

TWENTY YEARS OF
PSYCHICAL RESEARCH
1882-1901

WITH FACSIMILE ILLUSTRATIONS OF
THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE DRAWINGS

BY

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Assistant-Secretary to the Society for Psychical Research, 1882-1902

"By improving the Present, by laying the Foundations
in the Now, you clear the way for rearing the
Temple of Beauty and of Use in the Yet-to-Be."

—J. J. MORSE (TRANCE ADDRESS.)



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NOTE.

The writer has again to express his thanks to the Council of the Society for Psychological Research for kindly permitting quotations from the *Proceedings* and *Journal* of the Society, and also for allowing the reproduction of some more of the Thought-Transference Drawings.

INTRODUCTORY.

This volume is in no sense a repetition of the book by the same author published last year. It deals, as that did, with the work of the Society for Psychical Research, but in a different manner, and with entirely fresh illustrations in regard to the evidence presented.

Chapter I. consists of a historical synopsis of the main features of the first twenty years' work of the Society, arranged in four periods of five years each.

Chapter II. summarises the work accomplished, its character and amount. To facilitate this, and, as the writer thinks, to make the total results more clearly seen and appreciated, the Phenomena investigated may conveniently be arranged in three groups:—

I.—Phenomena, the reality of which has been so far established that they have been brought within the circle of recognised scientific enquiry:—Thought-Transference or Telepathy,—Hypnotism.

II.—Phenomena, as to which it can only be said, that certain facts have been established:—Hauntings,—Apparitions,—The Divining Rod,—Automatic Action,—The Trance Condition.

III.—Phenomena, as to which even the main alleged facts are still matters of controversy:—The Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism,—The Existence of Intelligences other than "The Living," and the Reality of Inter-communication.

Chapters III., IV. and V. are devoted to a selection of typical evidence; one chapter being devoted to each of the above three groups.

Chapter VI. states the conclusions which some of the leading workers have come to, and which appears to be the legitimate outcome of the work of the Society.

The volume concludes with a Descriptive Index of Reference to Main Issues, followed by a selected List of Books.

This Index is arranged to correspond with the grouping of the Phenomena which has been adopted in the preceding chapters. In addition some other headings are given, under which the principal articles on that particular subject are enumerated. The object is to facilitate the work of the enquirer who wants to acquaint himself with the more important matter contained in the *Proceedings* and *Journal* of the Society on any special subject.

With this in view a reference is given to the Part of the *Proceedings* and to the Number of the *Journal* as well as to the Volume, in which the various articles will be found. In the List of Books at the end the price of each Part, as well as of the Volumes of the *Proceedings* is given. The reader who wants, for instance, to consult Mr. Myers' series of articles on Automatic Writing, or who wishes to refer to the Reports on the Divining Rod, or to know about Mrs. Piper, or who wishes to purchase the necessary Parts, will easily find all needful information.

It is hoped that these last pages will be of use to the reader who wishes to study any special branch of the great subject.

Twenty Years of Psychical Research.

CHAPTER I.

TWENTY YEARS.—1882-1901.

THE Council of the Society commenced its enquiry by the appointment of six Research Committees, to devote themselves to the six branches of enquiry set forth in the "Objects," under the titles of Thought-Reading, Mesmerism, Reichenbach's Experiments, Apparitions, Haunted Houses, Physical Phenomena, in addition to which a Literary Committee was appointed.

I.—1882-1886.

The Committees lost no time in setting to work. The first fruits of their labours were seen at the first General Meeting held on July 17th, 1882. The proceedings were opened by an address from the President, Professor Henry Sidgwick. This address was quoted from at considerable length in the first chapter of the writer's earlier work mentioned above. It will be sufficient now, again to quote a few lines of permanent value, quite as important now as then:—

The highest degree of demonstrative force that we can obtain out of any single record of investigation is, of course, limited by the trustworthiness of the investigator. . . . We must drive the objector into the position of being forced either to admit the phenomena as inexplicable, at least by him, or to accuse the investigators either of lying or cheating, or of a blindness or forgetfulness incompatible with any intellectual conditions except that of absolute idiocy.*

"The First Report on Thought-Reading," by Prof. Barrett, Edmund Gurney, and F. W. H. Myers, was then presented, together with two Notes on the subject by Prof. Balfour Stewart, F.R.S., and the Rev. A. M. Creery. These were published in the following

* Proceedings, S.P.R., vol. 1, p. 12.

