

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE MEETING OF THE SOCIETY ON

*December 9, 1882.*

The second general meeting of the Society was held at the Rooms of the Medical Society of London, Chandos-street, Cavendish-square, London, on December 9, 1882.

HENRY SIDGWICK, ESQ., PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

The following address was delivered by the President :—

In opening this, the second, meeting of the Society for Psychical Research, I do not propose to detain you long from the records of work done and planned which our Committees have to lay before you. Indeed, I should be sorry if it became a general rule for the chairman at our meetings to occupy any substantial part of our time with such general observations as must be already familiar to many, and will soon become trite to all. But our undertaking is so novel, and is still viewed with so much suspicion and disfavour by important sections of the educated world, that it may be well if for a few minutes I take up again the line of thought pursued in my address delivered at the last meeting; and reply to some of the general criticisms on our aims and endeavours that have been offered in somewhat greater abundance since the publication of our first Proceedings.

When I say that many regard us with disfavour, I do not mean to imply that the reception of our Proceedings has shewn this to be the case to a greater extent than I anticipated. Indeed, it has shewn the very contrary. The number both of adhesions, and of expressions of sympathy and approval from persons who do not join us, has gone decidedly beyond my expectations. I think the most cautious members of our Council are convinced that the existence of our Society is firmly established; that we are to have a fair field, and a fair hearing from at least a considerable portion of the educated world, by whom whatever work we do will be estimated on its merits without prejudice; so that if we fail to attain our ends, it will be due either to our own deficiencies, or to the peculiar difficulties presented by the matters that we are trying to investigate. It is not, therefore, because we are under any positive necessity of conciliating hostile critics that I wish to reply to their objections; but because, from the nature of our undertaking, it is important that the largest possible number of persons should be induced

to render us at least incidental and casual aid, and also because in our attempt to carry the methods of organised and systematic investigation into ground so little trodden by the scientific investigator, I, for one, feel that we have need of whatever instruction we can derive from any criticisms or suggestions, whether delivered in a friendly or hostile spirit.

For my own part, I should have been glad to learn even from those who treat our endeavours with unmitigated ridicule, holding as I do with Horace that it is quite possible for a jester to speak a seasonable truth. But I have found that the very few persons who, in the Press or in private, have adopted this line of treatment, have been so totally, so ludicrously, ignorant of the facts from which they tried to extract jokes, so utterly unacquainted with the nature of the evidence that, in our view, constitutes a *prima facie* case for serious investigation, that it has been impossible to derive from their utterances anything but amusement—which was, no doubt, what they wished to furnish, though in a somewhat different way. If any person who might otherwise have assisted us could be dissuaded from doing so by the buffoonery of (*e.g.*) the *Observer*, his assistance, I think, could hardly have been of much value.

A graver attempt at dissuasion, which was made by a more important organ of opinion, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, deserves, perhaps, more serious consideration.

On October 21st that journal, in an article written with a great air of scientific culture, urged its readers to abstain from inquiring into ghost stories on account of the dangerous tendency to give them credence which, on the principles of evolution, must be held to exist in our brains. Owing to the many generations of our ancestors who believed in spirits, we retain, it seems, in our nervous mechanism, “innumerable connections of fibres,” which will be developed into superstitious beliefs if we give them the slightest opportunity. Our only chance is to starve these morbid fibres by steadily refusing them the slightest nutriment in the way of apparent evidence. We must “keep clear of the pitch” of superstition if we would avoid defilement. “The scientific attitude can only be maintained by careful abstention from dangerous trains of thought.”

When I read this article I seemed to remember having heard something very like it many years ago, only not quite in the same language. And then it flashed across me that this was the exact counterpart of the dissuasions which certain unwise defenders of religious orthodoxy, a generation ago, used to urge against the examination of the evidences of Christianity. They told us that owing to the inherited corruption of the human heart we had a proneness to wrong belief which could only be resisted by “steadily neglecting to develope” it; that we must keep

clear of the pitch of free-thinking if we would avoid defilement; that, in short, the *religious* "attitude can only be preserved by careful abstention from dangerous trains of thought." And I remembered the generous and sincere indignation with which our scientific teachers then repudiated these well-meant warnings, as involving disloyalty to the sacred cause of truth, and a degrading distrust of the God-given reason of man: with what eloquence they urged on us to maintain our privilege of free and unfettered inquiry, to keep our minds impartially open to all evidence from all sources and follow our reason whithersoever it led, at whatever sacrifice of long-cherished conviction; and I thought how the whirligig of time brings round his revenges and how the new professor is "but old priest writ large" in a brand-new scientific jargon.

But it would be a pity to dwell too long on these extravagances, for I do not really think that the article I have referred to represents the view of any considerable number of scientific men—indeed, I do not suppose that any instructed physiologist would gravely discuss the grotesque substitute for original sin which the *Pall Mall* offers us in the shape of superstitious connections of brain fibres. What our scientific opponents for the most part really mean, however contemptuous their manner may be, is not that they will refuse to look at any evidence we bring forward, but that they will require a great deal of very good evidence before they will look at it. Now, I think that their demands in this respect go somewhat beyond the limits of legitimate scientific caution as regards the investigation of thought-reading, of which we gave the results in our last Proceedings; and it might be worth while to try to convince them of this, if all the evidence attainable had been already procured so that the stock could not be increased. But since we have no reason to believe this—since, on the contrary, I hope we shall keep making important additions to the evidence already brought forward—I do not care to dispute with them as to the exact amount necessary for reasonable conviction. I quite agree with them that very strong, very overwhelming, proof is wanted to establish scientifically a fact of such tremendous importance as the transmission of ideas from mind to mind otherwise than by the recognised organs of sense; and if they will not yield to half-a-dozen decisive experiments by investigators of trained intelligence and hitherto unquestioned probity, let us try to give them half-a-dozen more recorded by other witnesses; if a dozen will not do, let us try to give them a score; if a score will not do, let us make up the tale to fifty. The time and trouble will not be thrown away if only we can attain the end.

And here, I think, we may appeal for support to our scientific friends—I mean our scientific enemies, whom we hope to turn into friends—against another class of objectors who are much less difficult to convince of the truth of our conclusions, but are benevolently

anxious that we should not waste our time in establishing them. I meet people in society who talk in this way ; they think our evidence for thought-reading looks very strong, and they do not see why there should not be brain-waves or something of the kind ; indeed, they have themselves tried some experiments after dinner at country-houses, which seem to confirm our view ; and, as for apparitions at the point of death, they have always thought there was a case for them. But they do not like to see so many superior persons, as they politely say to me, spending a serious part of their time on such matters, instead of writing a commentary on Plato, or studying the habits of beetles, or in some other way making a really useful contribution to science or learning. Now here, as I say, I think we may be content to set one body of our critics to argue against the other. For our really scientific opponents do not for a moment dispute the immense importance of our conclusions, if only they could conceive it possible that they could be established ; they would admit that a man would be fortunate indeed who could hope, in any department of recognised science, to light upon a new truth of anything like equal importance.

And there is another objection, again, to the range we have marked out for our work, which equally misconceives the position we hold in relation to science. Some not unfriendly critics have given us to understand that if we had only confined ourselves to thought-reading, and, perhaps, clairvoyance, and similar phenomena of the mesmeric trance, we might have had their countenance ; but that by taking in haunted houses, spirit-rapping, and so forth, we make ourselves too absurd. And I quite admit that we might have avoided some ridicule by drawing the line as they suggest, but we should have avoided it at the expense of logic and consistency. Observe that we do not argue that all these different kinds of alleged phenomena must stand or fall together, and that by proving the reality of thought-reading we tend to prove the existence of ghosts. That would be a quite unwarranted inference. But we say—and I think any competent scientific authority will support us here—that the general presumption of established science against the possibility of thought-reading or clairvoyance is so strong that it could not be much stronger against any other class of alleged facts ; and, therefore, if we judged reasonable to disregard it in the former case, on account of the strength of the testimony to actual instances of thought-reading, &c., it would be palpably inconsistent in us to refuse investigation in other cases in which the quantity and quality of the testimony are such as would be conclusive in any matter of ordinary experience. And that the testimony to the so-called hauntings of houses is strong enough to establish a case for investigation on this principle, appeared to us incontrovertible. Of the quality of this testimony the report of our Committee will presently give you a specimen ; but we could not

give you an adequate impression of its quantity if this Committee had the whole time of the meeting at its disposal. And I must repeat, we do not put forward this testimony as amounting to scientific proof, but merely as justifying investigation.

One word, before I conclude, in reference to an objection to one part of our investigation, which proceeds from a very different quarter. There are not a few religious persons who see no reason to doubt the alleged facts of modern Spiritualism, but who regard any experimental investigation of them as wrong, because they must be the work either of the devil or of familiar spirits, with whom the Bible forbids us to have dealings. Now, as regards these Scriptural prohibitions, I think that there is much force in what has been urged by educated Spiritualists—viz., that they relate to a state of things in which the industry of diviners and soothsayers was in distinct rivalry and antagonism to the worship of Jehovah, so that any one who sought their aid tended to be drawn away from his allegiance to the true God; and that therefore such prohibitions should not be considered as directed against the Spiritualistic séance of the present day, provided it is conducted in right spirit and manner. But with arguments of this kind we have here nothing to do; we have not come to the point at which it is needful to consider them. What we should urge upon our religious friends is that their scruples have really no place in the present stage of our investigation, when the question before us is whether certain phenomena are to be referred to the agency of Spirits at all, even as a "working hypothesis." It must be in the interest of religion no less than of science that this point should be somehow settled, because of the distrust thrown on all human testimony to the marvellous if the existing mass of evidence to these Spiritualistic manifestations is simply neglected; and when we have settled this point, if we should conclude that we have evidence of the existence and operation of extra-human intelligences, then the time will come to consider whether the character of these intelligences is such as to make it desirable to have any further dealings with them. Many of us, I think, will be amply content if we can only bring this first stage of our investigation to something like a satisfactory issue; we do not look further ahead; and we will leave it for those who may come after to deal with any moral problems that may possibly arise when this first stage is passed.

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## SECOND REPORT

ON

## THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE.

By EDMUND GURNEY, M.A., Late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge ;  
 F. W. H. MYERS, M.A., Late Fellow of Trinity College,  
 Cambridge ; and W. F. BARRETT, Professor of Physics in the Royal  
 College of Science for Ireland, *Hon. Secretary.*

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The first Report of the Committee on Thought-reading, presented to the Society on July 17, 1882, established, as we venture to affirm, the following conclusions :—

(1.) That much of what is popularly known as “Thought-reading” is in reality due to the interpretation by the so-called “Reader” of signs, consciously or unconsciously imparted by the touches, looks, or gestures of those present ; and that this is to be taken as the *prima facie* explanation, whenever the thing thought of is, not some visible or audible object, but some action or movement to be performed.

(2.) That there does exist a group of phenomena to which the word “thought-reading,” or, as we prefer to call it, *thought-transference*, may be fairly applied ; and which consist in the mental perception, by certain individuals at certain times, of a word or other object kept vividly before the mind of another person or persons, without any transmission of impression through the recognised channels of sense.

We have been fortunate enough to obtain a much larger amount of adhesion to this view than its startling character had permitted us to expect. Some valuable coadjutors have shewn their approval by joining our body ; and the wide notice which has been taken of the Research, in the Press and in society, has started, we trust, many sets of experiments, from which useful results may be fairly anticipated. Criticism has, of course, been by no means entirely favourable ; and we had had some idea of prefacing our description of further experiments by a detailed reply to some of the objections which have been taken to our former report. But an attentive study of those objections has failed to supply us with much controversial matter worthy of occupying the

time of the present meeting. They may, we think, be completely answered from the pages of the Report itself. One lesson, indeed, our critics have taught us—the importance of the directest statements, and the largest letters, in a paper containing complex or novel matter, which is to meet the eye of the ordinary reviewer. For most of the criticisms on our first Report were founded on the assumption that it does *not* contain what, in fact, it *does* contain—if only the reader will take the trouble to read it. To take the main point, we based our conviction of the reality of the phenomena on experiments made *when none of the Creery family were cognisant of the object selected*. A feeling of courtesy (not, we trust, necessarily unscientific) prevented us from saying in so many words, “It will thus be seen that our results hold good, however much the Creery family may have been in league to cheat us”; but a reference to pp. 22 and 23 of our Report will shew that we said what amounts to precisely the same thing.

We fully agree with our critics that both conscious and unconscious deception must be most carefully guarded against in all these cases. We shall continue to take all the precautions which experience suggests, and clearly to indicate in our Reports that we have taken them. But we must beg our future reviewers to read those reports with sufficient care to absolve us from saying in plain words at every turn—“This we did to prevent Mr. A. from slyly glancing at the card”—“This precaution was taken for fear Miss B. should be telling a lie.” It is part of the wisdom of the serpent not to discuss too obtrusively the harmlessness of the dove.

We could easily reply *seriatim* to all the objections that have been brought; as, for instance, that we have not stated that silence was preserved during the experiments, whereas we *have* stated it over and over again; or that the child might have known which card we were likely to choose, whereas we have stated that the cards were drawn at random from a full pack. Does the hypothesis, further, include the likelihood of the child’s guessing that our minds would be irresistibly directed to the names Arthur Higgins and Esther Ogle—names which we trust our free-will enough to believe that we invented in the act of writing them down? Such detailed refutation, however obvious, might possibly be worth working through, did the whole case for thought-reading depend on this *one* series of experiments. As the case stands, however, we think we may fairly pass on, without more ado, to fresh matter.

#### CAMBRIDGE EXPERIMENTS.

The chief part of the first Report dealt with a series of experiments on thought-reading made at Buxton, with the young daughters of the Rev. A. M. Creery. The Committee felt it desirable

that the experiments with this family should be repeated elsewhere; and accordingly Mr. Myers invited the Committee to meet the Misses Creery at his house, Leckhampton, Cambridge, during the summer vacation. In addition to Mr. Myers, Mr. Gurney, and Mr. Barrett, Mrs. Myers and Miss M. Mason were also present.

The experiments began on July 31st, 1882, and were continued day by day for ten days. The experiments were made with the three Miss Creerys, Mary, age 17; Alice, age 15; Maud, 13; and were varied in many ways. Sometimes (though in a decided minority of cases) the two children who were not guessing knew what we had selected. The percentage of success in these cases was not appreciably above the average percentage of the whole series. Sometimes the guesser was outside a thick closed door, sometimes secluded by a thick curtain in full observation of one of the Committee. On several occasions the children were tested, one by one, alone. Professor Barrett's results under these conditions, and Miss Mason's under the same conditions, and with the child outside the door, were decidedly striking.

The fluctuations in success were very remarkable. Thus, on one day, August 1, when the guesser was outside the closed door, twenty-seven trials with cards gave not a single correct result; merely seven partial successes, as eight of diamonds for seven of diamonds. Whereas on August 3, apparently under precisely similar conditions, the guesser being outside the closed door and no sound of any kind permitted within the room where we, who knew the card, sat, ten trials gave two completely right and two almost right; and on August 4, twenty-five trials under exactly the same conditions gave two completely right and two partially right.

Here are the details of the trials on August 3.

*Evening of August 3, 1882.*

Miss Mary Creery outside the closed and locked door, and a yard or two from it, in the company of one of the Committee, who observed her attentively. A card chosen by one of the Committee cutting a pack; the fact of the card being selected indicated to the guesser by a single tap on the door. The selected card placed in view of all the sitters, who kept their minds intently fixed on the name of the card. After the guesser had named a card loudly enough to be heard through the door, the words "No" or "Right" said by one of us; otherwise complete silence preserved.

The cards chosen by us are printed in italics, the guesses in Roman type. Two guesses only allowed.

1. *Three of hearts*.—Ten of spades (No). King of clubs (No).
2. *Seven of clubs*.—Nine of diamonds (No). Seven of hearts (No).
3. *Ten of diamonds*.—Queen of spades (No). Ten of diamonds (Right).
4. *Eight of spades*.—King of clubs (No). Ten of spades (No).
5. *Nine of hearts*.—Nine of clubs (No). Ace of hearts (No).
6. *Three of diamonds*.—Six of diamonds (No). Ten of diamonds (No).
7. *Knave of spades*.—King of spades (No). Queen of clubs (No).
8. *Six of spades*.—Six of spades (Right).
9. *Queen of clubs*.—Queen of diamonds (No). Ten of clubs (No).
10. *Two of clubs*.—Ten of diamonds (No). Ace of diamonds (No).

It may be remarked that, in addition to the two completely right answers in this series, there were several close approximations; and though the success was very imperfect, we give the result in detail, in order that those who feel disposed may, experimentally, compare them with any series determined by chance alone.

Anxiety to secure success on the part of the subject of experiment is nearly always fatal and always prejudicial, hence the little trepidation that exists when set trials are made, or trials before strangers, tells most unfavourably. We found that casual experiments, when the subject was under no mental restraint, gave very satisfactory results, albeit on such occasions our precautions to avoid erroneous convictions were in no way relaxed.

On the morning of August 4, such a casual trial was made, *Mrs. Myers and Professor Barrett only knowing the card selected*. Eight experiments were made; of these, three cards were guessed completely right—two of them at the first attempt and the third at the second attempt; in this last case the first guess was the nine of clubs, the second the nine of spades, that being the card chosen. In addition to these the suit was given rightly three out of the remaining five times, the pips or court card twice out of the five. It is instructive to note that immediately after this experiment the two younger sisters of the guesser were called in and allowed to know the card chosen by Mrs. Myers and Professor Barrett. The results, compared with the preceding, were as follows:—

*Without the sisters knowing*. Eight trials. Completely right three times, two of them the first try.

*With the sisters knowing*. Seven trials. Completely right three times, two of them on the first trial; and to make the coincidences more curious, the partial successes were identical in number with the previous trial.

Other casual trials were made by single members of the Committee, he alone knowing the word or card selected.

Thus on August 5 Professor Barrett tried with Miss Creery numbers of two figures; two attempts were generally allowed to each. The following results were obtained. The number chosen is in italics:—

	ANSWER.			ANSWER.	
18.	16 and then	18 were said.	48.	48 said at once.	
29.	26	29	31.	71 and then 61.	
52.	35	25	21.	22 said (one trial only given).	
33.	53	58	36.	16	" "
76.	17	36	28.	28	" "
			92.	10	" "

Here out of 11 experiments, 4 were guessed rightly (2 at the first attempt), and 4 bore some resemblance to the figure chosen, as 25 the inversion of 52, the number chosen. This inversion of figures not infrequently occurred, together with what seemed like piecemeal guessing of the figures, which were, of course, counted as failures, such as 17 and 36 for 76. These guesses may be nothing more than pure coincidence, but taken in conjunction with our similar experience with cards, they would seem to indicate that often mental glimpses of the thing selected are obtained, more or less faint and fugitive, and sometimes perverted, as if the figures had been seen from their reflection in a mirror.

A remarkable instance of this partial perception of the thing selected occurred on August 2. On this occasion all the Committee were present; two of the sisters of the guesser were also in the room, and knew the card selected; they were, however, so placed that (though they were completely in our view) only the tops of their heads were visible to the guesser, and they remained quite motionless and silent throughout the experiments. Out of 32 experiments with cards, 5 were guessed completely right at the first attempt, and in addition 20 were partially right. *Fourteen times running* the suit was named correctly on the first trial, and reiterated on the second; not only was no indication whatever given to shew that the suit was rightly named, but our impassive countenances and the solitary word "No," failed to displace from the percipient's mind the correct impression of the suit. The chances against success in naming the suit rightly in any one case are of course 3 to 1, but the chances against being right fourteen times *consecutively* are 4,782,969 to one. That is to say, if the words "clubs," "diamonds," "hearts," and "spades" were written on slips of card and shaken up in a bag, we might very likely have to try four or five million times before pulling out fourteen times in succession the particular word fixed upon.

To vary the wearisome monotony of our experiments, a number of

trials were made at Cambridge in piecing together the letters of certain difficult words fixed upon by us. The letters forming the word,—which was always some out-of-the-way Latin or botanical term unlikely to be divined by mere guesswork,—were selected by us from a box of letters; the confused heap was then taken to one of the Miss Creerys, who was seated in an adjoining room. Some of these trials were very successful, but we abandoned this method of experiment as open to the possible objection that even children might gain some hint of the sequence of letters from an instinct of the probabilities of language. We give, however, a couple of instances out of some twenty similar trials. Here none but one or two of ourselves knew the word selected; the letters were chosen by us and then mixed up; the guesser, seated with her back to us, picked out the letters as we silently and successively thought of them. The figures under the letters indicate the number of trials before success was obtained; thus 1 means right on the first trial, 2 right on the second, and so on. No word was spoken except “No” and “Yes.”

H e d y p n o i s  
1 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 1

P h y s a l o i d e s  
1 2 4 1 1 1 1 4 1 1 1

Not reckoning these experiments with letters, our experiments during the meeting of the full Committee at Cambridge may be summed up as follows:—

With a full pack of playing cards 248 trials were made with one or more of the Committee. Of these, 22 were guessed completely right on the first trial, and 18 on the second trial, or a total of 40 quite right out of 248; or one right in not quite 7 experiments. In addition, there were 69 cases in which the card was guessed in part correctly. *Omitting the second correct guess, the results with playing cards show one quite right in 11 experiments; if pure guesswork were the explanation, there would have been about one right in 52 experiments.*

With the exception of the 32 experiments described on page 74, and which we deemed so unexceptionable that they were included, all these experiments were made when the Miss Creerys were excluded from a knowledge of the card we had selected.

