucinations are telepathic in origin, and have no spacial existence at all.

It would seem therefore that the cleavage noticed between the parapsychical and parapsychical in mediumistic phenomena is even more pronounced in spontaneous phenomena.

A word is perhaps necessary as to cases of mixed or combined mental and physical phenomena, such as spirit photography or the "direct voice" of trumpet mediumship. In many of the cases reported it would appear that mental phenomena of poor quality are accepted because they are guaranteed by physical phenomena which are no better, and *vice versa*; there are few types of mediumship for the genuineness of which the evidence is less satisfactory.

Let us now consider whether the two types of phenomena operate through some common or similar force, and also whether they origin-

ate in any common or similar psychology in the persons through whose agency they occur. Under the first heading we may compare telepathy and telekinesis as being the two best authenticated forms of each class of phenomena.

Telepathy is generally accepted as a purely psychical process, independent not only of any physical force known to us, but also of any force which, while unknown, yet conforms to known physical laws. The main, but not the only, argument in support of this view, is that telepathy takes no account of distances, and treats with disrespect the law of inverse squares. The evidence for telepathy has not yet convinced general scientific opinion, but so far as it goes, it seems to point to the direct action of mind upon mind. One sometimes hears telepathy spoken of as a sort of "beggarly rudiment" that the S.P.R. ought long ago to have left behind; but it is such a revolutionary conception, that if nothing else had been done by the Society in the last fifty years beyond bringing it as near the point of proof as it has been brought, our time would not have been wasted.

Whether telekinesis, on the assumption that it is genuine, is to be regarded as the direct operation of mind on matter, or as the operation of mind on normal matter through the medium of matter in the abnormal condition known as ectoplasm, it does not in either aspect seem to offer any analogy or parallel to telepathy.

Various theories have from time to time been put forward to explain the connection between parapsychical and parapsychical phenomena such as the etheric and ideoplastic theories. If one starts with the essential connection of the parapsychical and parapsychical as proved, it is legitimate, possibly inevitable, to adopt some theories of this kind as a missing link, but it is not satisfactory to reverse the process and make the missing link an argument to prove the connection.

In considering the psychological conditions favouring the production of either type of phenomenon it is best at the outset to confine our attention to the spontaneous instances of each type and to proceed later to mediumistic phenomena, since the genuineness of each medium's performances must be judged separately, while the much greater number of persons concerned in the production of spontaneous phenomena more readily permits generalisation.

A glance at *Phantasms of the Living* or Mrs Sidgwick's later collection of similar cases will show the very wide distribution of spontaneous mental phenomena. It is impossible to point to any type or class of sane human being and say, "there goes a typical agent or a typical percipient" or, "there goes a person who is most unlikely to transmit or perceive a veridical hallucination." Poltergeist phenomena, on the other hand, conform to a general type, as agreed both by those who believe in their genuineness and by those who do

not. They centre round some individual of a type almost too familiar to require description. Usually it is a child, occasionally an adult, in either case mentally or physically subnormal. The surroundings are usually uncongenial, and the main purpose of the phenomena seems to be to compensate the depressed person round whom they centre by conferring a transient importance. The poltergeist, if left to run its course unchecked, may develop into regular physical mediumship, and so it becomes important to inquire whether anything is to be found outside the limits of poltergeist phenomena psychologically analogous to the "naughty little girl," to use Podmore's convenient label for the typical poltergeist.

Two parallels at once suggest themselves. First the mischievous phase, often observed in cases of multiple personality, of which the Sally of Morton Prince's Miss Beauchamp is probably the best-known. The second is the child control frequently appearing in the case of mediums of various types. The nature and origin of Sally has been much debated, but it is sufficient for the present purpose that as the result of dissociation there emerged a very tricky, clever child personality, quite unlike either the normal Miss Beauchamp or any of her other subsidiary personalities, and eager to play mischievous pranks on them; a character in fact very closely resembling the child medium of poltergeist cases, except that Sally was more amusing and attractive. Margaret of the Doris Fischer case comes into the same general class as Sally. It will be remembered that the re-integrated Doris is credited by Dr Walter Prince with supernormal powers.

Of the child Controls of mediums many seem to be no more than *noms de guerre*. Others, such as Fedra, have all the distinguishing marks of personality, whether independent of or subsidiary to the normal personality of the medium. Fedra, according to the universal testimony of Mrs Leonard's sitters, has the attractive characteristics of Sally without her less admirable traits. But except in the one respect of childishness there is as little resemblance between Fedra and the typical "naughty little girl" of the poltergeist cases, as there is between poltergeist phenomena and Mrs Leonard's trance communications.

But with the other types of mediums we may find instances of child Control much more in line with the poltergeist cases. There is, for example, Stainton Moses's "Little Dickie," who it will be remembered provided the comic relief in the almost too serious atmosphere of Stainton Moses's sittings. Like Sally he was amusing and mischievous and showed little regard for the physical comfort of the principal personality: for instance he hit Stainton Moses on the head with a brass candlestick. His kinship with the typical child medium of poltergeist cases is also apparent.

Mrs Thompson, who produced physical phenomena in the earlier stages of her mediumship, but later confined herself to trance communications, had a child Control Nelly, and Mrs Piper had a child, Chlorine, as one of her earliest Controls.

With Mrs Leonard's Feda we reach the opposite pole to the type represented by Sally, Dickie and the "naughty little girl" of the poltergeist cases. That there should be differences in the characters of child Controls is not surprising, but may be significant. They correspond to the differences between real flesh and blood children. Not all little girls are naughty little girls, and not all children, thank goodness, become the centres of poltergeist disturbances. While it seems that there is a natural tendency for mediumistic dissociation to bring to the surface a child personality endowed with those characteristics which most children share, playfulness and some liking for make-believe, the nature of the child personality which rises to the surface seems to vary with the fundamental nature of the medium, and the phenomena produced seem to vary in the same way. Mrs Leonard, as everyone knows, is a well-balanced contented woman, and Mrs Piper has been described as placid in the extreme.

Stainton Moses, on the other hand, though successful as clergyman and schoolmaster, was obviously something of a misfit. It is not of course suggested that the "Dickie" phase of Stainton Moses was responsible for the whole of his phenomena: it would be absurd to attribute the *Spirit Teachings* to a mere "infantile regression." Podmore's analysis of mediumistic psychology in *The Newer Spiritualism* (Book II, chap. i) is in many ways admirable. He stresses the common psychological origin of physical and mental mediumship in dissociation, bringing to the surface a child personality. "The trance personality," he says, "is commonly non-moral in the sense that many children and some savages are non-moral. . . . It shows little desire, has perhaps little aptitude, for distinguishing between facts and fiction," and so on. Hence he finds it natural that most trance mediums have at one time or another produced physical phenomena, or as he puts it, "they voyage in the same boat with Home and Eusapia." He excepts cases of slight dissociation such as those which result in automatic writing. The analysis would be even better if he had not ignored the great divergence between the types of child personality evoked by dissociation, and probably if he were writing this chapter now with knowledge of more recent developments he would have laid more stress on the differences, and less on the similarities between the two types of mediumship.

We may sum the matter up by saying that, so far as concerns spontaneous phenomena, which occur without trance and so without dissociation, there is no psychological connection between the two types: so far as regards mediumistic phenomena, in cases where there is no

dissociation, or only a slight one, there is also no connection: in mediumistic cases, where there is *much* dissociation, there is a connection in the emergence of the child phase or personality, but only a superficial one, as the child personalities vary as widely as the normal personality of the mediums themselves.

So far the discussion has left the question of fraud on one side, but it is impossible to conclude it without asking which particular kind of mental phenomena and which of physical are being compared with each other. As regards the mental it is generally agreed that abundant evidence is forthcoming for the genuineness of both spontaneous and mediumistic phenomena. With the physical phenomena the case is entirely different, and the difference in evidential value suggests some fundamental difference inherent in the two types of phenomena. The contrast has been so well and so recently drawn by Dr Walter Prinee in his Presidential Address that it is unnecessary to dwell on it in detail.

In the discussion which followed the paper, Mr Besterman referred to Dr Osty's recent investigation of Rudi Schneider as affording another instance of parapsychical phenomena (in that case, interference with an infra-red ray by some substance or force which could not be photographed) apparently responding to intelligent direction.

Mr Hettinger, Mr Findlater, and Miss Reutiner discussed the connection between mental and physical phenomena with regard to table tilting and the direct voice.

Mr Lambert emphasized the difficulty of drawing a clear-cut distinction between genuine physical phenomena and hallucinations, while admitting that hallucinations affecting several senses of several percipients at the same time were almost unknown.

The Rev. C. Drayton Thomas said that it was important that everybody who was interested in psychical research should test their own powers for the production both of mental and of physical phenomena, as nobody knew what their powers were until they had tested them. He believed that there emanated from mediums what he would call a "field of influence" and that it was of denser character in the case of physical mediums than with mental mediums, and he hoped that apparatus would be invented to enable us to investigate it.

Miss Fleming and Mr Wilkinson also took part in the discussion.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE STATISTICAL METHOD OF ASSESSING THE EVIDENTIAL VALUE OF MEDIUMISTIC COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,

In vol. xxxix of *Proceedings*, p. 58, Mr Saltmarsh, dealing with the difficult problem of scoring sittings so that the statistical method may be applied to them, writes: "The closest analogy seems to be the marking of examination papers on some literary subject where differences of opinion, individual idiosyncrasy, nuances of meaning, all complicate the matter." This comparison between the problem of scoring and the marking of examination papers on some literary subject should make the following experiment of great interest.

Some time ago, the Durham University School Examinations Board authorised an experiment to test the reliability of the methods of marking the English papers set for the School Leaving Certificate. The papers comprised an essay and précis (a two-hour paper) and answers to six questions on set books in literature (a three-hour paper). All the scripts from one school—48 in number—were marked separately by seven examiners of long experience, both in teaching and examining. These examiners did not meet or consult one another about the marking but were told the object of the experiment. The result, given in the table below, was astounding, even to teachers and examiners prepared for differences in standards of marking.

Examiner	Fail	Pass	Credit	Special Credit.
A	1	16	27	4
B	0	2	34	12
C	7	30	11	0
D	0	9	36	3
E	5	16	27	0
F	2	7	37	2
G	19	12	17	0

This discrepancy in the marking becomes even more pronounced if the "Credit" mark (the most important one) is taken and candidates divided into two classes.

Examiner	Below Credit	Credit and Above
A	17	31
B	2	46
C	37	11
D	9	39
E	21	27
F	9	39
G	31	17

Finally, when this classification was examined, it was found that only one candidate out of the 48 was placed by all the examiners in the same class.

The bearing of this experiment on the statistical method in psychical research is obvious. It shows how sound is Mr Saltmarsh's view (p. 59) that "the ideal method would be to have each record scored independently by several persons, who would be provided with a set of rules for their guidance; a discussion between them of each disputed point would in all probability then result in some compromise, and the average of the final scores might be taken as a fairly reliable estimate." It is quite true, as he says, that such a method "would entail an enormous amount of labour," but an investigation made on this principle (together with the other suggestions he makes in the Appendix) would be a valuable contribution to psychical research.

Yours, etc.,

J. W. FINDLATER.

[The interesting experiment referred to by Mr Findlater is described in two articles by Charles Roberts and H. V. A. Briscoe in *The A.M.A.* (the journal of the Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools), for December 1931 and February 1932 (xxvi. 319-20, xxvii. 47-8). Arrangements are being made for a similar experiment in the marking of mediumistic records.—*Ed.*]

IS PROOF OF SURVIVAL POSSIBLE ?

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,

In the April *Journal* under the above heading Mr Saltmarsh has very clearly set forth some of the difficulties he finds in connection with the idea of latency. Of chief interest is his suggestion that if an impression is received as a memory there is no reason why a period should be set to its latency. I think all these difficulties disappear if we take the word latency in its scientific connotation, where there is always the idea of potential energy; not that of the ever-resilient-spring type, but (as there are experimental psychological grounds for positing) something analogous to an electric charge which slowly loses strength if not discharged.

But the theory of latency was only suggested provisionally to account for phantasms of the recently deceased without having to attribute them to discarnate agency (*v. Myers, Human Personality*, concise ed., p. 223). Incidentally it necessitated rather high-handed action with a considerable mass of well-attested evidence for phantasms of the dead, which has in effect to be attributed to telepathic impressions received by the percipients from unknown living

persons in a state of perturbation at their recollections of fear or apprehension under strange natural or apparently praeternatural experiences. The theory is mainly based upon the "lagging" observed in certain historical telepathic experiments with hypnotised subjects (*v. loc. cit.*) which, it may be suggested, may possibly have been due not to latency at all, but to lethargy or slowness of action on the part of the percipients. It is not "latency" which causes the proverbial Scot to laugh at a joke A while others are enjoying joke B.

The Morton haunting, the Barter ghost, Miss L. Dodson's experience, the F. G. case (the scratched nose)—to mention a few old recorded examples of apparitions—are strongly suggestive of discarnate agency, which is supplemented by (e.g.) the Statius, Ear of Dionysius and Lethe cases and the best evidence obtained by Mr W. Irving and Mr Drayton Thomas with Mrs Leonard.¹

It is in my opinion not possible to do the evidence justice by generalised pronouncements on the different categories of material collected by the Society, although categorical proof may be a consummation never to be realised.

Yours, etc.,

ERNEST S. THOMAS.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF TESTIMONY.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,

I venture to assume that most of the members of the S.P.R. must have been amazed at the contents of the Society's *Proceedings* for May 1932. Officially they consist of a report of a "series of experimental sittings . . . for the purpose of investigating the most favourable conditions for observation in sittings for psychical [*sic*, read "physical."—*Ed.*] phenomena." The Council approved the scheme.

Six sittings were held, and each was attended by seven members of the Society [this is not correct: see the report, pp. 369, 373.—*Ed.*] making forty-two in all. After each sitting they answered a written *questionnaire* by Mr T. Besterman as to what had actually happened during the twenty-five minutes that the sitting occupied (movements on the part of the lady enacting the medium, interruptions by himself, etc.) and he marked them for the accuracy and scope of the answers. The rest of the *Proceedings* is taken up with eighteen

¹ The remarkable incident of the pseudo-personality John Ferguson recorded by Mr Soal (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. xxv) from his sittings with Mrs Cooper, which weighs against the "spiritistic hypothesis," may perhaps be correlated with what was said by controls through Mrs Leonard to Sir Oliver Lodge regarding "masks" and "personations" (*v. Conviction of Survival*, pp. 23-33) although the cases are obviously different in character.

pages of elaborate tables concerning the marks the sitters earned, and Mr Besterman's analysis of them. As the procedure at all these sittings was identical, they yield no results whatever as to the investigation of the most "favourable conditions for observation" which was their avowed object, but only show the comparative powers in observing of forty-two unnamed persons.

It is impossible to imagine a more futile issue of the *Proceedings* of a Society whose aim is Psychological Research, for from first page to last there is nothing however remotely connected with it. Surely it would be better if, during any month, there is nothing whatever to report about the Society's activities in their subject, to notify the members, and issue no *Proceedings* at all, but save the expense of photographs, plans, printing and publication, till the Council has some material which is of possible interest to its members.

Yours, etc.,

E. F. BENSON.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

The Lancet, 17 October 1931.

Dr Robert M. Riggall, Hon. Clinical Psychologist to the West End Hospital for Nervous Diseases, gives a brief account of an interesting case of an eightfold multiple personality. It is the case of a woman, now aged 41, whose medical history is known since 1915. As Dr Riggall is a psycho-analyst it is interesting to note that the various personalities fit very well into a psycho-analytical view of human personality. This feature does not appear in the classical cases of multiple personality. So far as can be gathered from Dr Riggall's brief account the splitting of the personality began in 1915, when the patient herself claimed that she was a dual personality. While under the care of Dr W. H. B. Stoddart at St Thomas's Hospital during 1916 and 1917 "several different personalities were discovered by means of hypnosis." It would be interesting to learn precisely how these personalities were "discovered." It is unfortunately only too often true that such pseudo-personalities are "suggested" to the patient by the hypnotist himself. A case of eightfold personality is so unusual that it is to be hoped a detailed report will be forthcoming in due course.

TH. B.

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY,

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 28 September 1932, at 5.30 p.m.,

WHEN A PAPER WILL BE READ ENTITLED

“*SUPERNORMAL PHOTOGRAPHY*”

BY

MAJOR W. RAMPLING ROSE

AND

MR FRED BARLOW

N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.

The Rooms of the Society will be closed after Saturday, 30 July, until Monday, 12 September. Correspondence will be forwarded to the staff during this time. Members may borrow not more than six volumes from the Library before the Rooms close. The next number of the "Journal" will be issued in October.

THE SOCIETY'S JUBILEE 1882-1932.

THE celebration of the Society's Jubilee was inaugurated by the delivery of his Presidential Address by Sir Oliver Lodge, on 29 June, in the Conway Hall. His Address will be printed in Part 127 of *Proceedings*.

On the following day there was a Council Dinner at the Langham Hotel. The President, Sir Oliver Lodge, presided, and the following were present : Dr Eleanor C. Lodge, Mr and Mrs Brodie Lodge, Miss Norah Lodge, Sir Lawrence and Lady Jones, Dame Edith Lyttelton, Mr and the Hon. Mrs Harold Myers, Lady Barrett, Mr S. C. Scott, Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P., Lord Charles Hope, the Hon. Everard Feilding, Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, Sir Reginald Johnston, K.C.M.G., Mrs E. W. Allison, Mr G. H. Ardron, Mrs W. W. Baggally, Mr F. Barlow, Mr and Mrs Theodore Besterman, Dr and Mrs William Brown, Mr and Mrs H. Bury, Miss Carruthers, Mrs. Coombe-Tennant, Mrs De Crespigny, Professor and Mrs E. R. Dodds, Mrs C. B. Fernald, Dr D. F. Fraser-Harris, Dr Lionel Giles, Mr David Gow, Mr C. C. L. Gregory, Rev. J. W. Hayes, Rev. W. S. Irving, Miss Boucher James, Miss Ina Jephson, Mr and Mrs G. W. Lambert, Mr G. R. S. Mead, Mr and Mrs Ernest Milton, Dr and Mrs T. W. Mitchell, Miss Isabel Newton, Miss Ramsden, Mrs Kenneth Richmond, Major Rampling Rose, Mr and Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr S. G. Soal, Professor F. J. M. Stratton, Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, Mr E. S. Thomas, Rev. H. Thurston, Miss Vincent, Miss Nea Walker.

After the loyal toast Sir Ernest Bennett proposed "The pious memory of the Founders and the future prosperity of the Society" ; and Sir Oliver Lodge proposed the health of Mrs Sidgwick, the President of Honour, referring in moving terms to the great services she had rendered the Society and the regret felt by all at her inability to be present. He also referred to the regretted absence (due in some cases to reasons of age and health, and in others to the world-wide economic depression) of distinguished foreign members of the Society. Letters of congratulation and regret had been received from Professor Charles Richet, Professor Hans Driesch, Professor Henri Bergson, Dr W. F. Prinee, Professor Max Dessoir, Professor T. K. Oesterreich, Dr Eugène Osty, Count Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo, Graf C. von Klinekowstroem, Dr Tanagras, Dr R. Tisehner, Mr Carl Vett, and others.

Professor Gilbert Murray also wrote regretting that an important engagement in connection with the League of Nations Union prevented his presence at the Jubilee celebrations.

The dinner was followed by a Reception by the President and Council, to which all Members and Associates were invited. There was a large attendance, and an excellent programme of music was provided by the Griller Quartet.

On 1 July Mrs Henry Sidgwick's paper on the history of the Society was read in the Conway Hall by the Rt Hon. the Earl of Balfour. Her paper is circulated herewith as Part 126 of *Proceedings*.

On 2 July Dr William Brown, F.R.C.P., Wilde Reader in Mental Philosophy in the University of Oxford, delivered an Address in the Conway Hall on "Psychology and Psychical Research," which will be published in Part 127 of *Proceedings*.

MORE ALLEGED OCCURRENCES OF THE ROPE-TRICK.