October, together with an appendix by Professor Barrett, in Part I. of the *Proceedings*. Thus commenced the public work of the Society.

No useful purpose can be served by references to the subjects brought before each successive General Meeting. Before the end of 1886 twenty-two such meetings had been held. During 1882-3-4 the Committee on Thought-Transference presented four Reports, the Committee on Mesmerism three, the Reichenbach Committee one, the Committee on Haunted Houses two, and the Literary Committee four. Experience showed that the issuing of collective reports by standing Committees was attended with some disadvantages. After 1884 the matter brought before the Society was mostly in the form of Papers by individual members, for which their authors alone were responsible. A large mass of experimental work on Thought-Transference was thus presented. During the years 1884-5-6, Mr. Gurney contributed two important papers on Hypnotism; Mr. Gurney and Mr. Myers contributed a joint Paper on "Some Higher Aspects of Mesmerism," Mr. Edward R. Pease wrote an article on the Divining Rod; Mr. Myers presented the first and second of a series of Papers on Automatic Writing; and also a paper on "Human Personality in the Light of Hypnotic Suggestion," in which he may be said to have laid the foundations of his great work, "Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death," never to be completed by its author, and not published until eighteen years later; Mrs. Sidgwick presented a Paper on "Phantasms of the Dead"; and Mr. Gurney two Papers on Hallucinations. In 1886, three Papers were read on the Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism, by Prof. Barrett, Mrs. Sidgwick, and Mr. C. C. Massey.

At the commencement of 1884, the question of the issue of a *Monthly Journal*, in addition to the *Proceedings*, engaged the attention of the Council. In February the first number appeared, under the Editorship of Professor Barrett, "for private circulation [among the Members and Associates of the Society." During the subsequent years the *Journal* has played an important and most interesting part in the work of the Society.

In May, 1884, a Special Committee was appointed to investigate "Phenomena connected with the Theosophical Society." In December of that year the Committee issued a preliminary and provisional Report. This Report was circulated among Members and Associates of the Society only, and not published. The conclusion come to was that an actual residence in India for some months of some trusted observer, was an almost necessary pre-requisite of any more definite

judgment. In accordance with this view, Richard Hodgson, B.A., then a scholar of St. John's College, Cambridge, spent three months in investigations in India, returning in April, 1885. The results of his enquiries were laid before the Society at the 14th and 15th General Meetings, in May and June, 1885, and were published in full, in Vol. III. of the *Proceedings*.

It was also in 1884 that Professor Barrett was the means of establishing a Society for Psychical Research in America, during a visit for the purpose of attending the British Association, which met that year at Montreal. The Society then founded, made Boston its headquarters, and was subsequently reconstituted as a branch of the English Society.

During the latter part of this period,—namely 1884-6,—many members of the Society had sittings with Mr. Eglinton, who claimed to be a medium for “psychography,” that is to say for “direct writing.” No Papers were read at the General Meetings on the subject; but in the *Journal* for June, 1885 (Vol. II.) an elaborate and carefully-prepared article appeared, extending to over 50 pages, by Mrs. Sidgwick, consisting of a collection of the evidence which had been received from members of the Society, with remarks and criticisms by the author. This was followed during the remainder of the year, by a voluminous correspondence, pro and con., and by a long Paper by Dr. Richard Hodgson, discussing in detail the evidential value of the reports printed in the June number of the *Journal*.

This period of the work of the Society was fitly brought to a close by the publication, at the end of 1886, of “Phantasms of the Living,” in two large 8vo. volumes. The book was not brought out ostensibly by the Society, but under the joint authorship of Edmund Gurney, F. W. H. Myers, and Frank Podmore.