In like manner, while we alone knew the thing selected, 64 trials were made with *figures* ranging between 10 and 99. Of these, 5 were correctly named at the first trial, and 6 at the second—a total of 11 right out of 64, or about 1 in 6; and in addition, 18 trials were nearly right. *Omitting the second correct guess, the results with figures show one right in not quite 13 experiments; pure guesswork would have given about one right in 90 experiments.*

## DUBLIN EXPERIMENTS.

Two of the Miss Creerys having lately been on a visit to Dublin, one of our number, Professor Barrett, took the opportunity of continuing the trials, and obtained some interesting results. Here also a series of trials were made with the young percipient secluded behind an opaque curtain; her sister was allowed to know the card, but no audible signal could pass without its instant detection, and visual signs were rendered impossible.\* In this way 14 trials, made on November 27, with a full pack of playing cards, gave 4 completely right on the first try and 2 on the second try; and in addition, on an analysis of the results, the name of the suit was found to have been correctly given five times running, and reiterated on the second trial. Some experiments made under exactly similar conditions, a day or two later, gave 2 successes on the first trial out of a total of 8, and, except in the last trial, the suit was named correctly each time; here only one answer in each case was allowed. These, it is true, are specimens of results where the amount of success was above the average; which may perhaps partly be accounted for by the sister's assistance in the mental picturing of the card, or by the percipient's having had a long respite from the irksome effort of concentration; but doubtless the chief element of success in this case was freedom from anxiety, as the percipient believed they were mere casual experiments, and could not see that the results were being formally taken down.

Altogether, in Professor Barrett's house 109 trials were made with playing cards: of these 19 were right on the first trial, and 7 on the second, and in addition 2 others were rightly corrected on a third attempt, though to grant this was against our usual practice. Altogether this makes 28 completely right out of 109, and 26 other trials were nearly right. *But confining ourselves to the first guess, the results showed one right in not quite 6 trials; pure guesswork would give one right in 52 trials.* In the large majority of these trials the second sister did not know the card selected.

One hundred and forty-three experiments were also made with words and figures, Professor Barrett *only* knowing the thing he had selected. The choice was here more limited, being on an average about 1 in 16. Of these 143 experiments, 53 were quite successful on the first and 23 on the second trial; *excluding the second trial the successful results were rather more than 1 in 3; pure chance*

\* Although our previous experience had not much favoured the suggestion, it was thought desirable further to test whether some *rapport* or sympathetic relation between the sisters might conduce to the desired result. This explains my allowing the other sister to be present and see the card in some of these experiments.—W. F. B.

would have given 1 in 16. For the purpose of comparison 27 experiments were made, in which the other sister was allowed to be present and to know the figure, this being selected as before out of a set of 16. Out of the 27 experiments, 8 were successful on the first trial, and 1 on the second; omitting this, we have rather less than 1 in 3 right, showing that the presence and assistance of the sister here made no appreciable difference in the results.

A consecutive series of 50 experiments were made at one sitting to test the effect of fatigue. Besides Professor Barrett and Miss Alice Creery, who was seated with her back to the former, *no one else was present in the room.* The words "hearts," "clubs," "spades," and "diamonds" were written down by Mr. Barrett, and one of these words mentally selected by him.\* Out of the 50 trials, the word selected was named rightly 25 times on the first trial; and a second trial being allowed (though of no value as a test), the right answer was then given ten times, making a total of 35 out of 50. The series occupied about 20 minutes, and the guessing was slower in the latter half of the time.

<p><i>During the first 10 minutes.</i> 30 experiments were made. Of these 18 were right on the 1st trial 8       "       "       2nd trial or 4 wholly wrong.</p>	<p><i>During the second 10 minutes.</i> 20 experiments were made. Of these 7 were right on the 1st trial 2       "       "       2nd trial or 11 wholly wrong.</p>
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so that about 1 in 7 trials was wholly wrong in the first half of the time, and about 1 in 2 was wrong in the second half.

It was also noticed incidentally that the longer word "diamonds" was guessed with more difficulty than the remaining monosyllables, thus—

"Diamonds"	was wholly wrong	6 times	out of 12.
"Spades"	"       "       "	2	"       11.
"Hearts"	"       "       "	3	"       13.
"Clubs"	"       "       "	4	"       14.

Indications were given in other trials, made with a selection of monosyllables phonetically unlike, that certain sounds were guessed more easily than others; thus the word *cups* was more frequently wrong than *tongs* or *hats*. But a much larger range of experiments is needed before any generalisation in this direction can be attempted. It will

\* The percipient, it should be remarked, knew that these four words were selected, and that she was to guess one of them. We hope the reader will credit us with being fully alive to the fact of the necessity of avoiding any movement which might serve as a hint to the guesser.

probably be remarked that the average of success in the above experiments, though far above what chance alone could have supplied, falls considerably below the level attained in the trials with the same children which were described in Part I. of our Proceedings; and (as will have been seen) this decline in power equally showed itself whether the remaining members of the Creery family were or were not cognisant of the object to be guessed. The fact seems to be (and the children themselves are regretfully conscious of it) that the capacity is gradually leaving them—a fresh illustration of the fleeting character which seems to attach to this and other forms of abnormal sensitiveness. *En revanche*, we find the capacity present, to a degree admitting of valuable experiment, in a far larger number of persons than we had at first supposed. To those who desire to extend our knowledge in this direction, the following queries suggest lines of useful inquiry:—

1. A natural impressibility being assumed, what are the further conditions which determine or modify success?
2. Is the transferred impression phonetic, or visual, or indeterminate?
3. How far do impressions of drawings or geometrical figures, inexpressible in descriptive words, admit of being transferred?
4. Are there any peculiar features in this latter form of transference, such as the inversion or perversion of the object, &c.?

To the third query we have unexpectedly received from some recent experiments a most definite and satisfactory answer. With a description of these experiments we must conclude the present report.

#### BRIGHTON EXPERIMENTS.

In the last Report (p. 63) a letter is quoted from Mr. Blackburn, of Brighton, who is now an associate of our Society, and who is a very painstaking and accurate observer, to the effect that he had obtained remarkable results in thought-reading, or will-impression, with a Mr. G. A. Smith, a young mesmerist living at Brighton.

We entered into correspondence with Mr. Blackburn, who thereupon took the trouble to send us a paper recording in detail his experiments with Mr. Smith. These statements appeared to be so carefully made that two of our number, Mr. Myers and Mr. Gurney (Mr. Barrett being unable to go at the time), arranged to pay a visit to Brighton personally to investigate the joint experiments of Mr. Blackburn and Mr. Smith. These gentlemen most obligingly placed themselves at our service, and a series of trials were made in our own lodgings at Brighton. The results of these trials give us the most important and valuable insight into the

manner of the mental transfer of a picture which we have yet obtained.

Mr. Blackburn has frequently practised thought-reading with Mr. Smith; but at the time when our first experiments were made, he had been accustomed to hold Mr. Smith's hand, or touch his forehead, with a view to communicating the impression. No unconscious pressure, however, could have communicated to the subject the definite words and pictures enumerated below. Though some of the early experiments are not striking, we prefer to give the whole series, that a due estimate may be formed of the chances against mere coincidence as an explanation.

EXPERIMENTS MADE AT OUR OWN ROOMS, BRIGHTON, DECEMBER 3, 1882. Present: Mr. Edmund Gurney, Mr. F. W. H. Myers, Mr. Douglas Blackburn, hereafter called B., and Mr. G. A. Smith, hereafter called S.

S. was blindfolded at his own wish to aid in concentration, and during the experiment sat with his back turned to the experimenters.

B. holds S.'s hand, and asks him to name a colour, written down by one of us and shown to B. It is needless to say the strictest silence was preserved during each experiment.\*

	COLOUR SELECTED.	ANSWER.
<i>Expt.</i> 1.—	Gold .....	Gilt, colour of picture frame.
„ 2.—	Light wood .....	Dark brown, slaty.
„ 3.—	Crimson .....	Fiery-looking, red.
„ 4.—	Black .....	Dark, black.
„ 5.—	Oxford blue .....	Yellow, grey, blue.
„ 6.—	White .....	Green, white.
„ 7.—	Orange .....	Reddish brown.
„ 8.—	Black .....	I am tired, and see nothing.

After a rest *numbers* were then tried in the same way.

	NUMBER SELECTED.	ANSWER.
<i>Expt.</i> 9.—	35	34
„ 10.—	48	58
„ 11.—	7	7

Several trials of colours and numbers were now made with S. and B. in separate rooms, which failed. *Names* were next tried, written down and shown to B., who then took S.'s hand as before. There was, as usual, no sound nor movement of the lips on the part of any one.

\* Nothing was said when S. named the colour, and where more than one colour is mentioned he gave the colours successively without fresh question.

	NAME CHOSEN.	ANSWER.
<i>Expt.</i> 12.—	Barnard	Harland, Barnard.
„ 13.—	Bellaïrs	Humphreys, Ben Nevis, Benaris.
„ 14.—	Johnson	Jobson, Johnson.
„ 15.—	Regent Street	Rembrandt Steeth, Regent Street.

Two names were then tried without any contact, as follows:—

	NAME CHOSEN.	ANSWER.
<i>Expt.</i> 16.—	Hobhouse	Hunter.
„ 17.—	Black	Drake, Blake.

Contact between S. and B. was now resumed by our express desire, as the increased effort of concentration, needed when there was no contact, brought on neuralgia in B.

	NAME CHOSEN.	ANSWER.
<i>Expt.</i> 18.—	Queen Anne	Queechy, Queen.
„ 19.—	Wissenschaft	Wissie, Wissenschaft.

As B. was ignorant of German, he mentally represented the word “Wissenschaft” in English fashion.

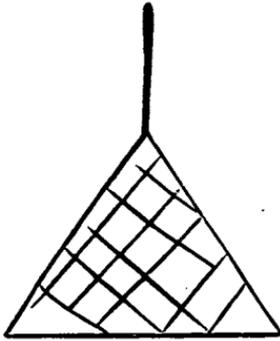
*Pains* were then experimented on. One of us held a sofa cushion close before S.'s face, so that vision of anything on the other side of it was absolutely impossible (he was also blindfolded); and the other pinched or otherwise hurt B., who sat opposite S., holding his outstretched hand. S. in each case localised the pain in his own person, after it had been kept up pretty severely upon B.'s person for a time varying from one to two minutes.

	PART RENDERED PAINFUL.	ANSWER (by pointing).
<i>Expt.</i> 20.—	Left upper arm	Left upper arm.
„ 21.—	Lobe of right ear	Lobe of right ear.
„ 22.—	Hair on top of head	Hair on top of head.
„ 23.—	Left knee	Left knee.

These experiments were very striking in the accuracy of the indications given by S. This form of transmission of sensations might with advantage be more widely attempted.

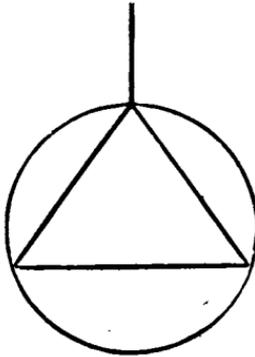
We next drew a series of diagrams of a simple geometrical kind, which were placed behind S., so that B. could see them. S. described them in each case correctly, except that he generally reversed them seeing the upper side of the diagram downward, the right hand side to the left, &c.

Expt. 24.—



DESCRIPTION.—A triangle, with apex *downwards*; and some loose lines.

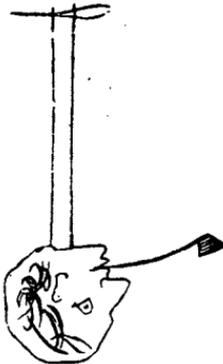
Expt. 25.—



DESCRIPTION.—Triangle in a circle, and straight line pointing *downwards*.

Expt. 26.—A large arrow was drawn, and variously moved about, in order to discover whether the reversal of the image was maintained. In every case it was described as pointing to *right* when it pointed to *left*, *downwards* when it pointed *upwards*, and so on.

Expt. 27.  
Figure held  
upside down  
as shown.—



DESCRIPTION.—I see a sort of circle; a streak, with a lump at the top; an "Aunt Sally" sort of thing.

Next day (December 4) we varied this experiment, thus:—

One of us, completely out of sight of S., drew some figure at random, the figure being of such a character that its shape could not be easily conveyed in words; this was done in order to meet the assumption that some code—such as the Morse alphabet—was used by S. and B. The figure drawn by us was then shewn to B. for a few moments,—S. being seated all the time with his back to us and blindfolded, in a distant part of the same room, and subsequently in an adjoining room.

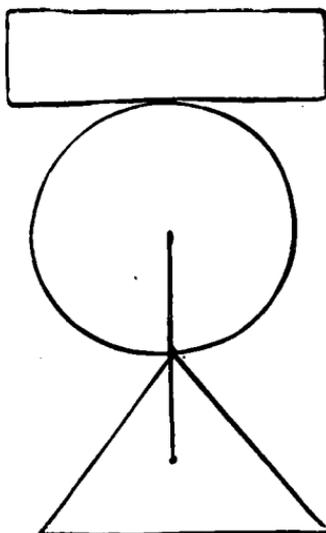
B. looked at the figure drawn; then held S.'s hand for a while; then released it. *After being released*, S. (who *remained* blindfolded) drew the impression of a figure which he had received. It was generally about as like the original as a child's blindfold drawing of a pig is like a pig; that is to say, it was a scrawl, but recognisable as intended to represent the original figure. In no case was there the smallest possibility that S. could have seen the original figure; and in no case did B. touch S. even in the slightest manner, while the figure was being drawn.

In one case, No. 6 in the series, the copy may be said to be as exact as S. could have drawn it blindfold if he had previously seen the original. The figures were not *reversed* on this day, as they had been on the previous one.

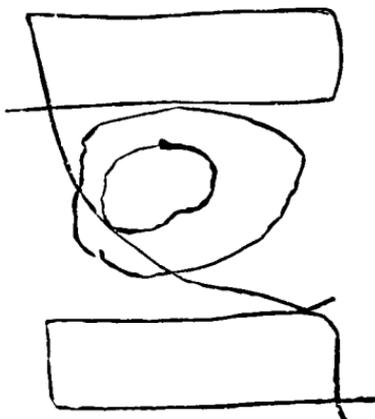
The whole series of figures (nine in number) are given in the accompanying plates, which are engraved from photographic reproductions, *on the wood blocks*, of the original drawings. The number indicates the order in which they were drawn; the original drawing made by us is shown in the upper half of the plate, its reproduction by S. on the lower half.

P.S.—Since the foregoing Report was read, the experiments have been continued and improved, *no contact whatever* being found necessary between Mr. Blackburn and Mr. Smith. An account of these experiments, with the accompanying diagrams, will appear in the next part of our Proceedings, together with the result of numerous experiments made to ascertain whether a perversion or inversion of the transferred image occurs in the mind of the percipient. The most striking and successful results were obtained under conditions still more stringent than those previously imposed. The burden of explaining these results rests upon those who deny the possibility of thought-transference.

NO. 1. ORIGINAL DRAWING.

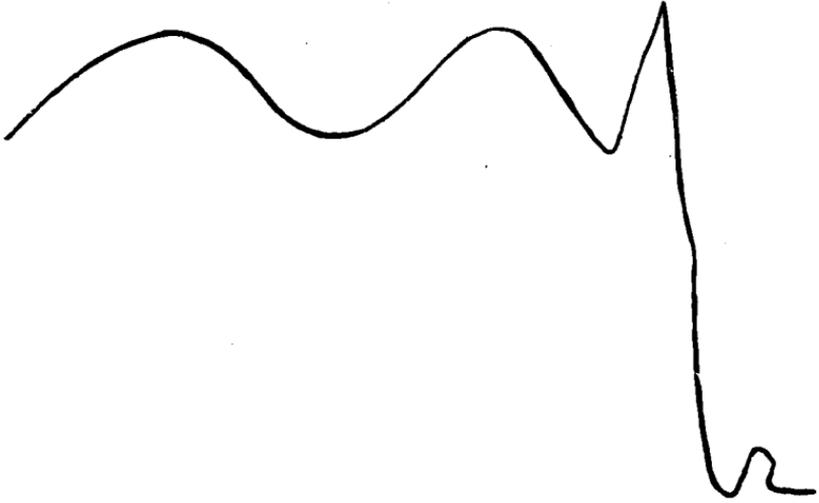


NO. 1. REPRODUCTION.

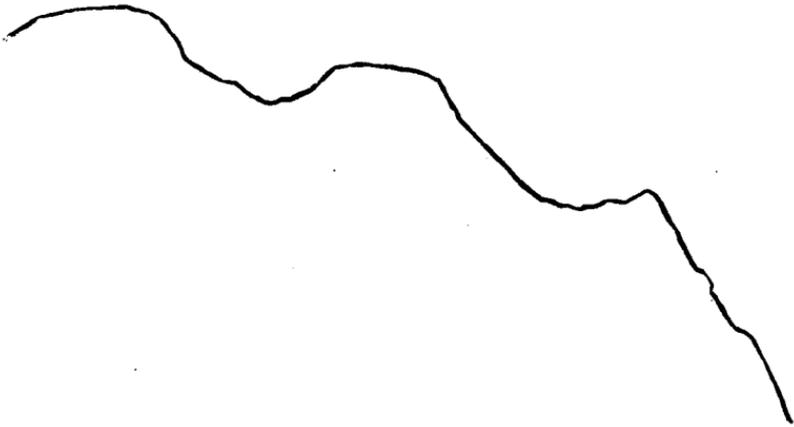




**No. 2. ORIGINAL DRAWING.**

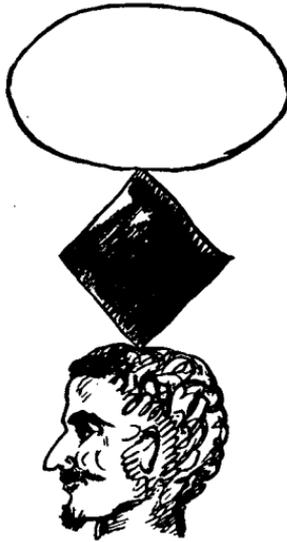


**No. 2. REPRODUCTION.**

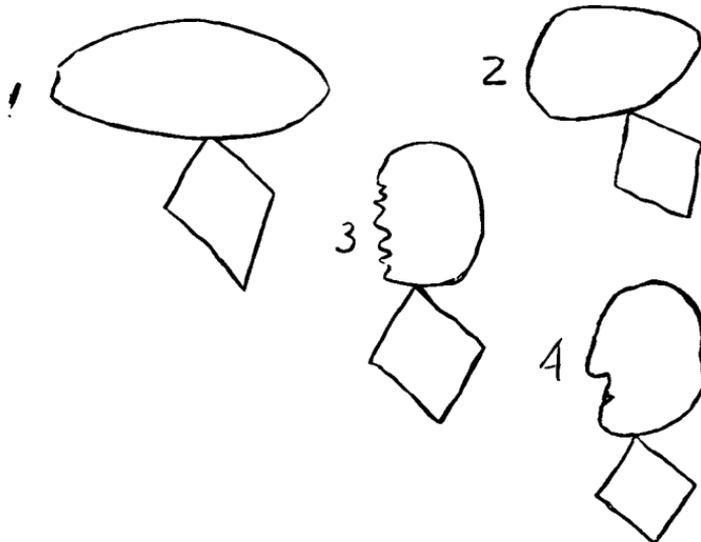




No. 7. ORIGINAL DRAWING.

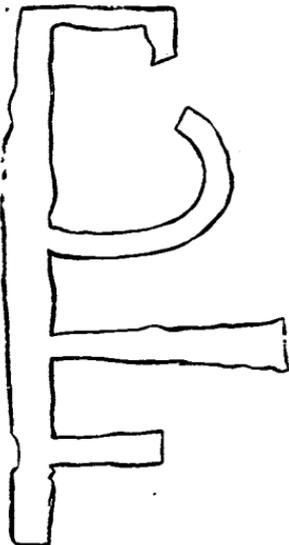


No. 7. REPRODUCTION.





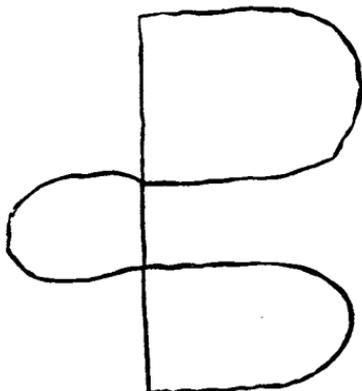
No. 8. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



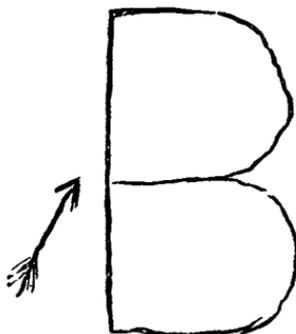
No. 8. REPRODUCTION.



No. 9. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



No. 9. REPRODUCTION.



Mr. S. touched the spot to which the arrow points, and said: "There is something more there, but I cannot tell what it is."



## II.

PRELIMINARY REPORT  
OF THE  
"REICHENBACH" COMMITTEE.

By Professor W. F. BARRETT, F.R.S.E. ; Rev. MAXWELL H. CLOSE, M.A. ;  
ST. GEORGE LANE-FOX ; EDMUND GURNEY, M.A. ; FREDERIC  
W. H. MYERS, M.A. ; A. T. MYERS, M.D. ; EDWARD R. PEASE ;  
HENRY N. RIDLEY, M.A., F.L.S. ; W. H. STONE, M.A., M.B. ;  
and WALTER H. COFFIN, *Hon. Secretary.*

The "Reichenbach" Committee, on account of preliminary difficulties in investigating the subject entrusted to them, have to postpone the publication of results. They hope, however, at the next meeting to report upon the work which has been begun within the last few days. Their first object has been to secure suitable rooms and apparatus, and then proceed to a determination of the reality of the simpler phenomena described by Baron Karl von Reichenbach.

In reply to inquiries as to the exact nature of these, it may be said that (apart from exceptional difficulties of repetition and questionable conditions surrounding them), the alleged phenomena are in themselves perfectly definite and simple. According to Baron Reichenbach, certain persons declared to him that ordinary magnets, crystals, the human body, and some other substances, were to those persons self-luminous, presenting singular appearances in the dark, and otherwise distinguishable by producing a variety of peculiar sensory impressions, such as anomalous sensations of temperature, bodily pain or pleasure, unusual nervous symptoms, and involuntary muscular action. These are generally (but Reichenbach believed not necessarily), accompanied by abnormal physiological and mental states.