BY THE HON. EVERARD FEILDING.

HAVING been recently reminded, through reading for review Ottokar Fischer's *Illustrated Magic*, of the verbal account given me some twenty years ago by a friend (who prefers to be referred to by his initials, but whose name is known to the Editor) of an occasion on which he had himself seen a performance of the rope-trick, I asked him to write a report of his experience. Several letters have passed between us, but for brevity I have to summarise the resultant of his original statement and of his answers to my questions.

16 February 1932.

"One Sunday afternoon in December 1903 in my bungalow on the Wynaad plateau, S. India, my boy Daniel told me a group of jugglers had arrived and would like to perform before me. I demurred, thinking they were of the ordinary type. . . . David, however, insisted that they were out of the ordinary and I agreed. . . . The group consisted of four, an aged man with a long white beard, another man middle aged, a woman and a small boy of about 10 years from the Telegu country. They proceeded with their performance, which was good, . . . and after a little time I dismissed them. Some little time after, Daniel appeared to say they were still at the back and were anxious to show us a special trick which he declared to be 'so so clever,' but they wanted a promise of 15 rupees. . . . The verandah not being suitable we went outside. They told me I was to see the boy climbing up a rope to the sky. I may say here that while I knew this to be a wonderful trick and had read of it in books I did not know that but few people had seen it, and I have, ever since, blamed myself for not noting details with more care.

“ The performanee which had gone before had been carried through by the three younger members of the group, the old man contenting himself with droning on some pipes. In this matter however the old man took complete echarge.

“ He asked for four saucers which he placed at the corners of a square of about 6' x 6'. In the centre of the square he placed a shallow earthenware vessel, about 15" in diameter. The boy stripped off everything except a ' langooty ' and string. The old man poured some grayish powder into the saucers and central ehatty.

“ He insisted that if Daniel was to watch he must sit elose to me so he squatted between my feet, he also stipulated for dead silence, no smoking, and we were both to watch him carefully.

“ He put a match to the powders, and from all the vessels arose a thin column of rather pungent smoke. He then took a fine rope, coiled it, and held it in his right hand. The boy kept close to him the whole time and copied every movement he made.

“ He then squatted down and kept up a sort of incantation, making passes with his hands. (These passes were not out of the ordinary but of the type usually made by jugglers when at work.) In the meantime the man and woman were busy on the tom-toms. This went on for some time until I got rather bored ; but was afraid to take my eyes off him as I expected something to happen any moment. Suddenly he moved towards the centre column of smoke keeping his eyes on us throughout, and after what seemed a short time, flung the rope into the air. The boy sprang for the rope and disappeared up the rope through the smoke column. The whole thing was very quick, he seemed to go up, dwindle and disappear. I remember it was a ease of the boy being hauled up by, rather than climbing, the rope, for his position as I saw him was that of a man being lowered on a rope with his foot in a loop of it, one arm outstretched holding the rope above, the other arm by his side. He just disappeared rope and all. The tom-toms had been worked up to a roar and then suddenly ceased.

“ When I looked down again the old man was sitting eabnly opposite with a smile on his faee. The boy was not to be seen but presently the woman euppued her hands and ealled, and the boy appeared on the hill nearby. This was a high hill about as high as that on which the old bungalow at W. [a place known to me. E.F.] rested, although much more preeipitous. That is all I can tell you of what I saw. Daniel saw all I saw, and was worried deelaring it to be ' devil's work '.

“ The old man declined diseussion on the triek simply asking for his fee, which he got.

“ Daniel and myself were the only onlookers, my other servants having gone away for the day. Daniel declared he felt ill and had

a bad head that night and next day, but knowing Daniel to be rather fond of master's whiskey I put this down to what I found had always previously been the cause of such heads. I did not time it, but the whole affair took about half an hour. The time was between 5.30 and 6 p.m. The old man was really aged, though fairly active, and I should have put him down as 80 and over."

22 February 1932.

"The following answers to your questions may help you. (1) The account was made from memory, but the details were planted in my mind when I wrote a letter at the time describing it to my father.

"(2) When I say 'fine' rope I mean a rope of ordinary thickness, of say $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter. I did not examine the rope, but from what I remember it was of ordinary make.

"(3) No, the smoke was not thick enough to obscure the boy. I could not say to what height the boy went, but he certainly grew less and less, until he vanished. The rope seemed to go with the boy.

"(4) I did not see the end of the rope for all my attention was riveted on the boy.

"(5) The rope vanished with the boy, nor did I see it again, and I did not examine it.

"(6) As regards the time taken from when the man flung up the rope to when the boy and rope disappeared I could not rightly say, but it seemed a matter of very few seconds.

"(7) As regards the height of the hill, an active boy could have got to the top of it easily in five minutes. It must have been the same boy for it was a lonely place, and no other people could have been 'pressed' into the service of the jugglers. I cannot of course say how long it was before the boy appeared; but it seemed almost at once after I looked down that the woman called out, and he appeared.

"(8) As to whether at the time everything seemed quite normal like a conjuring trick, or whether I felt as if I had been bemused or made the victim of an optical illusion, it seemed to me an ordinary trick which I could not explain, and I do not remember ever thinking I was in any way bewitched, or bemused.

"(9) At that time of year the days were short: I do not remember what the light was like, but it was usually dark by 6 to 6.10 p.m. in December. The sunset I could not see at any time from the bungalow site as the country was very broken."

I wrote further to ask if the report to his father was extant and whether he could not say approximately whether the boy went up 10 feet high or 20 or 50 or 100. Also, as it seemed to me impossible that a rope hanging from the sky with a boy disappearing up it could

appear like an ordinary trick, whether there was nothing about it that seemed abnormal.

To this he replied :

25 February 1932.

“ I am sorry to say the account I wrote for my father is not extant.

“ (2) I'm afraid it is very disappointing, but I cannot state any given height [to which the boy seemed to go]. The boy disappeared, and as he disappeared decreased in size so that the height must have been well over the maximum you instance.

“ (3) I was only 23 years of age when I saw this trick performed, and at the time did not consider it any more wonderful than that one of placing a boy in a basket, piercing him with swords, the boy presently appearing perfectly sound and intact from the bottom of the garden although one had never taken one's eyes from the basket into which he had originally stepped. As I say, I was young at the time and did not appreciate the wonder I was being shown.

“ No, I cannot say there was anything which seemed abnormal to me.”

Up to this point, I had abstained from reminding my friend of anything he had told me before. As I have said it was about 20 years ago, but my recollection of the account he then gave me was absolutely clear on two points, viz. that the height of the rope did not exceed 10-12 feet and that when he looked at the top of it it seemed muzzy, i.e. *not* normal. The difference was so striking that I asked whether the mythopoeic faculty had been at work in his mind or in mine. He replied :

7 March 1932.

“ I fear it is in my mind, not yours, that the mythopoeic faculty is at work. There is no doubt as regards the rope not being a long one, for the coil I saw was small, so my memory as regards the ending of the trick is probably faulty, and what I told you some twenty years back (very nearly) would be more exact. There is no doubt that Daniel my servant considered himself bemused : but as for myself, whether my memory through distance has become warped I cannot say, but I am quite unable to remember whether my vision of the boy was clear or foggy at the moment he disappeared.

“ Now that you mention the fact I clearly remember telling you what you write and that is, I should say, probably what is correct. One tells these stories (based on fact) to people who murmur ‘ How wonderful ’ and forget all about them, and one is therefore rather inclined to slur actual detail happenings and in time forget what to the keen analyst of such matters are the main essentials, so you must forgive me if I have disappointed you.”

Well it certainly *is* disappointing, but even the account as my

friend first told it me years ago was sufficiently impressive to make it probable that the trick he saw was something very different from that described in the book which has given rise to this discussion (see my review in *Journal S.P.R.*, May 1932, xxvii, 261).

Since writing the above my attention has been called to some correspondence about this trick which appeared in the *Morning Post* at the end of January 1932, amongst others from Mrs Pennell-Williamson, of Boscombe, who supplemented her account in a letter to myself. She refers to an occasion 35 years ago when she saw the rope-trick in Mussoorie in Northern India. Her version differs from H.A.'s in that she says the boy climbed up the rope hand over hand and vanished at the top at a height of from 20 to 30 feet, coming back after a few moments from another part of the grounds of a hotel, from a window on the first floor of which she viewed it. This lady is of opinion that the effect was one of some hypnotic influence.

Various officers wrote to the *Morning Post* maintaining that the rope-trick was purely a myth, chiefly on the ground that although they had offered rewards for its performance no one had ever come forward to claim them. Reference, however, was made by one correspondent to Lord Frederick Hamilton's book *Here, There and Everywhere*, published in 1921, which contains a story told to the author by Colonel Barnard, at one time chief of police in Calcutta, who with an English subordinate saw what purported to be the trick. Colonel Barnard, having never seen the rope-trick, had instructed his policemen to inform him of the arrival in Calcutta of any juggler professing to do it. At length the police told him that a man able to perform the trick had come and would show it on condition that Colonel Barnard should be accompanied by one friend only. The Colonel took with him one of his English subordinates; he also took his Kodak. They arrived at a poor house in the native quarter, where they were ushered into a courtyard thick with dense smoke rising from two braziers burning mysterious compounds. The juggler, naked except for his loincloth, appeared and commenced salaaming profoundly, continuing his salaams for some little while. Eventually he produced "a long coil of rope. To Colonel Barnard's surprise the rope began paying away, as sailors would say, out of the juggler's hand of its own accord, and went straight up into the air. Colonel Barnard Kodaked it. It went up and up, till their eyes could no longer follow it. Colonel Barnard Kodaked it again. Then a small boy, standing by the juggler, commenced climbing up this rope, suspended to nothing, supported by nothing. He was Kodaked. The boy went up and up, till he disappeared from view.

"The juggler, professing himself angry with the boy for his dilatoriness, started in pursuit of him up this rope, hanging to nothing. He was Kodaked, too. Finally, the man descended the rope

and wiped a blood-stained knife, explaining that he had killed the boy for disobeying his orders. He then pulled the rope down and coiled it up, and suddenly the boy reappeared.

“The two Europeans returned home absolutely mystified. Colonel Barnard went into his dark room and developed his negatives. *Neither the juggler, nor the boy, nor the rope had moved at all.* The photographs of the ascending rope, of the boy climbing it, and of the man following him, were simply blanks, showing the details of the courtyard and nothing else. Nothing whatever had happened: but how, in the name of all that is wonderful, had the impression been conveyed to two hard-headed, matter-of-fact Englishmen?”

I have no means of judging whether when Colonel Barnard told his story to Lord Frederick Hamilton or when the latter wrote his book the mythopoeic faculty had been at work on one or other of them, as seems to have been the case with my friend H.A. It will be noticed that in two respects their accounts tally, *i.e.* the smoke-producing powder or herbs, and the impression that the rope went up of itself. Through another correspondent of the *Morning Post*, Mr F. D. Logan, I was referred to an account of the trick in the journal of the great Moorish traveller, Ibn Battuta, who went to China in about 1345 and records how he there saw a juggler take a wooden ball with holes in which were long leather thongs and throw it in the air till it rose right out of sight,—the audience were sitting in the Palace Court during the hot season—when nothing remained in his hand but a short piece of the cord [or thong]. He then ordered an apprentice to go up the cord until he too disappeared from sight. The juggler called him three times without receiving any reply, so he took a knife and climbed up till he disappeared as well. He then threw down the boy's hands, feet and trunk, and finally his head and then came down himself puffing and blowing and smeared with blood. After saluting Ibn Battuta's host, an Emir, he placed the boy's limbs touching one another and gave them a kick, when he rose up as sound as ever. This so amazed Ibn Battuta that he got a palpitation of the heart, so they gave him a potion, and then a Cadi sitting next to him told him that there was no climbing or coming down or cutting up of limbs at all, but that the whole thing was *hocus-poeus*.

This is only one of many accounts of marvels performed by fakirs in Ibn Battuta's presence in India and China, which in the 14th century would have offered a rich field of work for the S.P.R.

ON A SITTING WITH RUDI SCHNEIDER.

BY WILLIAM BROWN, M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P.

OWING to the appearance in the popular press of highly-coloured reports of my recent experiences with Rudi Schneider, I felt it

desirable to publish an accurate description over my own signature as promptly as possible. For this reason I contributed the following two letters to *The Times* of 7 May and 14 May respectively. The first letter gives an objective account of the "phenomena" which I witnessed, and my immediate mental reactions to them. The second sets out the results of a week's hard thinking and reflection on the whole experience, and states my considered opinion about it.

I may add that I was present at one or two "successful" sittings with Rudi Schneider three years ago, and have had many unsuccessful or "negative" sittings with him before the remarkable sitting to which these letters refer.

I. From *The Times* of 7 May 1932.

SIR,—As a certain amount of publicity, unsolicited by me, has been accorded to a striking experience which I had last Tuesday night at the National Laboratory for Psychical Research, I should like to give a brief record of my impressions in your journal, while they are still fresh in my memory. A detailed record of every incident was made at the time by a shorthand writer, but that is another matter.

I was one of a circle of seven people at a séance with Rudi Schneider, the Austrian medium. We sat, holding hands, in front of a "cabinet", or small recess, curtained off by two heavy curtains edged with luminous strips, with the medium to the side, about 2 ft. from the left-hand curtain, and fully controlled as to hands, feet, and head by one of the sitters. A shaded red lamp hung in front of the curtains, and on the floor in front of them, illuminated by the red rays, was a small table with a detachable top on which was placed a knotted handkerchief. A luminous waste-paper basket was also near by. Inside the cabinet, on the floor, were vases containing different kinds of flowers—daffodils, anemones, etc. I searched the cabinet carefully and found nothing else there. Then the room was plunged into darkness, apart from the red light, and Rudi went into a trance characterised by rapid breathing, which was kept up over long periods of time. His trance personality, "Olga", appeared and spoke in whispered German.

Later the curtains began to shake and billow out as if blown by a breeze, and we had a feeling of cold. After some experiences with the basket, which "Olga" directed me to place on my knees and then to hold near the curtain, and which was moved and tugged by some unseen agency, sounds of movement seemed to come from the small table, and a loud bang was heard in a far corner of the room. Subsequently, on turning up the light, we found that the detachable top had been hurled over our heads into that corner, and that the knotted handkerchief had been transported over our heads into the opposite corner of the room.

Then a mass of flowers suddenly emerged from the curtains at a level of about 4 ft. from the floor and fell under the red lamp. They had been caught up from the vases in the cabinet by some unseen agency. Mr Harry Price, the director of the laboratory, who was sitting immediately in front of the shaded red light, was asked by "Olga" to hold a flower by its head, with the stalk pointing towards the curtains, under the red light. It then disappeared towards the cabinet. I was asked to do the same with another flower. I felt an impact at the end of the stalk, and then the flower was drawn from me into the darkness. These were the outstanding events of the sitting. I could find no evidence of fraud or trickery, and, while retaining an alert and critical attitude of mind throughout, I had a strong feeling of some mysterious power working from within the cabinet, a power for which I could imagine no mechanical or pneumatic contrivance as a cause—at least such as would be possible under the conditions of the séance.

I have had sittings with many other "physical" mediums, and in no case have received the impression of genuineness in their manifestations such as I had with Rudi last Tuesday night. Undoubtedly the phenomena are worthy of the closest scientific investigation.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

WILLIAM BROWN.

II. From *The Times* of 14 May 1932.

SIR,—In my letter of last Saturday I endeavoured to give a concise, accurate account of a "successful" séance with the young Austrian medium Rudi Schneider at which I was present on Tuesday night, 3 May. I briefly described the chief events that occurred and also my own mental reactions to them. At the time I had a feeling of conviction that the phenomena could not be accounted for in ordinary terms—in other words, that they were supernormal. But intellectual conviction comes, if at all, only after reflection upon all the relevant circumstances, and this involves in its scope a very wide circle of facts both physical and psychological. Direct observation, free from any inaccuracy, may point imperiously in one direction and yet a full consideration of all the circumstances may indicate a different interpretation. In psychical research, as in the investigation of crime, circumstantial evidence is of supreme importance.

My experiences are paralleled by those of Dr D. Fraser-Harris and of all the other sitters (a large number) who were present at one or another of the more successful séances, and I understand that their conviction of the genuineness of the phenomena was at least as strong as mine. Moreover at the Institut Métapsychique in Paris the director, Dr Eugène Osty, held a large number of séances with Rudi last year, using infra-red rays and elaborate photo-electric receiving

apparatus, whereby he seems to have demonstrated absorption of such rays to the extent of 30 per cent. and more by action at a distance under trance conditions. These interesting researches are described in "Les Pouvoirs Inconnus de l'Esprit sur la Matière" (Librairie Félix Alcan, 1932). Similar results with infra-red rays have been obtained in one or two sittings here in London with less elaborate apparatus.

Nevertheless, one is not relieved from the necessity of the closest scrutiny of all the circumstances of these researches, and during the past week my mind has hardly ceased from an active review of every conceivable aspect of the problem. The human element must be closely considered, the temperament, situation, and motives of every person concerned, both here and abroad, so far as it is at all possible to discover them. The order of events, the conditions of the séances, certain observations which seemed insignificant at the time but which may prove to be important in the light of later events—these and many other considerations must play their part in helping one to come to a final verdict.

In the light of such considerations as these I am still unable to dispute the genuineness of the phenomena that I experienced. On the other hand, the extensive *lacunae* in my knowledge of this wider circle of facts prevent me from going sponsor for the phenomena, in spite of their immediate impressiveness. Intellectual conviction can only come, if at all, after a much more stringent scientific investigation carried out in a university laboratory or in the séance room of the S.P.R., with trained scientists and psychical researchers as sitters. In saying this I am not depreciating the very important preliminary work that has already been done, both here in England and on the Continent, but I am emphasising the need of confirmatory evidence and of systematic verification. Further knowledge is required of the exact physiological and psychological nature of Rudi's trance state, or so-called trance personality "Olga"—whether genuine or spurious. An outstanding difficulty in this kind of research, distinguishing it from ordinary scientific research, is that one has to adapt oneself to the whims and preconceptions of the medium on pain of getting no "phenomena". One cannot dictate the conditions of the investigation, but has to submit to dictation from him or from his trance personality. Therefore indirect and hidden control of the investigation needs to be exceptionally stringent and far-seeing.

Whether genuine or spurious, Rudi Schneider's trance manifestations are worthy of the closest scientific study, and will well repay such study.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

WILLIAM BROWN.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF TESTIMONY.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—I have read with interest Mr E. F. Benson's criticism of the experiments in the psychology of testimony published in the last number of the *Proceedings*. He does not seem to me to have understood the point of such experiments. It is generally realised by those who have studied the evidence for the physical phenomena of spiritualism that there is a strong tendency in witnesses to take an exaggerated view of their own powers of observation and of their ability to report what they have seen. The only way to convince them of this is to give them the opportunity of comparing their account of what they think they saw or heard on some given occasion, with an authentic account of what actually happened, by the person or persons who know this from the inside as it were. And that is what Mr Besterman endeavoured to do. Of course if he could have produced the expectant atmosphere generally prevalent at a real *séance* as S. J. Davey did, the evidence would be more interesting, but in an experiment conducted under the auspices of the Society it would hardly be permissible to do this. The effectiveness of the evidence obtained would be increased by adding to the number and varying the items, but if this is done it will hardly be necessary to publish tables of the results every time.

Yours, etc.,

ELEANOR MILDRED SIDGWICK.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—In the June *Journal* Mr E. F. Benson ventures to assume that most of the members of the S.P.R. must have been amazed at the contents of the Society's *Proceedings* for May 1932. I had formed a similar opinion, but on other grounds than those put forward by Mr Benson. I thought that many of our members would have been surprised to learn that the accounts given by intelligent witnesses of the events of a short sitting for physical phenomena could be so faulty and so incomplete. Some of our members may not have read the remarkable papers by Hodgson and Davey in *Proceedings*, vols. iv and viii and the possibilities of mal-observation and lapse of memory revealed in those papers may be unknown to them. Yet to have knowledge of these possibilities is of the first importance in all investigations of paraphysical phenomena, and serious students of psychical research should welcome Mr Besterman's Report.