The number of Members of the Society of all classes, at the close of 1886, was 661.

II.—1887-1891.

The public work of the Society for the year 1887, opened with the 23rd General Meeting on January 28th, when Mr. F. W. H. Myers read the third of a series of papers on Automatic Writing. The fourth and last of the series was read in June of the same year, but was not published until 1889, when it appeared under the title of “The Dæmon of Socrates.” Mr. Edward Gurney contributed three articles on Hypnotism: “Stages of Hypnotic Memory,” “Recent Experiments in Hypnotism,” and “Hypnotism and Telepathy.” He was engaged

on a Paper on "Apparitions occurring soon after Death," when his own sudden and lamented death took place, in June, 1888. The first part of this Paper had been read by Mr. Gurney at a meeting in January, 1888. It was completed by Mr. Myers, and read to the Society in March, 1889. Mr. Myers also contributed Papers on "Multiplex Personality," on "The Work of Edmund Gurney in Experimental Psychology," and an article on "French Experiments on Strata of Personality." This article treats of the curious experiences of Professor Janet with Madame B—— in her three Personalities—Léone, Léontine, and Léonore. Later, Mr. Myers contributed two Papers of great interest and of a more popular character, under the titles of "Recognised Apparitions occurring more than a year after Death," and "A Defence of Phantasms of the Dead"; the latter being written in special reference to an article by Mr. F. Podmore entitled "Phantasms of the Dead from another Point of View." Mr. Myers also wrote a Paper on "Alleged Movements of Objects without Contact." Mrs. Sidgwick contributed Papers "On the Evidence for Premonitions," "On the Evidence for Clairvoyance," and on "Spirit Photographs." During this period the question of Crystal Vision was introduced to the notice of the Society by Miss A. Goodrich-Freer. Writing anonymously as "Miss X," she contributed an exhaustive Paper, partly historical, partly experimental, and which is by far the best modern presentation of this curious subject. This was followed by a second Paper by the same writer, "A Record of Telepathic and other Experiences."

Professor Sidgwick gave two addresses on the "Census of Hallucinations." A Committee consisting of six members of the Society had been appointed to take up the question of Hallucinations in general. For several years this Committee devoted an immense amount of labour to the work of endeavouring to ascertain the proportion of "veridical," that is to say, of "truth-telling" Hallucinations experienced in the average community. Two *ad interim* reports were presented in 1890 and 1891.

About this time the Phenomena connected with D. D. Home were brought under the notice of the Society, first by Sir Wm. Crookes, who read some "Notes of Seances with D. D. Home," at a General Meeting, secondly by a Report on D. D. Home, by Professor W. F. Barrett and Mr. F. W. H. Myers, and also by a review of the "Gift of D. D. Home," by Mr. Myers. The last two of these appeared in the *Journal* only.

The latter part of this period was also memorable for the first

introduction of Mrs. Piper to the Society. At the 39th General Meeting, on May 9th, 1890, the President, Professor Sidgwick, in the chair, portions of Papers on "Observations of certain Phenomena of Trance," were read by Mr. Myers, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Dr. W. Leaf. These Papers, *in extenso*, with additional matter from Professor and Mrs. Sidgwick, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Professor William James, occupy 224 pp. of Part XVII. of the *Proceedings*, forming part of Vol. VI. This was followed in 1891, by the first Report on Mrs. Piper by Dr. R. Hodgson, and which was published in 1892.

In 1891, Mr. Myers commenced his series of addresses on "The Subliminal Self," afterwards expanded into the articles which appeared in the *Proceedings*, and subsequently embodied in his great work on "Human Personality."