Such is the testimony, as recorded by him, of a numerous but special class of observers who described in great detail what they saw or felt. Moreover, by a critical analysis of the evidence, and a series of tests which, if accurately stated, appear conclusive, Reichenbach satisfied himself that the phenomena had an objective reality, and the sensations an external cause in the things to which they were attributed. His further conclusions briefly are, that all bodies whatever, in a certain degree, and magnetic and regular crystalline bodies in a high degree produce peculiar effects upon exceptional organisations called "sensitive." Extending his researches into phenomena of surprising complexity, he

proceeded to speculative inferences from them as to hypothetical fluids and forces, which do not immediately concern us.

Now without necessarily questioning Reichenbach's good faith, objectors generally describe his supposed effects as due to imagination, hysterical illusion, or fraud, and (except as subjective) really impossible in the nature of things. But such a conclusion cannot be accepted as final; for even assuming that all attempts to repeat the experiments have failed, these may not have been sufficiently numerous to imply any high degree of improbability for the phenomena, in the face of recorded testimony in their favour. Considering therefore that if real, the phenomena, however rare, should by perseverance still admit of demonstration, and that for this the appeal lies to experiment of a simple and convincing kind, the Committee feel the necessity of a strenuous and exhaustive attempt at their reproduction; and this view is confirmed by the very encouraging results which their earliest trials have given. Moreover, since the researches in question were made and criticised, our notions are more exact as to the nature of the magnetic field, and its relation to moving conductors; so that fresh interpretations of the discredited phenomena may possibly be forthcoming, and further light thrown on the alleged relations between physical forces and vital functions.

The Committee further consider that some allied subjects may usefully claim their attention; as certain obscure photographic phenomena, the neglected study of curious physiological and mental effects of perfumes, colours, and sounds, and similar matters not before other Committees of the Society.

They are collecting references for an index to repetitions and to criticisms of the experiments of Reichenbach and his followers, and solicit information from members and others, in the hope of securing a catalogue of this special literature. Upon the question of an examination or translation of foreign writings (particularly Italian, German and Russian), the Committee will be glad of suggestions or help.

## III.

FIRST REPORT  
OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON HAUNTED HOUSES.

By W. F. BARRETT; A. P. PERCIVAL KEEP, B.A.; C. C. MASSEY;  
HENSLEIGH WEDGWOOD, M.A.; and FRANK PODMORE, B.A.,  
and E. R. PEASE, *Hon. Secretaries.*

The object of the Committee on Haunted Houses was to investigate the phenomena of alleged hauntings whenever a suitable opportunity and an adequate *prima facie* case for inquiry might be presented. In order to place ourselves in a favourable position both for obtaining such opportunities and for judging of their value, we have thought it desirable to begin by making a systematic collection, from trustworthy sources, of evidence bearing upon the subject of our researches. Our labours in this direction have been fruitful beyond our expectation; we have obtained a large mass of testimony, which we are endeavouring to render as complete as possible by further inquiries. Whenever we can, we question our witnesses personally, and take down their testimony from their own lips. In other cases we conduct a cross-examination by letter. We have to thank all those who have given us assistance of this kind for the readiness with which they have submitted to our method of working, and for the promptness and courtesy with which they have replied, in almost every case, to our questions.

It seems desirable that we should explain clearly the standard that we adopt in estimating the claims of any narrative to be included in our list. In the first place, we, of course, begin by tracing every story to the fountain-head. But we do not consider that *every* first-hand narration of the appearance of a ghost, even from a thoroughly trustworthy narrator, gives us adequate reason for attempting further investigation. On the contrary, our general principle is that *the unsupported evidence of a single witness does not constitute sufficient ground for accepting an apparition as having a prima facie claim to objective reality.* To distinguish any apparition from an ordinary hallucination, such as those recorded by Abercrombie, Brewster, Carpenter, and others, it must receive some independent evidence to

corroborate it. And this corroboration may be of two kinds; we may have the consentient testimony of several witnesses; or there may be some point of external agreement and coincidence—*unknown, as such to the seer at the time*,—(e.g., the periodic appearance on a particular anniversary, or the recognition of a peculiar dress), to give to the vision an objective foundation. As regards the first of these two cases, there is a distinction to be drawn, which is of the greatest importance, though commonly neglected. It may often happen that several persons *misinterpret* the same phenomenon in the same manner, exemplifying what is called “collective delusion.” But neither science nor the common experience of life has produced any undoubted cases analogous to what, in this department, has been designated “collective hallucination”—that is, the observation and identical description by several persons of an appearance having no basis in reality. The only case known to us which warrants the description of collective hallucination is the effect sometimes produced by the mesmerist upon his subjects—a case obviously abnormal.

Perhaps our method of investigation can best be illustrated by a few examples of its actual operation.

At the beginning of our researches we received tidings of a ghost which had been seen within the last few years by an artist at his studio in Chelsea. Having obtained an introduction, two of our number called upon him, and received from him a very striking and circumstantial account of his experiences. The apparition was seen in broad daylight; it appeared to him, during his three years' tenancy of the studio, over a hundred times. He was in his ordinary health throughout this period, and neither before nor since had ever seen anything of the kind. The circumstances were such as to preclude all possibility of deception, and the figure itself was so distinct and lifelike that he succeeded in producing a portrait of it. A rough sketch of this portrait—which is now in the possession of the Society—represents a young man of about twenty-five, with the right arm torn away from the shoulder, and a strangely mournful, pleading expression in the eyes. Our informant was perfectly clear in his account; and the minute examination to which we subjected him failed to disclose any inconsistencies. Further, it was impossible to question his good faith. That he was fully convinced he did actually see what he described to us is a matter which, in our judgment, does not admit of doubt.

We next proceeded to the house itself, and examined its present tenant, a respectable mechanic, with a sturdy contempt for ghosts. He assured us that neither he nor any of his family had been troubled by anything of the kind. The housekeeper who had kept the studio in order, and had lived in the house during the artist's tenure of it, and for some years previously, was also interrogated. She had seen nothing

unusual in the house, nor, so far as her knowledge extended, had anyone else, except Mr. P., our informant. The history of the house—which had been built about forty years ago—as narrated to us by Mr. P., was confirmed by both these witnesses. A distressing suicide had taken place there, but it did not seem possible to connect this in any way with the vision seen by Mr. P.

On the whole, then, in the entire absence of any corroborative evidence, such as that indicated above, it seems to us that we cannot reckon this vision as other than a hallucination arising from some morbid condition of the subject; and the circumstances under which it was seen to some extent favour this view. With one exception, it invariably appeared to Mr. P. floating in air behind the rails of the staircase, when he was washing his brushes at the end of his day's work. The sudden quickening of the circulation, caused by the change of position and rapid movement after a period of some hours passed in a sedentary or stationary posture, would be precisely one of the conditions we should look for as calculated to develop any latent predisposition to spectral illusions. There is, however, one circumstance which makes us waver in our diagnosis of this case. On the occasion above referred to as exceptional, Mr. P. saw the figure in his studio. He was sitting before his easel with his back to the door one winter's morning, when, as he assured us, he felt that someone was in the room, and, turning round, he saw the apparition a few feet from him. This intrusion appears to have annoyed him, and he uttered an impatient exclamation, upon which the figure slowly vanished. If Mr. P.'s remembrance of this incident is completely accurate, there would certainly seem to be some degree of justification for his own firm belief in the objective nature of the phantom; since hallucination which affects sensation in two modes—what we may call hallucination of two dimensions—is at all events uncommon. However, in the absence of more conclusive evidence, we must be content to regard the presumption in favour of the objective nature of this apparition as, at least, too weak to afford us ground for action.

In another instance we have an admirable illustration of the fallaciousness of hearsay evidence, where the intermediaries are not experts in researches of this kind. We lately received an account of a very remarkable phantasmagoria said to have been witnessed by two gentlemen in Gloucestershire about fifty years ago. The story, though of a very startling kind, is not without parallel amongst our records; and our informant had himself heard the story from one of the persons concerned. It ran as follows:—Two gentlemen were travelling together in a post chaise one Christmas Eve, on some date between 1820 and 1830. The country was not known to them, and the difficulty of finding their way was increased by a heavy fall of snow. The coachman

appears to have taken the wrong turning at some cross-roads, and only discovered his mistake on arriving at a house whose brilliantly lit up interior betokened that some Christmas festivities were being carried on within. The elder of the two gentlemen walked up to the door, and asked his way of the master of the house, who came out to meet him. He was courteously invited to enter, and, on his declining, a servant was sent with him to conduct the chaise into the right road. When, on his leaving them, one of the occupants of the carriage placed a crown-piece in the servant's hand, it appeared to them both to fall through the hand on to the snow, and the man, at the same time, mysteriously to vanish. On arriving at their destination, the travellers learnt that no house now stood in the locality, which they described; the house, which had formerly occupied the spot, had been pulled down after a terrible crime which had been committed there on Christmas Eve many years before. On examining the scene of their night's adventure on the day following, the travellers found in the snow the wheel marks of their carriage leading up to the spot where this house had once stood.

We have recently had the opportunity of hearing the narrative of the surviving witness of this strange scene. The incidents did, in fact, take place substantially as related. The account, as we had at first heard it, differed from the true version only by the misrecollection of one or two particulars, which might well seem trivial and unimportant to those who regard "ghost stories" as more suited for the amusement of a firelight hour in the drawing-room or the nursery, than for the subject of serious and painstaking research. Yet it is just the details, which, when accurately reported, serve to bring this incident back from the realms of fairyland almost to the dull level of commonplace reality. For it would appear that it was not until *many years afterwards* that the travellers—who were schoolboys at the time of the occurrence—learned that no house had stood for more than half a century on the spot where they believed themselves to have gone astray, and in that interval we may fairly suppose that their memories would be so blurred as to render their identification of the locality untrustworthy. The following extract from a letter of the surviving witness throws much light on the other extraordinary features of the narrative: "If I am right in my recollection, I think my friend made the remark to me, 'Didn't you see the coin go right through his hand and fall to the ground?' But, then, you must bear in mind that it was snowing heavily, and a flake of snow might be taken for a half-crown, or he *might* have said it in joke. Then, as to the unusually rapid disappearance of the man. This *may be accounted for* by the density of the falling snow, or his temporary concealment behind a bush or tree. Strange as the whole affair appeared to my vision that night, I am not inclined to lay much

stress upon these deceptive phantoms." Elsewhere he writes that he regards it as "*a strange circumstance*, some portions of which were really puzzling to me when I came to think them over in after times."

Here again, then, the evidence falls manifestly short of our requirements.

But in justice to our correspondents we must admit that when we have tracked a story to its source, we find, perhaps more commonly than not, that its features, so far from being exaggerated, have been blunted and toned down by repetition. Amongst educated people, at all events, the fear of ridicule is prepotent over even the love of the marvellous, and the enjoyment of a good story. Most persons, we imagine, would be of one mind with a gentleman, who has recently communicated with us, and whose story met with so unsympathetic a reception on its first recital, that until now he never ventured on a second. And when our records have been rigorously tried by the canons which we have above indicated, and the largest allowances have been made for the possible importation of essential details into the narratives through defect of memory or the instinctive tendency of the imagination towards dramatic unity and completeness, there remains a mass of evidence from wholly independent sources, sufficient, we venture to assert, to justify the steady prosecution of our inquiries. From this mass we select two narratives for publication in this report—not as being more authentic than many other accounts in the possession of the Society: still less as excelling the others in interest or importance—but as illustrating, in connection with our comments, the kind and the amount of evidence which we regard as indispensable.

For at the same time we would point out that these narratives, severally not in all points proof against criticism, convey a very inadequate idea of the real strength of the evidence by which our hope of future success in this direction is, we think, justified. The strength of that evidence consists essentially in the independent and *cumulative* testimony of many sane and credible witnesses; and to form a just estimate of it, it would be necessary for our readers to have before them, not one or two selected stories, but the whole collection of narratives at present in our possession. Till this is possible, we would ask them, with ourselves, to hold their judgment in suspense.

We have chosen the following narrative as having received incidental corroboration from external sources of which, necessarily, few such stories are capable. At the same time, whilst not underrating the value of this corroboration, we would point out that *we* have at present the testimony of only one witness to the events related. Though there can be no question of our informant's integrity, the evidence would, certainly, be considerably strengthened if we could

obtain the direct testimony of the other persons concerned. The manner in which this story was obtained illustrates incidentally the difficulties which beset our investigation. Our informant, a gentleman of considerable intellectual distinction, declined to correspond with us, but at a personal interview narrated to Mr. Podmore the following details, on which he cheerfully submitted to be catechised. The account here given was drawn up immediately after the interview, and was read through and corrected by Mr. X. Z. himself, as we will call him. But it is only within the last few days that Mr. X. Z. has accorded us permission for the publication of the story: and that without his own name, or the address of the house referred to—a prohibition which we regret, but can scarcely hold unreasonable. We should, perhaps, add that, besides, being personally known to one of our number, Mr. X. Z., as we have called him, is familiar by reputation to every member of the Committee, and no doubt to most of our readers.

“In the early spring of 1852, Mr. X. Z. went to reside in a large old house near C—. Mr. X. Z. only occupied part of the house, the remainder being inhabited by a friend of his own, Mr. G—, and some pupils. Mr. G—had occupied the house about a year before Mr. X. Z.’s arrival; and two servants had, in that interval, given him warning, on account of strange noises which they had heard. The house, which is a large one, was let at an extremely low rent.

“On the night of the 22nd September, 1852, at about one a.m., Mr. X. Z. went up to his bedroom. The house was in complete darkness, and he took no candle with him; but on opening a door which led into the passage where his room was situated, he found the whole passage filled with light. The light was white like daylight, or electric light, and brighter than moonlight. At first Mr. X. Z. was dazzled by the light, but when his eyes became used to it he saw, standing at the end of the passage, about 35 feet from him, an old man in a figured dressing-gown. The face of this old man, which Mr. X. Z. saw quite clearly, was most hideous; so evil was it that both expression and features were firmly imprinted on his memory. As Mr. X. Z. was still looking, figure and light both vanished, and left him in pitch darkness. Mr. X. Z. did not, at that time, believe in ghosts, and his first thought was (he had lately read Brewster’s ‘Natural Magic,’ and had been much impressed with the striking cases of spectral illusion recorded in that work) that he was the subject of a hallucination. He did not feel at all frightened, but resolved to take a dose of physic in the morning. The next day, however, remembering the tales told by the two servants who had left, he made inquiries in the village as to the past history of the house. At first he could find out nothing, but finally an old lawyer told him that he had heard that the grandfather of the present owner of the house had strangled his wife and then cut his own throat, on the very spot where Mr. X. Z. had seen the figure. The lawyer was unable to give the exact date of this occurrence, but Mr. X. Z. consulted the parish register, and found the two deaths recorded as having taken place on the 22nd September, 179—(the precise year he could not now (1882) remember). The lawyer added he had

heard that the old man was in the habit of walking about the house in a figured dressing-gown, and had the reputation of being half an imbecile.

“On the 22nd September, 1853, a friend of Mr. G——’s arrived to make a short stay. He came down to breakfast the following morning, looking very pale, and announced his intention of terminating his visit immediately. Mr. G—— rather angrily insisted on knowing the reason of his sudden departure; and the young man, when pressed, reluctantly explained that he had been kept awake all night by the sound of cryings and groanings, blasphemous oaths, and cries of despair. The door of his bedroom opened on to the spot where the murderer had committed suicide; and it was in the bedroom which he had occupied that the murder had been committed. In 1856 Mr. X. Z. and his friend had occasion to call on their landlord, who lived in London. On being shewn into the room Mr. X. Z. at once recognised a picture above the mantel-piece as being that of the figure which he had seen. The portrait, however, had been taken when the man was younger, and the expression was not so hideous. He called Mr. G——’s attention to the painting, saying: ‘That is the man whom I saw.’

“The landlord, on being asked whom the portrait represented, replied that it was the portrait of his grandfather, adding that he had been no credit to the family.

“Doors also opened and shut in the house without apparent cause; bells were rung in the middle of the night, causing all the household to turn out and search for burglars; and the inmates of the house declared that unseen footsteps had followed them down the whole length of the passage already mentioned.”

It would appear from Mr. X. Z.’s statement that other persons (including Mr. G——) heard or saw unaccountable things in the house. But Mr. X. Z. was unwilling, both for his own credit and for that of the house, that the inquiry should be prosecuted further in this direction. Moreover, even had we felt justified in acting against his express desire in the matter, it would have been a task of great difficulty to obtain at this distance of time the testimony of the other inmates of the house, previous to 1856; Mr. X. Z. being unable to give us any assistance in our inquiries.

Mr. X. Z. and his friends left the house in 1856; and Mr. X. Z. himself was generally absent during September. This circumstance, coupled with the fact that the room in which the sounds were chiefly heard was generally used as a guest-room, and only occasionally occupied, may account for nothing of an unusual character having been seen or heard during the remainder of their tenancy.

We have, in this instance, audible testimony for the occurrence in a house where a murder had been committed, of :—

1. Noises of footsteps and bell-ringing, such as were commonly reported to be heard in houses of this description.

2. An apparition, noticed on the scene of the murder, and subsequently recognised from a portrait as bearing resemblance to the murderer.

3. Articulate sounds of appropriate significance, heard, again, on the anniversary and on the scene of the murder, by another witness who was entirely ignorant of the facts.

The house has been partially rebuilt since Mr. X. Z.'s departure; and the disturbances have, apparently, ceased. The matter, however, is still under investigation by the Committee, and we have some hope of obtaining, at no distant date, further authentic information on the subject.

In our next narrative we have been fortunate enough to obtain the testimony, at first hand, of three witnesses—two of them daughters of an Irish clergyman of some distinction—to the events related. We have also the testimony of several other persons, given, it is true, at second-hand, but, as we have good reason to believe, authentic. Of these persons we can claim acquaintance only with Miss H. G——. This lady's evidence was taken down from her own lips by Mr. Sidgwick and Mr. Podmore, last summer, and the sheets were subsequently read through and corrected by her. The other witnesses, who reside in Ireland, have themselves written down their experiences for us. In this case also, for obvious reasons, we are not permitted to publish names and addresses.

The history of the house, as gathered from Miss G——'s letters, and from conversation with Miss H. G——, may be summarised as follows: The house itself is an old rectory in the north of Ireland. In 1818 or 1819, Miss A——, the eldest daughter of the then incumbent, died, and it is this lady whom the apparition which has been seen in the house is supposed to represent. Into the circumstances attending her death, which lend a tragic interest to the commonplace details of the following narrative, we are not at liberty to enter. But this much is clear, that Miss A——'s life had been an unhappy one—narrow in its interests, and repressed in its sympathies. After Dr. A—— left there had been six rectors in succession before Mr. G——, the father of our informants. Miss H. G—— informed us that she had heard from Mr. H——, one of their predecessors, that strange noises, which he attributed to rats, were heard in the house during his residence there. Since this gentleman's departure, however, the house had been partially rebuilt, and there appear to have been no rats in Mr. G——'s time. Miss H. G—— and her sister had heard when they first came to the house that it was haunted by Miss A——'s ghost; but nothing unusual appears to have been *seen* in the house until 1861 or 1862. The old rectory is at the present date (1882) occupied by a respectable farmer and his family. We understand that these persons have not witnessed anything unusual in the house, but we have as yet found no opportunity for detailed

investigation. The following is a copy of a letter written to us by Miss G—, one of four sisters.

“We lived for twelve years in what was considered to be a ‘haunted house.’ It was an old country rectory, in which, forty years before, a terrible tragedy had occurred.

“We took possession of the place in October, and nothing remarkable occurred until one evening about Christmas time—I forget the exact date. After family prayers, when all our party, except my mother and father and myself, had retired, I left the dining-room, and went across the hall into the drawing-room. There was no light in the front hall, but a hanging lamp in the back passage gave some little light. The drawing-room fire was almost, but not quite, out. There was a white marble mantelpiece, and before the fire-place stood a chair, in which one of us had been sitting before tea. As I entered the room, a figure rose up quietly from that chair and approached me. I thought I recognised my sister, and said, ‘Are you here, H—? I thought you had gone to bed.’ The figure advanced and came so close to me that I put out my hand and said, ‘Don’t knock me down.’ Still no answer, and the figure was gone.

“I returned to the dining-room and said to my father and mother, ‘If there is a ghost in D— I have seen it just now.’ They laughed at the idea, but I insisted that I had seen something for which I could not account, and was determined to investigate it. I therefore took a lamp and searched drawing-room, hall, and passages, satisfied myself that the servants had gone to bed, and then went to the rooms upstairs occupied by my sisters and by some friends who were staying with us at the time. Not one of them had been in the drawing-room after prayers.

\* \* \* \* \*

“A few evenings afterwards I opened a door which led from the back passage to the top of the kitchen stairs. A figure seemed to rush up the stairs to meet me, went past me, and when I looked after it into the lighted passage behind me, it was gone. For this incident also I could not satisfactorily account.

“This is all I saw, but I, as well as other members of our household, often heard strange noises, as of dragging furniture, heavy footsteps, &c., especially at night.

“We investigated these over and over again, and once I detected that the sound of a clanking chain was caused by a reverberation from the stable. There were no rats in the house while we were there.

“I. F. G—.

“June 7th, 1882.”

“Three other points I should note before leaving this subject.

1st. “The figure at D— was generally seen about the shortest and longest days of the year.

2ndly. “Some old parishioners who remembered Miss A—, the Arch-deacon’s daughter, whose mysterious death occurred in 1819, remarked to us that my sister H—’s figure was singularly like hers.