I do not understand how Mr Benson can describe such a report as futile or maintain that there is nothing in it "however remotely con-

nected " with psychological research. In my opinion some knowledge of the psychology of testimony is essential in every form of psychological research whatsoever.

Yours, etc.,

T. W. MITCHELL.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—Mr E. F. Benson's letter in the June issue of the *Journal* protesting at what he terms the futility of the contents of the Society's *Proceedings* for May 1932, seems to me to show a very ill-judged lack of appreciation of Mr Besterman's experiments. He complains that the investigations " only show the comparative powers of observing of forty-two unnamed persons." But is not that the very crux of psychological research—the powers of observing of named or unnamed persons?

The great majority of us in these matters must always take our evidence second-hand. The bulk of the " evidence " collected by our Society after fifty years of effort is in the form of reports of personal experiences from persons unknown to most of us. Now quite apart from the *bona fides* of these witnesses what are their " powers of observing ? " Surely a vital question indeed ! Mr Besterman's investigations throw a rather disturbing light on the whole matter. Look at his tentative conclusions :

Sitters largely ignore disturbances that appear to be irrelevant.

Sitters' reports of auditory conditions . . . are untrustworthy and erratic, etc.

Thirteen sitters (out of 42 !) actually experienced illusions ranging from extreme mal-observation to true hallucinations. Who would have anticipated that result ?

I venture to assert that far from being futile the whole question is one that requires the most serious investigation. I, for one, would like to thank the experimenter for undertaking such a dull task and I take off my hat to his patient spirit of enquiry.

Yours, etc.

G. W. FISK.

THE MEDIUM BERT REESE.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—I am glad that Dr Prince has now printed his account of his sitting with Reese. Any additional information regarding Reese's methods, as well as those of Ludwig Kahn, is valuable, and from what Dr Prince has recorded it is clear that Reese used several methods in his performances.

I can, however, hardly agree that Reese's methods, as outlined by

Dr Prince, were so remarkable. Substitution of one billet for another is not so difficult if the first billet can openly be seized. The fact that Reese deliberately took the billet for the purpose of exchange weakens his art from the point of view of the conjurer, who would naturally assume that that was the occasion for substitution. Reese's fame rests upon an entirely novel method of seizing the billets *without the knowledge of the sitters*. This, coupled with a variation of the misdirection noted by Dr Prince, was mainly responsible for the theory that the billets remained untouched. But unfortunately he did not, apparently, work this method before Dr Prince. Had he done so Dr Prince would have been far more impressed by his "marvellous art". It was probably this method which Kahn also used and on which was built up his reputation as a clairvoyant.

Yours, etc.,

E. J. DINGWALL.

[It is hardly correct to imply that in Reese's sitting with Dr Prince the first billet could be openly seized. On the contrary, it is precisely Dr Prince's point that it was taken by Reese *without* the sitter's knowledge. The method described by Dr Prince is, in essentials, precisely the same as that recorded by previous observers, including Dr Dingwall (see *Zeitschrift für kritischen Okkultismus*, ii. 275 ff, where full references are given, to which may be added an account dating from 1926 in the sixth edition of Prof. Max Dessoir's *Vom Jenseits der Seele* [1931], pp. 96-8). If, therefore, Dr Dingwall now knows of any other method used by Reese, it is to be hoped that he will put it on record. ED.]

ORIENTAL WORDS IN A DREAM.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—The following experience may interest Members of the Society. In 1929 or 1930 I dreamt that I was standing in the midst of a group of people of Oriental nationality in a flat country with hills on the horizon—a sort of plateau. The colour of the country was yellowish (hot looking), and the dress of the people with whom I was talking was Oriental looking, mostly yellow long garments but not exclusively so, there were light colours and a predominant note of yellow in colour both in the landscape and their clothes—but this was not stressed in any way. The point was that they were consulting me as to the meaning of something or other which had to do with religion. I supposed *their* religion, and I remember saying to myself, in my dream, "These people at any rate think religion is important". I wondered at their asking *me* and felt that they did not understand how ignorant I was. The sentence was repeated

more than once. In my dream I seemed to understand their conversation but do not remember that I understood this particular sentence, which was : *Mifta-taleen*.

I have spelt it as I pronounced it in my dream, and as they did. I woke up, repeating this sentence, wide awake. I recognised that the words were gibberish, but thought I would memorise them, so that I should know, when I awoke for the day finally. I told myself that the second syllable of the first word was the same as the first syllable of the second word. For, in my dream it was only two words, I thought. This enabled me to remember the phrase clearly.

A few weeks later, I met Mr Lawrence Lockhart, who knows both the Persian and Arabic languages well, and asked him if there was any meaning in these words that I had heard in my dream, in any Oriental language that he knew. He at once said "Certainly, there is"—and wrote out this sentence in Persian and in Arabic. The meaning is the same, he says, in both languages : *miftāh-i-t'ālīm*, Persian ; *miftāhu't-t'ālīm*, Arabic ; meaning "The Key of the Teaching".

In my dream, as will be noticed I heard the last letter of the word as *n*, but I might easily have mistaken this.

My daughter to whom I told my dream next morning after dreaming it confirms me in what I say.

Yours, etc.,

EMILY BALDWIN.

DOROTHY I. D. BALDWIN.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

The Boston Society for Psychical Research, Bulletin XVI, April 1932.

This Bulletin of 135 pages, which contains *The Sinclair Experiments demonstrating Telepathy*, by Dr W. F. Prince, consists of two parts, the first being a careful and critical discussion of the telepathic experiments, chiefly in the transference of rough drawings, conducted by Mr and Mrs Upton Sinclair, she being the percipient. It may be remembered that Mr Sinclair's book about them entitled *Mental Radio* was reviewed in our *Proceedings*, vol. xxxix. Dr Prince, however, had before him more material than we had, for he had practically the whole of the original notes of the experiments described in the book and of a number carried out since, including some in which Professor McDougall was the agent. Moreover he himself arranged a series of experiments in guessing without the aid of telepathy, using one of the telepathic series as a standard of comparison. The result was very much in favour of telepathy as against chance. In this part Mrs Sinclair also described the conditions she finds favourable to telepathic success.

We cannot in the space at our disposal describe Mrs Sinclair's

valuable experiments in more detail nor speak at length of the second part of Dr Prince's study. This he describes as "Some Historical Data of Experiments for Telepathy, especially by means of drawings." He here discusses in detail a number of published series of telepathic experiments mostly published in our *Proceedings* from early days onwards, though some published elsewhere. And he also gives references to some which he does not describe in detail. It is a useful reminder for students of the subject of what has been done. But the whole Bulletin and the discussion of the Sinclair experiments in particular, will be of great value to psychical research if it stirs up possible percipients to try what they can do in telepathy, for more experimentation is greatly needed. E. M. S.

Revue Métapsychique, September-October 1931.

This number opens with a paper by M. René Warcollier on "Telepathic Drawings." M. Warcollier compares such drawings or diagrams with those of children and primitives, noting analogies and discrepancies.

"Rhabdomancy" or the divining-rod is much to the front in the shape chiefly of the first two instalments of a long paper by Professor Cazzamali of Milan. This paper, chiefly theoretical, deals also with the experiments made on 16 March 1931 at the Verona stadion with eight Italian dowscrs. The results obtained Professor Cazzamali describes as "excellent" in four cases and "negative" or "poor" in the other four. It is unfortunate that the experiments were to some extent undoubtedly vitiated—as pointed out by Professor Cazzamali himself—by the presence of the three engineers who had prepared the nine artificial "zones" or "camps" to be explored (p. 345).

Dr Osty deals with cases where people "foresee" their own death. His conclusion is that such cases are not explicable as "mere cellular warnings giving to the mind the certainty that the body will soon cease to exist"; and he thinks the cause to lie in "the cryptic intelligence for which time and space are not barriers to knowledge."

The recent experiments with Rudi Schneider at the Paris Metapsychical Institute are dealt with by the same author in another preliminary and very brief statement which promises us detailed results in a few months. We regret to note that the financial resources of the Institute are incidentally referred to as "incessantly sinking."

From the *Chronique* we learn with regret of the death of Father Mainage, a Dominican and Professor at the Paris Catholic Institute, whose attitude towards psychical research—a very favourable one—seems to have been almost unique so far as the Roman Catholic clergy are concerned. P.-P.-S.

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 26 October 1932, at 5.30 p.m.

WHEN

THE COMPLETE ANNOTATED RECORD OF
A SITTING WITH MRS LEONARD

WILL BE READ BY

THE REV. W. S. IRVING

N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.

NEW MEMBERS.

Herbert, C. V. C., F.R.A.S., 3 King's Mansions, Lawrence Street, London, S.W.3.

Hyder, S. M., The Chestnuts, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon.

Pocock, Miss F. N., 34 Gerard Road, London, S.W.13.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 297th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1, on Wednesday, 29 June 1932, at 3.45 p.m., The EARL OF BALFOUR in the Chair. There were also present : Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Dr William Brown, Professor E. R. Dodds, Lord Charles Hope, Miss Ina Jephson, Sir Lawrence J. Jones, Bart., The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Professor F. C. S. Schiller, Mr S. G. Soal, and, later, the President (Sir Oliver Lodge), who had been otherwise engaged on the Society's business ; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Three new members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

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G. 296. CASE OF HAUNTING AT RAMSBURY, WILTS.

WE have received the following account of a case of haunting from Lord Balfour and Mr Piddington, signed by them both.

In June 1931, a man named Samuel Bull, by occupation a chimney-sweep, died in his cottage in Oxford Street, Ramsbury. His widow continued to live in the same cottage with a grandson, James Bull, and soon after her husband's death became bed-ridden.

In August 1931, a married daughter of the widow came to live with her mother at the cottage in Oxford Street, as well as her husband and five children.

In February 1932, the hauntings described below began: the apparition of Samuel Bull being seen by the members of the family.

On 3 April 1932 Lord Selborne was given a verbal account of the hauntings by Admiral Hyde Parker, who lives at Ramsbury, and on 6 April he wrote to Lord Balfour to say that Admiral Hyde Parker would be willing to answer any communication from the S.P.R. On 7 April, Lord Balfour wrote to Admiral Hyde Parker, and on 11 April received from him a letter from which the extract that follows is taken:

“ I at once got into touch with our Vicar (Rev. G. H. Hackett) and showed him your letter and Lord Selborne's, and he undertook to obtain answers to your questions and to write out all he knows. I now enclose his dossier which I do not think I can usefully add anything to. . . .

The old widow of the defunct Bull is bedridden and too ill to mind much about things, but Mrs Edwards, his daughter, is quite willing to receive an investigator from your Society, or to give it any help in her power.”

The Vicar's report, enclosed in Admiral Hyde Parker's letter, follows:

“ Samuel Bull, chimney-sweep, a man of very pleasant and high character, died of cancer, leaving an aged widow and grandson aged 21.

A daughter, Mrs Edwards, gave up her own home and came with her husband and five children to live with the widow for the purpose of looking after her.

Soon after, certain rooms of the cottage became unfit and unsafe for habitation, and as no alternative accommodation could be found, they had to live in a dreadfully crowded and unhappy condition. This state of things had continued for several months, although continued effort has been made to find better housing.

Added to this, the aged widow has been very ill most of the time, and confined to her bed all the time since very shortly after her husband's decease.

Some time in February (1932) when some of the children had gone to bed, the mother (Mrs Edwards) was made anxious by their sleeplessness and restlessness. They complained that there was someone outside the door, and were very nervous.

No one was there, however, *i.e.* no visible presence, but the conditions continued, and a little later the deceased man was seen to ascend the stairs and pass through a door, which was shut, into the room in which he died, and in which Mrs Bull, the widow, had been lying for some time until it was condemned as unsafe, and which at the time of the apparition's first appearance was shut up and unused.

The apparition was seen by Mrs Edwards and the grandson (aged 21) and then by all the others, widow and grandchildren.

At first everyone was terrified and the children screamed, but later, and on subsequent occasions, were calmer, but in a state of quiet awe.

The 'appearances' have been very frequent since, but no diary has been kept of dates and happenings.

All the questions submitted by Lord Balfour I had already put to Mrs Edwards and the family, and had received consistent, satisfactory, and in most cases quite clear and definite answers, but in one or two cases they had found it difficult to express in words their own experiences.

I once again, on receipt of the series of questions asked by Lord Balfour, asked Mrs Edwards to answer all these questions in the order in which they were set down, and again I received answers which were perfectly consistent with her earlier statements and were exactly the same except in one case, question No. 6, where an interesting development is noted.

The following are the answers received :

1. *Particulars of real names and address (not necessarily for publication) and dates :*

Deceased man : Samuel Bull—who appears ;
 Widow : Mary Jane Bull (aged invalid confined to her bed);
 Daughter : Mrs Edwards ;
 Son-in-law : Mr Edwards ;
 Grandson : James Bull ;
 Grandchildren : Five girls and boys—the eldest a girl nearly
 14 years ;

All living in Oxford Street, Ramsbury. No particulars of actual dates have been kept.

2. *Have several members of the family seen the apparition at the same time when they were together ?*

Yes. All members together. Even the smallest girl (5 years ?) who recognised the apparition as 'Grandpa Bull'.

3. *Have any members seen it when others did not?*

Yes. When some members have been absent, such as children at school, husband at work, etc., but when the apparition comes all who are present can see, and apparently can see equally well.

4. *Details concerning the apparition. Is its appearance more or less as in life, and solid? Can they see the features clearly?*

Yes, as in life, dressed as he usually was in the evenings when he had finished work.

Yes, solid, though only one member has felt him, that is the widow. The apparition invariably goes to a position by the bed and lays his hand upon the forehead of the widow. Mrs Bull says the hand is firm but cold.

Yes, the features are clearly recognised (as instanced by the child in answer 2). Mrs Edwards has said that the thing which seemed to fascinate her most was the appearance of his 'poor hands,' because the knuckles seemed to be protruding through the skin.

5. *Is any colour visible? Is it heard as well as seen? Have any of the family felt as if touched?*

The family find it difficult to say anything as to colour. (I think this is due to the dim light in the house and the more or less drab colour of his clothes whilst alive—see answer to question 4—but Mrs Edwards spoke of the 'muffler' he was wearing as being different in colour from the rest of the clothes.)

Only the widow has felt the touch. (See answer to question 4.)

6. *Is the apparition seen, heard or felt (a) in daylight, (b) in artificial light, (c) in twilight, (d) in darkness?*

The apparition has been seen at all times of the day and of the night, but only *seen* at times of darkness because there were candles burning. See Note A below.

7. *Was there any sense of alarm felt at first? Was it seen by one person only or by more than one on the first occasion?*

Yes, there was alarm at first. See prefatory note.

It was seen first by Mrs Edwards and almost immediately after by Jimmy—the grandson of 21 years.

8. *Had the man ever said in life that he would try to reappear after death?*

No. The 'appearance' has come as a great shock to the family.

NOTE A.—All the statements bore testimony to the sadness of the apparition's appearance. They 'understood' that the deceased was grieved at their forlorn condition, but the last two appearances have changed considerably and he seems much happier. This is believed to be due to the possibility that the family might soon go into a Council house, and so be in happier circumstances.

With reference to answer to question 6. I had asked Mrs Edwards some time ago whether the apparition were luminous—but she said

'No'. When he appeared at night, though they felt his presence, they could not see him without artificial light.

But now Mrs Edwards says, since this change in him he is lighter. I asked, 'Do you mean that he shines with a light of his own?'

She answered, 'I can hardly tell, but I think so'. I asked, 'If he were to come in the middle of the night do you think you would see him without the help of your candle?' She answered 'Yes, I believe I should.'

There was genuine grief at the sadness of his appearance before, and now there is as genuine gladness at the change that has taken place.

NOTE B.—The family always know the 'presence' is there for half an hour or more before anybody sees him. They are conscious of a peculiar restlessness or stirring or expectancy. Mrs Edwards says, 'I feel as though I am expecting my brother from America, or something like that'.

NOTE C.—There is some hope that the family might be moving into a Council house in a few days time, and in that case the apparition might cease to appear, especially as the owner intends to put the house into condition, which will involve very considerable disturbance of present conditions. So if the S.P.R. propose to make any investigation there is no time to be lost.

Mrs Edwards will be very pleased to do all in her power to facilitate an investigation.

(Signed) GEO. H. HACKETT,
Vicar of Ramsbury.

9 April 1932.

EXTRA NOTES.—The appearances are not fleeting, but quite lengthy, and [on] one occasion at least, lasted for several hours.

Mrs Bull had faithfully nursed the deceased for four years before he 'passed' from sooty cancer."

On 14 April, Lord Balfour and Mr Piddington went to Ramsbury, and had a long interview at Admiral Hyde Parker's house with the Admiral and Mr Hackett, the Vicar. During this interview the Vicar gave them the following information :

1. With regard to the statement contained in the Note attached to his report to the effect that on one occasion the apparition "lasted for several hours", the Vicar explained that he had meant by this that the figure appeared *off and on* during several hours.

2. The widow once heard the ghost say "Jane"—that being her name.

3. The first to see the apparition were Mrs Edwards and her nephew of 21 years old, and they saw it on the same occasion. [See, however, below for Mrs Edwards's own statement which differs from the above.]

4. In reply to the question "What grounds have the family for thinking that the apparition has any connexion with the unsatisfactory state of the cottage?" the Vicar said he thought that they had no grounds beyond "sheer inference".

5. When the children complained of there being "some one outside the door", they did not, the Vicar understands, hear any noise; nor has any noise been heard by other members of the family, with the exception of the widow, who, as mentioned above, once heard her name spoken.

6. When asked whether any members of the family have been interested in Spiritualism, the Vicar said "No"; and he returned the same answer when asked whether any members of the family have had previously any experiences similar to the present ones.

7. Mrs Edwards, with whom the Vicar had had a talk earlier in the morning of 14 April, had spontaneously told him that the appearances take a great deal out of the members of the family, and especially out of old Mrs Bull. She also told him spontaneously that Mrs Bull often sees the figure; and that the last appearance had been on Saturday, 9 April.

8. In reply to the suggestion that the whole story might have been concocted for the purpose of arousing sympathy with the family on account of the wretched conditions in which they were living, and so increase the chances of their obtaining better accommodation, the Vicar said that, in the first place, he believed in the good faith of the witnesses, and, in the second place, that any such plot might well have had just the opposite result to that desired. He added, however, that the family might, of course, have miscalculated the outcome of a manœuvre of the kind.

9. Lord Selborne in his letter to Lord Balfour had written as follows: "The Admiral seemed to regard the family as telling the truth, but he emphasised the fact that no strangers have ever seen the apparition though they have been in the room when all the family said they saw him." Admiral Hyde Parker said that Lord Selborne must have misunderstood him; and that so far as he knew no strangers had ever been present during the appearances. The Vicar agreed.

At 2.55 p.m. Admiral Hyde Parker, Mr Hackett, Lord Balfour and Mr Piddington called at the cottage, and had a minute or two's conversation with Mrs Edwards, downstairs. They then all went upstairs into a bedroom where Mrs Bull was lying in bed, Mrs Edwards taking with her her youngest child—the only one of her children who was at home at the time.

They found the cottage completely dismantled, the only furniture left being the bed in which Mrs Bull was lying and a single chair. The dilapidated state of the cottage was apparent. The family were

actually engaged that day in moving into one of the local District Council houses.

In Mrs. Bull's bedroom an interview then took place which lasted about 40 minutes. In the course of it a number of questions were put to Mrs Edwards and answered by her. Mrs Bull answered one or two questions.

Appended is a summary of what Mrs Edwards and Mrs Bull said.

Summary of Interview.

On 21 June 1931, Samuel Bull died. His daughter, Mrs Edwards, came to live with her widowed mother in August 1931, as did also her husband and five children.