In addition to the matter already enumerated, a large number of contributions of comparatively secondary importance were made during these five years:—Reports of Experiments in Thought-Transference, by Professor and Mrs. Sidgwick, with the assistance of Mr. G. A. Smith, by F. W. H. Myers, Dr. A. T. Myers, Sir Oliver Lodge, Lt.-Col. Le M. Taylor, Mr. H. Babington Smith, and also by several Continental Investigators; accounts of some Spiritualistic seances by Prof. F. Carvell Lewis and others; Experiments in Clairvoyance by Dr. A. Backman, of Kalmar, and Notes of a visit to Kalmar, by F. W. H. Myers; a case of Double Consciousness (Ansel Bourne), by Dr. Hodgson; and "Apparitions of the Virgin in Dordogne," by L. Marillier.

The subject of Psychography in connection with Eglinton, again came up in 1887. Mr. S. J. Davey wrote a long article on "Possibilities of Mal-observation," to which Dr. Hodgson wrote an introduction. This was published in full in *Proceedings*, Vol. IV. A considerable correspondence appeared in the *Journal* for the same year, 1887 (Vol. III). Mr. Davey's unexpected death took place in 1890. In March, 1891, a letter from Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace on Mr. Davey's experiments appeared in the *Journal*, and in reply to a challenge contained in it, Dr. Hodgson prepared a Paper which was read at a General Meeting in May, 1891, and published in the *Proceedings*.

The number of members of the Society, of all classes, at the close of this period was 759, and of the American branch 398.

III.—1892-1896.

The third period in our history opens at the 10th Anniversary Meeting of the establishment of the Society, and at its 50th General

Meeting. Professor Sidgwick occupied the chair at the three meetings held on January 29th, 1892:—The Annual Meeting of Members, the succeeding Meeting of the Council, at which he was re-elected President for the last time, and the General Meeting which followed. At this meeting the consideration of the Trance Phenomena of Mrs. Piper was resumed by the reading, by Dr. W. Leaf, of portions of a lengthy Paper by Dr. Hodgson. Part XXI. of the *Proceedings*, forming the commencement of Vol. VIII., is devoted to this Report. Mr. F. W. H. Myers also addressed the meeting on the subject of "The Mechanism of Genius." This address forms the nucleus of the first chapter of the series of articles on the Subliminal Self, subsequently embodied in the great work on "Human Personality."

This is perhaps the most fitting place to allude to the unique character of several addresses which Mr. Myers gave at the General Meetings of the Society. He would stand up and speak for three-quarters of an hour, or an hour, on some branch of these abstruse subjects, apparently without a note or a written memorandum before him, and without any hesitation all through, for a word, a metaphor, or a quotation; and though often difficult to grasp or follow the argument, he carried the sustained attention of his audience to the end. The concluding sentences generally consisted of a burst of religious eloquence and feeling, though at times, we fear, almost too classical for some of his hearers fully to appreciate. Many who had the privilege of listening to these addresses will, we are sure, never forget them, and will look back upon them as unique experiences in their lives.

At the next General Meeting, Mr. Myers read portions of a most interesting Paper on "Indications of a Continued Terrene Knowledge on the part of Phantasms of the Dead." At the following meeting he gave an address on "Hypermnesic Dreams," which was a further instalment of his series of articles on the Subliminal Self. At the same meeting Mr. Myers also read an Anonymous Paper, "Records of a Haunted House," which may be looked upon as the A1 Haunted House case brought to light by the Society's enquiries.*

At the 54th General Meeting Mr. Myers read a Paper in continuation of the Subliminal Self forming Chapter v. on "Sensory Automatism and Induced Hallucinations." Again, in March and April, 1893, at the 57th and 58th General Meetings he gave an address on "Motor Automatism," and read a Paper on "The Mechanism of

* For a full summary of this case see "The Society for Psychological Research," by the present writer, 1903.

Hysteria." These were developed into the sixth and seventh chapters of the series on the Subliminal Self. The concluding section of this series was not dealt with until April and May, 1895, at the 72nd and 73rd General Meetings, when Mr. Myers read portions of two Papers dealing with the relation of Subliminal Phenomena to Time: (1) to Time: Past—Retro-cognition, and (2) to Time: Future—Pre-cognition. These form Chapters viii. and ix. of the series, and are of remarkable interest and suggestiveness.