3rdly. “We came by degrees to consider the mysterious figure which

occasionally appeared, as a personage in the house, friendly toward us, but quite unconnected with our concerns. We always spoke of her as 'Miss A——.' She never came to warn us, nor to communicate with us. We had towards her a kindly feeling, perhaps mixed with awe, but we were not in the least afraid of her. Servants who were at different times in our employment could give information about the appearances and sounds in that house, but it would be vain to expect them to reply to letters.

"L. F. G——.

"June 19th, 1882."

Mrs. B——, the writer of the letter given below, is a friend of the G—— family, and has, at their request, communicated to us the following incident.

"I am not quite sure what year it was that during one of many visits to my friends at D——, I saw the 'ghost' of the house. It was, I think, 1861, about the end of September. We were a large merry party just finished tea in the dining-room, and were all proceeding from it across the hall to the drawing-room; the doors of the rooms facing each other. I, being the guest, was the first to leave the dining-room and enter the drawing-room, the last of the party following, carrying the lamp, so that all the light was behind us, though still very strong.

"When I opened the drawing-room door I started back on seeing what I thought was a lady, or one of the daughters of the house, seated on a sofa by the fire on the opposite side of the room from the door (although I knew everyone staying in the house was immediately behind me), and said, 'Who's that?' 'Oh!' said someone, 'it must be Miss A——,' the name by which the ghost of the house was known.

"In a minute the room was full of bright light, and there was nothing to be seen of the appearance which a moment before looked so like a lady comfortably seated by the fire. I had never been much of a believer in what I had been told of the ghost of this house, and even still think it *may* have been a combination of shadows and reflections; and the seeing of it thus did not inspire me with any feeling of alarm, as I have often stayed in the house since; but I have never, either before or since, seen any shadows take so tangible and substantial a form as that did.

"During several of my visits I have heard various people, both visitors and inmates, say they had either seen or heard, or rather I should say felt, the presence of the same shadowy lady at all hours and places in the house.

"T. M. B——.

"July 25th, 1882."

Next, we have Miss H. G——'s evidence, as given to Mr. Sidgwick and Mr. Podmore.

"Some time in June, 1861 or 1862, I was coming up the stairs, in the dusk, about nine p.m. As I reached the first landing, I saw just in front of me, apparently about two yards off me, or nearer, standing against the light—which came through the landing window—a grey figure, which I supposed to be one of my sisters. I stopped, and said, 'Are you coming on?' No reply;

and I made a step forward. The figure vanished ; and I felt a slight shock. It was as if I had suddenly come upon my own figure in a mirror. Had there been a mirror there, I should have certainly supposed that to be the case. I went upstairs, and told the others what I had seen."

Miss L. G——, who never saw the apparition herself, has communicated by letter her recollection of what she heard from her brother and others. We have been unable to trace the two servants herein referred to.

"In the year 1862 I was staying at Broomfield, after my grandmother's death. Some time towards the end of September my brother John found us there, and told us he had seen the 'ghost at D——,' but had not told them at home.

"He said that one evening he had driven my eldest brother, William, to the station at D—— for the 6.20 train. On his return he left the horse and car, as usual, in the stable-yard with the servant, and was going into the house, when, on passing the drawing-room windows, he saw, standing in that next the hall-door, a figure which he at first took to be one of his sisters. Suddenly he thought that the figure was not dressed in mourning, as his sisters would be, and he stepped back off the doorsteps to look at it again. She was standing with her hands up, as if she had just shut down the lower sash of the window, and was looking out between her arms. He could not in the dusk discern the features, but saw the hair parted on the forehead, and that the dress was *grey*. It was not any of his sisters, or any of the servants. He left the figure standing in the same attitude, and went into the house, and into the drawing-room direct. No one could have left the room without meeting him in the hall. The room was vacant, and when he went into the parlour opposite he found all the members of the family who were at home seated round the tea-table. The servant whose business it was to close the drawing-room windows (who was also in *black*) and all the other servants were, he satisfied himself, below stairs. The breadth of the area, close to the edge of which he stood to look at the figure, was, I fancy, about eight feet ; it could not have been more than ten.

"The hour was about, probably after seven o'clock, the date about the 18th September—I am not sure of the exact day. John was eighteen, in good health and spirits. He died in 1865. He did not tell anyone at home at the time, as he said, when he found the room empty, he felt 'eerie,' but he told me he wandered through the house the rest of the evening trying to see the figure again, but could not. The only other time he was conscious of a 'presence' was, he told me, one day when, coming out of one of the rooms on the upper lobby, he felt as if some person brushed closely by him, but he saw nothing.

"Several years afterwards—I think about 1868—we had a girl named Susan Taylor living with us as our maid. We were annoyed by a little girl from the village of——, whom we were trying to train as a servant, telling the servants that the house was haunted, and saying she was afraid to go upstairs in the evening.

"Speaking of this to me, Susan said that she did not believe in ghosts ;

that she had been washing out the upper lobby one evening towards dusk, hurrying to get it done, as she thought I should be displeased at her doing it so late; she looked up, and saw, as she thought, my youngest sister cross the lobby. She said, 'I thought I saw Miss Caroline go from your room into Miss H——'s, with a shawl over her head. I was afraid she had the tooth-ache, and I got up and followed her, but when I went into Miss H——'s room there was no one there.' And she continued: 'That shews the nonsense about a ghost in that room, for if there had been one I should have seen it.' Susan added that she, like myself, was accustomed to be through the house at all hours of the day and night, sick-nursing.

"L. E. G——.

"June 13th, 1882."

We subjoin an account, given to us by Miss H. G——, of phenomena observed by two other persons, with whom it is no longer possible to communicate, and of various strange sounds heard by herself.

"Some time early in the sixties Mr. John H—— came over to call on us one summer's morning. As he passed the drawing-room windows, of which there were two, to go into the house, he saw, as he thought, myself sitting in the drawing-room. He waved his hand to the figure, went in at the open door, and proceeded straight to the drawing-room. There was no one there. When he met me Mr. H—— told me what he had seen.

"In October, 1862, Mr. F—— had been playing by himself in the drawing-room. It had grown dusk, and thinking it was probably time to dress for dinner, he went out into the hall, and groped about on the shelf, where they were usually kept, for a candle. He found a candle, and whilst feeling for the matches, he heard the light step, as he thought, of one of us coming down rapidly from the top of the house. When the step, as he thought, was near him, he called, 'Is it one of you girls? Can you find me some matches?' The noise ceased and he found no one there. He at once mentioned the incident to my brother.\*

"On another occasion, when I was away from home, and two of my sisters occupied the room next to mine, Mr. F—— occupied the guest-room below mine. In the morning he asked my sisters what they had been about in the night; he heard noises of furniture, &c., being moved in their room, which had prevented him from sleeping.

"Strange sounds—generally as of furniture being moved or some person moving about in the room—were frequently heard in my room.

\* [The above account was written down by us from Miss H. G——'s lips, and as she professed herself unable to state with certainty whether Mr. F—— had mentioned having *seen* anything on the occasion referred to, we judge it best to omit all reference to a possible appearance. Recently, however, Miss I. F. G—— on reading through her sister's narrative, writes to us, "This part of the story has certainly lost, not gained, in the telling. Mr. F—— told us that he distinctly *saw* a girlish figure coming downstairs on the occasion here mentioned, that he addressed her first as one of the ladies of the family, then as a servant; and that it was only when he walked close up to the figure that it vanished. He heard distinctly the rustle of a dress and footfalls, as the figure came quickly downstairs to meet him.]

“The following were the most memorable instances :—

“1. In 1863, on a summer’s morning about 10 a.m., the door of the room being ajar, I heard what I supposed to be the noise made by the housemaid moving about in the room; and accordingly pushed the door further open and stepped into the room, calling out, ‘Margaret, I want you;’ but found no one there.

“2. In November, of 1872, about two p.m., when we were on the point of leaving the house, having just gone up to my room, I heard a step come from the room opposite along the passage, and called out, ‘Who’s there?’ Finding no one I ran immediately down into the drawing-room and found my sister and brother there (the only persons then in the house, except servants); and then went into the kitchen and ascertained that none of the servants had been upstairs.

“3. In the winter of 1864 (I think), while I was sitting in my room with my back to the door, I had a vague impression as of someone entering the room. I then heard a loud noise as of the crack of a whip on wood, three times in succession, as though the whip had been struck first on a wardrobe and then on each of two windows opposite the door—as though the striker were going round the room from the door, towards me. “H. G.—.

“July 6th, 1882.”

It would appear in this case that in a house which bore the reputation of being haunted :—

1. Certain unaccountable noises were occasionally heard.
2. A shadowy figure was seen at various times, by at least six witnesses : and as these witnesses in most cases affirm that they at first took the object seen to be a living person, their apparent visions cannot be referred to any state of expectancy, produced by their knowledge of the supposed haunting—unless we attribute to them a coincidence of misrepresentation on this important point.
3. There are some grounds for connecting this figure with the lady whose spirit was supposed to “haunt” the house.

Though for the reasons above indicated we deprecate as premature any systematic attempt to estimate the weight of the evidence afforded by these two narratives, we would, to a certain extent, anticipate criticism by pointing out here, as we have done in Mr. X. Z.’s story, what we consider the weakest points of the case. In the first place, then, though the figure is said to have been seen by so many persons, it was never seen by two persons simultaneously. Nor was it ever seen under such circumstances, and in such light, that its features could be clearly recognised. And, undoubtedly, some of the evidence for its appearance is very weak, the figure seen by Mrs. B—, for example (p. 110), being quite possibly a mere illusion of the senses,—the imagination having been previously excited by hearing of the ghost in the house. In fact, any piece of the evidence standing by itself might be ingeniously explained away, though it is difficult to see how this can

be done with the spontaneous and independent testimony of several creditable witnesses. It is not a *chain* of evidence which breaks down if the weakest link gives way, but rather a *rope*, the strength of which is to be judged as a whole, and not from the weakness of any particular fibre. Again, the evidence for the connection of the figure said to have been seen with Miss A—— is but slight. In the absence of any recognition of the features, or the appearance of the phantom on any definite anniversary, the supposed connection is founded mainly upon the general resemblance of the figure of one girl to that of another, and on the probabilities of the case as estimated in the fireside talk of a few Irish villagers. It should, however, be remembered, that to establish the *prima facie* objective nature of an apparition it is not *necessary* that any such connection as that above indicated should be demonstrated. And the identity of the apparition, as seen at various times by different persons, seems tolerably clear. The several descriptions are apparently descriptions of the same figure: the same general features are noted by each witness, and if there is no striking coincidence in the various accounts, neither is there any discrepancy. Moreover, the witnesses themselves are deserving of credence, not only from their high character, but from the plain and straightforward manner in which their testimony is given. This last, indeed, appears to us a most important feature in the case. The incidents related, and the manner of the relation, are so little calculated to stimulate the imagination, that there is the less suspicion of the story having been in any way embellished in the telling. It is only when the various bits of testimony are put side by side that their real significance can be appreciated.

Meanwhile, in addition to examining and recording the evidence of others, we have held ourselves in readiness to take any favourable opportunity for personally investigating the phenomena which forms the subject of our inquiries. But we have to admit that our record of work done under this head is too scanty to be worth laying before the Society. We have been confronted at the outset by difficulties peculiar to this investigation, which, though not altogether unforeseen by ourselves, do not appear to have occurred to some of our critics. We have been asked more than once why we do not bring a dozen disbelievers together into a haunted house, and leave them for a night with the ghost, in order to settle the matter decisively. But we would point out that this suggestion ignores certain obvious considerations. Even assuming the absolute truth of the narrative furnished to us, unless the incidents related occurred frequently or at fixed periods—a case which we have no grounds for believing at all common—it is very improbable that any result will be obtained by a single night's experiment. Ghosts, like aerolites, seem to be no respecters of persons; and no amount of

scientific watchfulness will make them come to order. Again, the owners of houses reputed to be haunted are reluctant to make the general public, or even a select portion of it, partakers in the privileges which they themselves enjoy. The man who admits the possibility of any house being haunted runs the risk of being regarded as a visionary; but the hint of such a possibility in the case of a man's own house is, none the less, commonly regarded by him as impairing the value of his property. To acquiesce in this requires a disinterested zeal for the advancement of knowledge which we fear must always be rare. Hence we can hardly feel surprised to find that, in many cases, owners of houses display a diplomatic reserve when questioned on this subject, or even profess entire ignorance of the existence of rumours affecting the reputation of their dwellings; and that they distinctly decline to offer any facilities for their investigation: nor that, when they can no longer ignore, or persuade others to ignore, these rumours, they should proceed to pull down or reconstruct the house without any regard to the scientific interests thus imperilled. In other cases we have failed to obtain even the name of the owner of the house from the narrator of a "ghost story:" these particulars being withheld by our informant out of regard to the feelings and interests of the persons concerned. A remarkable story, entitled "No Fiction," appeared in a recent number of *Macmillan's Magazine*. We have been in communication with the clergyman who wrote this account, and was himself the witness of some of the occurrences related, and whilst he has afforded us full confirmation of the accuracy of the narrative, he has been compelled, in deference to the wishes of his friend, the owner of the house in question, to withhold from us any further information.

In conclusion, it is hardly necessary to say that if any of our members can afford us opportunities for personally investigating cases of alleged haunting, we shall hold ourselves bound by any conditions of secrecy which they may think fit to impose; and we would earnestly invite help in this direction from any who may be able to give it.

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\*.\* By permission of the Council, this report has been somewhat modified and enlarged, since it was read before the Society on the 9th December last.

## IV.

## REPORT OF THE LITERARY COMMITTEE.

By W. F. BARRETT ; C. C. MASSEY ; Rev. W. STAINTON MOSES ; FRANK  
PODMORE ; and EDMUND GURNEY and FREDERIC W. H. MYERS,  
*Hon. Secretaries.*

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Five months have elapsed since the last general meeting of this Society. During that time the Literary Committee has been occupied in two principal lines of inquiry. In the first place we have collected and collated a great number of accounts already in print, the object of this Committee being gradually to produce a conspectus as complete as possible of such phenomena, illustrating the whole range of subjects which fall within the scope of this Society, as have been recorded by trustworthy witnesses in the last two centuries. The mass of such phenomena, we need not say, is exceedingly large ; and it is no easy matter to form an adequate collection of the books, especially the older books, in which these narratives are to be found. Our President, however, has kindly presented the Society with a considerable collection of books of this description, which we trust will form the nucleus of a valuable library. We shall be very glad to receive communications from anyone who has any of the rarer works with which he might be disposed to part ; and in the present condition of the funds of the Society we should, of course, be still more glad to receive any contributions to the library or Library Fund. Stories of the kind we want are often to be found scattered through biographies and the general literature of all countries, and several correspondents have already done us good service by pointing these out ; assistance of this kind is particularly invited.

The second direction of our inquiry has been of more immediate interest. We composed a circular letter asking for information on our various topics, and sent it to several of the leading London and provincial journals, as well as to private friends. In response to this we received very numerous communications containing matter of more or less value ; and we have also been favoured with several groups of stories already collected by other inquirers. We are very far, however, from considering that the stock of material obtainable in this way is

exhausted; and we are repeating the substance of our letter in the form of an advertisement from time to time in some leading papers.

A public appeal for information of this kind, has, no doubt, one conceivable drawback, which some eyes have magnified even into a fatal objection—the possibility, namely, of hoaxes. The same possibility, it may be remarked, has to be faced in antiquarian, historical, and some other kinds of scientific research. It is a danger which can be obviated by care; and the process of sifting to which we subject every narrative sent to us is, we think, a sufficiently severe one. No evidence is considered at all unless authenticated by names and dates (not necessarily for publication); and in most cases we make the personal acquaintance of the narrator, and hear his story told in a manner which pledges his honour to its truth.\* We also communicate with such other living persons as may be concerned, and obtain all the independent corroboration possible.† It is therefore in the last degree unlikely that anyone who allows the publication of his name is vouching for anything which he does not, at any rate, believe to be the fact. And if he were to withhold permission to publish his name, while yet contriving his plot with sufficient elaboration to take us in, he could derive but small pleasure from seeing his false story, in small print and dull anonymity, used to reinforce the better-attested evidence of some three hundred more honourable correspondents. The value of other possible objections—such as the natural proneness to exaggeration and the love of exciting wonder—will be better estimated when the evidence itself is presented in full. It will then be seen, we think, that these elements of narration, even when the utmost allowance is made for them, could not conceivably affect the main fact reported.

We have just used the words “dull anonymity.” Why, it may be said, should accounts dealing with these mysterious subjects, whether real or fictitious, be dull? Well, we are perhaps somewhat *blasés* by the number that we have lately read; but we can scarcely hope that those who, in turn, follow our guidance through the same paths will escape the same fate. The very last thing that we expect to produce is a collection of narratives of a startling or blood-chilling character; our pages are far more likely to provoke sleep in the course of perusal

\* Cases of occasional relaxation of this rule are, *e.g.*, where the testimony of illiterate persons, difficult to reach, has been accepted as authentic on the authority of the clergyman of the parish.

† The numerous cases explicable by *illusion* or *hallucination* have been, we think, effectually excluded from our present series by our rule of admitting no account of an appearance which was not either (1) perceived by more than one person, or (2) approximately coincident with, and apparently dependent upon, some occurrence of which the witness of the appearance was not otherwise cognisant. The latter is the distinctive mark of the cases given in this report.

than to banish it afterwards. The point in the evidence that impresses us is not its exciting or terrific quality, but its overwhelming quantity—overwhelming, we mean, to any possibility of further doubting the reality of the class of phenomena. Those who are used, as most of us have been all our lives, to hearing now and again a stray story at third or fourth hand, with the usual commentary of vague wonderment or shallow explanation, but without any suggestion of analysing or probing it, can scarcely imagine the effect on the mind of a sudden, large accumulation of direct, well-attested, and harmonious testimony. The similarities of unlooked-for detail which bind the phenomena together into distinct groups, the very similarities which make the accounts of them monotonous reading, give the strength of a faggot to the dispersed units which looked as if the mere dead weight of uninquiring incredulity might easily break them.

Further, we must warn future readers that the details of the evidence are in many cases not only dull, but of a trivial and even ludicrous kind; and they will be presented for the most part in the narrator's simplest phraseology, quite unspiced for the literary palate. Our tales will resemble neither the *Mysteries of Udolpho* nor the dignified reports of a learned society. The romanticist may easily grow indignant over them; still more easily may the journalist grow facetious. The collection may be easily described as a *farrago*; but it will at any rate be a *farrago* of facts. For its miscellaneous character we shall hardly be responsible. However caused, these phenomena are interwoven with the everyday tissue of human existence, and pay no more regard to what men call appalling than to what men call ridiculous.

The facts which we are thus collecting belong to every department of our subject. That subject, however, must evidently be treated in separate instalments, for which the work of years will be necessary. During the course of this year we hope to publish the next considerable instalment in the form of a book which will deal more at large with the subject of this Report. But for present purposes, and until the mass of our evidence can be fully set forth, we must claim to assume its general credibility, and confine ourselves mainly to the mode of arranging it. In a chaos such as this subject presents, classification, however rude and provisional, is itself light-bringing; it is at any rate an indispensable pre-requisite of any true analysis.

#### a. AGENT AND PERCIPIENT BOTH IN A NORMAL CONDITION.

Having continually-growing reason to believe that the primary phenomenon of Thought-transference is solidly established, we naturally desired, in framing the scheme of the forthcoming book, to link its matter as logically as possible with the results already achieved.

Starting, then, with the assumption of the reality of this primary phenomenon, we propose to examine other cases of transferred or sympathetic impression. In Thought-transference, so far as we have hitherto dealt with it, both parties (whom, for convenience' sake, we will call the Agent and the Percipient) are supposed to be in a normal state; and we have a few cases which appear to differ from our previous experiments in Thought-transference only in the facts that the transference of the impression was not accompanied by any definite exercise of will, and that the transferred image seemed more objective. Such a case is the following, given us by Mr. J. G. Keulemans, of 2, Mountford Terrace, Barnsbury Square—a scientific draughtsman—with whom some of us are personally acquainted:—

- (i.) “One morning, not long ago, while engaged with some very easy work, I saw in my mind's eye a little wicker basket, containing five eggs, two very clean, of a more than usually elongated oval and of a yellowish hue, one very round, plain white, but smudged all over with dirt; the remaining two bore no peculiar marks. I asked myself what that insignificant but sudden image could mean. I never think of similar objects. But that basket remained fixed in my mind, and occupied it for some moments. About two hours later I went into another room for lunch. I was at once struck with the remarkable similarity between the eggs standing in the egg-cups on the breakfast table and those two very long ones I had in my imagination previously seen ‘Why do you keep looking at those eggs so carefully?’ asked my wife; and it caused her great astonishment to learn from me how many eggs had been sent by her mother half an hour before. She then brought up the remaining three; there was the one with the dirt on it, and the basket, the same I had seen. On further inquiry, I found that the eggs had been kept together by my mother-in-law, that she had placed them in the basket and thought of sending them to me; and, to use her own words, ‘I did of course think of you at that moment.’ She did this at ten in the morning, which (as I know from my regular habits) must have been just the time of my impression.” Such an incident, however, seems very exceptional; and in the great body of our cases one or other of the parties is, or both of them are, in some condition other than that of normal waking consciousness.

### β. PERCIPIENT IN AN ABNORMAL CONDITION.

#### 1. *Exalted perception during sleep.*

In the first place, then, the Percipient may be asleep, and may receive in a dream or vision some impression which may be noted, and subsequently proved to have been coincident with an impression, derived either from outward or inward sources, in a waking mind—that of him whom we call the Agent. The following account, given to us by a personal friend of our own (whose name and address we are at liberty to mention privately), differs from ordinary Thought-transference, not

only in the vividness of the impression, but in the fact that one at least of the percipients was asleep :—

(ii.) “One Sunday night last winter, at 1 A.M., I wished strongly to communicate the idea of my presence to two friends, who resided about three miles from the house where I was staying. When I next saw them, a few days afterwards, I expressly refrained from mentioning my experiment ; but in the course of conversation, one of them said, ‘You would not believe what a strange night we spent last Sunday ;’ and then recounted that both the friends had believed themselves to see my figure standing in their room. The experience was vivid enough to wake them completely, and they both looked at their watches, and found it to be exactly one o’clock.” [One of these friends has supplied independent testimony to this circumstance.]