The first experience occurred after three of the children, who had previously been sleeping in the grandmother's bedroom, had been moved to a room downstairs because one, or perhaps two, of the children had got influenza. The children had been at least a fortnight downstairs before they experienced anything unusual. It was when Mary, a girl who will be 14 next June, was down with influenza—and she was the last of the children to catch it—that the ghost was first seen by Mrs Edwards and Mary. It was shortly afterwards that Mrs Edwards and the grandson, James Bull, aged 21, saw the apparition together. Mrs Bull, when she heard that Mrs Edwards and Mary had seen the apparition, said to Mrs Edwards that she had seen it before.

Mrs Edwards said that the date when Mary was ill could be ascertained by the Vicar, as he could find out when Mary was absent from school.

When Mrs Edwards and James Bull saw the figure on the same occasion, Mrs Edwards, as soon as she saw it, told him that she was seeing it.

Mrs Edwards said that all the members of the family, including her husband, had seen the figure.

The figure appears to be quite life-like to Mrs Edwards. It does not glide, but walk, and seems solid. She spontaneously described the appearance of the hands and knuckles, her statement agreeing with the one reported by the Vicar under question 4 above.

Mrs Edwards said that when the appearances began she was more frightened than the children.

After describing the feeling of restlessness and expectancy that precedes her visions of the figure, Mrs Edwards added that after the ghost has disappeared she feels more composed.

Mrs Bull said that she had twice felt the hand of the ghost on her brow. It felt cold. She also said that she had heard the ghost call her "Jane" once.

Questioned as to whether any members of the family had ever had any experiences of a psychical kind, Mrs Edwards said that her father, Samuel Bull, had had a premonition of the death of one of his sons, who died as a prisoner of war at Mons. She gave details of her father's premonition, which, however, it is not necessary to reproduce here.

When asked about the duration of the appearances, Mrs Edwards said that on one occasion the figure must have been visible for half-an-hour continuously.

Mrs Edwards was a good witness. She answered the questions put to her simply, naturally, readily and briefly.

The interview ended at about 3.40 p.m.

The account of the interview with Admiral Hyde Parker and Mr Hackett, and the account of the interview with Mrs Edwards and Mrs Bull, were written out by Mr Piddington on 15 April 1932, and are based on memoranda that he made at the time.

The Vicar undertook to seek an opportunity of interrogating the husband, Mr Edwards, later, on which any excitement that the interview with Mrs Edwards might have caused had died down.

On 31 May 1932, the Vicar wrote to Mr Piddington as follows :

“ Thank you for your letter. I did not hurry to obtain the signatures to this statement, first because you advised me not to hurry, and secondly because I thought that it would be a further test of some value if I allowed a considerable time to elapse before returning to the subject with the family, as it seemed to me that memory was likely to be less stable in regard to a mere statement, especially a false statement, than it would be in regard to an actual experience. Moreover, the aged widow has been extremely ill lately—her ‘ passing ’ is imminent—and it was hardly seemly to press the family at such a time.

However, since receiving your letter I have watched for an opportunity, and it came to-day, when the husband happened to be at home.

I had the statement with me, and was able, quite naturally, to open the subject.

Every question was answered as naturally as before and with as much conviction and appearance of truthfulness. Both Mrs Edwards and her husband were perfectly ready and willing to sign the statement, which I read over to them before the signing.

I regret that the signatures are not in ink. My own pen stubbornly refused to serve and the only medium they could provide was a stumpy pencil.

Nothing has happened in the new home. . . .

(Signed) GEO. H. HACKETT.”

The following is endorsed on the back of the Vicar's report :

“The following is the signature of Mrs Edwards (referred to in the foregoing) and also of Mr Edwards her husband, testifying to the correctness of the statement. The whole statement was read to them immediately before signing.

(Signed) MARY JANE EDWARDS.

HENRY JOHN EDWARDS.

These signatures were obtained in the house of Mrs Edwards, and are in pencil because they had no ink in the house at the time.

The signatures were made in my presence, to-day, May 31st 1932.

(Signed) GEO. H. HACKETT,

Vicar of Ramsbury.”

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF TESTIMONY.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—Your correspondent (*Journal*, xxvii. 278) alleges that the experimental sittings by Mr Besterman “yield no results whatever as to the investigation of the most ‘favourable conditions for observation’ which was their avowed object.” His ground for this view is that “the procedure at all these sittings was identical.” Apparently his thought is that the conditions of some of the experiments should have been “most favourable” and of others less favourable for observation, and that the results of questioning after these respectively should have been compared. But, as I understand it, Mr Besterman wished to see what the answers would be relative to a set of experiments uniformly under the “most favourable conditions for observation” compared with the mass of reported experiments with persons actually claiming to produce supernormal physical phenomena. Let *B* stand for the Besterman experiments, *X* for the stock sittings with physical mediums, and make a few of the comparisons possible. (1) *B* sitters in advance notified by a letter to expect no supernormal phenomena; *X* sitters most commonly incited in advance to expect supernormal phenomena. (2) *B* sittings prefaced by a warning that that “medium” is not a real one, and a statement expressly intended to put sitters on their guard to observe critically; *X* sitters met at the start by the assumption that the medium is a real one, and usually subjected to a barrage of remarks from medium and presumed spirit control calculated (intentionally or not) to lull their suspicions and put them in an uncritical frame of mind. (3) *B* sitters expressly told that their attention is to be confined to the *what*, to the exclusion of the *how*; *X* sitters.

in duty bound to have their attention divided between the *what* and the *how*. (4) *B* sittings but 25 minutes long, not long enough seriously to enfeeble the sitters' powers of attention; *X* sittings usually two hours long, often much longer. (5) *B* sittings proceed to phenomena at once; in *X* sittings often phenomena do not occur for half an hour, an hour, or more, when already the threshold of attention is lowered. (6) In *B* sittings abstention from any misleading suggestions, with one exception; in *X* sittings full latitude for misleading suggestions. (7) In *B* sittings the phenomena (acts) comparatively few; in *X* sittings the phenomena (including the acts of the medium and such of others as must be taken into account) probably averaging twenty times as many. (8) In *B* sittings some of the most important phenomena taking place in full light; in *X* sittings all the important phenomena usually occurring in darkness or bad light.

These points will be enough. Now if under these comparatively "most favourable conditions for observation" all the sitters forget more or less of what occurred and many of them observe or remember things otherwise than as they occurred, it is certain that under less favourable conditions for observation—those of the ordinary sitting—things will be observed and reported not in better but in still more peccable fashion. Is it of no "possible interest", when we read the reports of Tom, Dick or Harry on what he saw and heard at a sitting for teleplasm, or materialisation, or slate-writing, to know that with most people the bodily senses can be deceived, and that the memory will fail to record some essential facts and will record others in muddled or quite erroneous fashion?

It is not uncommon to read that in a particular experiment with a physical medium one or two persons claim to have observed an incriminating or suspicious act, while all the others present did not see it and express their disbelief in its occurrence, although the light was poor and both particular skill and a particular location were the requisites for observing the disputed act. Readers may be "amazed", but is it of no "possible interest" and of no value to learn that in an experimental test where we know exactly what in fact was done, out of the details of an incident occurring in full light, only 4 out of 42 observed its most crucial one, that of pocketing a card? The means of producing a fraudulent physical phenomenon may, and often does, hinge upon an act as apparently trivial as that. In one case it hinged upon the medium's wiping his nose and then putting his handkerchief in another pocket than that from which he had drawn it. Many witnesses failed to note, or to remember, that act; it was so commonplace a one that it appeared to be utterly detached and irrelevant. It is of extreme importance to realise that nothing which occurs in a physical sitting can be regarded as certainly irrelevant, and that the most casual and apparently detached

act may be the "wood-pile" in which the "nigger" hides. Probably many of the sitters in the Besterman experiments took no pains at all to observe what took place as immediate sequences of the knock on the door, supposing that "the disturbance" was no part of the show. The demonstration that people can be so easily diverted is most important, for exactly so do fraudulent physical mediums arrange "disturbances", and lead sitters to think the disturbances are no essential part of the sitting and may be disregarded. It is so "natural" when one coughs to raise his hand to his mouth for a moment that thousands of sitters have quite overlooked and disregarded this act by the medium in the darkness, although the trivial act was the very key of the mystery.

Sometimes the time factor is an important one in the rendition of a report. A sitter says that "not five minutes" after he laid his notes on the table an answer of some length was received on a slate. If that were so, one would be puzzled to account for it on normal grounds, for to get possession of one of the notes, find opportunity to unfold and read it under the edge of the table, restore it folded to the table and produce the writing unperceived would be expected to occupy more than five minutes filled with the necessary confusing little acts and misdirecting utterances. The sitter does not claim to have timed the occurrence by his watch, nevertheless he is sure of his "not five minutes". Is it of no "possible interest", is it not rather a piece of valuable information to all who read such asseverations, that in a case where the elapsed time is exactly known to have been 19 minutes the estimates of 35 persons ran all the way from 5 to 40 minutes, and that the preponderant tendency was to under-estimate rather than to over-estimate? Eighteen persons named a figure four or more minutes below the real number, only seven a figure four or more minutes in excess of it.

I should have expected that all, or at least most, sitters would be unable to report other than very defectively the objects, details of objects and their positions during the moment of a flash. But I regard a demonstration better a hundredfold than an opinion. And surely every one of the nine "tentative conclusions" has its value. We have been reading statements by sitters at physical sittings for a long time and shall probably continue to do so more or less for a long time to come. Every approach which is made toward a measurement of the average value of sensory impressions under given conditions and of memories, immediate or delayed, of the average witness, or the average person in a given class of witnesses, is of value and must be taken into account in our subsequent reading.

There has perhaps never been comprised in such a short space so brilliant a demonstration of what I might call the divertibility of the human mind as is to be found in the Crocker report (*Bulletin XII*,

Boston S.P.R.). It is a demonstration that even men whose very profession relates to the presentation of evidence cannot equally observe diverse phenomena at the same time. The majority were lawyers, and they were apparently so intent on hearing and remembering what was said that a black object on a background of white, in good light, was noted by none, and none noted its withdrawal. Before their eyes took place the acts which indicated theft by a certain person, and they were none the wiser, but rather the weight of their testimony tended to incriminate an innocent person. Mr Besterman's series of experiments does not with such overwhelming force show that, for instance, in a physical sitting incriminating facts may visibly happen unnoticed by most or all of the witnesses. But it is notable as the first attempt in the direction of measuring the various factors of unreliability in honest testimony under sitting conditions. I hope that he or others will institute series of experiments in order further to strengthen the correct conclusions and to rectify any (if there are such) which are wrong, and in order to lead to further conclusions, by varying the conditions and the phenomena of the test sittings and by varying the queries. If most readers should indeed be "amazed" and disgusted by the printing of results in tabular form, as is intimated, then only totals, percentages of totals and conclusions might be printed, and the tables could be mimeographed and thus put into the hands of the real investigators.

I do not think that when the total number of sitters is only 42 any table by which the average scores of Spiritualists are computed and compared with the average scores of the non-Spiritualists is of any particular value, apart from further data regarding the persons who happen to constitute the two groups. It might be that a larger share of the Spiritualists than the others were experienced; it probably would be that the Spiritualists willing to take part in such experiments, and at the invitation of the S.P.R., ranked comparatively high in critical quality. Dr Hyslop was convinced of spirit communication, but few could surpass him in the number and precision of his observations in such a sitting. On the other hand, I have known a college professor of such a temperament that after scores of experiments with a particular medium he remained blind to the damning force of indicia which stamped the mediumship as obviously spurious in the eyes of more cautious men even at their first sittings.

Of course, a thing actually observed by one sitter out-weighs the failure of the nine other sitters to observe it. But it might be urged that the observation of the one was an illusion. So this has long been the situation with physical phenomena: certain men whom I might name attend sittings with one prominent medium after another, and, if they make no convicting discoveries, yet have the misfortune, time after time, of witnessing no phenomena which

seem to them genuine, and of observing much in the way of indicia which seem to them to point to normal causation, while, on the other hand, certain other persons visit these same mediums and time after time announce what seem to them supernormal phenomena, and observe few or no indicia which seem to them suspicious. I, myself, have the unhappiness to belong to the former class. And the war goes on, each class charging the other with seeing, remembering, judging improperly. It is well within the bounds of possibility to have tested the question which of the two classes is in fact reporting more nearly in accordance with the objective facts. Let six sittings, varied as to their phenomena, be carefully rehearsed in advance by three managers who will be able afterward to vouch for every detail of what actually occurred, and when and under what conditions. Let these sittings be attended by, say, a half dozen of the unfortunates seldom, if ever, able to testify to the genuineness of physical performances, and by an equal number of persons who have testified to the genuineness of physical phenomena and hence have come into collision with the former class. Then let it be ascertained by the reports which class has the better score, and by how much. It would be a most illuminating set of experiments, and I would gladly offer myself as one of the subjects. But it is doubtful if the test will ever be made.

Another test I should like to see undertaken. Believing that there are sitters who, hearing after or even during an experiment the chatter of others as to what they saw and heard, by suggestion come to think that they also saw and heard details which they actually did not themselves experience (and the calling out of statements to make a dictaphone record may likewise confuse the memories of some sitters as to what they individually observed), I wish that it could be scientifically determined whether or not this is so. Let there be arranged six sittings, with varied, brief, rehearsed and fixed programs as to phenomena and conditions. Let there be present nine persons at each sitting—six valid and inexperienced ones and three who, unknown to the rest, are to play a part. At the first three sittings let silence be preserved, or at least let no experiments in misdirection take place. But at the last three let loose the gates of conversation and let the three in the "plot"—shrewd and adroit persons acquainted with psychology—occasionally utter a misdirecting or suggestional remark or question. For instance, if there appears a rounded patch of mingled light and shadowy spots (caused by bunching a phosphorescent piece of fabric), one might say, as if to himself, "Isn't that a face?", etc. Then the reports on the first three sittings could be compared with those on the last three. But such an interesting psychological experiment would probably be denounced as one of extreme iniquity.

Psychologically it would have been desirable to ascertain to what extent the omissions of particulars in the "disturbance" as indicated in Table III, were due to defects of observation and to what extent to failures to record what was in fact noticed. Some people seem constitutionally unable to give a full account of what they actually witnessed within a brief period of time, or become able to do so only after practice. It is very improbable that only four persons noticed the white card or its pocketing, seeing that Mr Besterman was not speaking so as to divide attention at the moment. Probably the object and the act were unmentioned by some from an erroneous feeling that they were too trivial or detached to deserve mention. If at the very close of the questionnaire attention had been specifically called again to the incident and sitters had been asked to think whether or not they had omitted any details of it, presumably a number of the blanks would have been filled. Of course, it is of value to demonstrate that the tendency to omit details deemed unimportant exists, for it follows that, as indeed we have been morally certain is the case, many witnesses would similarly omit observed details in a sitting for claimed supernormal phenomena because of the judgment, often fatally erroneous, that they are not worth recording.

It seems to me that some method of scoring should be devised which will distinguish between an utterly erroneous answer and no answer at all. If failure to reply to question 5, asking what object was touched, presumably because of inability to recollect, ranks as O, then naming the wrong object ought to be reckoned as a minus. The witness of a physical sitting who positively misstates the actual fact of a given movement does much more damage than the witness who either did not note the fact at all or is silent because uncertain as to its nature.

A series of specially designed experiments would, I believe, demonstrate that while an experienced sitter versed in psychology may undergo an illusion (using the term to include hallucination), he is very much less likely than a person untaught in both respects to be unaware that it is an illusion. The remark of the psychologist (page 386), "I have, however, the impression that this was an optical illusion," is an illustration.¹ No other sitter experiencing illusion appears to have made an equivalent remark. In one of my Stuttgart experiments, as it approached the fifth hour of duration, certain persons experienced heterogeneous optical hallucinations, partly

¹ I would not be taken as implying that the psychologist, as such, is likely to see and record more correct details of an objective sitting than other intelligent men. This particular psychologist seems not to have made a brilliant record, and I have known psychologists who seemed helpless to protect themselves against those defects of observation, memory and record about which they were accustomed to discourse.

due to weariness and partly probably of the nature of after-effects from long staring at luminous bands and spots. I was one of these, but found that the effects persisted in whatever direction in the darkness I looked, so not for a moment doubted their hallucinatory character. But two other persons, more naïve in experience and in psychological knowledge, were inclined to think that materialisations were beginning to appear.

Any future series of experiments to the same general end as those of Mr Besterman, carried out properly and reported from any part of the world, will be regarded as far from "futile" by more persons than myself. For example, were there held two sets of test sittings, one with tricky physical effects, the other for purported mental mediumship and containing previously rehearsed devices for obtaining hints from sitters and instances of "giving away" facts by sitters, the two sets to be attended by the same cultured witnesses (no ninnies), and their ability to report justly what occurred in the one and the other set were compared, an important conclusion to which some of us have come might be much strengthened. And if not, we should like to know it.

Yours, etc.,
WALTER FRANKLIN PRINCE.

REVIEWS.

GEORG WUNDERLE, *Um Konnersreuth*. 8vo, pp. iv. 65. Abhandlungen zur Philosophie und Psychologie der Religion: Würzburg, Verlag C. J. Becker, 1931. Price Mk. 2.

This little book (65 pages) is a valuable contribution to a much discussed problem.

Its *pièces de résistance* are Professor Wunderle's paper on "Die Stigmatisierte von Konnersreuth," read by him at the Erfurt Congress of Religious Psychology (June 1930), and Professor Alois Mager's "Religionspsychologie und die Vorgänge in Konnersreuth": a paper read at a similar Congress in Vienna eleven months later. We have further, besides an introduction by Prof. Wunderle, two chapters, of which the first is devoted to some "echoes" of the Erfurt paper and the second to a polemical pamphlet of Dr Fritz Gerlich's published in 1931 and directed against Professors Wunderle and Mager; also a correspondence between the latter and Dr Gerlich, and a "conclusion".

Professors Wunderle and Mager (the latter of Salzburg University) are, it should be noted, two Roman Catholic ecclesiastics, Professor Mager being besides a Benedictine monk. Dr Fritz Gerlich has published a work in two volumes on Therese Neumann; he is a layman and was until recently a Protestant (he is now, we believe, a Roman Catholic).

That both Professor Wunderle and Professor Mager are believing Roman Catholics, goes without saying. That they will cheerfully submit to the verdict of their Church in the matter, when that verdict has been officially formulated, is equally certain. But meanwhile and whilst ready to see in the *stigmatica* not only a young girl of irreproachable behaviour, but also a kindly and pious person of high merit (Wunderle, p. 14), and in the Konnersreuth facts themselves a "religious occurrence" (whatever that may mean exactly), "authentic, trustworthy, uniform (einheitlich), full of meaning, impressive" (Mager, p. 37), they are by no means ready to endorse at once the interpretation put on the "phenomena" by the enthusiasts. They plead for more accurate and scientific investigation and evidently earnestly wish their Church to suspend its judgment and postpone as much as possible an "infallible" verdict.

Here and there we find opinions expressed or hinted at by them concerning the way in which they are being treated by their opponents. "If," writes Father Mager to Dr Gerlich (p. 43), "Therese Neumann approves of the way in which Dr Gerlich acts and looks upon him as her advocate it is certain that Christ does not speak through her. For nothing contradicts Christ's spirit more than that kind of polemic." If Therese Neumann stated, after Dr Gerlich laid before her Father Mager's letter of 15 May 1931, that she hardly spoke with him, "this is and remains, objectively speaking, an untruth, whether uttered in a normal state or in the *Zustand der erhobenen Ruhe*" (p. 65). It is permissible to suppose, it should be noted, that the two learned ecclesiastics would have expressed themselves more freely if they had had full liberty to do so. Though we are not entitled to speak of any concrete moral pressure brought upon them, their position in the Roman Catholic world in reference to Konnersreuth is more or less peculiar; comparative isolation (at least in Europe) will perhaps not be too strong a term.

In view of this fact we may surmise that in dealing with such delicate matters as those referred to in the two passages above quoted they tried to express themselves as diplomatically as they could.¹ And I confess that when reading Father Mager's paper at the Vienna Congress, I have the impression that the original paper was on one or two points more explicit. Still, a characteristic sentence has remained: "It must be stated most emphatically," Father Mager writes, "that there can be no question of a scientific verdict as to the Konnersreuth case, so long as these preliminary investigations have not been made (p. 39)." Now these "preliminary investiga-

¹ Since writing the above I have read a masterly article of Professor Wunderle's in the Würzburg *Fränkisches Volksblatt* which he kindly sent me. I acknowledge with pleasure that the language of that article as well as some extracts quoted from a paper of Father Mager's are sufficiently explicit.

tions " should, in the Salzburg Professor's opinion, deal with Therese Neumann's state of consciousness during, between and after the ecstatic visions ; with the nature of the ecstasies themselves ; with the alleged talking by her in languages no more spoken to-day ; with the apparent non-absorption by her of any food. And though in Father Mager's opinion, there remains at Konnersreuth a residuum of facts inexplicable by what we know to-day of causality, natural, nay pathological factors, take part in what occurs there (p. 37). And the very nature of the *voyante's* illness and of the accident which caused that illness has not been thoroughly cleared up (p. 39).

As to the " phenomenon " which has perhaps most contributed to Therese Neumann's world-wide celebrity, though Dr Wunderle is undoubtedly much impressed by her stigmata, he distinctly says (p. 22) that he is unable simply to ascribe the character of a " theological miracle " to every kind of stigmatisation, and he admits the possibility of *natural* stigmatisation.

Of particular importance for his general position is, however, such a passage as the following : " The fact that not only a medical, but also a psychological investigation of the Konnersreuth case has been declined is to be deeply regretted. *I hold those who, directly or indirectly, have been guilty of such a refusal to have assumed no small responsibility* " (p. 15 ; the italics are Prof. Wunderle's own).

The case is still *sub judice* and I am afraid will remain so for a long time to come ; nor do I think it likely, alas, that its investigation will assume the character science is entitled to require. Isolated instances of objective research there will possibly be ; but what is called sometimes the " Konnersreuth circle " has now, I am afraid, closed on Therese Neumann in such a way as almost to preclude the possibility of a sound investigation worthy of the name.

That, scientifically speaking, truth is on the side of those who follow Prof. Wunderle and Father Mager there is no doubt. But even from the religious standpoint it seems to me that the critical and semi-sceptical tendency has scored already an important point. For, astounding as it may seem, it is a fact that for such people as Dr Gerlich and Pfarrer Naber (Therese Neumann's confessor) there is apparently no doubt that it is Christ Himself who speaks through the *stigmatica* using her in the state known as *erhobener Ruhezustand* as a " terrestrial speaking instrument " (p. 53).

So firm is on this point Dr Gerlich's conviction that, as he informs us in his letter to Father Mager printed on pp. 46-61, when he wants to obtain some enlightenment from the entity speaking through Therese Neumann in the *erhobenen Ruhezustand*—" therefore, such is my conviction, from the Saviour "—and when he is unable to obtain it himself, he " regularly " applies to Pfarrer Naber in writing in the following terms : " Will you be kind enough to request in my

name the Saviour to confer on me the grace to answer the following question . . . (p. 55).”

On this Professor Wunderle says : “ Not only is the questioning of the Saviour by Gerlich and Pfarrer Naber utterly antiscientific, but it is a proceeding equally conflicting with the attitude of the Church. From the religious standpoint the utilisation of Therese Neumann as a formal *Christusorakel* for the purpose of verification of scientific researches must be rejected categorically. *By so doing the Konnersreuth affair is placed in a risky position*” (the italics are Professor Wunderle’s own).

These lines are the last of this little volume. On the one hand they are discouraging. On the other they are cheering, as showing that inside the Roman Catholic Church itself there are to be found honest and learned, noble-minded priests in whom deep religious feeling does not exclude a truly scientific and objective attitude and a sincere regard for truth even in a peculiarly “ ticklish ” sphere.

We earnestly hope that in spite of so delicate a position both Professor Wunderle and Professor Mager will be able to continue their championing of the cause of objective scientific inquiry into the Konnersreuth problem. I much fear that their efforts may not prevail in the long run. Their merit will be none the less and they will deserve—they deserve already—the sympathy and respect of all honest seekers after truth, whether devout Christians, atheists or agnostics.

PEROVSKY-PETROVO-SOLOVOVO.

CARL VETT, *Seltame Erlebnisse in einem Derwischkloster*. 8vo, pp. 331, 4 ill. Strassburg: Heitz und Co., 1931.

The well-known organiser of the International Psychological Research Congresses reports in this book on the personal experiences he has had with the Turkish dervishes in Constantinople. The larger part of his book consists of a psychological diary of a fortnight’s stay in a Dervish cloister in that town in 1925. Mr Vett entered it not only and not primarily out of scientific curiosity, but rather because of a religious desire to come into direct contact with the mysticism of Islam. He succeeded in entering into such intimate contact with various typical Dervish sheiks as probably no European had done before him. And so he is able to give us a highly instructive and intimate insight into the religious life of this order. As the works of Nicholson and Macdonald on the religion of Islam show, it is full of reports on and beliefs in parapsychical happenings. It is the chief merit of Mr Vett’s book that he gives us a direct insight into these things. It contains a mass of reports on telepathic visions, bilocations, levitations, fire-tests, and other phenomena. An investigation into their reality is naturally in no case possible. Nevertheless one

obtains the general impression that, notwithstanding obviously uncritical credulity, parapsychical phenomena are not rare among the Muslims.

It is a tragically disappearing world into which Mr Vett was able to look. While under the old régime it was reckoned a privilege to belong to the Dervish order, and officials of high standing entered it, the present-day Turkish government sees only superstition in it, and in February 1931 a number of the Dervishes who had received Vett into their community were condemned. European rationalism, which is no longer in Europe itself the last word in the scientific outlook, still triumphs in the East. (*Translated.*)

T. K. OESTERREICH.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Revue Métapsychique.

November-December 1931. Dr Eugène Osty and Marcel Osty, The unknown Powers of Mind over Matter. [To be continued].—Abbé G. Lambert, A Case of an anticipatory Vision of Events. [A trance medium, Mlle Simon, foretold the details of a voyage].—E. Osty, Black Magician. [The word "black" in the title does not refer to the nature of the magic but to the colour of the magician's skin. Supernormal incidents observed in Africa by Dr L. Cipriani].—Ch. Anary-Bourgeois, The Great Problems of Modern Physics.—*A propos* of Ludwig Kahn. [This clairvoyant has been sentenced to a year's imprisonment owing to financial frauds].

January-February 1932. Dr E. Osty and M. Osty, The unknown Powers of Mind over Matter. [To be continued].

March-April 1932. Dr E. Osty and M. Osty, The unknown Powers of Mind over Matter. [Concluded. See the review of this important report in *Proc. S.P.R.*, xl. 428-36].—E. Pascal, The Prophecy of the Monk of Padua.—Jean Tenaille, *A propos* of the Dowzers. [The writer is of the opinion that the movements of the dowsing-rod are not due to the dowser's muscular movements].

May-June 1932. E. Pascal, Natural Somnambulism. [The writer concludes that somnambulism is a subconscious state characterised by waking amnesia, alternating memory, and suggestibility. It is, in short, the natural counterpart of artificial hypnosis].—Dr E. Osty, Looking Backward. [Dr Osty pays a generous tribute to the S.P.R. on the occasion of its Jubilee].—Sir Oliver Lodge, Memories. [On the same occasion the passages relating to psychical research in Sir Oliver Lodge's recent autobiography are translated].—F. de Briey, To What are due the Movements of the Dowsing-Rod? [The writer re-states very lucidly the reasoning which shows that these movements are due to unconscious muscular action.

Particularly interesting is the demonstration of the absurdity of the electrical hypothesis, since a current of 10,000 amperes would be required to produce the movements of the rod under the conditions.]—E. Osty, Contribution to the Psychology of Prejudices and Beliefs. [Taking as his text various foolish remarks on psychical research in the press, Dr Osty exposes the partiality and ignorance of the writers].

July-August 1932. Dr. E. Osty, Spontaneous Telepathy and Experimental Thought-Transference. [To be continued].—C. de Vesme, The Prophecy of the Monk of Padua.—Sir Oliver Lodge, Memories. [Concluded].—Maurice Maire, Chronicle. [This regular feature covers an even wider range than usual in this issue and is as witty as always.]

Quarterly Transactions of the British College of Psychic Science, Ltd.

April 1931. Dr Th. Wereide, The Trance Phenomena of Mrs Ingeborg. [A summary of the interesting mediumship since described by Judge Dahl in his book *We Are Here*].—S. De Brath, The Old and the New Physics.—F. H. Wood, Evolution and Reincarnation.—Automatic Writing. [Interesting incidents, unfortunately uncorroborated].—Invisible Exteriorisation. [A translation of Dr Osty's preliminary note on his sittings with Rudi Schneider].—Mary E. Monteith, Psychometry.—E. Bozzano, Animism and Spiritism. [A translation by Mr De Brath of the writer's answer to M. Sudre's book].—The London Psychical Laboratory. [The preliminary, favourable report on Mrs Dunean].—Mrs R. De Crespigny, The Margery Mediumship. [A reply to the paper in *Proceedings*, xxxix. 358 ff. The writer regards the ineliminating finger-print as irrelevant].

July 1931. The Margery Mediumship. [Report of two "solus sittings"].—Sir F. Younghusband, God and the Universe.—H. A. Hall, The Next Step.—E. B. Gibbes, Simultaneous Automatism. [Two interesting cases of apparent cross-correspondences obtained simultaneously].—E. Bozzano, Animism and Spiritism. [Continued].

October 1931. The Government of the Universe. [An address by Mrs Meurig Morris, Controlled by "Power"].—Lieut.-Col. E. F. Gordon-Tucker, The Complexity of Living Matter.—Mrs Hewat Mackenzie, Faces on the Wall of Christchurch Cathedral. [The writer does not regard the resemblance to a face of certain discolourations on the wall in question as accidental].—R. Dimsdale Stocker, Spiritualism, and the New Naturalism.—H. E. Yerbury, Invisible Exteriorisation and the Properties of Infra-red Radiations.—A Remarkable "Book-Test". [A good book-test obtained through Mrs Garrett; it would be interesting to know whether this

was the sitter's first visit to the medium. "Unknown" may only mean anonymous].—E. Bozzano, *Animism and Spiritism*. [Continued].—Mrs Duncan's Mediumship. [The final adverse report, with comments].—On the Border Line.

January 1932. Dr T. Glen Hamilton, *The Mary M. Teleplasm* of Oct. 27, 1929. [The teleplasm in question is one in which there again appeared at least two flat, miniature faces. It is impossible to say that these are not genuine, but they bear a most remarkable resemblance to photographs and to Eva C.'s fraudulent phenomena of the same type].—E. B. Gibbes, *The Subliminal Self*. [A supposed communication from F. W. H. Myers through the hand of Miss Cummins].—N. Fraser, *Visualised Rhythm-Forms in Music*.—S. H. Hart, *Edward Maitland, his Life and Work*.—*The Voice of Confucius*. [General remarks on the Chinese language].—*The Use of the Sub-conscious Memory by Controls*.—*The Mediumship of Mrs Murphy Lydy*. [Anonymous notes].—F. von Reuter, *How I obtained the Direct Voice in my own Circle*.—Mrs Champion de Crespigny, *The Efficiency of Consciousness*.

April 1932. E. B. Gibbes, *Alleged Communications from F. W. H. Myers*. [The writer describes how these communications came to be obtained through the automatism of Miss Cummins].—*The Road to Immortality*. [Selections from the messages so obtained].—*Invisible Exteriorisation*. [A brief account of Dr Osty's sittings with Rudi Schneider].—Dr Nandor Fodor, *Apports: a Plain Statement of Facts and a Theory*. [The genuineness of the phenomena is throughout taken for granted].—Mrs Hewat Mackenzie, *The Value of Spiritualism to the Individual*.—C. de Vesme, *The History of Experimental Spiritualism*. [An account by the author of his book of the same name].—*A Book Test at a Distance of 8,000 miles*. [There were really two book-tests, neither of which, however, is genuinely a book-test in the ordinary sense. In each case the medium, Mrs Garrett, stated that certain sentiments, etc., would be found on a specified page, in one case in Heine, in the other in Rupert Brooke. The location of the book was not given, and thus the sole evidential point is that these books were in fact in the sitter's library, which cannot be regarded as very remarkable].

Journal of the American Society for Psychological Research, 1932.

With the first issue for 1932 this periodical, called *Psychic Research* during 1928-1931, resumes its original title, while retaining its changed format.

January. Two Cases of Premonition. [Anonymous, no corroboration].—*Le Livre des Revenants, Part IX*. [Further report of the table sittings held by Mrs Bigelow and others].—Dr E. Osty, *The Faculty of Supernormal Cognition, Part IV*.—H. Carrington, *A Case*

of "Spirit Photography." [The photograph was submitted to the Kodak Company, who suggested double exposure; the photograph is reproduced and confirms this view].—A. Goadby, *Conversing Animals*. II. The Hypothesis of Normal Intelligence.

February. A.S.P.R. Annual Meeting, President's Report. [Announces the forthcoming publication of the second volume of the account of the Margery mediumship, and the appointment of Mr Brackett K. Thorogood and Dr Ralph G. Adams to investigate this mediumship].—Dr M. W. Richardson, *The Judge's Sign-Manual*. [On the post-mortem thumb-prints of C. S. Hill produced through Margery's mediumship].—Margery visits Mrs Garrett. ["My 'incognito' was strictly preserved." But it is hardly to be supposed that Margery's appearance is unknown to Mrs Garrett].—Prof C. Blacher, *Ectoplasmic Threads*. [Translated from *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*, lvii. 461-4].—G. Endore, *Jeanne d'Arc*. . . . A Short Consideration of the Historicity of her Psychic Powers.

March. B. K. Thorogood, *The Sir Oliver Lodge Finger Impressions*. [At Margery's sittings thumb-prints were obtained which were declared by Walter to be those of Sir Oliver Lodge. This was confirmed by ex-Inspector W. T. Bell, who added, "In view of the circumstances in which many of these impressions were alleged to have been obtained it is imperative for me to state that even with a comparatively short association with a person it would be quite a simple matter to obtain thumb impressions and afterwards to reproduce these identical replicas by artificial means." There exists independent confirmation of this statement, which almost entirely destroys the interest of the fingerprints hitherto obtained through Margery's mediumship].—W. H. Button, Walter helps to perfect the Control. [Through the automatic writing of Mrs Sarah Litzelmann, Walter asked Mr Button to take the existing lock off an experimental box and to put his own on it. Mr Button procured the key to the *séance*-room, put various objects in the box, including a piece of plasticine, locked the box with a Yale lock (padlock?) with two keys, which he kept in his possession. During the sitting Walter correctly described the contents of the box and made a thumbprint on the plasticine. This is one of the most interesting incidents recorded in the Margery mediumship. If the incidents occurred as described, conspiracy is the only normal explanation].

April. H. Carrington, *The Psychology of Genius*.—Dr E. Servadio, *Proofs and Counter-proofs concerning Human "Fluid"*.—Dr G. Walther, *An Interesting Case of Bilocation*. [Second-hand, no corroboration].—H. Carrington, *Brief Subject Index of the chief contents of the British S.P.R. Proceedings*. [It is perhaps enough to say that the index covers less than three pages].

May. Dr E. Osty, *Invisible Exteriorisation*. [A much abridged

translation of the first part of the report of Dr Osty's recent sittings with Rudi Schneider].—Dr E. Servadio, Proofs and Counter-proofs concerning Human "Fluid," II.—D. Gow, Science and the Human Psyche.—Mrs F. A. Brunke, Case Records. [Four cases, three of them uncorroborated. In the fourth the writer's husband, motoring with Mrs Brunke, hears a voice saying "Turn back." He does so, and a few hours later a dam "went out" killing several hundred people, including the friends they had intended to visit].

Scientific American, March 1932.

W. F. Prince, Mrs Sinclair's "Mental Radio". [A preliminary statement of the report published by Dr Prince as Bulletin XVI of the Boston S.P.R.]

Psyche, April 1932.

George Lawton, *Psychical Researchers as Spiritualist Theologians*. [Mr Lawton, an American, has read widely, but not very deeply, in the literature of psychical research. Beginning with the almost explicit assumption that acceptance of the spirit hypothesis is unscientific, he has no difficulty in showing that practically all psychical researchers are really theologians! A typical remark is the author's complaint (p. 57) that no "avowed materialist" has ever been president of the S.P.R. He regards this as "very strange", but has it not occurred to Mr Lawton that if avowed materialists do not join the Society that is their fault and not ours?].—E. J. Dingwall, *The New Witchcraft*. [The writer inveighs against the "half-baked minds" who flock to mediums. He thinks it is idle to look to "the occultist or the ordinary student of psychical research. They are immersed in their search for life and immortality. The scientific method is to them a snare and a delusion."]

TH. B.

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

ON

WEDNESDAY, 30 November 1932, at 5.30 p.m.

WHEN A PAPER WILL BE READ ENTITLED

“SUPERNORMAL PHOTOGRAPHY”

BY

MAJOR W. RAMPLING ROSE

AND

MR FRED BARLOW

N.B.—*No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.*

NEW MEMBERS.

- Ardron, G. H.**, Thatched House Club, St James's Street, London, S.W. 1.
- Balfour, Dr Margaret I.**, 14 Sylvan Road, London, S.E. 19.
- Cooke, Percival A.**, 7 Foulser Road, London, S.W. 17.
- Eason, Mrs**, 163 Wimbledon Park Road, London, S.W. 18.
- Evans, S. I. J.**, 3 Chancery Lane, Port of Spain, Trinidad, B.W.I.
- Leigh, Mrs**, 10 Belbroughton Road, Oxford.
- Librarian**, Public Libraries, Roehdale.
- Lodge, F. Brodie**, The Lawn, Rugby.
- Lodge, Mrs F. Brodie**, The Lawn, Rugby.
- Oliver, C. R.**, 24 Glazbury Road, London, W. 14.
- Palmstierna, Baron**, Swedish Legation, 27 Portland Place, London, W. 1.
- Rothschild, Miss Miriam L.**, 4 Palace Green, London, W. 8.
- Stansfield, C. E.**, 70 Northeourt Avenue, Reading.
- Strutt, Hon. Charles**, 39 Cadogan Square, London, S.W. 1.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 298th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 28 September 1932, at 3.30 p.m., SIR LAWRENCE JONES, BART., in the Chair. There were also present: The Earl of Balfour, Mr W. R. Bousfield, K.C., Dr William Brown, Mr L. S. Fletcher, Lord Charles Hope, The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Dr F. C. S. Schiller, and Mr S. G. Soal; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Fourteen new members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

The Monthly Accounts for June 1932 were presented and taken as read.

PRIVATE MEETINGS.

THE RESULTS OF RECENT CARD EXPERIMENTS.

THE 115th Private Meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday, 25 May 1932, at 5.30 p.m., MR W. H. SALTER in the Chair.

MISS INA JEPHSON read a paper on "The Results of Recent Card Experiments", which it is hoped to publish in an early Part of *Proceedings*.

A discussion followed in which the Chairman, Mr Soal, Mr Besterman, Professor Dodds, and Mr Chant took part.

SOME NEGLECTED TYPES OF EVIDENCE IN PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

THE 116th Private Meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday, 28 September 1932, at 5.30 p.m., The HON. MRS EDITH LYTTTELTON in the Chair.

FATHER HERBERT THURSTON, S.J., read a paper entitled "Some Neglected Types of Evidence in Psychical Research".