In this case there was a deliberate exercise of will. Similar cases where that feature is absent are likely often to pass unobserved ; and all the observed ones that happen to have come under our notice have been complicated by the pre-existence of some sort of mesmeric *rapport* between the persons concerned.

## 2. Exalted perception during trance.

This circumstance affords a natural transition to the next class of cases where the Percipient is in that rarer and deeper state of slumber known as the “mesmeric trance.” Instances of impression transferred from the agent to the percipient, when the latter is in this state, are of course exceedingly numerous. *Clairvoyance* will, we hope, be fully and separately dealt with hereafter ; but we have little doubt that many of the facts recorded under that head will be found to resolve themselves into simple transference of impression. This distinction, which we think is of the greatest importance to keep in mind, is well illustrated by the following incident :—

(iii.) A mesmerist, well known to us, was requested by a lady to mesmerise her, in order to enable her to visit in spirit certain places of which he himself had no knowledge. He failed to produce this effect ; but found that he could lead her to describe places unknown to her but familiar to him. Thus on one occasion he enabled her to describe a particular room which she had never entered, but which she described in perfect conformity with his recollection of it. It then occurred to him to imagine a large open umbrella as lying on a table in this room, whereupon the lady immediately exclaimed, “I see a large open umbrella on the table.”

Here we must certainly suppose that the impression proceeded from no other source than the operator’s mind ; and it is to transferences of this sort that for the present we intend to confine our treatment of mesmerism, reserving mesmerism in general and *clairvoyance* proper for subsequent treatment.

3. *Exalted perception at or near the moment of death.*

We come now to a third class of cases, which at first sight seem to differ in a singular way from those already enumerated. For it seems that not only the apparent *depression* of the vital energies in sleep or trance, but also their apparent *exaltation* in moments of excitement or danger, may have a decisive effect in engendering or increasing the percipient's susceptibility to impressions from a distance. There is, however, we may suggest, one strongly-marked condition which would seem to unite in itself the characteristics both of depression and exaltation: we mean death, or, as in this connection we prefer to call it, the process of dissolution. During this process, often a prolonged one, mental conditions are undoubtedly observed analogous on the one hand to trance, on the other to exalted excitement. We would venture to suggest, therefore, that in death may be seen a possible key to the mysterious parallelism, in their effects, of conditions so opposite as mesmeric sleep and the excitement of peril. If we may borrow a phrase from magnetism, we may perhaps picture these cases to ourselves as involving a relaxation of some *coercitive force*, which under normal conditions is able to limit the channels of impression to those through which the recognised senses act in the recognised way. However this may be, it would appear that the excitement of danger or imminent death has a potent influence in facilitating the transference of supersensory impressions; and though, as a rule, it is not the percipient, but the agent, who is dying or in danger, this is by no means always the case. There seems sometimes to be a distinct interchange of perception, as in the following instance. The narrative is abridged from the words of the late Mrs. Charles Fox, of Trebah, Falmouth (a lady well known to one of us), who had heard the story from her grandmother, one of the children who witnessed the apparition. Few families could be named in which such traditions were likely to be at once more sacredly and more soberly preserved.

(iv.) "In 1739 Mrs. Birkbeck, wife of William Birkbeck, banker, of Settle, and a member of the Society of Friends, was taken ill and died at Cockermouth, while returning from a journey to Scotland, which she had undertaken alone—her husband and three children, aged seven, five, and four years respectively, remaining at Settle. The friends at whose house the death occurred made notes of every circumstance attending Mrs. Birkbeck's last hours, so that the accuracy of the several statements as to time as well as place was beyond the doubtfulness of man's memory, or of any even unconscious attempt to bring them into agreement with each other.

"One morning, between seven and eight o'clock, the relation to whom the care of the children at Settle had been entrusted, and who kept a minute journal of all that concerned them, went into their bedroom as usual, and found them all sitting up in their beds in great excitement and delight. 'Mamma has been here!' they cried, and the little one said, 'She called, "Come,

Esther!" Nothing could make them doubt the fact, and it was carefully noted down to entertain the mother on her return home. That same morning as their mother lay on her dying bed at Cockermonth, she said, 'I should be ready to go if I could but see my children.' She then closed her eyes, to reopen them, as they thought, no more. But after ten minutes of perfect stillness she looked up brightly and said, 'I am ready now; I have been with my children;' and then at once peacefully passed away. When the notes taken at the two places were compared, the day, hour, and minutes were the same.

"One of the three children was my grandmother, *née* Sarah Birkbeck, afterwards the wife of Dr. Fell, of Ulverstone. From her lips I heard the above almost literally as I have repeated it. The elder was Morris Birkbeck, afterwards of Guildford. Both these lived to old age, and retained to the last so solemn and reverential a remembrance of the circumstance that they rarely would speak of it. Esther, the youngest, died soon after. Her brother and sister heard the child say that her mother called her, but could not speak with any certainty of having themselves heard the words, nor were sensible of more than their mother's standing there and looking on them."

We have at first hand some other very interesting examples of this double percipience. Commander Aylesbury, late of the Indian navy, tells us how, when nearly drowning as a boy, he had a vivid vision of his home circle, engaged as they actually were at the time, while they simultaneously and distinctly heard his voice, and were thereby rendered apprehensive that evil had befallen him. Singularly like this is the personal experience which the celebrated conjurer, Mr. J. N. Maskelyne, recorded in the *Daily Telegraph* of October 24th, 1881. And rare as the type is, it is perhaps less so than that where a dying person perceives, and correctly describes, the surroundings of a living friend who himself has no impression of the dying person's presence.

#### 7. AGENT IN AN ABNORMAL CONDITION.

We pass over now to the great family of cases, where the transference of impressions is facilitated by some abnormal condition on the side of the Agent, while the condition of the Percipient remains normal.

##### 1. *Impression from a person in sleep.*

In the first place, the Agent may himself be asleep, and his vivid dream may communicate itself as an apparently objective reality to a wakeful mind. To this category belongs the following singular dream, written down by the dreamer, the Rev. Joseph Wilkins, a Dissenting minister at Weymouth (who died in 1800), and endorsed by the late Dr. Abercrombie, of Edinburgh, a man, we need hardly say, of the greatest scientific acumen:—

(v.) "Joseph Wilkins, while a young man, absent from home, dreamt, without any apparent reason, that he returned home, reached the house at night,

found the front door locked, entered by the back door, visited his mother's room, found her awake, and said to her, 'Mother, I am going on a long journey and am come to bid you good-bye.' A day or two afterwards this young man received a letter from his father, asking how he was, and alleging his mother's anxiety on account of a vision which had visited her on a night which was, in fact, that of the son's dream. The mother, lying awake in bed, had heard some one try the front door and enter by the back door, and had then seen the son enter her room, heard him say to her, 'Mother, I am going on a long journey and am come to bid you good-bye,' and had answered, 'O dear son thou art dead !' words which the son also had heard her say in his dream.

### 2. *Impression from a person in a state of trance.*

There are other cases of this type, and the class fades into the next one, where the Agent is in a state of trance either natural or induced, and is perceived by waking persons at a distance. To this category belong a large number of somnambulatory stories; as for instance the well-known account, vouched for by Dr. J. H. Jung-Stilling, of a man who, falling into a trance in Philadelphia, conversed with a ship captain in a London coffee-house, and communicated the results of the interview, which were subsequently confirmed, to the captain's wife in America. Such cases, however, belong to the deferred subject of trance and mesmerism.

### 3. *Impression from a dying person.*

The classification we have adopted now brings us to the far larger and more important class of apparitions, perceived at moments when the Agent is at or about the time of his death. We are obliged to use the vague phrase "at or about the time of death," in order to cover the whole process of dissolution; for in fact some of these appearances would seem to have been witnessed at some little interval before death, others at the moment of apparent death, and others again at some short time after apparent death had supervened. It is obvious that when the interval between death and the apparition exceeds a certain length, we are brought face to face with problems, and possibly with phenomena, of a quite different kind from those which we have been discussing. These phenomena and these problems lie outside the scope of the book on which we are at present engaged. But the cases in which there is approximate coincidence between the death and the apparition are extremely numerous, and comprise, perhaps, as many as half of the first-hand accounts which we shall have to bring forward. In many of these cases (as of those where the excited or dying person is the percipient), the evidence seems to point rather to a vivification of a general rapport already existing between the parties, than to any special transference of the thought or

emotion of the moment ; and the impression produced on the percipient's mind is either that of the sensible presence of the agent, or is a strong general idea of him, without any distinct reference to what is passing in his mind.

We have received the following account from our friend Mr. John Addington Symonds :—

(vi.) "I was a boy in the Sixth Form at Harrow ; and, as head of Mr. Rendall's house, had a room to myself. It was in the summer of 1858. I woke about dawn, and felt for my books upon a chair between the bed and the window ; when I knew that I must turn my head the other way, and there between me and the door stood Dr. Maclean, dressed in a clergyman's black clothes. He bent his sallow face a little towards me and said, 'I am going a long way—take care of my son.' While I was attending to him I suddenly saw the door in the place where Dr. Maclean had been. Dr. Maclean died that night (at what hour I cannot precisely say) at Clifton. My father, who was a great friend of his, was with him. I was not aware that he was more than usually ill. He was a chronic invalid."

Captain G. F. Russell Colt, of Gartsherrie, Coatbridge, N.B., allows us to publish the following narrative :—

(vii.) "I was at home for my holidays, and residing with my father and mother, not here, but at another old family place in Mid-Lothian, built by an ancestor in Mary Queen of Scots' time, called Inveresk House. My bedroom was a curious old room, long and narrow, with a window at one end of the room and a door at the other. My bed was on the right of the window, looking towards the door. I had a very dear brother (my eldest brother), Oliver, lieutenant in the 7th Royal Fusiliers. He was about nineteen years old, and had at that time been some months before Sebastopol. I corresponded frequently with him, and once when he wrote in low spirits, not being well, I said in answer that he was to cheer up, but that if anything did happen to him he must let me know by appearing to me in my room, where we had often as boys together sat at night and indulged in a surreptitious pipe and chat. This letter (I found subsequently) he received as he was starting to receive the sacrament from a clergyman who has since related the fact to me. Having done this he went to the entrenchments and never returned, as in a few hours afterwards, the storming of the Redan commenced. He, on the captain of his company falling, took his place, and led his men bravely on. He had just led them within the walls, though already wounded in several places, when a bullet struck him on the right temple and he fell amongst heaps of others, where he was found in a sort of kneeling posture (being propped up by other dead bodies) thirty-six hours afterwards. His death took place, or rather he fell, though he may not have died immediately, on the 8th September, 1855.

"That night I awoke suddenly, and saw facing the window of my room, by my bedside, surrounded by a light sort of phosphorescent mist as it were, my brother kneeling. I tried to speak but could not. I buried my head in

the bedclothes, not at all afraid (because we had all been brought up not to believe in ghosts or apparitions), but simply to collect my ideas, because I had not been thinking or dreaming of him, and indeed had forgotten all about what I had written to him a fortnight before. I decided that it must be fancy, and the moonlight playing on a towel, or something out of place. But on looking up there he was again, looking lovingly, imploringly, and sadly at me. I tried again to speak, but found myself tongue-tied. I could not utter a sound. I sprang out of bed, glanced through the window, and saw that there was no moon, but it was very dark and raining hard, by the sound against the panes. I turned, and still saw poor Oliver. I shut my eyes, walked through it and reached the door of the room. As I turned the handle, before leaving the room, I looked once more back. The apparition turned round his head slowly and again looked anxiously and lovingly at me, and I saw then for the first time a wound on the right temple with a red stream from it. His face was of a waxy pale tint, but transparent-looking, and so was the reddish mark. But it is almost impossible to describe his appearance. I only know I shall never forget it. I left the room and went into a friend's room and lay on the sofa the rest of the night. I told him why. I told others in the house, but when I told my father he ordered me not to repeat such nonsense, and especially not to let my mother know. On the Monday following\* he received a note from Sir Alexander Milne to say that the Redan was stormed, but no particulars. I told my friend to let me know if he saw the name among the killed and wounded before me. About a fortnight later he came to my bedroom in his mother's house in Athole Crescent, in Edinburgh, with a very grave face. I said, 'I suppose it is to tell me the sad news I expect;' and he said, 'Yes.' Both the colonel of the regiment and one or two officers who saw the body confirmed the fact that the appearance was much according to my description, and the death wound was exactly where I had seen it. But none could say whether he actually died at the moment. His appearance, if so, must have been some hours after death, as he appeared to me a few minutes after two in the morning. Months later his small prayer-book and the letter I had written to him were returned to Inveresk, found in the inner breast pocket of the tunic which he wore at his death. I have them now."

Mr. Colt mentioned several persons who could corroborate this narrative. We add the following letter from Mrs. Hope, of Fermoy, sister of Mr. Colt:—

"On the morning of September 8th,† 1855, my brother, Mr. Colt, told myself, Captain Ferguson of the 42nd Regiment, since dead, and Major Borthwick of the Rifle Brigade (who is living) and others, that he had during the night wakened from sleep and seen, as he thought, my eldest brother, Lieut. Oliver Colt of the Royal Fusiliers (who was in the Crimea), standing

\* Communication with the Crimea was then conducted by telegraph for only part of the way.

† The date was really September 9th, and the figure was *kneeling*. These minute discrepancies clearly in no way affect the value of the corroboration.

between his bed and the door; that he saw he was wounded in more than one place—I remember he named the temple as one place—by bullet-wounds; that he roused himself, rushed to the door with closed eyes and looked back at the apparition, which stood between him and the bed. My father enjoined silence; lest my mother should be made uneasy; but shortly afterwards came the news of the fall of the Redan and my brother's death. Two years afterwards my husband, Colonel Hope, invited my brother to dine with him; the former being still a lieutenant in the Royal Fusiliers, the latter an ensign in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. While dining, they were talking of my eldest brother. My husband was about to describe his appearance when found, when my brother described what he had seen, and to the astonishment of all present, the description of the wounds tallied with the facts. My husband was my eldest brother's greatest friend, and was among those who saw the body as soon as it was found."

Miss Summerbell, of 140, Kensington Park Road, W. (who is personally known to the Secretaries), communicates the following story:—

(viii.) "My mother married, at a very early age, without the consent of her parents. My grandmother vowed that she would never see her daughter again. A few months after her marriage my mother was awakened at about 2 a.m. by a loud knocking at the door. To her great surprise my father did not wake. The knocking was resumed; my mother spoke to my father, but, as he still slept, she got up, opened the window and looked out, when, to her amazement, she saw her mother, in full Court dress, standing on the step and looking up at her. My mother called to her, but my grandmother, frowning and shaking her head, disappeared. At this moment my father woke, and my mother told him what had happened. He went to the window, but saw nothing. My mother was sure that my grandmother, even at that late hour, had come to forgive her, and entreated my father to let her in. He went down and opened the door, but nobody was there. He assured my mother that she had been dreaming, and she at last believed that it was so. The next morning the servants were questioned, but they had heard nothing, and the matter was dismissed from the minds of my parents till the evening, when they heard that my grandmother had been, in Court dress, at a ball the night before—I think at Kensington Palace, but of this I am not sure—that, feeling unwell, she had returned home, and after about an hour's illness, had died at 2 a.m. She had not mentioned my mother's name during her short illness." It will be observed that in this case the impression from the dying mother, although fully realised only in wakefulness, made itself felt in the first instance during sleep.

Mr. J. G. Keulemans, whom we have already mentioned, gives us the following account:—

(ix.) In December, 1880, he was living with his family in Paris. The outbreak of an epidemic of small-pox caused him to remove three of his children, including a favourite little boy of five, to London, whence he received, in the course of the ensuing month, several letters giving an excellent account of their health. "On the 24th of January, 1881, at half-past seven in the morning,

I was suddenly awoke by hearing his voice, as I fancied, very near me. I saw a bright, opaque, white mass before my eyes, and in the centre of this light I saw the face of my little darling, his eyes bright, his mouth smiling. The apparition, accompanied by the sound of his voice, was too short and too sudden to be called a dream: it was too clear, too decided, to be called an effect of imagination. So distinctly did I hear his voice that I looked round the room to see whether he was actually there. The sound I heard was that of extreme delight, such as only a happy child can utter. I thought it was the moment he woke up in London, happy and thinking of me. I said to myself, 'Thank God, little Isidore is happy as always.'" Mr. Keulemans describes the ensuing day as one of peculiar brightness and cheerfulness. He took a long walk with a friend, with whom he dined; and was afterwards playing a game at billiards, when he again saw the apparition of his child. This made him seriously uneasy, and in spite of having received within three days the assurance of the child's perfect health, he expressed to his wife a conviction that he was dead. Next day a letter arrived saying that the child was ill; but the father was convinced that this was only an attempt to break the news; and, in fact, the child had died, after a few hours' illness, at the exact time of the first apparition.

The Rev. W. S. Grignon, Hanbrook, Bristol, writes to us as follows:—

(x.) "I give the annexed narrative of the apparition of a deceased or dying person on the authority of my mother, the late Mrs. Elizabeth A. Grignon, wife of the late William Stanford Grignon, of Upton, near Montego Bay, Jamaica, Esq., and youngest sister of the well-known counsel, Sir James Scarlett, afterwards the first Lord Abinger. I received the account from her, and have had it confirmed by my late sister, Miss Elizabeth Scarlett Grignon, who had often heard it from our mother. I may say that my mother was a cool-headed, accurate person.

"About the year 1820 she was resident at Upton, in Jamaica, and had as an upper nurse in her family a Mrs. Duchoux, an Englishwoman who had married a Frenchman; with the exception of this nurse, every servant in the house was black or brown. One morning my mother observed that this woman seemed much depressed, so much so that she pressed her for the reason. She said she was sure she should hear of the death of an aunt of hers resident in England. Her statement was as follows:— She had got into bed, but not yet fallen asleep, and had before this locked the door of her bedroom. A negro girl was sleeping on a mattress on the floor of her room. Near the foot of her bed was a small table on which stood a candle under a shade. Looking up, she saw a female figure in a night-dress, standing with its back towards her at the foot of the bed, near the table with the light on it, and holding a roll of paper in its hand. As she looked, the figure turned its face round towards her, and she at once recognised an aunt then living in England. The figure then moved towards the door and seemed to pass out of it or disappear. Mrs. Duchoux was not at all frightened, but jumped out of bed and found the door still locked on the inside, and the negro girl asleep. She was quite sure that it was her aunt's and no other face which she saw, and that she should hear of

her death. My mother told her that she must have dreamed the whole scene ; but nevertheless was so far impressed by the woman's reiterated assurance that she had been wide awake, that she at once made a note of the statement, with the date. On the arrival of the packet which left England shortly after the date of the apparition a letter reached Mrs. Duchoux, informing her that her aunt had died just about the date of the vision, and had in her will left her £100. I cannot say that the time of the apparition coincided exactly with the last moments of the deceased. I doubt if this was inquired into at the time. But I remember that my mother stated that the woman had not previously heard anything to make her anxious about her aunt."

The next account has been placed at our disposal by the Miss Sarah Jardine of the following story :—

(xi.) "In 1833, Sarah and Margaret Jardine, daughters of a barrister on the Western Circuit, were girls of about ten and twelve respectively. They lived with their parents in a house in the suburbs of London, and their grandfather and grandmother on the opposite side of the road. Their grandmother was a woman of decided character and very firm will, and between her and the children there was strong affection. One night as the children lay in their four-post bed, sleeping as they did with a rush light in the room, Sarah saw her grandmother in her night-dress standing at the foot of the bed, looking at them with a pleased smile on her face. She moved round the bed, keeping her eyes constantly fixed upon the children, till she passed behind the curtain at the head of the bed on Sarah's side, and seemed to sit down on the chair that was placed there. Sarah raised herself up and drew back the curtain in order to speak to her, when, to her great surprise, she saw no one there. She was not at all frightened, and awoke her sister, saying, 'Grandmamma is in the room.' They both got up and looked about for her, and finding that there really was no one in the room, Margaret said that her sister must have been dreaming, and scolded her for awaking her. In the morning they were awoke by their father, who told them that a dreadful thing had happened, that their grandmamma had died in the course of the night. She had been ailing, but nothing serious had been apprehended until her son was sent for, after the children had gone to bed. On hearing that her grandmother was dead, Sarah became much terrified at the thought of having seen a ghost and gave a violent scream, without saying anything of the cause of her fright. A day or two afterwards her sister told what Sarah had seen, and in order to reassure her they tried to persuade her that it had been a dream. But she herself was quite certain that it was not ; and for long afterwards she had such a dread of seeing the apparition again that they dared not leave her alone at night. After the lapse of more than forty years she still retains the most vivid remembrance of the whole incident."

We received the next narrative from Mrs. Hunter, of 2, Ellesmere Villas, Forest Hill, who is personally known to the Secretaries :—

(xii.) Mrs. Hunter had had a friend from whom she had parted in coldness, and whom she had not since seen or corresponded with. "Poor Z. was very far from my thoughts, when one night I had just got into bed. The fire burned

brightly, and there was my usual night-light. I was placing my head on the pillows, when I beheld, close to the side of the bed, and on a level with it, Z.'s head, and the same wistful look on his face which it had worn when we parted years before. Starting up, I cried out, 'What do you want?' I did not fear; anger was my feeling. Slowly it retreated, and just as it disappeared in the shadow of the wall, a bright spark of light shone for a few seconds, and slowly expired. A few days after my sister wrote, 'You will have heard of poor Z.'s death, on his way to the South of France.' I had heard nothing about him for years. Special reasons prevented my inquiring particularly into the precise moment of his death. Strange to say, my bed-fellow was his great pet among my children; she, however, slept through this strange interview."