He had been struck in reading the objections raised by the more sceptical critics of the phenomena of D. D. Home by the little effort they seemed to have made to deal with the spiritualistic literature of the period. While they were quite willing to quote admissions to the discredit of mediums, evidence tending in the contrary sense was ignored or ruled out as valueless. Beyond doubt the stories of marvellous phenomena which filled the spiritualist journals of the Home period were as a rule negligible. But he would urge that all this testimony was not equally worthless. Mr Frank Podmore had largely set the tone of the adverse criticisms of physical phenomena, especially in the case of Home. But Podmore had concentrated his fire upon only a few examples and had brushed aside much testimony that ought not to have been left out of account. An example was the account in the *Norwood News* of 22 May 1869 of a sitting at the house of Mr Emmore Jones. He referred to this because it seemed to him a very straightforward statement, endorsing from a quite independent standpoint the type of manifestation so frequently recorded in Lord Adare's letters. Besides the familiar raps, table movements and accordion tunes, the account mentioned two less usual features. One was that of the table oscillating violently without shaking off a statuette and its glass shade, the other was the statement that the writer of the description felt the keys of the accordion moving up and down as it hung over his feet. Podmore dealt with these types of phenomena in *The Newer Spiritualism* by quoting Mr W. M. Wilkinson's account in *The Spiritual Magazine* (1861, pp. 359-362). This Podmore dismissed on the ground that the conditions were not described. He then referred to Sir William Crookes's experiences of the same kind. These he attributed to Home's use of "a small musical box, a loop of black silk, and a hook with a sharp end".

It seemed to him that this view was quite inadequate. It did not account for the playing of tunes and for the movement of the accordion keys, a phenomenon which Podmore stated against the plain evidence never to have been seen in good light. It did not account for such descriptions as those left by Serjeant Cox and other witnesses, who saw the bellows expanding and contracting, heard the music playing, and felt the powerful tugging. If hallucination were to be put forward it would involve the hallucination of three senses. It was also strange that the fact of the accordion playing in

other people's hands was passed over by Mr Podmore without a word.

A discussion followed in which Mr Trethewy referred to similar evidence he had come across in some manuscript records of 1857-1860.

Mr Besterman said that he still felt inclined to agree with Podmore's criticisms in general, but not perhaps in detail. Father Thurston had not attempted to criticise the narratives he had quoted. There was no indication in most of these narratives that notes had been made at the time. Yet these accounts were long and detailed, referring to a large number of phenomena, the exact nature and sequence of which it was essential to know. He therefore felt somewhat sceptical about the reliability of such accounts. Nevertheless they would all feel indebted to Father Thurston for having again drawn attention to the great difficulties of judging these old cases.

Dr Dingwall regretted that the speaker had not dealt with Home's levitations. He felt that these phenomena were now too old to be capable of being adequately judged. The proper course was to study the mediums of to-day and to apply the comparative method.

The Rev. Mr Hayes suggested that the alleged phenomena might have been hallucinations.

Sir Lawrence Jones, Captain Seton-Karr, Mr Sweeney, Mr Hettlinger, Mrs Adlereron and Mrs Felkin also took part in the discussion.

OBITUARIES.

G. LOWES DICKINSON.

[Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson died in the early morning of 3 August 1932, in his 70th year. He had been a member of the Society for over 28 years and a member of Council from 1904 to 1920. His interest in the Society's work never diminished: he was present at one of the meetings held to celebrate its jubilee. Among his contributions to the Society's publications are a report of "A Case of Emergence of a Latent Memory under Hypnosis" (*Proceedings*, xxv. 455-467) and a discussion of certain cross-correspondences (*Journal*, xiv. 10-15).]

I think Lowes Dickinson was the first person who interested me actively, now a long time ago, in the work of our Society. I know at least that for more than twenty-five years I have had the inestimable advantage of talking over its problems with him and hearing his acute and stimulating comments. Perhaps they were all the more stimulating because his mind was so receptive as well as so critical. Everyone who had the privilege of his friendship, and many who only heard him speak or only read his beautiful writing, felt the

beauty of his character, its courage, its gentleness, its freedom. There were the same qualities in his mind, a mind that could not stiffen, that was always ready to grow, a faith the more invigorating because, to paraphrase one of his own great sayings, it lived always with the dagger of criticism pointed at its heart.

Perhaps it will be of most interest to our members if I try to give some account of his attitude, as I knew it, to our most burning questions. I have hesitated more than once in doing this, proud though I was to have been asked, and for several reasons. I am afraid of rousing controversy, of treading on sacred ground, and even more of not giving a true impression of Dickinson's own position. For this was always changing, even oscillating, though to make the metaphor truer as well as more complete, it oscillated round a fixed centre. I have known him doubt, and deeply, the possibility of any survival, certainly of individual survival, and I have known him, on the other hand, accept for the time as evidences of real phenomena things which later on he came to consider delusions or deceptions. Gradually and both by scrutinising all the evidence he could get hold of and by listening to those secret intimations of something beyond which come to a man of his spiritual insight, he arrived, I think, pretty definitely at a double conclusion, negative and positive. First, that the physical phenomena as they are usually called—"the Witch of Endor business" as we sometimes dubbed them when we were talking—things like the calling-up by mediums of apparitions and "ectoplasm", were now really too deeply discredited by incessant fraud and their own inherent vulgarity to be at all credible. Next, that a large and growing body of evidence did point not only to ordinary thought-transference from living minds, but also to something drifting through from another form of mind. I wrote "filtering through" at first, and then I saw that Dickinson would have criticised this as a most inappropriate metaphor. For what came through seemed, he thought, always to come mixed up with all kinds of impurities and puerilities, so that if one swallowed it *holus-bolus* there was an end of sound discrimination and genuine science.

I think it was from him I heard a simile which always struck me as an excellent one, to the effect that the typical outpourings of a medium were like a dream when one has heard a knock at the door, with a whole tissue of absurdities woven round it. But it has been a real knock by someone else for all that. And in connection with this he leaned more and more to the view that our ordinary way of conceiving mind as split up into individual minds is singularly inadequate and at bottom unsatisfying to the heart. What he loved "to dream of", as he might have put it himself, was that the world of spirit was like a vast submerged continent of which only the peaks appeared on this earth as individuals. And however much he might, did,

doubt at times, he always swung back to the sense that "we are greater than we know" and not destined to go out like the blown flame of a candle. This was the centre I spoke of, and for him it involved a conviction of the value in the Society's work.

It is comforting to me to remember how keenly interested he was in the account I gave him, almost the last time I saw him alone, of Mrs Sidgwick's review, read by Gerald Balfour at our Jubilee. He had not been able to hear this and I was full of it. It chimed in very well with his own attitude and I heard, after his death, that he had spoken of it eagerly to a Cambridge friend.

He knew for some months, as he told another friend, that his life hung by a thread which might snap at any moment. He faced this not only with calm but with a noble sense of adventure. I did not know myself that he knew it, for he was endlessly careful not to alarm the apprehensive. But he did write and speak to me about feeling "the great change" drawing near. The first time was in a letter. "I wonder", he wrote, "if you feel, like me, that what used to be only words is becoming real? It is pretty terrible but very exciting". I thought when I read this that he was only speaking of old-age which he felt approaching although in a sense he never lost touch with youth. But when we talked about it I saw he meant more, in fact he said he did, and I hope I shall never forget the look in his eyes as he told me. "It must be such a tremendous change", he said. Then, a little later, when talking about a friend who had recovered from a terrible malady and almost at once forgotten all about the suffering, I happened to say "I should not wonder if death was like that". "Nor should I, my dear", he answered and he smiled.

F. MELIAN STAWELL.

JOHN WILLIAM GRAHAM, Litt.D.

The sudden death of J. W. Graham on 17 October 1932, has deprived the S.P.R. of an old and devoted member. His name occurs first in the List (of Associates) for December 1884.

He was born, of Quaker parentage on both sides, at Preston, Lancs., in 1859, and after being educated at the Friends' Schools at Ackworth and Kendal, passed on to University College, London, and then to King's College, Cambridge. Here he was one of a group of ardent young Liberals who, in the 'eighties, created an atmosphere at King's perhaps more stimulating than was to be found at the time in any other College. Another of the group, and ultimately the most distinguished of them, was the late Lowes Dickinson, who was also, like Graham, keenly interested in psychological research, though he did not join the Society till later.

In 1866 Graham became Tutor in Mathematics, History and Economics at Dalton Hall, Manchester, a Hostel for Men founded by the Society of Friends, and from 1897 to 1924 he was Principal of the Hall. He was a man of wide and varied interests and worked hard at many schemes for social betterment, such as Adult Education and Smoke Abatement.

After his retirement from Dalton Hall he became a Fellow and Lecturer at Woodbrooke, Birmingham, and a year later Professor of the Principles and History of Quakerism at Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania. He then travelled for some time in India, lecturing on the philosophy of religion.

He was prominent and influential in the Society of Friends and an active member of many of their Committees. Their international work made a special appeal to him and he travelled and lectured extensively in Germany of late years to help forward the cause of international reconciliation. He published a number of books on politics and religion, of which *The Faith of a Quaker* (brought out by the Cambridge University Press soon after the war) is perhaps the most characteristic.

In 1928 he came back to live in Cambridge and last year was adopted a prospective Liberal candidate for the borough. He was now an elderly man, in frail health, and it was only a sense of public duty that led him to accept this practically hopeless position, for the opportunities it gave him of publicly advocating his principles.

As a Friend, he held steadfastly to pacifism during the war, as he had done previously in the Boer war, but his nature was fiery and pugnacious—qualities derived perhaps from his ancestors on the Scottish border—and when it came to spiritual fighting with the forces of evil, he put on his whole armour and went forth unabashed by “the thunder of the captains and the shouting”, for he was generally, of course, on the unpopular side.

Though he had strong convictions, he was not a party man. Neither as a Liberal nor as a Friend was he bound to the orthodoxies of his own side: he would consider each question independently on its own merits and not infrequently found himself in conflict with his friends or colleagues. This, though it sometimes distressed him greatly, never led to bitterness or estrangement.

The great concern of his life was religion, and he cared about psychical research chiefly for its possible bearing on religious questions. He never took a prominent part in the work, but gave much useful help unobtrusively in inquiries. He was not in the first instance critical of evidence, for it was his habit to think well of everybody and he could not easily be persuaded of the ordinary person's inaccuracies of statement and failures in memory. But when real flaws were pointed out, he was candid enough to admit

them and to realise that a scientific Society, such as ours, must insist on a high standard of evidence. Thus, while he personally attached importance to the psychical experiences that abound in the early history of the Friends (as in that of other religious bodies, such as the Franciscans and the Wesleyans), he recognised that they were rarely, if ever, "evidential". A striking case of this kind, however, which we owed to his researches, was printed in the *Journal*, xiii. 87.

He wrote occasionally in other periodicals on psychical research, e.g. an interesting article by him on the characteristics of the "Myers Control" in automatic scripts appeared in the *Hibbert Journal* for January 1909. He had been from his Cambridge days a devoted disciple of Myers: indeed, among his chief heroes in early life were Ruskin, Sidgwick and Myers. He was of the type that remains faithful to its youthful ideals and enthusiasms, and he was fortunate in being able to work all his life for the causes that were nearest to his heart.

Alice Johnson.

L. 1296.

CASE.

HALLUCINATORY IMPRESSION OF A RELATIVE'S DEATH.

Mme Adelina de Lara, Cranford, Hook Heath, Woking, a Member of the Society, writes as follows in a letter dated 28 July 1932:

"On Monday 25th inst. I awoke about 7.15 a.m. and saw lying at my side on the pillow, what appeared to be a half-sheet of note paper with words written on it—'Mimi was dying, last night'. I repeated this to myself and the whole thing vanished—When my friend—who lives with me—brought in my morning tea I immediately told her, I also said it was rather strange, as I had only ever known one 'Mimi' and (as my friend knew) she was my cousin's (Sir Landon Ronald's) wife. I did not know if she were ill or well as I have not seen her for some years, nor have I had occasion to speak or think of her.—Relations leading busy lives often drift apart—"

[Signed] ADELINA DE LARA.

The friend mentioned in Mme de Lara's statement corroborates it in the following terms:

"I hereby testify that the above is a true and correct statement."

[Signed] PEARL IVES.

Lady Ronald committed suicide during the night of 24 July 1932 by taking poison. The death occurred after 10.30 on the evening of the 24th, but it is not possible to establish the exact time. The incident thus has the appearance of a deferred telepathic impression.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ON THE EVIDENCE FOR SUPERNORMAL OCCURRENCES
IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY.*To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.*

SIR,—Professor E. R. Dodds says in the *March Journal* that the orthodox Greek view was that the dead were safely imprisoned in Hades. If this statement correctly represents Greek ideas about the next life, in the classical period, it is not true of those ideas as held under the Roman Empire. This is clear from the evidence cited by Ludwig Friedländer in the *Sittengeschichte Roms*, vol. ii, pp. 623 ff. According to Friedländer, Dio Cassius says that at great events and in moments of crisis the dead would rise, sometimes in considerable numbers, and freely show themselves on this earth. This belief may throw some light on the obscure passage in St. Matthew's Gospel, xxvii. 52 f.

Yours, etc.,

H. NORTHCOTE.

P.S.—Moreover, in Greek thought, “daemons” were human in origin.

[Prof. Dodds writes: “I trust my paper did not convey the false impression that the ‘orthodox’ Hades-theory was the only view held in later antiquity about the state of the dead: by the time of Dio Cassius (*circa* 200 A.D.) the most conflicting opinions on the subject were current. But there is in any case nothing especially significant in Dio's mention of apparitions of the dead among other portents occurring at times of great crisis. The popular belief that the heroic dead may rise from their graves to protest against acts of tyranny or foreign aggression is found among many peoples, including the Greeks of the classical period. It is exemplified, as Mr Northcote says, in *Matt.* xxvii. 52. But it does not imply belief in spiritualism. *i.e.* in the possibility of regular communication with the spirits of individual deceased persons; the French soldiers who thought they saw Joan of Arc leading their ranks in the late war were not spiritualists.

“Mr Northcote's postscript about daemons would be correct if he had written ‘in *some* Greek thought’. It is true that from an early time (Hesiod) the *heroic* dead, who received cultus, were sometimes described as ‘daemons’, and that later this complimentary epithet was occasionally extended to the ordinary dead. But the fact has little bearing on my contention about the difference between Neoplatonic theurgy and spiritualism: for Iamblichus (*de myst.* II. 1 f.) explicitly distinguishes daemons from ‘heroes’ and human souls; and in many of the utterances quoted by Porphyry the communicator described himself unambiguously as a *god*.”]

NOTES ON SITTINGS.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—It is useful for students to compare their experiences, so I need not apologise for making a few comments on points in the "Report of some sittings with Valiantine" in a recent issue of *Proceedings*.

1. I note that the "Voice" gave Lord Charles Hope the name of an aunt: but that he did not at once identify this because it was not the name she was usually called by. I have repeatedly had a similar experience. Some years ago I was with a highly developed clairvoyant, Mr Otto von Bourg. I handed him a letter signed with the initials (only) of an aunt of mine who died before I was born, and after whom I was named. He gave her surname almost correctly and then said: "I get Annie". Her second name was Anne, but she was never so called in my hearing. He then said: "Who is Harriet—Harry—Henrietta?" I said: "You are not quite right". "I get H. so strongly," he rejoined. He put the letter again to his forehead and said: "It is Helen! She says Helen".

The name so familiar to me was obtained with difficulty; the name I did not associate with her came readily. It is curious that a few weeks later this medium again gave the name "Annie" alone, in connection with this aunt.

"On another occasion with the same clairvoyant I asked a question. I said: "Can you tell me anything about a friend, a girl I know was called after?" He promptly gave me one of this girl's names, but not the name which she is known by, not the name of the friend in memory of whom she received the name I always called her by.

What can be the psychological reason for this? Is it, perhaps, connected with the trick of memory which makes it so difficult sometimes to give a familiar name when one is suddenly asked for it?

2. Lord Charles Hope writes: "Before the end of my Valiantine sittings I felt I could have got this voice to acquiesce in and repeat any nonsense I cared to suggest".

This is an experience which can also be corroborated. A friend of mine, who might have become a very gifted medium if circumstances had permitted her to cultivate her faculty in this direction, received through her own writing what claimed to be communications from a deceased friend. Some remarks which were made impressed me as affording a clue to the confusions which arise in mediumistic experiences: they suggested to me that the "Control" was conscious of the possibility of becoming merged in the consciousness of the medium and then merely giving back her own thought to her. This is not an unlikely occurrence, it is equally possible that a medium, or Control, may reflect back the thoughts and suggestions of the sitter.

It is this contingency that makes it desirable that the sitter should avoid asking questions, and should keep a passive and receptive mental attitude.

Some of my most successful sittings have been proxy sittings, in which, being almost completely ignorant of the conditions of the person on whose behalf I was acting, I was not liable to affect the medium by the activity of my own mind.

Yours, etc.,

HELEN ALEX. DALLAS.

ON A SITTING WITH RUDI SCHNEIDER.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—In your issue for July Dr Brown's letters to the *Times* about his sitting with Rudi Schneider are reprinted. In one of these letters he refers to publicity unsolicited by him. I should like therefore to make it clear that not a word concerning the sitting in question was conveyed to the Press except upon Dr Brown's own initiative.

Yours, etc.,

HARRY PRICE.

REVIEW.

C. E. BECHHOFFER ROBERTS, *The Truth about Spiritualism*. 8vo, pp. 280. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1932. Price 8s. 6d. net.

A title beginning "The Truth About . . ." does not predispose a reviewer in favour of a book, but the reader who penetrates beyond the title of this book will find (to his agreeable surprise, if he is not already familiar with Mr Bechhofer Roberts's writings) a well-arranged and well-informed discussion of the strength and weakness of the different types of evidence on which the case for Spiritualism rests. The book is primarily intended for readers not very deeply versed in psychical research: but it is very different from most "popular" literature on the subject, and there can be few students so advanced as to derive no profit from it, even if Mr Roberts does no more than compel them to think of arguments to rebut his conclusions.

In the first chapter Mr Roberts, after explaining that, in the absence of any definition universally acceptable to spiritualist bodies, he proposed to define as a Spiritualist anyone who, to put it briefly, accepts survival and constant communication, gives a short account of how spiritualists are organised, and a description of a typical spiritualist service. Many, of course, who accept survival and communication hold aloof from all spiritualist organisations, the cause of abstention being usually their knowledge of the untrustworthiness

of many of the particular phenomena, acceptance of which has, as shown by Conan Doyle's attacks on the S.P.R., become almost *de fide* among organised spiritualists. It is presumably to meet the case of these abstainers, who have an influence out of all proportion to their numbers, that Mr Roberts in his definition speaks of "constant communication", but it might have been well if he had made their position rather plainer.

Chapters II and III give an interesting summary of spiritualist practises among the ancients and the more backward races of our own times, and of the American origins of the modern spiritualist movement, closing with a good short account of the career of D. D. Home.

The rest of the book is concerned with the developments of spiritualism in our own time, ever since in fact, with the foundation of the Society, the facts on which it relies have been subject to systematic, continuous, impartial scrutiny. The scale of the book does not of course permit of Mr Roberts giving full-length portraits of all the notable mediums of the last 50 years, or a detailed analysis of all the relevant types of evidence: there are parts of the book where the subject suffers from excessive compression. But on the whole the author is to be warmly congratulated on the completeness with which he covers the ground and the judiciousness of his comments. It would be superfluous, or even offensive, to praise an author of a book on almost any subject other than psychical research for refraining from asking the reader to accept untrustworthy evidence, or for choosing instances that were relevant to illustrate his argument. It is hoped that Mr Roberts will not repudiate a tribute to the skill he has shown in avoiding pitfalls which have ensnared so many writers of popular books on this subject.

After two good chapters on the psychology of the sitter and of the medium, Mr Roberts turns to parapsychical phenomena, mediumistic and spontaneous. While some of the former have, he considers, fairly good evidence in their support (*e.g.* Dr Osty's recent experiments with Rudi Schneider), there is in his opinion no ground for connecting any tolerably well-established phenomena of this class with the activities of disembodied spirits. The phenomena (such as telekinesis), which have the least apparent connection with spirit agency, are the best evidenced: those with the closest ostensible connection (spirit photography and materialisations), the worst. The necessarily brief accounts of notable physical mediums are judicious: in fairness, however, to Eusapia Mr Feilding's Naples sittings with her might have been mentioned.

Mr Roberts holds that some types of spontaneous physical phenomena are better attested, but that they do not provide any better grounds for accepting a spiritualist interpretation.

Passing to the mental phenomena Mr Roberts first discusses prevision and psychometry, which, if genuine, are just as difficult to explain on a spiritualistic, as on any other hypothesis. In the chapter on telepathy which follows, one is glad to see due emphasis laid on the Groningen experiments. As however it is by telepathy (*i.e.* telepathy between the living) that the author later on explains most of the mental phenomena of spiritualism, his argument requires that he should not only establish the reality of telepathy (which he most successfully does), but should also indicate the extent and limits of its operation. In this connection reference might have been made to the negative results of various "mass" experiments.

In the chapter on trance-mediumship Mr Roberts classifies the information given by such mediums as Mrs Piper and Mrs Leonard (information, that is, outside the medium's normal knowledge) into four groups: A. information known to the sitter, B. information known to some other person connected with the sitting, C. information known to some living person not connected with the sitting, and D. information apparently known only to some person who has died. "We shall see", he goes on, "that the evidence in these groups varies with the complexity: there is plenty for the first, and a certain amount for the second, and some perhaps for the third; while the fourth requires special investigation if it is to yield any at all".

If we leave the fourth class out of account for the moment, surely "some perhaps" understates the evidence for the third class. And, assuming that telepathy from the living was the sole effective cause, should we on, the basis of the knowledge derived from the spontaneous cases and the experiments, be justified in expecting any success at all in group C?

The other two stumbling blocks in the way of any exclusively telepathic explanation are the vivid presentation in trance of a personality normally unknown to the medium, and the cross-correspondences. Mr Roberts refers to both, but unfortunately they require more space for adequate illustration than the size of the book permits. It is possible to frame a theory which will explain each of them, more or less, by telepathy, but is it not necessary in doing so to invent *ad hoc* a species of telepathy for which there is otherwise practically no evidence? Why is it that for its best efforts telepathy between the living should habitually masquerade as communication from the dead?

These are questions which some Spiritualists, who may have followed Mr Roberts's argument up to this point with much approval and little dissent, might wish to put, in the hope that at some future time Mr Roberts may deal with it as fully as the complexity of the problem demands.

W. H. SALTER.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Boston Society for Psychical Research, Bulletin XVII, October 1932.

This Bulletin is entitled Book Reviews and other matters, which well describes it. It begins with supplementary information connected with a book on *Leonard and Soule Experiments in Psychical Research* by Mrs L. W. Allison, published by the Boston Society some years ago. Then follow the reviews by Dr Prince of seven books printed in the last seven years. The reviewing of careful reviews already published would seem a rather profitless occupation. Dr Prince's own reviews are always careful, so I do not propose to devote more than a sentence or two to any of these seven. For the first, *How to go to a Medium* by E. J. Dingwall, Dr Prince "has practically nothing but commendation". The second on Mr Besterman's *Some Modern Mediums* is largely occupied by a defence of the author against unjustifiable and unfair attacks, especially by foreign critics. The third book reviewed is *Body, Mind and Spirit* by Dr Elwood Worcester (the President of the Boston Society) and Dr Samuel McComb—an interesting book judging from the review, but only partially concerned with psychical research. The next review deals with Mr. Bradley's book . . . *And After*—the book in which he expounds the exposure of the medium Valiantine, regarding whom there has recently been discussion in our *Proceedings*. The fifth review—on Fort's *Wild Talents* pronounces the book, though amusingly written, as having "no interest for psychic research, since it has no scientific value whatever". The sixth review deals with *Houdini and Conan Doyle* and perhaps needs no further remark here. The seventh and last book reviewed is Mr Harry Price's *Rudi Schneider*. This is followed by a paper by Professor Nils von Hofsten of Upsala describing two sittings in the course of Mr Price's series at which the Professor was one of the sitters. This article should be read in connection with Mr Price's book. Readers of the article will agree we think that at Professor von Hofsten's two sittings at any rate the supposed faultless conditions of control were defective, though he does not claim to have observed any occurrence of actual trickery.

The *Bulletin* concludes with "An Hypothesis suggested as a Possible Aid to the Interpretation and Further Investigation of Psychical Phenomena" by Professor Hornell Hart of Bryn Mawr College. All serious attempts well thought out to interpret and explain psychical phenomena are well worth while, but so far prescribed programmes of investigation seem doomed to failure by the impossibility of getting the phenomena to occur to order, and I am afraid that Professor Hornell Hart's well-meant effort may meet with the same fate.

E. M. S.

Journal of the American Society for Psychological Research, 1932.

June. Joseph Sell, Parapsychical Separations and Infra-red Waves. [It will perhaps be sufficient to quote the first sentence of this translation: "Experimental observations made by Dr E. Osty, Paris . . . that by the application of certain devices, parapsychical separations [*sic*, read "secretions"] of Medium Rudi Schneider, present in the room in weak form, and consequently not manifest to us, could be proved, when they were continued within an infra-red wave area, seems of special interest to us, because an influence on parapsychic radiation was least to be expected from this particular kind of way"!—E. Servadio, Prof. Meyerson, "False Sciences" and Psychological Research. [A reply to the distinguished philosopher's criticism of supernormal phenomena].—F. B. Bond, A New Type of Metapsychic Phenomenon. [Four anonymous members of the A.S.P.R., sitting with photographic plates enclosed in light-tight envelopes, obtained spots, linear marks and cloud-effects on the plates. The Kodak company, who sealed the envelopes before the sittings, are said to "certify that such marks as appear are not due to any normal cause or error in manipulation". It would be interesting to have the complete text of their guarantee, which, as cited, appears to go further than is warranted by the facts.]—Le Livre des Revenants, Parts X and XI.

July. The Margery Mediumship. [It appears that Mr E. E. Dudley, who had been engaged by the American society to investigate the *Margery* fingerprints, made certain discoveries reflecting on their genuineness. Without publishing Mr Dudley's own conclusions the Research Committee of the American society now attempt to refute his charges. Comment is clearly impossible at present.]—David Gow, The Resources of Trance Mediumship. [An Account of the mediumship of J. J. Morse.]—Blewett Lee, A Trance in Court. [Comment on an incident in the action brought by Mrs Meurig Morris against Associated Newspapers, Ltd.]—Le Livre des Revenants, Part XII.—W. W. Parker, An interesting Case-Record. [This "certain, definite, unmistakable, incontrovertible and . . . scientific proof not alone of the existence of future life but of the persistence of identity", is a typical telepathic dream.]

August. William H. Button, The Margery Mediumship. [A detailed account of the supposedly supernormal removal of objects from and introduction into sealed boxes.]—F. B. Bond, An Astronomical Script and its Verification.

¶ *September.* William H. Button, The Margery Mediumship. [On the production of handprints on wax, the prints being apparently made by a hand turned back, the palm forming the outer side of an almost complete circle.]—Dr Gerda Walther, Some Experiences con-

cerning the human "Aura". [The writer is herself able to "see" auras.]—A. D. Louttit Lang, Sitting with Mrs Garrett. [Not annotated].—Werner Haag, Psychical Experience of a Russian Lady. [Uncorroborated].—A Psychical Communication.—Geo. Crosswell Cressey, No Proxy for Survivalism.—Helen A. Dallas, A Seance with Florence Corner (née Cook). [An account, apparently based on contemporary notes, of a sitting in 1903 in which a full-form materialisation appeared.]

T. H. B.

THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE
CIRCULATION.

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on a definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only." The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

ON

WEDNESDAY, 4 January 1933, at 3.30 p.m.

WHEN SHORT PAPERS WILL BE READ ON

“THE EVIDENCE FOR PRECOGNITION”

BY H. F. SALTMARSH AND ON

“AN EXPERIMENT IN
PRECOGNITIVE DREAMS”

BY THEODORE BESTERMAN.

A Series of Gramophone Records recently made of a sitting with
Mrs Leonard will be played.

N.B.—*No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.*

NEW MEMBERS.

Gernon, Mrs De, 16 Cheniston Gardens, London, W.8.

Jones, Ernest, 540 Hempshaw Lane, Stockport.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

THE 299th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1, on Wednesday, 26 October 1932, at 3.15 p.m., The HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTTELTON, G.B.E. in the Chair. There were also present: The Earl of Balfour, Miss Ina Jephson, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr H. F. Saltmarsh, Dr F. C. S. Schiller, and Mr S. G. Soal; also Mr Theodore Besterman, Librarian and Editor, and Miss Isabel Newton, Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Two new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

Miss Nea Walker and Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt were co-opted Members of Council for the year 1932-33.

The Monthly Accounts for July-September 1932, were presented and taken as read.

PRIVATE MEETING.

A SITTING WITH MRS LEONARD.

THE 117th Private Meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday, 26 October 1932 at 5.30 p.m., MRS W. H. SALTER in the Chair.

THE REV. W. S. IRVING read the complete annotated record of a sitting with Mrs Leonard.

He said that several papers had been read to the Society or printed in the *Proceedings* or *Journal* in which particular incidents from sittings with Mrs Leonard, selected either for their exceptional evidential value, or because they illustrated some point which the author desired to discuss, had been presented to them detached from their context. Useful as this method of presentation was, it was important that they should not fail "to see the wood because of the trees", and he proposed therefore to read a paper in which a recent sitting of his with Mrs Leonard should be reproduced and analysed from start to finish. It was inevitable in any sitting that some points should be more impressive than others, and he did not suggest that all the incidents which he analysed were particularly striking. The object of the paper was to record in full a sitting which presented a number of typical incidents, chosen for their illustrative rather than for their evidential value. Unfortunately such a paper clearly did not lend itself to summary.

[It has been filed in the Society's Rooms and can be seen by any member].

In the discussion which followed the Rev. J. W. Hayes asked whether in the lecturer's experience the medium's features or actions during the Personal Control tended to imitate those of the Communicator. Mr Irving said that on the whole they did not.

Mr Soal considered that the sitting contained nothing supernormal and referred to the difficulty of deciding this point without full knowledge of all the circumstances.

Mr Saltmarsh said that when working on the Warren Elliott sittings he had carried out control experiments, which produced results only one-fourth or one-fifth as good as the real sittings.

Dr Dingwall agreed with Mr Soal and said that he found it difficult to suppose there was anything supernormal whatever in the sitting.

Mr Besterman thought that some of the speakers had failed to understand the object of the paper, which was merely to present a typical sitting, without regard to its evidential standing. As the published evidence showed there would have been no difficulty in selecting a considerable number of highly evidential incidents, only of course they would not all occur in the same sitting.

The Chairman, Miss Home, and Mrs Baggally also took part in the discussion.

CASE

L. 1297. APPARITION NEARLY COINCIDING WITH A FRIEND'S DEATH.

WE have received through Mrs Henry Sidgwick the following account of what seems to have been an apparition coinciding with a death. It was seen by the Rev. Prebendary Carlile, the well-known leader of the Church Army, and the account below is by him and was given to Mrs Sidgwick on 6 October 1932, when, by the kind arrangement of Lord Daryngton, she had the opportunity of meeting the Prebendary and talking over with him the experience.

He states : " On Sunday morning, 14 February 1932, I went to St Paul's Church, Woking, and after Matins stayed for the Holy Communion. It has always been my habit, when there, if there were over 30 Communicants, to offer to assist with the Cup if desired.

" As there seemed a need on this occasion, I looked round and was just going to offer to help, when I saw a second clergyman standing in the chancel, robed ready to assist. Three times I looked, especially to see whether the stole was black or purple. On his left in the choir was also a choirman in surplice. After the Celebrant came in to take the service I looked up again and saw the clergyman kneeling in the centre at the Communion Rail, apparently waiting till needed. I then looked again but he had left, and I supposed he was unwell and had retired to the vestry.

“After the service I asked the verger at the door, why they had sung a burial hymn that morning. He said it was because the Rev. Outram Marshall, late secretary of the E.C.U., had just passed away.

“I then went into the vestry to inquire how the other clergyman was. The Curate and the Churchwardens and the robed choirman said there was no other clergyman present, nor had any of them seen one. I asked them and my sisters afterwards, whether I appeared to be quite normal, and they all said I was quite as usual.

“The priest who had passed away was in the habit of coming; when well enough, to the weekly Celebration in this church.

“He was an old personal and affectionate friend of mine, and I was unaware that he had died; hence possibly this Visibility was granted to me. I am perfectly certain about what I saw. Similar appearances have occurred to many others.”

Mrs Sidgwick writes: “Mr Carlile told me that this vision is the only visual experience of a psychical kind that he has ever had, though he has had strong feelings of the presence of a loved person no longer in this world. The figure he saw had its back to him so that he did not see the face, nor did he recognise his friend. In fact when he went into the vestry to inquire how the clergyman he believed himself to have seen was, he expected to see, or hear about, a stranger. The evidence for the experience having been a psychical one depends therefore on two coincidences difficult to attribute to chance—the fact that the vision occurred so soon after the death, and the fact that no one else appears to have seen the stranger clergyman at all. The experience undoubtedly greatly impressed Prebendary Carlile himself and those to whom he related it. An account of it was written shortly after it occurred and on 18 April I was shown one signed by himself. I could not however pursue the subject further at that time as I was ill.”

We have verified from other sources that Mr Outram Marshall's death did occur on 14 February, but do not know the hour.

PRELIMINARY NOTES ON THE TRANCE MEDIUMSHIP OF FRU INGEBORG KÖBER (NÉE DAHL).

BY THEODORE BESTERMAN.

[*These notes are extracted from a full report of the sittings in question. This has been filed in the Society's Rooms, where it can be inspected by any member of the Society. It is not being published at present in the hope that the Society may have further opportunities for investigating Fru Ingeborg.*]

The circumstances of this case are briefly as follows: Hr Ludvig Dahl, Byfogd¹ of Fredriksstad, a town in south-east Norway, on the

¹ The Byfogd combines the functions of Mayor and Judge.

east of the Oslo fjord, about 120 miles south of Oslo, and his wife, lost their son Ludvig (born in 1894) in May 1919, as the result of a sailing accident, and another son, Ragnar¹ (born 1901), in May 1924, from tuberculosis. At the end of 1919 some odd phenomena of a parapsychical kind led to a table-sitting being held at which it became apparent that Fru Ingeborg Köber, the only daughter of Judge and Fru Dahl, was the medium. In the form of raps messages purporting to emanate from Ludvig were received, and the experiments were repeated. At first, as Fru Ingeborg then lived in another part of the country, progress was slow. It was not until 1923 that the table was replaced by the ouija. From that time the communications became more frequent. Judge Dahl gives an ample selection from them in his books.²

Apart from the usual type of spirit communications, the mediumship of Fru Ingeborg presents several striking features. The most remarkable of these are the reading of the contents of sealed envelopes, the giving of booktests from books in another room, and a few physical phenomena. I was therefore anxious to have sittings with Fru Ingeborg and approached Judge Dahl through the kind intermediary of Mr I. C. Gröndahl, Lecturer in Norwegian at University College, London. Judge Dahl very kindly invited me to take part in some sittings, and my wife and I accordingly spent the larger part of July 1932 in Norway, chiefly in the island of Hankö, in the Oslo Fjord, on which Judge Dahl has a summer villa.

During the few weeks available to us before we left my wife and I acquired as much Norwegian as possible, sufficient in my own case to read Norwegian with the help of a dictionary, to follow easy and slow conversation, and to follow the messages spelled out on the ouija. Nevertheless the language difficulties remained serious; this fact and the circumstance of our attending the sittings as guests, decided me to concentrate on those phenomena over which we could most easily keep effective control: namely, booktests and the reading of sealed envelopes. In the case of the latter it was of course possible to make the conditions perfect from the beginning. In the case of the booktests, not knowing what conditions might be imposed (none were in fact imposed), and how long it would take to obtain such a test, as they occur very rarely, we had arranged a series of progressively stricter tests; the least strict of these, however, was sufficiently evidential for the purpose of a preliminary investigation.

I now proceed to a description of Fru Ingeborg's trance and of the conditions under which the sittings are held, so far as these came under our own observation.

¹ Ragnar is usually referred to in the sittings as *Skat*, which means Darling.

² *We are Here* (1931), which is based on three Norwegian books.

The sitters take their places about, but not at, a round table, and sometimes in other parts of the room. The sitter in charge of the ouija takes his place at the table on the medium's right, and is seated at right angles to her. In front of him lies the ouija, a rectangular board measuring ten inches by fourteen inches. Its longer side faces the sitter. Looked at from his point of view, the upper part of the board bears, in curved concave rows, the letters of the alphabet, a few conventional phrases such as Yes, No, All right, etc. The lower part is blank and on this is laid a small triangular pointer on three metal discs, which slides smoothly on them over the surface of the board. The medium is seated at such a distance from the ouija, facing of course its shorter side, that when she stretches out her right arm almost to its full extent her hand rests comfortably on the triangular pointer when it is in the middle of the ouija.

Another of the sitters, not necessarily in the circle, keeps a record of the proceedings. During the ouija trance the communications are written down from the dictation of the sitter in charge of the ouija (the other sitters can see what is being spelled out); during the rest of the sitting they are taken down in the usual way.

The remaining sitters seat themselves as they please, and the whole proceedings are quite informal, absolute silence not being imposed, the lighting conditions being normal, and matters going forward without fuss or excitement.

The sitters having taken their places, the medium stretches out her right arm in the manner described, putting her right hand on the pointer, puts her left elbow on the edge of the table and leans her head on her left hand, with which she covers her closed eyes. At several of the sittings either my wife or I sat very near the medium and at her side, in a position in which her eyes and face could be observed. We are satisfied that when the medium's right hand is spelling out messages on the ouija her eyes are in fact closed; and even if they were not that the position of her left hand over her eyes would make anything more than a casual view of the board impossible.

This fact at once introduces an element of seeming supernormality, since it is clear that the medium's hand is not guided by sight to the various letters, etc., on the ouija. It is possible that long-continued practice has made the position of the letters so familiar to the medium that she can find her way about it unseeing. I tested this possibility so far as possible during sittings VII, VIII, IX, by occasionally not replacing the board in position when it was accidentally moved. Even when the board was lying at a considerable angle and several inches from its usual position, the accuracy with which the letters were pointed out was not affected. But of course such a test is far too crude to be conclusive. A much more

convincing one took place quite by chance in sitting XI. Dr Wereide, not having the ordinary ouija available, used one made by himself. This is a square glazed frame, bigger than the board the medium is accustomed to. The letters on it are differently disposed, and the medium had not seen it before the sitting,¹ nor did she give more than a casual glance at it in the few moments before she went into trance. Nevertheless, the spelling out of the communications was hardly affected. From time to time the pointer went to the position in which a given letter would normally have been, but this was exceptional. On the whole the letters were pointed out with certainly not less than 90 per cent. of accuracy. This point clearly deserves further investigation.

Within a few moments, at most within two or three minutes of settling herself in position, the medium's breathing becomes irregular and stertorous, and she appears to fall into a trance. Her right hand then begins to move the pointer to various letters of the alphabet on the ouija, thus spelling out messages, answers to questions, etc. Very occasionally the medium mutters a few words while her hand continues to move about the board. This part of the sitting I call the ouija trance.

It continues for a period varying from a few minutes to half-an-hour or a little more. Then the medium's hand moves slowly away from the pointer and drops into her lap, as does the other hand; the medium opens her eyes, her breathing becomes more normal, and she begins to speak. Sometimes, however, the transition is extremely abrupt, the ouija communication being broken off even in the middle of a sentence, the hand falling suddenly away from the pointer, and the medium sitting up with a violent start. She is now in a trance characterised by a species of vocal automatism, and she acts as if she sees and speaks to the spirits of deceased persons, usually one or both of her brothers Ludvig and Ragnar. Her eyes move freely, if somewhat rigidly, but as if focussed on a moving point which usually remains at a fixed distance just out of her reach. From time to time she makes tentative gestures, as if reaching out to touch the object, *e.g.* one of the brothers, on which her eyes are fixed, and then realising that it is out of reach. Sometimes the medium appears to see the object moving away from her, as may be gathered from her gestures and words, and then her eyes seem to follow it to a more distant

¹ I asked Dr Wereide for a statement on these points, and he writes in reply: "I can inform you that the ouija board had not been seen by Mrs Ingeborg before. Always when she has been here (about 6-7 times in all) she has carried her own ouija board with her. When I arranged the meeting with you here I did not know that she would be here at all. The same day you came here she telephoned and said she had been ordered by Ludvig to come here. I thought she would take her ouija board with her, but as she did not I must use the one we had."

point. This usually happens towards the end of this part of the sitting. From time to time the medium rubs her right shoulder, as if it was being irritated or touched.