The next account, also given to us by Mrs. Hunter, is made specially remarkable by the prolonged character of the apparition, and the number of persons by whom it was seen:—

(xiii.) Mrs. Hunter's husband had had a Scotch wet-nurse of the old-fashioned sort, more devoted to him than even to her own children. Mrs. Hunter, soon after her marriage, made acquaintance with this nurse, Mrs. Macfarlane, who paid her several visits during Mr. Hunter's absence in India. In June, 1857, Mrs. Hunter, who was travelling to a health-resort, confided to Mrs. Macfarlane's keeping a box of valuables. One evening in the following August Mrs. Hunter was entertaining some friends; but having occasion to return to the dining-room for a moment, she passed the open door of her bedroom, and felt irresistibly impelled to look in; and there on the bed was a large coffin, and sitting at the foot of it was a tall old woman stedfastly regarding it. "Returning to my friends, I announced the vision, which was received with shouts of laughter, in which after a time I joined. However, I had seen what I have described, and, moreover, could have told the very dress the old woman wore. When my friends left, and I had paid my usual last visit to the nursery, my nurse looked odd and *distraine*, and to my astonishment followed me on to the landing. 'O ma'am,' she began, 'I feel so queer, such a strange thing happened. At seven o'clock I went to the kitchen for hot water, and when I came out I saw a tall old woman coming downstairs, and I stopped to let her pass, but, ma'am, there was something strange about her, so I turned to look after her. The hall door was wide open, and she was making for it, when in a moment she melted away. I can swear I saw her, and can tell you her very dress, a big, black poke bonnet and a checked black and white shawl.'" This description of the dress exactly corresponded with what Mrs. Hunter had herself seen. Mrs. Hunter laughed the matter off, and did not even think of connecting her own vision with the nurse's. About half-an-hour afterwards, when in bed, she heard a piercing scream from her little daughter, aged five, followed by loud, frightened tones, and she then heard the nurse soothing the child. "Next morning little E— was full of her wrongs. She said that 'a naughty old woman was sitting at the table and staring at her, and that made her scream.' Nurse told me that she found the child wide awake, sitting up in bed, pointing to the table, and crying out, 'Go away, go away, naughty old woman!'

There was no one there. Nurse had been in bed some time and the door was locked. My child's vision I treated as I did her nurse's, and dosed both. However, a day or two afterwards, I received a letter from Mrs. Macfarlane's son, announcing her death, and telling me how her last hours were disturbed by anxiety for my husband and his family. My nurse, on being told the news, exclaimed, 'Good Lord, it was *her* I saw that night, and her very dress!' I never ascertained the exact hour of her death. My letter of inquiry and condolence was never answered, though my box was duly sent to me."

The following account, given us by Mr. C. Colchester, of Bushey Heath, Herts, somewhat resembles the last, in that the apparition was seen by three persons and in two different rooms:—

(xiv.) "Forty-two or three years ago my father was with a detachment of his regiment, the Royal Artillery, stationed at Montreal, Canada. He had left his mother some months before in England in an indifferent state of health. One evening he was sitting at his desk, writing to her, when my mother, looking up from her work, was startled to see *his* mother looking over his shoulder, seemingly intent on the letter. My mother gave a cry of alarm, and on my father turning round the apparition vanished. On the same evening I and my brother (aged about six and five years) were in bed, watching the bright moonlight, when suddenly we saw a figure, a lady with her hands folded on her breast, walking slowly, between the bed and the window, backwards and forwards. She wore a cap with a frill tied under her chin, and a dressing-gown of the appearance of white flannel, her white hair being neatly arranged. She continued to walk, it seemed to me, fully five minutes, and then was gone. We did not cry out, and were not even alarmed, but after her disappearance we said to each other, 'What a nice, kind lady!' and then went to sleep." The children mentioned what they had seen to their mother next morning, but were told not to talk about it. The news of their grandmother's death on that same evening arrived a few weeks afterwards. "I may add," Mr. Colchester concludes, "that neither I nor my brother had ever seen our grandmother till that evening, nor knew of what my mother had seen till years after. The apparition I saw is as palpably before me now as it was forty years since."

Mr. Colchester also sends us the following extract from a MS. work on Bermuda, written by his late father, who, at the time of the occurrence narrated, was assistant-surgeon in the Royal Artillery. We abridge the extract, and give the full names of the two officers, viz., Lieutenants Creigh and Liston, which were given in initial in the MS. The author had the account from Lieutenant Creigh, and pledged himself to its strict accuracy.

(xv.) "The passage from Bermuda to Halifax is in certain seasons hazardous, and in 1830 a transport, containing some two hundred and twenty men, was lost at sea between these two ports. Two officers of the regiment to which the detachment had belonged had, in a half-jesting way, made a sort of promise

that whoever died first should come back if he could and let the other know whether there was another world. This conversation was heard by the narrator, as it took place in his presence, perhaps a year before the events happened, though not remembered till afterwards. Liston embarked in charge of the detachment, and had been gone about a fortnight, when Creigh, who had one night left the mess early and retired to bed, and was beginning to close his eyes, saw his door open and Liston enter. Forgetting his absence and thinking he had come to pull him out of bed (for practical joking was then more common in the army than it is now), he cried, 'No, no, d—n it, Liston, don't, old fellow! I'm tired! Be off!' But the vision came nearer the bed foot, and Creigh then saw that Liston looked as if very ill (for it was bright moonlight), and that his hair seemed wet and hung down over his face like a drowned man's. The apparition moved its head mournfully; and when Creigh in surprise sat up, rubbed his eyes, and looked again, it was gone. Still Creigh avers that all this time he had no idea of its being a spectre, and, believing that he had seen Liston himself, he went to sleep. In the morning he related the occurrence, when he recollected, but not till then, Liston's absence on duty from the island."

In this case it is of course impossible to say whether the transport founded at the precise moment that the vision occurred. We may remark in passing that a large proportion of these appearances at death seem to have been preceded by some such half-jesting compact as existed between Liston and Creigh.

The following narrative is from Mr. P. H. Berthon, F.R.G.S., &c.:—

(xvi.) "Some years ago, when residing at Walthamstow, in Essex, my wife and self became intimate with a lady and gentleman who had become temporarily our near neighbours. On one occasion, when they were dining with us quite *en famille*, my friend and I, on repairing to the drawing-room, not long after the ladies had left us, were surprised to find that his wife had been suddenly taken with a kind of fainting fit, and had been obliged to return home accompanied by one of our female servants. My wife, as a matter of course, went the next day to inquire after her friend, who then told her that the cause of her sudden indisposition had been the appearance, as if in her actual person standing before her, of one of her two sisters, who were then residing with their mother at Beyrout, in Syria, which had greatly alarmed her. Communication by telegraph had not then been established, and by post it was much slower than at present. Many days had therefore elapsed before the lady received letters from Beyrout, but on their arrival they conveyed the intelligence that her sister had died on the day and, allowing for the difference in the time, at about the hour of her appearance to our friend."

The next account is from Miss Peard, of Sparnon, Torquay, a member of our Society, who has rendered us most valuable assistance. She received it direct from the Miss H., a connection of her own, whose experience is recorded:—

(xvii.) "Some thirty years ago, or more, an English regiment was

quartered in Upper Canada. One of the officers, a Mr. W., admired a young Canadian lady very much, and was a great deal at her father's house. He was a great rider, and in one race had received an injury to his leg which crushed the bone, and produced a slight halt. On a certain day Mr. W. rode and won a hurdle race; the young lady, Miss H., had been present at the race. She then wore a very pretty rose, and Mr. W. suggested beforehand that it should be given to the winner. He claimed it immediately, and also engaged her for two or three dances at a ball to be given by her father that evening.

"Evening came and the guests arrived, but no Mr. W. Miss H. was rather vexed at his lateness, and spoke of it to one or two gentlemen, particularly when the dances began which she had promised to give him. But as she felt sure he would appear, she refused to dance them with others. Presently, as she was standing and talking to three of these gentlemen, Mr. D. A., Mr. R. P., and another, they all saw Mr. W. come into the room, look steadily and calmly at her, and pass into the dining-room. He was dressed in ordinary evening dress, in his red shell jacket, and there was nothing remarkable about his appearance. She thought it strange that he did not come to speak to her, and alluded to it to the other gentlemen, saying she thought Mr. W. was really the rudest man she ever saw, and laughing, followed him into the dining-room. There, however, he was not. The other gentlemen had seen him as well as she, and, I believe, her mother also. The time was quarter-past ten.

"The whole affair piqued and vexed her a good deal. The next morning her father came hastily into the room, and asked her if she had not seen Mr. W. the night before. She said 'yes,' and that he had acted very oddly in only just appearing for a moment, and in not even speaking to her. Her father then told her that on that morning his body had been found in the river. His watch had stopped at quarter-past ten, which was the hour at which he had been seen in the ball-room. The rose Miss H. gave him was still in his button-hole."

The Rev. Canon Eyre, of Bray, County Wicklow, writes to us as follows:—

(xviii.) "On the 5th of September, 1876, there was a regatta on the Shannon. Two young friends of ours (Irwin and Charles Coghlan) had a yacht to sail. On the 4th (a stormy day), they sailed to the opposite shore for a young friend they expected; in midway the squall upset their yacht, and they, with their boy, were drowned. The writer of the subjoined account is my daughter. She and her sister thought the two young gentlemen were coming to bring them in their yacht to their father's, for a party there next evening. On the 5th my daughters were going in my carriage—a distance of ten miles; when half-way they were stopped by Mr. Coghlan's servant with a hurried note, giving the sad report of the loss of his two sons, the boy, and the boat. The apparition was at the same hour as their loss. They also appeared to their mother, who now lives in Rathgar, Dublin, a widow."

The daughter's account here referred to is as follows :—

“With reference to the apparition of the two gentlemen which I saw, the facts are as follows :—I was in our dining-room (Portumna Rectory) about eleven o'clock on the morning of the 4th September, 1867, when, on looking out of the window, I saw the two young gentlemen in question coming in at the avenue gate, and a boy with them. I then left the room to tell my mother they were coming. My sister, who was in the room at the time, did not see them. It was about the time they met with their sad end.”

4. *Impression from a person who is excited or in danger.*

We proceed now to the class of cases where the Agent was not at or near the point of death, but in some condition of abnormal disturbance or excitement—a class of which a few well-authenticated examples were given in the latter part of the First Report on Thought-transference (Proc. S.P.R., p. 60). A well-established case has lately become widely known through its being mentioned in the Life of the late Bishop Wilberforce, the passage from which we subjoin.

“The Bishop was in his library at Cuddesdon with three or four of his clergy writing with him at the same table. The Bishop suddenly raised his hand to his head, and exclaimed, ‘I am certain that something has happened to one of my sons.’ It afterwards transpired that just at that time his eldest son's foot (who was at sea) was badly crushed by an accident on board his ship. The Bishop himself records the circumstance in a letter to Miss Noel, dated March 4th, 1847; he writes: ‘It is curious that at the time of his accident I was so possessed with the depressing consciousness of some evil having befallen my son Herbert, that at last on the third day after, the 13th, I wrote down that I was quite unable to shake off the impression that something had happened to him, and noted this down for remembrance.’”

The following account was given us by Mrs. Gates, of 24, Montpellier Road, Brighton, whom we know personally, and who has given us several instances of the singular sympathy existing between herself and her children, and manifesting itself by marked disquiet at moments when they are in danger or pain, although she may have no means of knowing it. The fact, in the present instance, of her premonitory alarm and vision of blood, has been confirmed to us independently by the daughter to whom she described it. We suppress the son's name, and that of the monastery where he resides.

(xix.) “One August morning at breakfast the well-known feeling stole over me. Waiting till all had left the table excepting my second daughter, I remarked to her, ‘I am feeling so restless about one of my absent boys! It is ——; and I feel as if I was looking at blood!’” The son in question, in a letter received a few days later, inquired of Mrs. Gates as follows—“Write in your next if you had any presentiments during last week. We were going to —— canal, fishing, and I got up at the first sound of the bell, and, taking my

razor to shave, began to sharpen it on my hand, and being, I suppose, only half awake, failed to turn the razor, and cut a piece clean out of my left hand. An artery was cut in two places, and bled dreadfully." Further details are given which shew that the pain and bleeding were probably at their maximum at the hour of Mrs. Gates's breakfast that same morning.

The next account is from Mr. R. Fryer, of Bath:—

(xx.) "A strange experience occurred in the autumn of the year 1879. A brother of mine had been from home for three or four days, when, one afternoon, at half-past five (as nearly as possible), I was astonished to hear my name called out very distinctly. I so clearly recognised my brother's voice that I looked all over the house for him, but not finding him and, indeed, knowing that he must be distant some forty miles, I ended by attributing the incident to a fancied delusion, and thought no more about the matter. On my brother's arrival home, however, on the sixth day, he remarked amongst other things that he had narrowly escaped an ugly accident. It appeared that whilst getting out from a railway carriage he missed his footing, and fell along the platform; by putting out his hands quickly he broke the fall and only suffered a severe shaking. 'Curiously enough,' he said, 'when I found myself falling I called out your name.' This did not strike me for a moment, but on my asking him during what part of the day this happened, he gave me the time, which I found corresponded exactly with the moment I heard myself called."

We are allowed to publish the following letter, written by a clergyman to his daughter, who is an intimate friend of the Secretaries:—

(xxi.) "When your brother E. was at Winchester College (about 1856 or 1857) on going to bed one Saturday night, I could not sleep. When your mother came into the room, she found me restless and uneasy. I told her that a strong impression had seized me that something had happened to your brother. The next day, your mother, on writing to E., asked me if I had any message for him, when I replied: 'Tell him I particularly want to know if anything happened to him yesterday.' Your mother laughed, and made the remark that I should be frightened if a letter in Dr. Moberly's handwriting reached us on Monday. I replied, 'I should be afraid to open it.' On the Monday morning a letter did come from Dr. Moberly to tell me that E. had met with an accident, that one of his schoolfellows had thrown a piece of cheese at him which had struck one of his eyes; and that the medical man, Mr. Wickham, thought I had better come down immediately and take your brother to a London oculist."

The next narrative is from Canon Sherlock, of Sherlockstown, Naas:

(xxii.) "During the Indian mutiny my brother was serving (as ensign) in the 72nd Highlanders. At that time I was an undergraduate of T. C. D. and living at Sandycove, near Kingstown. One night, about two o'clock, I was reading by the fire when I heard myself distinctly called by my brother, the tone of his voice being somewhat raised and urgent. Looking round I saw his head and the upper part of his body quite plainly. He appeared to be looking at me, and was about seven or eight feet distant. I looked steadily at him for about half a minute, when he seemed gradually to fade into a mist and disappear.

“The date of this occurrence I unfortunately lost note of, but upon my brother's return from India, and my casually mentioning that I had so seen him, we talked the matter over, and both came to the conclusion that the apparition coincided with a dangerous attack of illness in which my brother suddenly awoke with the impression that he was suffocating, at which moment he thought of me. The attack was brought on by sleeping during a forced march through a country great part of which was under water.

“This is the only apparition that I have experienced, and there was no anxiety on my mind which could have given rise to it, as we had quite recently had a letter from my brother, written in good health and spirits.”

The next account was given us by Mrs. Swithinbank, of Ormleigh, Anerley Park, S.E., with whom several of us are personally acquainted:—

(xxiii.) “When my son H. was a boy, I one day saw him off to school, watching him down the grove, and then went into the library to sit, a room I rarely used at that time of the day. Shortly after, he appeared, walking over the wall opposite the window. The wall was about thirteen feet distant from the window, and low, so that when my son stood on it, his face was on a level with mine, and close to me. I hastily threw up the sash, and called to ask why he had returned from school, and why he was there; he did not answer, but looked full at me with a frightened expression, and dropped down the other side of the wall and disappeared. Never doubting but that it was some boyish trick, I called a servant to tell him to come to me, but not a trace of him was to be found, though there was no screen or place of concealment. I myself searched with the same result. As I sat still wondering where and how he had so suddenly disappeared, a cab drove up with H. in an almost unconscious state, brought home by a friend and schoolfellow, who said that during a dictation lesson he had suddenly fallen backward over his seat, calling out in a shrill voice, ‘Mamma will know,’ and becoming insensible. He was ill that day, prostrate the next; but our doctor could not account for the attack, nor did anything follow to throw any light on his appearance to me. That the time of his attack exactly corresponded with that at which I saw his figure, was proved both by his master and class-mates.” The Rev. H. Swithinbank, eldest son of the writer of the above, explains that the point at which the figure was seen was in a direct line between the house (situated in Summerhill Terrace, Newcastle-on-Tyne) and the school, but that “no anima’ but a bird could come direct that way,” and that the walking distance between the two places was nearly a mile. He describes his brother as of a nervous temperament, but his mother as just the opposite, a calm person, who has never in her life had any other similar experience.

Still more remarkable is the following case, from the fact that the exciting experience on the part of the Agent was not of pain or danger, but only of strong momentary surprise and shock. The account is from Mr. R. P. Roberts, 10, Exchange Street, Cheetham, Manchester, who is personally known to one of us.

(xxiv.) “When I was an apprentice in a drapery establishment, I used to go to dinner at 12 and return at 12.30. My employer was very strict and hot-tempered, which made me anxious to avoid his displeasure. The shop stood

at the corner of Castle-street and Rating Row, Beaumaris, and I lived in the latter street. One day I went home to dinner at the usual hour. When I had partly finished I looked at the clock. To my astonishment it appeared that the time by the clock was 12.30. I gave an unusual start. I certainly thought it was most extraordinary. I had only half finished my dinner and it was time for me to be at the shop. I felt dubious, so in a few seconds had another look, when to my agreeable surprise I found that I had been mistaken. It was only just turned 12.15. I could never explain how it was that I made the mistake. The error gave me such a shock that for a few minutes I felt as if something serious had happened, and had to make an effort to shake off the sensation.

"I finished my dinner and returned to business at 12.30. On entering the shop I was accosted by Mrs. Owen, my employer's wife, who used to assist in the business. She asked me rather sternly where I had been since my return from dinner? I replied that I had come straight from dinner. A long discussion followed which brought out the following facts. About a quarter of an hour previous to my actually entering the shop (*i.e.*, at about 12.15) I was seen by Mr. and Mrs. Owen, and a well-known customer, a Mrs. Jones, to walk into the shop, go behind the counter, and place my hat on the peg. As I was going behind the counter Mrs. Owen remarked, with the intention that I should hear, 'that I had arrived now that I was not wanted.' This remark was prompted by the fact that a few minutes previous a customer was in the shop in want of an article which belonged to the stock under my charge, and which could not be found in my absence. As soon as this customer left I was seen to enter the shop. It was observed by Mr. and Mrs. Owen and Mrs. Jones that I did not appear to notice the remark made. In fact, I looked quite absent-minded and vague. Immediately after putting my hat on the peg I returned to the same spot, put my hat on again, and walked out of the shop, still looking in a very mysterious manner, which incensed one of the parties, I think Mrs. Owen, to say, 'that my behaviour was very odd, and she wondered where I was off to.' I, of course, contradicted these statements, and endeavoured to prove that I could not have eaten my dinner and returned in a quarter of an hour. This, however, availed nothing, and during our discussion the above-mentioned Mrs. Jones came into the shop again, and was appealed to at once by Mr. and Mrs. Owen. She corroborated every word of their account, and added that she saw me coming down Rating Row when within a few yards of the shop; that she was only a step or two behind me, and entered the shop in time to hear Mrs. Owen's remark about my coming too late. These three persons gave their statement of the affair quite independently of each other. There was no other person near my age in the Owens' employment, and there could be no reasonable doubt that my form had been seen by them and by Mrs. Jones. They would not believe my story till my aunt, who had dined with me, said positively that I did not leave the table before my time was up. You will, no doubt, notice the coincidence. At the moment when I felt, with a startling sensation, that I ought to be at the shop, and when Mr. and Mrs. Owen were extremely anxious that I should be there, I appeared to them, looking, as they said, 'as if in a dream or in a state of somnambulism.'"

Of a still rarer type is the next account, where an impression, though unmistakably produced, was only physically felt, and not understood by the Percipient. It has been placed at our disposal by our friend, Mr. F. Corder, a gentleman of very high reputation in the musical world.

(xxv.) "On July 8, 1882, my wife went to London to have an operation (which we both believed to be a slight one) performed on her eyes by the late Mr. Critchett. The appointment was for 1.30, and, knowing from long previous experience the close sympathy of our minds, about that time I, at Brighton, got rather fidgety, and was much relieved—and perhaps a little surprised and disappointed—at not feeling any decided sensation which I could construe as sympathetic. Taking it therefore for granted that all was well, I went out at 2.45 to conduct my concert at the Aquarium, expecting to find there a telegram, as had been arranged, to say that all was well. On my way I stopped, as usual, to compare my watch with the big clock outside Lawson's, the clockmaker's. At that instant I felt my eyes flooded with water, just as when a chill wind gives one a sudden cold in the eyes, though it was a hot, still summer's day. The affection was so unusual and startling that my attention could not but be strongly directed to it; yet, the time being then eleven minutes to three, I was sure it could have nothing to do with my wife's operation, and, as it continued for some little time, thought I must have taken cold. However, it passed off, and the concert immediately afterwards put it out of my mind. At 4.0 I received a telegram from my wife 'All well over. A great success,' and this quite took away all anxiety. But on going to town in the evening, I found her in a terrible state of nervous prostration; and it appeared that the operation, though marvelously successful, had been of a very severe character. Quite accidentally it came out that it was not till 2.30 that Mrs. Corder entered the operating-room, and that the operation commenced, after the due administration of an anæsthetic, at about ten minutes to three, as near as we could calculate."

#### δ. AGENT AND PERCIPIENT BOTH IN AN ABNORMAL CONDITION.

Finally, a third great class remains to be considered—that, namely, where *both* the parties concerned are in a state to some extent abnormal.