The medium's expression changes rapidly and constantly: joy, fear, amusement, unhappiness, affection, terror, almost the whole gamut of emotions, follow each other in rapid succession, and often express more than the words spoken. This is often so to a surprising extent: the medium's expression may indicate that she is in extreme fear, while the words she speaks simultaneously hardly denote more than a little anxiety. From time to time the medium appears to be speaking with her brothers more directly, as it were, or intimately, than usual, and then an expression of great and almost maternal affection, touching to observe, comes over her face. (It must be remembered that the brothers died at the ages of 25 and 23 respectively, while the medium is now 37). This stage I call the speaking trance.

When this is drawing to an end, and for some moments after, the medium appears terrified: she clutches the hand of whoever is seated at her right (usually Judge Dahl), strokes his face repeatedly, then touches the table, the curtain, other nearby objects, pinches herself, looks round intently, until she is finally reassured and come to completely. This process is sometimes painful to watch, and was so particularly in sittings VII, VIII, IX, in which my wife and I had considerable difficulty in comforting the medium. This intermediate stage between the speaking trance and the regaining of full consciousness I call the waking trance, though Judge Dahl uses this name for the whole post-ouija part of the sitting. There is no doubt, however I think, that the two stages, the speaking and waking trance, are distinct. During this stage the medium, as will be gathered, gradually loses "contact" with her brothers and becomes aware of her surroundings. These two processes overlap and it is often difficult to draw a hard and fast line both at the beginning and at the end of the waking trance. Further, the speaking trance is sometimes interrupted by a return to ouija communication.

When the medium has come out of trance, she sometimes remains slightly distracted for a few moments; on one occasion she felt impelled to say a few words which were relevant to what had taken place in the sitting, but the meaning of which the medium did not appear to appreciate, for she apparently has no memory of what occurred during the sitting. A somewhat unusual feature is the fact that the medium invariably comes out of trance with a very sharp thirst.

I now turn to the results of the sittings.

The sealed envelopes. There is no need to enlarge on the results of the experiment with sealed envelopes. The Communicators stated

that they had read the contents of three of these, but preferred to communicate them in my absence. I understand from Judge Dahl that this promise has been repeated since our departure, but at present (November 1932) nothing definite has occurred. So further development may perhaps still be looked for.

The booktest. We had prepared nine newly-bought volumes of pocket size. On our arrival at the hotel these were placed, as bought, on a table in our room. But the books were not all continuously on this table: once or twice a day one or other of the books was taken away for one purpose or another. We chose for the first test Fielding's *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews* (No. CCCXXXIV in *The World's Classics*), a book we had both read before some years ago, but in quite a different edition;¹ we were careful not to open it, and consequently had no notion what appeared on any particular page. We knew, of course, the name of the hero, and the names of Parson Adams, Fanny, Joseph, and Lady Booby appear on the jacket of the book. The medium stated afterwards that the book is unknown to her.

At the first two sittings I had brought a sealed envelope in my pocket. In view of what the Communicator said at Sitting II (that they would prefer a letter which was not brought to the sitting) I substituted *Joseph Andrews* for the envelope in Sitting IV and onwards. I mentioned this fact (without specifying the book) to Judge Dahl and to Hr Fridtjof Dahl before the beginning of Sitting IV. After each Sitting we returned to our hotel and put back the book with the others on the table. Between the placing of the book in my pocket and the replacing of it on the table it never left my pocket.

The Communicators first clearly referred to the proposed booktest in Sitting V, saying: "With reference to that little booktest, we must find the opportunity. On such an occasion the conditions must be the very best, is that not so? You certainly understand that. But an attempt we are willing to make."

In Sitting VII the Communicators, in response to my request, again affirmed their intention to try the booktest. In Sitting VIII they finally did so. The significant part of the test reads as follows, omitting repetitions and interpolations: "I take the first section at top on page 49, Jos. Joseph. Having put . . . something about his coat. . . . Something about a man, Jo, Joseph. . . . There was forty-nine." Page 49 of *Joseph Andrews* is reproduced and the reader can judge for himself of the accuracy of the booktest, which I regard as definitely successful, even allowing for the biblical associations

¹This is unfortunately no longer in our possession. Its lay-out was so different from that of the edition in *The World's Classics* that different matter must certainly have appeared on the relevant page.

between the name "Joseph" and the word "coat." It is not impossible that the medium's "He [Joseph] put something in my mouth, I choked," which followed, is a reference to the passage in the next paragraph on the same page.

Ch. 12. JOSEPH ANDREWS, &c. 49

who hath been since transported for robbing a hen-roost) had voluntarily stript off a great coat, his only garment, at the same time swearing a great oath (for which he was rebuked by the passengers) 'That he would rather ride in his shirt all his life, than suffer a fellow-creature to lie in so miserable a condition.'

Joseph, having put on the great coat, was lifted into the coach, which now proceeded on its journey. He declared himself almost dead with the cold, which gave the man of wit an occasion to ask the lady, if she could not accommodate him with a dram. She answered with some resentment, 'She wondered at his asking her such a question; but assured him she never tasted any such thing.'

The lawyer was enquiring into the circumstances of the robbery, when the coach stopt, and one of the ruffians putting a pistol in, demanded their money of the passengers; who readily gave it them; and the lady, in her fright, delivered up a little silver bottle, of about a half-pint size, which the rogue, clapping it to his mouth, and drinking her health, declared held some of the best Nantes he had ever tasted: this the lady afterwards assured the company was the mistake of her maid; for that she had ordered her to fill the bottle with Hungary Water.

As soon as the fellows were departed, the lawyer, who had, it seems, a case of pistols in the seat of the coach, informed the company, that if it had been day-light, and he could have come at his pistols, he would not have submitted to the robbery; he likewise set forth, that he had often met highwaymen when he travelled on horseback, but none ever durst attack him; concluding, that if he had not been more afraid for the lady than for himself, he should not have now parted with his money so easily.

As wit is generally observed to love to reside in empty pockets; so the gentleman, whose ingenuity we have above remarked, as soon as he had parted

There is no reason why a booktest should not be arranged for in completely evidential conditions. The conditions of the present test, which was intended to be the first of a series, were certainly not *completely* evidential. They were, however, sufficiently so to make a supernatural explanation highly probable and to make out a case for further investigation.

Physical phenomenon. The only other attempt at a supernormal phenomenon that came under our observation, did not succeed. This was an attempt in Sittings IX and XI to materialise a hair.

It is now my agreeable duty to acknowledge my indebtedness. First of all I should like to put on record our great appreciation of Fru Ingeborg's generosity in devoting the larger part of eleven sittings to us in twelve days, during more than one of which she was far from well and worried by the illness of her little girl and boy (a mild epidemic swept the island during our stay). Her immediate acquiescence in all our proposals, and her most kind attention to us made our observation of her mediumship more a pleasure than a duty.

All this applies very fully also to Judge and Fru Dahl, who at no time raised any objections of any kind, gave us a free hand, and showed us the utmost kindness and hospitality. Frk. Rynning, Miss Lipscomb, and Hr Fridtjof Dahl, gave us every possible help. Dr and Fru Wereide kindly allowed us to be present at the sitting at their home. Lord Charles Hope made a welcome contribution to the expenses of the journey.

Finally, I must express my great indebtedness to Mr Gröndahl, whose constant help and genial personality greatly contributed to the success of the sittings.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MASS EXPERIMENTS IN TELEPATHY.

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL.

SIR,—I have read with interest Dr William Brown's comments in *Proceedings* (Part 127) on my recent work in experimental telepathy. I need hardly say that I agree with Dr Brown that such experiments cannot disprove the existence of a telepathic faculty in the case of certain rare individuals, though they undoubtedly show that such individuals are extremely hard to find, since a broadcast appeal fails to discover them. Dr Brown however appears to me to be under a misapprehension when he goes on to say that "the negative results—that is the failures—swamp the successes to such an extent that the results show nothing of the activity of telepathy" (p. 80). In point of fact more than 200 persons continued the experiments over a period of 15-27 weeks and each individual's record was kept on a separate card and carefully studied. The advantage of working with large numbers is that it enables us to discover what is the *average* performance in the various tests. Chance alone of course will always produce a certain percentage of persons whose success is much higher than this average. Then it is usually possible to arrange further experiments to test this small minority. But whenever I have

carried out these additional tests I have invariably found that these apparently "successful" persons in the major test entirely fail to go on producing successful results, thus demonstrating that in all probability their original successes were simply examples of the extreme fluctuations of chance.

I am in entire agreement with Dr Brown that progress is likely to be made by a more intensive study of individuals who appear to possess supernormal powers of perception. But where are such individuals to be found who can produce results under experimental conditions? I have yet to meet the individual who can obtain a mean score exceeding 15.18 with 25 playing cards and then do it again with another 25 cards. Dr Prince tells me that besides Mrs Upton Sinclair he does not know of a single person who can demonstrate experimental telepathy in America. I certainly do not know of a single person in England who is capable of producing experimental results that will satisfy a rigorous scientific inquiry. Should any of your readers believe themselves to be acquainted with anyone who has an indisputable telepathic gift I should be only too willing to arrange some experiments with him or her even though he may *not* be able to get a score of 15.18 with playing cards.

Yours, etc.,

S. G. SOAL.

REVIEWS.

GEORGE LAWTON, *The Drama of Life after Death: A Study of the Spiritualist Religion*. 8vo, pp. xxvi. 668, 21 ill. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1932. Price \$3.75.

This is an astonishing book, baffling not only to the reader and reviewer but also, it would appear, to the publisher. For on the wrapper appears this legend: "This is a study of human beings, not books; and of hopes and fears, not theories. For the tragic question, 'If a man die, shall he live again?' has oppressed the race of men since the beginning and will to the end. Of the countless solutions of this riddle, not one offers so realistic and earthy a hereafter as that described in this book." But this is a wholly inaccurate description of the contents. Mr Lawton, who is an instructor in philosophy in the College of the City of New York, has set out to obtain from spiritualist books, lectures and conversations, a general picture of the Spiritualist creed: he concerns himself with beliefs and personalities, not with evidence; he nowhere discusses survival as an evidential problem, and he certainly does not offer any "realistic and earthy hereafter" except in so far as he reproduces and collates Spiritualist statements. He is not himself a Spiritualist: his attitude is summed up in the paragraph, "All religious systems are

therapeutic, not descriptive, and their vitality depends on the degree to which they transform, through the imagination, the simple brute facts of suffering, frustration and death, into something that will not hurt so much. Now Spiritualism is simply one way among many others of attempting an adjustment to the problems and denials of life. Spiritualism is therefore to be accepted or rejected for the same reasons that we accept or reject other systems of belief—its capacity of compensating us for our frustrations, releasing our tensions, and its possession of a sufficient degree of internal agreement to meet our intellectual standards.” This is surely not a very helpful avenue of approach to an examination of Spiritualism, for it is precisely the claim of Spiritualism to rest on a basis of scientific evidence that distinguishes it from other religions. It is perhaps due to Mr Lawton’s fundamentally mistaken way of approach that the contents of this book do not hang together in any sort of sequence. I find it impossible to discover what Mr Lawton set out to do—except in isolated sections—and where he supposes, at the end of over 600 pages, that he has arrived.

The first part of the book describes at length the general outline of Spiritualist beliefs, so far as it is possible for the author to collate these. There are pages after pages of extracts from writings so different as *Raymond, Alan’s Elaine* (a recent novelette by an American Spiritualist), and the works of Andrew Jackson Davis. Mr Lawton admits that there is not much uniformity in Spiritualist teachings, but he claims to have tried to discover certain main trends. In this he has certainly succeeded, though at the expense of more space and energy than many would think necessary, and by concentrating very largely on American Spiritualism.

Part Two of the book is an examination of Spiritualism as an organised religious body. Once again the author draws from all kinds of material—some of it, such as the quotation of an appeal of Spiritualists to wear “recognition badges,” with no fewer than five illustrations of these, surely of no value whatever—and over 200 pages are given to this subject. Nor, for that matter, is the information very accurate; Mr Lawton has rashly relied too much on Hartmann’s works of reference and similar unreliable sources. Thus on page 152 are thrown together as “Psychical Research Societies” all bodies whose names contain or suggest that purpose, regardless of what these societies actually stand for; so that the S.P.R. is made to rub shoulders with the British College of Psychic Science, the Society for the Study of Supernormal Pictures, and other heterogeneous organisations. And I doubt whether the “Dialectical Society of London”, even if it were not long defunct, would be claimed by anybody except Mr Lawton as an English Spiritualist society.

On page 375, the beginning of the third part of his book, the writer

appears at last willing to come to grips with his subject, but once again the reader will be disappointed. We are told at inordinate length why many people wish to believe in survival and then Mr Lawton reverts to such by-paths of psychology as the "Benefits accruing to Pathological Spiritualists from Communication." On page 530 he begins to discuss the functions and equipment of psychical research, but for some reason limits this investigation to "those researchers only who serve as theologians of the Spiritualist movement and who are regarded as such *by the Spiritualists*"—his italics—and afterwards declares that "the most obvious and genuine distinction between the Spiritualist and the researcher is . . . a class or social one. With exceedingly few exceptions psychical research societies, though perhaps intended to be centres for the scientific collection and appraisal of evidence, have actually become a very high type of Spiritualist organisation; they are churches for the spiritual and Spiritualist elect." Mr Lawton devotes his last hundred or so pages to discussing the contemporary sources of strength and weakness for the survival of the Spiritualist creed and, with a large but uneven bibliography, this curiously unsatisfactory volume ends. I cannot remember opening a book with more interest or putting one down with a greater sense of disappointment.

C. E. BECHHOFFER ROBERTS.

SIR J. ARTHUR THOMSON, *Scientific Riddles*. 8vo. pp. 384. London: Williams and Norgate, Ltd., 1932. Price 10s. 6d. net.

Sir J. Arthur Thomson is not a member of the S.P.R. and is one of the few men of science outside the Society who have taken some trouble to examine our evidence. Chapters XLII, XLIII and XLIV of this book are entitled respectively "Is Telepathy a Fact?" "What lies behind Clairvoyance?" and "How Explain Crystal-gazing?" Sir Arthur's treatment of the evidence is not at all unfair on the whole, although he is inclined to charge the S.P.R. with overlooking normal explanations of some of the phenomena—which is not the fact.¹ Also, in criticising the evidence for telepathy, he draws attention—without citing specific instances—to the faintness of coincidence between the agent's thought and the percipient's impression. I suspect that he is thinking of some of the vague coincidences occurring in a *series* of experiments, and that he has overlooked the fact that these vague coincidences form part of a *series* of coincidences in which close coincidences are found.

In his Introduction (p. 11) the writer says: "But the moment we

¹ As the author does not state to what particular reports he is referring, it may be that his criticisms are not directed against evidence published by our Society—of whose work, by the way, he speaks with respect. But my impression is that it is the evidence published by the S.P.R. which he has in mind.

ask such questions as : Is there a design in evolution ? or Can personality survive bodily death ? we are *beyond science*, though not necessarily off the pathway to Reality or off the way to Truth." Yet he evidently does not think that it is "*beyond science*" to ask such a question as "Is Telepathy a fact ?" Why, then, should it be "*beyond science*" to ask "Can personality survive bodily death ?" It seems to me that this latter problem is one to be investigated by much the same methods as the problem of telepathy. Since he does not, explicitly at least, take the line that telepathy, if a fact, must be a *physical* process, Sir Arthur Thomson appears to be inconsistent in placing the problem of survival outside the province of science, while treating the problem of telepathy as one within that province. All questions of this sort ultimately turn on what particular definition is given of the word "Science". Has Sir Arthur Thomson been consistent in his use of the word ?

J. G. P.

NOTES ON PERIODICALS.

Tijdschrift voor Parapsychologie, 1932.

January. C. P. van Rossen, A Gentleman-Medium and his Trance-personalities. [An ironical account of some automatic writings].—Dr D. H. Prins, Jun., Casualty, Determinism and Parapsychology.—[W. H. C.] Tenhaeff, Commentary on a Case of Clairvoyance. [More strictly a veridical apparition].

March. H. N. de Fremery, Fifty Years of Psychical Research. [A full account of the Society's work on the occasion of its jubilee]. Dr D. H. Prins, Jun., Causality and Determinism in Parapsychology. [Conclusion of the article with a similar title in the January issue].—Felix Ortt, The Evidential Capacities of Fingerprints. [In an earlier issue Dr Tenhaeff had maintained that fingerprints do not provide evidence for survival. This conclusion is traversed].—W. H. C. Tenhaeff, Spontaneous Paragnosy. [A case of telepathy].—[Dr W. H. C. Tenhaeff], Magic in Tibet. [To be continued].

May. Dr H. A. C. Denier van der Gon, New Methods in the Field of Experimental Parapsychology. [On the installation at the Institut Métapsychique].—J. J. Poortman, The Denial of Causality in Parapsychology and elsewhere.—Dr P. A. Dietz, Metagraphology and Psychical Transference.—[Dr W. H. C. Tenhaeff], Magic in Tibet. [To be continued].

July. H. N. de Fremery, Alexander N. Aksakov. [On the occasion of the centenary of his birth].—Annual Report of the Secretary [of the Dutch S.P.R.].—J. J. Poortman, Is Parapsychology based on a Psychophysical Parallelism or on a Theory of Interaction ?—[Dr W. H. C. Tenhaeff], Magic in Tibet. [To be continued].

September. Dr P. A. Dietz admitted as a Tutor in Parapsychology

at the State University of Leyden. [This announcement will be welcomed by all students of psychical research, who will extend to Dr Dietz their congratulations on this important innovation].—Report of the Annual Meeting of the Dutch S.P.R.—Dr P. A. Dietz, The Seeress of Prevorst. [On Friederike Hauffe].—[Dr W. H. C. Tenhaeff], Magie in Tibet. [To be concluded].

Quarterly Transactions of the British College of Psychic Science, Ltd.

October 1932. S. De Brath, Dr T. Glen Hamilton's Visit to England. [Illustrated with further examples of the Mary M. teleplasm].—F. H. Wood, Language Tests of Ancient Egypt. [Non-evidential scripts in phonetic hieroglyphics by a medium called Rosemary].—Major F. C. Tyler, Psychometry of Egyptian Ushabti figure. [The medium concerned is Mrs Humphrey Marten. The statements were practically all of a non-evidential kind].—S. De Brath, Prevision. [General Notes].—Sittings with Mrs Barkel and Mrs Mason.

The Contemporary Review, June 1932.

Dame Edith Lyttelton, The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Society for Psychical Research. [A general survey of the Society's work, with hopeful anticipations of the future].

The Hibbert Journal, October 1932.

Professor D. F. Fraser-Harris, The New Era in Psychic Research. [On Rudi Schneider, largely from personal experience].

The Week-End Review, 10-17 September 1932.

Julian Huxley, Science and Psychical Research. [On Dr Osty's sittings with Rudi Schneider].

The British Journal of Medical Psychology, September 1932.

D. F. Fraser-Harris, A Psycho-Physiological Explanation of the so-called Human 'Aura'. [The writer shows that the "aura" is an after-image when seen with the naked eye and purely subjective when seen through a Kilner screen].

TH. B.

ERRATA.

Page 175, line 15 from bottom, for "three" read "thirty-three".
Page 303, line 18, for "later, on which" read "later on, when".

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For the sake of brevity such qualifications as "supposed," "alleged," etc., are omitted from this index. It must, however, be understood that this omission is made solely for brevity, and does not imply any assertion that the subject-matter of any entry is in fact real or genuine.

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