##### 1. *Two persons dying or in peril at the same moment.*

Cases where two persons, between whom the supposed *rapport* exists, are dying at a distance from each other at the same time, must of course be extremely rare; but the effect of severe illness in producing or heightening the sensibility to an impression of a distant catastrophe is illustrated in the following account, lately contributed to *Knowledge* of December 2, 1882, by Mr. J. Sinclair:—

(xxvi.) "A friend of mine (Dr. Goodall Jones, of Liverpool) related to me the

following account of a case of premonition.\* The names and dates Dr. Jones will give, if required. He called on a female patient on Sunday afternoon at three o'clock; her husband met him at the door, and said he was about to come for him, as the patient was worse and delirious. On going up-stairs, the doctor found the poor woman in a very excited state, asserting that her brother (a Liverpool pilot) was drowning in the river; 'which,' said her husband, 'is impossible, as he is out at sea, to the best of our knowledge.' The doctor did what he could to soothe his patient, and left, convinced that it was a case of ordinary delirium. But in the next morning's paper he read with surprise the account of the pilot's death by drowning in the river on the previous afternoon at three o'clock."

## 2. *Simultaneous dreams.*

Cases, again, where it is asserted that two persons, both entranced at the same time, have been together in the spirit, as in Swedenborg's accounts of spiritual converse with persons apparently asleep, have lacked the corroboration necessary for sound evidence. But transferences of impression of the nature of simultaneous dreams are by no means rare, and are easily established. We have received one singular case where a strong nocturnal impression was reproduced even in a multiple form. Most of the persons concerned in this story are friends or acquaintances of the Secretaries of the Committee, and all the initials and localities were entrusted to us for publication; but as the matter is a delicate one, and the initials would probably have been recognised, we prefer to call the personages A., X., Y., and Z., and merely to say that they were resident in four separate countries of Europe.

(xxvii.) On the night of August 23-24, 1882, "I woke," says A., "after midnight with a sense of great anxiety, a sense that a spiritual message of vital importance had gone to X. by mistake." A.'s first letter, written to X. early in the morning of August 24th, cannot be found; but on the receipt of that letter, X. wrote, "Your letter astonished me. Yesterday morning early, before it was light, I woke up at —, with just this feeling of warning. Something was saying to me, 'This is for the last time; it is wrong and must not be.' In the darkness it gave me a horrible feeling." This feeling of moral warning was vaguely connected with A. in X.'s mind. The same post which brought X.'s letter to A., brought also letters from Y. and Z. Y., a correspondent from whom A. only heard about once a year, wrote soon after midnight of August 24-25. His letter, which was in metre, expressed a vague but strong feeling of anxious sympathy. In point of date Z.'s letter was more precisely coincident with A.'s primary impression; for it conveyed an inquiry as to A.'s well-being, prompted by an alarming dream

\*The word "premonition" is inaccurate, the event recounted being simply one of simultaneous impression. We have received confirmation of this narrative from Dr. Goodall Jones; and as soon as the husband, who is a sailor, returns from sea, we hope to receive from him and his wife that direct testimony which we make a rule of obtaining in every case where any living person is concerned.

which had visited Mrs. Z. on the night of August 23-24. "I seemed first," says Mrs. Z. in a subsequent letter, "to have a vague feeling of your presence; then to see you in a central spot of light with darkness everywhere else. I stood in the edge of the darkness, looking at you with sympathy, pity, and a little morbid curiosity which disturbed me, and made me wish that you would speak and break the spell that held me waiting (as I felt) for a clear revelation of what was lying heavily upon your soul. You raised your head as I watched you, and turned unseeing eyes towards me. The expression was of hopeless, despairing bewilderment. You had the appearance of a person who knows himself to be alone. As your eyes passed over me again, still unseeing, I knew that I was there in spirit only, and was about to hear and see and know things that I should not. I forced myself away into the darkness, and then into waking." "To me alone, perhaps," says A., "these matters carry much significance. I was greatly troubled at that time about a case of conscience, which I could not solve, and which all my will prompted me to solve wrongly." We may add that none of these friends, though linked with A. by close bonds of sympathy, were cognisant of the case of conscience in question.

In *Macmillan's Magazine* for October, 1882, was recorded a very interesting case of a somewhat similar type. The writer, Miss Mason, of whose punctilious care in observation we have had personal experience, was suffering from the excitement of painful sympathy with certain events actually in course of occurrence; and the vivid natural imagery in which her trouble was represented during a night of disturbed sleep, imagery drawn from a unique spot known to her and totally unknown to her maid, who was sleeping on another floor, was reflected in that maid's dreams with startling accuracy.

### 3. *Percipient asleep and Agent excited.*

Commoner still are the cases of double abnormality, where the transference of impression is to a sleeping Percipient from an Agent who is in some state of waking excitement. Such excited states, when below a certain stage of momentousness, seem to find in sleep a specially favourable condition for communication; and indeed, putting aside cases where mesmeric influence plays some part, the very slightest sort of events seem rarely or never to impress a distant mind except in dream. Owing to their very triviality, many of these experiences are doubtless lost; and this circumstance so far helps to perpetuate the unscientific view, which looks on transferred impressions as necessarily bound up with some solemn message or strange catastrophe. As an example of the trivial type, we may give the following narrative, which we received from Mr. A. B. McDougall, scholar of Lincoln College, Oxford:—

(xxviii.) "On the night of January 10, 1882, I was sleeping in one of the suburbs of Manchester in the house of a friend, into which house several rats

had been driven by the excessive cold. I knew nothing about these rats, but during the night I was waked by feeling an unpleasantly cold something slithering down my right leg. I immediately struck a light and flung off the bed-clothes, and saw a rat run out of my bed under the fire-place. I told my friend the next morning, but he tried to persuade me I had been dreaming. However, a few days afterwards a rat was caught in my room. On the morning of January 11, a cousin of mine, who happened to be staying in my own home on the south coast, and to be occupying my room, came down to breakfast, and recounted a marvellous dream, in which a rat appeared to be eating off the extremities of my unfortunate self. My family laughed the matter off. However, on the 13th, a letter was received from me giving an account of my unpleasant meeting with the rat and its subsequent capture. Then every one present remembered the dream my cousin had told certainly fifty-eight hours before, as having occurred on the night of January 10. My mother wrote me an account of the dream, ending up with the remark, 'We always said——was a witch; she always knew about everything almost before it took place.'

The heightening effect of sleep on the Percipient's impressibility, suggested by the triviality of such an incident as this, is more strikingly indicated by the fact that a transferred impression of graver matters seems sometimes to have to wait for the sleeping state, in order to cross the threshold of consciousness. Many cases are on record where an accident to an absent friend is dreamed of on the following night; as though the image, flashed, perhaps, at the moment from brain to brain, had needed sleep and darkness for its development.

Sleep, again, seems the only condition in which impressions of excitement of a happy kind are transferred, which may perhaps be taken as indicating the superior vividness of pains over pleasures. We are at any rate acquainted with no instance of a waking impression to parallel the account of a dream (for which we have the testimony both of the dreamer, Mr. A. Sparrow, of Derwent Square, Liverpool, and of the person to whom he related the dream on the morning after its occurrence), announcing, many hours before their arrival by post, the details of a friend's most unexpected marriage engagement. Of the far commoner transference to a sleeping Percipient of the impression of a distressing accident, we have many instances; and many more still of the apparition of a dying person perceived by a distant mind in dream or vision. Cases of transference where the Agent is in this most momentous of all conditions, seem, however, to differ, as a class, from the less momentous cases, in the fact that the number of them where the Percipient is asleep, large as it is, is disproportionately exceeded by the number where the Percipient is in a state of normal waking consciousness. We give a few specimens of these last classes.

4. *Percipient asleep and Agent dying.*

The Rev. R. B. F. Elrington, Vicar of Lower Brixham, a friend of one of us, vouches for the fact that the following occurrence in his parish was described hours before the arrival of the news confirming the fears which it occasioned; and he certifies to the good character of the witnesses.

(xxix.) In the early spring of 1881, Mrs. Barnes, of Brixham, Devonshire, whose husband was at sea, dreamt that his fishing-vessel was run into by a steamer. Their boy was with him, and she called out in her dream, "Save the boy!" At this moment another son sleeping in the next room rushed into hers, crying out, "Where's father?" She asked what he meant, when he said he had distinctly heard his father come upstairs and kick with his heavy boots against the door, as he was in the habit of doing when he returned from sea. The boy's statement and her own dream so alarmed the woman that early next morning she told Mrs. Strong and other neighbours of her fears. News afterwards came that her husband's vessel had been run into by a steamer, and that he and the boy were drowned.

Mrs. Powles, of Wadhurst, West Dulwich, S.E., who is personally known to one of us, sends us the following narrative:—

(xxx.) "I am in a position to vouch for a very curious dream which my late husband, Mr. William Holden, dreamt about a brother of his, Dr. Ralph Holden, who was at that time travelling in the interior of Africa. One morning in June or July, 1861, my husband woke me with the announcement, 'Ralph is dead.' I said, 'You must be dreaming.' 'No, I am not dreaming now, but I dreamt twice over that I saw Ralph lying on the ground, supported by a man. He was lying under a large tree, and he was either dead or dying.' In December, came the news that Dr. Holden was dead; and from a Mr. Green, who had been exploring in the same region, they learnt 'that he must have died about the time when his brother dreamt about him, and that he died in the arms of his faithful native servant, lying under a large tree, where he was afterwards buried.' The Holden family have a sketch which Mr. Green took on the spot of the tree and its surroundings, and on seeing it my husband said, 'Yes, that is exactly the place where I saw Ralph in my dream, dying or dead.'"

The next account is from a gentleman residing in Ireland, of long-standing repute both as a doctor and as an antiquary, and whom we will call A. His wish that his name should not be published is due to the fact that one of the actors whom his narrative discredits is still living.

(xxxi.) One Monday night in December, 1836, he had the following dream, or, as he would prefer to call it, revelation. He found himself suddenly at the gate of Major N. M.'s avenue, many miles from his home. Close to him were a group of persons, one of them a woman with a basket on her arm, the rest men, four of whom were tenants of his own, while the others were unknown

to him. Some of the strangers seemed to be murderously assaulting H. W., one of his tenants, and he interfered. "I struck violently at the man on my left, and then with greater violence at the man's face to my right. Finding to my surprise that I did not knock him down either, I struck again and again, with all the violence of a man frenzied at the sight of my poor friend's murder. To my great amazement I saw that my arms, although visible to my eye, were without substance; and the bodies of the men I struck at and my own came close together after each blow through the shadowy arms I struck with. My blows were delivered with more extreme violence than I think I ever exerted; but I became painfully convinced of my incompetency. I have no consciousness of what happened, after this feeling of unsubstantiality came upon me." Next morning A. experienced the stiffness and soreness of violent bodily exercise, and was informed by his wife that in the course of the night he had much alarmed her by striking out again and again with his arms in a terrific manner, "as if fighting for his life." He in turn informed her of his dream, and begged her to remember the names of those actors in it who were known to him. On the morning of the following day, Wednesday, A. received a letter from his agent, who resided in the town close to the scene of the dream, informing him that his tenant, H. W., had been found on Tuesday morning at Major N. M.'s gate, speechless and apparently dying from a fracture of the skull, and that there was no trace of the murderers. That night A. started for the town, and arrived there on Thursday morning. On his way to a meeting of magistrates he met the senior magistrate of that part of the country, and requested him to give orders for the arrest of the three men whom, besides H. W., he had recognised in his dream, and to have them examined separately. This was at once done. The three men gave identical accounts of the occurrence, and all named the woman who was with them; she was then arrested, and gave precisely similar testimony. They said that between eleven and twelve on the Monday night they had been walking homewards all together along the road, when they were overtaken by three strangers, two of whom savagely assaulted H. W., while the other prevented his friends from interfering. H. W. did not die, but was never the same man afterwards; he subsequently emigrated. Of the other parties concerned, the only survivor (except A. himself) gave an account of the occurrence to the archdeacon of the district in November, 1881, but varied from the true facts in stating that he had taken the wounded man home in his cart. Had this been the case he would, of course, have been called on for his testimony at once.

The following narrative we have from three independent sources, viz. (1) Letter from Mr. John C. Strefford, 39, Mount Street, Welshpool, son of the superintendent of police, whose dream is recorded and who is now dead; (2) Verbal account taken down from Miss Phillips by Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood; (3) Letter from the Rev. J. E. Hill, Vicar of Welshpool. All the accounts are practically identical, the only discrepancy being as to the length of time for which the girl was imprisoned. We abridge as follows:—

(xxxii.) About 1871, Miss Phillips, of Church Street, Welshpool, had a deaf and dumb maid. This girl fell ill and needed a change of air, and Miss

Phillips proposed to send her to her brother for three weeks. The girl was very unwilling to go, and on the appointed morning, a Tuesday, she handed over a tray which she was carrying upstairs to another servant, and was not seen afterwards. Miss Phillips and her friends in great alarm searched the house all over, including the cellar in which the girl was afterwards found. On the following Friday (or possibly the Wednesday) morning, the superintendent of police, Strefford, called and said that he had an impression on his mind that she was concealed in the house, and begged to be allowed to make search. Miss Phillips consented, and Strefford, who had never been in the house before, walked straight to the door of the cellar stairs and went down. In the cellar they found the girl jammed fast in an open flue directly beneath the fire-place in the room above, the ashes of which it was meant to receive. The opening from the flue to the cellar was not above eighteen inches high, and the girl had drawn some carpeting after her so as to conceal her legs. They had to get bricklayer's tools and dig down the bricks before they could get her out.

Now as to the cause of Strefford's assurance that he would find her there. "My father," says Mr. John C. Strefford, "awoke my mother in the middle of the night and said, 'I know where that poor girl is. She is up a chimney in the cellar belonging to the house in which she lives.'" He could not rest after this; got up at five o'clock, went to the house, and found the girl, as above narrated.

#### DREAMS AND CHANCE COINCIDENCE.

Since our arrangement of topics has thus brought us round at the end to what we started from, sleep or vision on the part of the Percipient, and since no department of our subject has been the field of more folly and superstition than this realm of dreamland, we may take the present opportunity of stating what kinds of dream we think deserving of notice. Dreams form, no doubt, the most assailable part of our evidence. They are placed almost in a separate category by their intimate connection with the lowest physical, as well as the highest psychological, operations. The grotesque medley which constantly throng through the gate of ivory thrust into discredit our rarer visitants through the gate of horn. For our purposes, then, the dreams must have been noted down, or communicated to others, directly after their occurrence. If concerned with grave events, those events must be not of a chronic but of a critical kind, such as sudden danger or actual death. If concerned with trivial events, those events must be in some way bizarre or unexpected, not such everyday occurrences as a visit from a friend or the arrival of a present. To all dreams, however, one objection may be taken which has plausibility enough to be worth a minute's consideration. It is said that millions of people are dreaming every night, and that it might be expected, according to the doctrine of chances, that some few out of so vast a multitude of dreams would

“turn out true.” But, in the first place, an extremely small percentage of this multitude of dreams contain as their single or culminating point the definite sight of some one else in unusual or exciting circumstances. There are few exceptions to the rule that we are the heroes of our own dreams, and where a single strong impression survives the moment of waking, an occurrence which in itself is comparatively infrequent, the impression is far more often than not of circumstances in which we ourselves are central. And, in the second place, a dream which leaves on the mind a sense of interest or of disturbance, extending far into waking hours, is with most of us a decidedly rare event, and is a *comparatively* rare event even with those to whom it occurs oftenest, if the number of their dreams be completely realised. The very fact of a dream being specially remembered and noted may be taken as a proof of its having been exceptional. Far rarer, of course, are the cases where these two rare characteristics are combined, and where a vivid impression of another person in unusual or exciting circumstances, having been first produced in a dream, survives as a haunting and disturbing influence. If the dreams of a single night in England could be counted, it may be doubted whether so large a proportion as one in a million would be of this character. And when this immensely reduced number of dreams is considered, the number of occurrences, coincidently with the dream, of the identical event dreamed of, so far from exemplifying the law of chances, would be found to set it completely at defiance. If it be still objected that this argument at any rate does not apply to cases of coincidence where the event or scene is not of an unusual or exciting kind, and is remembered sufficiently to be noted without the production of any haunting impression, the reply is obvious. Of ordinary and unexciting events and scenes the number possible to imagination is practically infinite: the trivial details of circumstances which any single person can in imagination connect with the various persons of his acquaintance so clearly outnumber the remembered dreams of his whole lifetime, as to put the coincidence of dream and reality again completely outside the law of chances.

#### CASUAL APPARITIONS.

To return now from this brief digression, our scheme of classification, as above sketched, is tolerably obvious; but in looking back on the topics which have been passed in review, it will be seen that the logical limits originally proposed, and which would confine the phenomena to those presenting a distinct analogy to Thought-transference, have been overstepped at many points. Attention has already been drawn to the difference between the cases where the actual impression in A.'s mind is simultaneously reproduced in

B.'s, and those where the impression produced in B.'s mind is that of A.'s personality rather than of his ideas. We described this more general impact of mind on mind (if such it be) as a vivification of some previously existing *rapport*, and it is to this head that we must refer many cases of apparition at death and of so-called *clairvoyance*. Even this category, however, is not wide enough to cover all cases of the impression, at a distance, of one personality on another. We have several instances of the following type. The two Percipients are personally known to one of us, and are above suspicion; the reason for suppressing their names is that they are in the employ of persons whose prejudices or susceptibilities they are obliged to consider. Mr. M.'s account, which was written down soon after the occurrence, has been slightly condensed.

(xxxiii.) "On Thursday, the 5th of September, 1867, about the hour of 10.45 A.M., on entering my office, I found my clerk in conversation with the porter, and the Rev. Mr. H. standing at the clerk's back. I was just on the point of asking Mr. H. what had brought him in so early (he worked in the same room as myself, but was not in the habit of coming till about mid-day) when my clerk began questioning me about a telegram which had missed me. The conversation lasted some minutes, and in the midst of it the porter gave me a letter which explained by whom the telegram had been sent. During this scene Mr. R., from an office upstairs, came in and listened to what was going on. On opening the letter, I immediately made known its purport, and looked Mr. H. full in the face as I spoke. I was much struck by the melancholy look he had, and observed that he was without his neck-tie. At this juncture Mr. R. and the porter left the room. I spoke to Mr. H., saying, 'Well, what's the matter with you? You look so sour.' He made no answer, but continued looking fixedly at me. I took up an enclosure which had accompanied the letter and read it through, still seeing Mr. H. standing opposite to me at the corner of the table. As I laid the papers down, my clerk said 'Here, sir, is a letter come from Mr. H.' No sooner had he pronounced the name than Mr. H. disappeared in a second. I was for a time quite dumbfounded, which astonished my clerk, who (it now turned out) had not seen Mr. H., and absolutely denied that he had been in the office that morning. The purport of the letter from Mr. H., which my clerk gave me, and which had been written on the previous day, was that, feeling unwell, he should not come to the office that Thursday, but requested me to forward his letters to him at his house. The next day (Friday), about noon, Mr. H. entered the office; and when I asked him where he was on the Thursday about 10.45, he replied that he had just finished breakfast, was in the company of his wife, and had never left his house during the day. I felt shy of mentioning the subject to Mr. R., but on the Monday following I could not refrain from asking him if he remembered looking in on Thursday morning. 'Perfectly,' he replied; 'you were having a long confab with your clerk about a telegram, which you subsequently discovered came from Mr. C.' On my asking him if he remembered who were present, he answered, 'The clerk, the porter, you and H.' On my

asking him further, he said, 'He was standing at the corner of the table, opposite you. I addressed him, but he made no reply, only took up a book and began reading. I could not help looking at him, as the first thing that struck me was his being at the office so early, and the next his melancholy look, so different from his usual manner; but that I attributed to his being annoyed about the discussion going on. I left him standing in the same position when I went out, followed by the porter.' On my making known to Mr. R. that Mr. H. was fourteen miles off the whole of that day, he grew quite indignant at my doubting the evidence of his eyesight, and insisted on the porter being called up and interrogated. The porter, however, like the clerk, had not seen the figure."

Mr. R. (whose testimony is, of course, all-important, as precluding the hypothesis of subjective hallucination, which Mr. M.'s experience might otherwise have fairly suggested,) has supplied us with independent and precise corroboration of these facts, so far as he was a party to them—the one insignificant difference being that he says he did not *speak* to Mr. H., but "gesticulated in fun to him, pointing to Mr. M. and the clerk, who were having an altercation about a telegram: but my fun did not seem at all catching, Mr. H. apparently not being inclined, as he often was, to make fun out of surrounding circumstances."

A case like this clearly cannot well be brought under the head either of Thought-transference or of exaltation of *rapport*. The latter seems excluded by the trivial and meaningless nature of the occurrence; while the prolonged duration of the apparition negatives any basis for it that we might seek to find in some casual and unheeded image of the office in London, which may have flitted through Mr. H.'s mind as he sat at home. Equally purposeless is the following incident, the account of which is signed by Mrs. Clay (sister of Mr. Gorst, M.P.), of Cheltenham. Her husband, the Rev. Mr. Clay, published an account of it in the *Spectator* many years ago, under the title of "Brain-waves."

(xxxiv.) "It was a very wet Sunday afternoon in 1835 or '36, Mrs. Clay being at home and Mr. Clay at service in the gaol where he was chaplain. Rather before his usual time Mrs. Clay heard her husband return, enter the house by the back door under the window of the room she was in, hang up his coat and hat, saw him enter the room, and, standing at the door, heard him remark what a wet day it was, and then, after her reply, he went upstairs. As he did not return, Mrs. Clay ran upstairs to seek him, and concluded he had gone out again as she could not find him. A little later the whole occurrence was *re-enacted*, and on her asking her husband why he had gone out again, he assured her he had not done so, but had then only just come back from service. This time it was the real Mr. Clay."

Here, moreover, the prophetic element clearly takes us on to altogether fresh ground. So, again, there is strong testimony that *clairvoyants* have witnessed and described trivial incidents in which they had no

special interest, and even scenes in which the actors, though actual persons, were complete strangers to them ; and such cases seem properly assimilated to those where they describe mere places and objects, the idea of which can hardly be supposed to be impressed on them by any personality at all. Once more, apparitions at death, though the fact of death sufficiently implies excitement or disturbance in one mind, have often been witnessed, not only by relatives or friends, in a normal state but interested in the event—a case above considered—but by other observers who had no personal interest in the matter. In some of these cases the disinterested observer has been in the company of the person for whom the appearance may be supposed to have been specially intended, as in the now classical case of the apparition of Lieutenant Wynyard's brother. In other cases there is not even this apparent link, as where a vision or apparition announces the death of a perfect stranger to someone who is wholly at a loss to account for the visitation. Clearly then the analogy of Thought-transference, which seemed to offer such a convenient logical start, cannot be pressed too far. Our phenomena break through any attempt to group them under heads of transferred impression ; and we venture to introduce the words *Telesthesia* and *Telepathy* to cover all cases of impression received at a distance without the normal operation of the recognised sense organs. These general terms may, we think, be found of permanent service ; but as regards what is for the present included under them, we must limit and arrange our material rather with an eye to convenience, than with any belief that our classification will ultimately prove a fundamental one. No true demarcation, in fact, can as yet be made between one class of those experiences and another ; we need the record of as many and as diverse phenomena as we can get, if we are to be in a position to deal satisfactorily with any one of them.

#### NEED OF MORE FACTS.

And this brings us back to the practical moral which we desire, in this Report, to enforce on as wide a circle as possible—namely, that what is really needed is a far larger supply of first-hand and well-attested facts. We have spoken with some assurance of the supply already amassed. But in a matter so anomalous, a number of direct and independent attestations, which would be utterly superfluous elsewhere, is indispensable for getting the scientific reality of the evidence into men's minds at all—for teaching them that that evidence is no shifting shadow, which it may be left to individual taste or temperament to interpret, but more resembles a solid mass seen in twilight, which men may indeed avoid stumbling over, but only by resolutely walking away from it. And when the *savant* thus deserts the field,

the ordinary man needs to have the nature and true amount of the testimony far more directly brought home to him, than is necessary in realms already mastered by specialists to whose *dicta* he may defer. Failing this direct contact with the facts, the vaguely fascinated regard of the ordinary public is, for all scientific purposes, as futile as the *savant's* determined avoidance. Knowledge can never grow until it is realised that the question "Do you believe in these things?" is puerile unless it has been preceded by the inquiry, "What do you know about them?"

We are glad to be able to say that, in the case of many of the best accounts that we have received, the writers have allowed us to publish their names. This permission greatly increases our gratitude to our correspondents—many of whom have, moreover, taken a great deal of trouble to present their narratives in a complete and accurate form. There are, no doubt, occasional cases where a feeling of delicacy or consideration for others, renders the stipulation that names shall not be published natural and right; but, as a rule, such a stipulation only makes us long to persuade our informants that, if they would but unite in disregarding a slight risk of ridicule, the risk itself would altogether disappear. For few persons who have not actively engaged in such inquiries as we are pursuing, can form any idea how enormous must be the sum of the phenomena which have been actually within the cognisance of persons now living. The number of those whom our appeal has actually reached forms but a very small proportion of the inhabitants even of a single country; and, moreover, much of our best evidence has been derived from the limited circle of our own acquaintance. We are justified, therefore, in regarding the area which our inquiries have hitherto swept as but a corner of a very much larger field. There may probably be scores of persons in this country who could amass a first-hand collection of narratives quite as good as our own, and quite distinct from it. The commoner difficulties which the collector encounters may be expected to disappear, as it becomes better understood that there is a scheme into which each narrative falls, and that any well-attested fragment of evidence may prove of unexpected value. At present a tone of mind very commonly met with (and it is one with which we are far from altogether quarrelling) is that of the man who prefaces his remarks with an expression of contemptuous disbelief in any evidence that you can possibly bring before him, and then goes on to say "that there is *one actual fact* which I can tell you, for it occurred to *myself*." Harder still to deal with are those who, while firmly convinced, not only of their own particular experience of the phenomena, but of the extreme importance of establishing the reality of such experience in general, refuse the direct attestation which alone can ensure the result

they profess to desire, and which they would readily give to any other sort of fact in heaven or earth that they truly believed in. Taking all these people into consideration, they often seem to us like a multitude of persons standing side by side in the dark, who would be astonished, if the sun rose, to see their own overwhelming numbers. Meanwhile we are greatly at their mercy ; with them, not with us, rests the possibility of giving to our subject the status of an organised science.

For, in fact, this subject is at present very much in the position which zoology and botany occupied in the time of Aristotle, or nosology in the time of Hippocrates. Aristotle had no zoological gardens or methodical treatises to refer to ; he was obliged to go down to the fish-market, to hear whatever the sailors could tell, and look at whatever they could bring him. This spirit of omnivorous inquiry no doubt exposed him to hearing much that was exaggerated or untrue ; but plainly the science of zoology could not have been upbuilt without it. Diseases afford a still more striking parallel to the phenomena of which we are in quest. Men of science are wont to make it an objection to this quest that phenomena cannot be reproduced under our own conditions or at our own time. The looseness of thought here exhibited by men ordinarily clear-headed is surely a striking example of the prepotence of prejudice over education. Will the objectors assert that all aberrations of function and degenerations of tissue are reproducible by direct experiment ? Can physicians secure a case of cancer or Addison's disease by any previous arrangement of conditions ? Our science is by no means the only one concerned with phenomena which are at present to a large extent irreproducible : all the sciences of life are still within that category, and all sciences whatever were in it once.

#### THE CONTINUITY OF ALL KNOWLEDGE.

And as we here find ourselves fairly embarked on the wide sea of difficulties and objections, we cannot better conclude our paper than by a brief discussion of some of those which, in the pursuance of our task thus far, we have most frequently encountered. We begin, then, by protesting against the distinction, as ordinarily drawn, between legitimate and illegitimate lines of inquiry. If we analyse the common idea of a legitimate inquiry, it seems to be conceived as one whose line of departure is in demonstrable continuity with previous facts and theories, the establishment and coherence of which has been the result of specialised skill and attention. An inquiry, on the other hand, is conceived as illegitimate, when its provisional hypotheses are not in obvious continuity with established conceptions ; especially if it depends on facts which do not wait for the expert, or admit of being bottled for his inspection, but are unexpectedly witnessed by untrained

persons, and liable to be distorted and exaggerated by the preconceptions or emotions of the observers. And these assumptions lead easily on to Faraday's famous *dictum* that the scientific approach of any subject presupposes "clear ideas of the naturally possible and impossible." So naïve a demand for prophetic knowledge of the unknown would alone suggest the fallacy of the above distinction of subjects. The true distinction is, in fact, one only of stage and degree. No science—scarcely even pure mathematics itself—has attained to the more advanced stage without experiencing the characteristic drawbacks of the earlier. And, since the mode of collecting evidence depends on the stage, a letter to the newspapers may be no unfair modern parallel to the old naturalist's visits to the slaughter-house and the fish-market.

But this erroneous distinction is in reality based upon an error of much greater magnitude. Many persons adopt the words "natural" and "supernatural" to express distinction between objects of inquiry belonging to the physical sciences and those with which we are concerned. This distinction we altogether repudiate. If any one considers the occurrences for which we bring evidence to be supernatural, it is certainly not ourselves. We have no idea what the word can mean in such a connection. We carry our whole instinct of scientific solidarity into every detail of our inquiry. The age of transition is assuredly near its close, which has permitted even eminent *savants* to picture the "natural" governance of the universe as a bond to be occasionally snapped by some power which itself, presumably, has no "nature." "That a beloved friend in the moment of his dissolution," Humboldt could still say sixty years ago, "may gain power over the elements, and, in defiance of the laws of Nature, be able to appear to us, would be perfectly incomprehensible, if it was not for the half-defined feeling in our hearts that it may be so. It is quite probable that a very earnest desire might give strength sufficient to break through the laws of Nature." To such language we find a double objection. On the one hand, we are unable to base objective conclusions on any "half-defined feeling in our own hearts" that the universe must needs be such as we would fain have it. But, on the other hand, if we find ourselves face to face with the sorts of events to which Humboldt refers, we can accept no arbitrary "scientific frontier" between them and the nature that we all know; whose so-called "laws" are simply our verbal expression of the orderly grouping and sequence of phenomena that have come under frequent observation. We entertain no doubt that orderly laws lie at the basis of *all* observed facts, however remote those laws may be from our present ken. The presumption as to our intellectual habits and attitudes, which the term "supernaturalism" is meant to imply, is therefore wholly without foundation. The phenomena examined by us stand on the

same ground as any other phenomena which are widely attested, but are not matters of common experience; and inquiry into such phenomena must not be obstructed by any question-begging term. Either they are facts, or they are not. If they are not facts, that must be proved in accordance with the laws of evidence, not by assertions of any prescriptive monopoly in the natural. If they are facts, all the mystery that lies behind them lies behind every other fact in the universe. Strip off this wrongly-fathered theory of the "supernatural," and to the marvel and mystery that remain we can apply no stronger expressions than have been constantly applied to the commonest phenomena in Nature by those who have known Nature best.

#### INHERENT DIFFICULTIES.

We do not, however, expect or desire altogether to dispel the instinctive feeling that the objects of our research present an aspect of the marvellous which seems in some sort *sui generis*; let us consider what natural basis this instinct possesses. We believe that the special feeling of incredulous surprise which much of our evidence excites is due to a combination of three characteristics. In the first place, the phenomena have very little obvious connection with those of sciences already established. In the second place, they are often of an emotional and startling character, so as to suggest a peculiar possibility of mistake; or if, on the other hand, their subject-matter is trivial, then their intrusion into the common routine of life produces a sense of the ridiculous which is equally hostile to just consideration. In the third place, although not exactly rare, they are diverse, sporadic, and seemingly so arbitrary in their occurrence that past observation suggests no clue to the time, place, or manner of their probable repetition. No other phenomena in Nature have united these three characteristics in so high a degree. The attraction exercised by amber on straw was an isolated, but not a startling, fact. The thunderclap was both an isolated and a startling phenomenon; but it was perceived often, and by numbers at once; and therefore, though it could give rise to superstition, it could not be met by incredulity. Nor could eruptions of Etna be questioned, though they might be attributed to the turnings of Typhoeus in his bed. Again, many optical effects, as the mirage in the desert, have seemed, when first observed, at once disconnected from science as then known, and arbitrary in their times of occurrence. The reality of such phenomena may have been questioned; but they have not been sufficiently intermixed with familiar things to arouse party feeling, or sufficiently exciting to suggest error of testimony through sensory illusion connected with a highly emotional state. Such instances may perhaps suggest how rare

in other directions is the union of all those provocations to incredulity which our evidence has to overmaster. It would be easy, however, to imagine that such a union might have appeared in the case of some phenomenon in natural history; and that phenomenon would then have been as strenuously disbelieved in as any ghost. Had Nature given us an electric whale instead of an electric eel, and had a whole boat's-crew of mediæval harpooners been now and again struck dead by the shock, what would have been thought of the story that their companions told of the encounter?

These inherent embarrassments of our inquiry are of course specially emphasised by its appearance in the world as a scientific study, in a generation whose ideal of such study is formed from the most developed branches of science. It is inevitable that, as the area of the known increases by perpetual additions to its recognised departments and by perpetual multiplication of their connections, a disinclination should arise to break loose from association, and to admit a quite new department on its own independent evidence. But the position of this department is yet further complicated by the fact that it happens to combine in itself difficulties of conception and treatment peculiar to the early stages of two great separate branches—physics and natural history. In the first place, like physics, it is presumably concerned with some specialised form of energy; but this form of energy is at present too indistinctly realised, and too little under our control, to admit of being correlated with the acknowledged forms, quantitatively estimated, or even instructively defined. Such speculations as can now be framed with regard to these obscure phenomena, can hardly be said to differ from the earliest physical conceptions of Thales and Heraclitus, except in the higher standard of scientific proof which we can now propose to ourselves as our ultimate goal. And the very existence of that standard constitutes a difficulty; the twilight which has, in every department of the endless domain of physics, preceded the illuminating dawn of law, is here made doubly dark and dubious by the advanced daylight of scientific conceptions from which we peer into it. In the second place, like natural history in its early stage, our inquiry is concerned with a variety of sensible phenomena as such—with forms or sounds simply as they strike the senses of those who come across them; and the isolation of the phenomena, and the absence of any genuine classification even of the most provisional kind, have a most distinct influence on their *prima facie* credibility, as compared with new phenomena of the older sciences, which have the advantage of falling at once under familiar classes. When the poisonous lizard is discovered he is a surprise to every one. Nevertheless he is both an animal and a lizard; and even in ages before his order or his *genus* was known, he would at least have found the category

of quadruped open to receive him. But in our inquiry, the phenomena do not, as a rule, find in men's minds a niche similarly ready for their acceptance. In their scattered independence they have to fight their way, each on its own merits, into minds which not only are indisposed to welcome them, but are even unable, without a distinct and disagreeable effort, to assign them any *habitat* at all.

#### THE OBJECTION AS TO UTILITY.

We think it well, and we think it enough, that the foregoing difficulties in the way of belief should be stated and realised; being convinced that, if the evidence as it stands be also realised, the difficulties will be rather incentives than obstacles to progress. But there is another sort of objection, not properly affecting grounds of belief, which requires different treatment; and which we shall here only notice so far as to make it explicit, and to shew in whose mouths, at any rate, it will not lie. It is a common idea that the recognised paths of labour, along which steady progress is being made and may still be made to an unpredictable extent, are so various and abundant, that it is trifling to desert them for a dubious track, where progress, even could it be supposed possible, would present no apparent relation to other progress, and would in no way react on the general advancement. But this vague language, answering to what is commonly but a vague prejudice, turns out to be susceptible of two very different meanings. Is the progress meant that of human happiness, or that of human knowledge? Are we listening to the gospel of Positivism, or of Science? The Positivist, from his own point of view, is justified in considering the practical amelioration of human conditions as so vast an aim, and the sciences which have an influence in that direction as so well recognised, that it is culpable to aim at extending mere knowledge, as such, and without a definite prospect of bringing the new acquisitions into relation with human welfare. In this view, we say, there is, *prima facie*, a fair ground of objection; and we specially refrain for the present from vindicating our inquiries from the charge of irrelevance to human welfare. That vindication, when the time for it comes, we are confidently prepared to undertake; we are confident of being able to show that there is no line of scientific inquiry from which results of so much importance to the well-being of mankind are to be expected. But what we would here point out is that the Positivist's view is one which in other connections our scientific opponents are the first to disclaim; and we cannot therefore allow them to take advantage of its prestige and popularity in the objections which they urge against us, as pursuers of a new and dubious path. Knowledge as such, knowledge wherever it may lead

us, knowledge however little it may seem to do for us—this is the very essence of the scientific creed. Men of science never tire of pointing out in what unlikely ways knowledge which once seemed objectless and useless has been brought, perhaps after centuries, into vital connection with human affairs ; and a naturalist who refused to describe the peculiarities of objects observed by him during some voyage of discovery, on the ground that he did not see how men would be better off for the knowing of them, would be scouted as a renegade. In the present instance, it is assuredly not the scientific unimportance, but the vastness and obscurity of the vistas opened to scientific inquiry, which may naturally lead men to pause before committing themselves to a search so infinite, through realms so long obscure.—

Quale per incertam lunam sub luce malignâ  
Est iter in silvis, ubi cœlum condidit umbrâ  
Jupiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem.

“ What good does it do ? ” or “ What good would it do, if it were true ? ” this, always the unscientific question *par excellence*, is surely the merest paltering here.

#### A PRIORI OBJECTIONS.

The reason of this alien note, the reason that it is possible, at this time of day, to treat one department of facts in a manner so opposed to recognised principles, lies really in the unnoticed entrance of assumptions—in a gravitation to an *a priori* standpoint, natural to all of us when not buoyed up by a pressure of facts of the most obvious and palpable sort. Objectors to the reality of the events, unable from the nature of the case to produce evidence that they *did* not, and driven therefore to argue that they *could* not happen, are fain to find a fulcrum for that argument in some quite gratuitous hypothesis. We have found this spirit of assumption taking most Protean forms. For example, the gentleman who commented in the *Nineteenth Century* on our evidences of Thought-reading, argued that they struck at the root of the understanding on which all human intercourse is carried on. The argument is, of course, one large assumption, being nothing less than this: If it were the case that exceptional individuals could obtain an impression of some perfectly simple object, on which the visualising power of all present is powerfully concentrated (a condition probably never once realised in the world's history till people lately began purposely and deliberately to make Thought-reading experiments) it would have to be equally the case that anyone, anywhere, must be able, against his neighbour's will, to read his most casual or abstract thought. Because a marine animal, alleged to have been dredged up in some remote part of the Atlantic Ocean does not swarm in all seas, it could not have been dredged up at all ! As to the sort of phenomena

considered in the present paper, the favourite hypothesis is that they only appear to people of nervous temperament, or emotionally predisposed to believe in them—an idea which the slightest study of the evidence would at once dispel. This same idea of predisposition suggested lately to a writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* a remarkable psychophysiological argument, in which the leading part was played by a still more singular assumption. From the fact that proneness to certain emotions, of which fright or awe might be a specimen, may safely be connected with points of nervous organisation which descend from father to son, it was tacitly inferred that the unemotional judgments, expressed in logical propositions, of men sitting down “in a cool hour” to weigh evidence, are largely determined by peculiarities of nervous tracks transmitted to them from their ancestors; which is something like assuming that, being all the near descendants of men whose brain-motions were associated with a belief in caloric or in luminiferous corpuscles, we are born with a predisposition to deny the mechanical equivalent of heat or the undulatory theory of light. But strangest of all are the assumptions which pervade the ordinary objections to the phenomena as senseless, profitless, and irrelevant to the general scheme of a dignified universe. Certain alleged facts, it seems, are not worth inquiring into, because their character does not correspond to what, on some hypothesis usually involving the “supernatural,” might have been expected. That this should be a frequent line of thought with men professing enlightened ideas, curiously reminds us how thin at present our varnish of science is, how few generations separate us from the Middle Ages, and how temptingly near us still is the *a priori* standpoint. Few of us can get for a moment off familiar ground without unconsciously betraying our descent from the men who muzzled Roger Bacon and sent Bruno to the stake.

But, after all, it is not so much controversy or exposition that is the business of the hour, but the collection, the record, and the assimilation of actual facts. And the invitation to aid in this business should not, we think, be an unwelcome one. We certainly hope to see our inquiry in a more *advanced* state as time goes on; but it can never well be in a more *interesting* state than at the present moment. There is the *maximum* of stimulus which the sense of a rising cause, of an on-flowing tide, can give; there are the alluring gleams of a dawning order; there is the excitement of a time when individual efforts, however humble, may contribute in a sensible measure towards the establishment of important truth. The qualities which the research needs, for the present at any rate, are not those of a specially-endowed minority; they are not so much originality and profundity as candour, patience, and care.

## V.

## "CLAIRVOYANCE."

A Paper on "CLAIRVOYANCE," by George Wyld, M.D., was also read at this meeting, of which the following is an abstract:—

The author defined clairvoyance as the power which is possessed by some sensitives of seeing or knowing objects, conditions, and thoughts beyond the reach of the ordinary channels of sensation; accordingly, in his view, thought-reading was a branch of clairvoyance. The following case, personally known to the author, was quoted as illustrating what seemed to be an instance of thought-impression.

A young lady, who had some power of thought-reading, having been lately called upon at a public institution to pass an examination in harmony, had a lesson set her on the black board, her own teacher, who was not the examiner, being present. The solution of the problem was much beyond the young lady's ability, but her teacher, anxiously desiring that his pupil should succeed, and having no knowledge of her thought-reading powers, harmonised the passage in a complicated form in his own mind, when, much to his surprise, immediately the young lady took up the chalk and *note for note* wrote down on the black board the harmony as it existed in his own mind. The mother, the teacher, and the pupil all asserted that the exercise accomplished was much beyond the normal capabilities of the young lady, and that no information could have reached her through the ordinary senses.

Two cases are adduced by the author to show that sometimes facts not uppermost in his mind have been revealed by the clairvoyant.

More conclusive is the rarer phenomenon of seeing distant or hidden objects. A crucial instance of this the author states he has seen in the mesmeric trance induced by a Mr. Redman, of 5, Avenue Place, Brixton Hill, S.W. This mesmerist recently brought a sensitive, Frederick Smith, a youth of seventeen, to the author's house. He was blindfolded by means of soft paper folded double, and then gummed over his eyelids. This, the author found, produced so complete a blindness that he could not distinguish the brightly-lighted gas globes; a silk handkerchief was also tied over this paper. Under these circumstances, Smith took a pack of playing cards provided by the author, and concealing their faces from all present—he being at one side of the table and the author at the other—threw down on the table a card asked for. After this, he read correctly on two occasions the first line on the pages indicated of a book given him by the author, who him-

self was ignorant of the words ; and on another occasion he read a verse of poetry correctly, the author at random pointing out the verse to be read, and being ignorant of the words.

The author quotes other illustrations of clairvoyance, which, however, have not come under his own observation ; and, in conclusion, refers to the curious state, as if the mind were detached from the body, which is sometimes induced by anæsthetics, and urges that a more careful record of the statements made by patients, on recovery from anæsthesia, should be kept by medical men.

In conclusion, the author states that his observations on the mesmeric trance and clairvoyance have now extended over many years, and have convinced him that they afford evidence that " the intelligent power, called soul, can operate not only independently of the senses but beyond the reach of the senses, and can show itself as an independent "*auto-noetic*" power triumphing over pain and disease, penetrating matter, and acting as if its connection with matter were but a passing accident."