Mr. Myers contributed an article on "Mind-cure, Faith-cure, and the Miracles of Lourdes" (in conjunction with his brother, Dr. A. T. Myers); two articles on "The Experiences of W. Stainton Moses"; a Paper on "Resolute Incredulity"; another on "Recent Experiments in Normal Motor Automatism"; and a "Glossary of Terms used in Psychical Research."

During the latter part of this period Mr. Myers gave much attention to an important piece of practical work—the enquiry into the Phenomena appearing in the presence of Eusapia Paladino. At the General Meeting on October 26th, 1894, the first portion of the matter relating to this case was laid before the Society by Dr. Oliver J. Lodge. An interesting discussion followed.

A year later, the case of Eusapia Paladino again came before the Society, when Dr. Hodgson, Mr. Myers. and Professor Sidgwick (from the chair) gave some later experiences and impressions. They had come to the conclusion that some of these later phenomena were fraudulently produced. Dr. Oliver Lodge, who had not taken part in the later experiments, and who was not present at the Meeting, contributed a letter, in which he stated his continued conviction of the reality of the earlier phenomena. A considerable amount of correspondence appeared in the *Journal*, until further discussion was closed by Professor Sidgwick, as Editor, in April, 1896. No report of the case was published in the *Proceedings*.

Another noteworthy feature of this period was the completion of the Report of the "Census of Hallucinations." This Report, which summarizes the labour of years on the part of the Committee, is a monument of careful and continuous work.

At two General Meetings in 1896, Dr. J. Milne Bramwell read the substance of two important Papers:—(1) "Personally observed Hypnotic Phenomena"; (2) "What is Hypnotism?"

The titles of the following Papers indicate other subjects that engaged attention:—"Experiments in Thought-Transference," by Mrs. Sidgwick and Miss Alice Johnson; also, on the same subject by

Henry J. Rawson and Dr. A. Blair Thaw:—"The Defence of the Theosophists," by Dr. R. Hodgson; "Indian Magic and the Testimony of Conjurors," also by Dr. Hodgson; "On the Apparent Source of Subliminal Messages," by Miss Goodrich Freer, and a Paper by Sir Oliver Lodge, on "The Difficulty of Making Crucial Experiments as to the Source of the Extra or Unusual Intelligence manifested in Trance-speech, Automatic-writing, and other states of Apparent Mental Inactivity."

At the end of 1896 the total number of members of the Society was 906. The number of members of the American Branch was 420.

IV.—1897-1901.

At the Annual Meetings of the Society on January 29th, 1897, an Address was given by the President, Sir William Crookes, F.R.S. A Paper was also read by Miss Goodrich Freer on alleged Hauntings at Clandon House, near Guildford. During this year Mr. Myers delivered three of his remarkable addresses in three successive months, March, April and May; the first two being on "Hysteria" and "Genius," and the third on "Moral and Intellectual Limits of Suggestion." In the autumn Dr. Hodgson gave two Addresses on Later and Latest Investigations into the Trance Phenomena of Mrs. Piper. The first of these is embodied in the Report, which extends to 300 pages in Vol. XIII. of the *Proceedings*.

During 1898 much of the time of the General Meetings was devoted to a consideration of the case of Mrs. Piper. Papers were read by Professor W. Romaine Newbold, Frank Podmore, Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, and Andrew Lang. Dr. Tuckey read a Paper on "The Influence of Suggestion on Health, with Special Reference to Christian Science." Miss Alice Johnson read the first part of an exhaustive investigation into "Co-incidences," which was completed the following year.

In 1899 Professor Chas. Richet contributed a Paper on "Conditions of Certainty." A Paper was read by Miss Mary Kingsley on "Forms of Apparitions in West Africa"; by F. C. S. Schiller on "Psychology and Psychical Research"; by Dr. Morton Prince on "Experimental Study of Visions"; and by Andrew Lang on "Fire-Walking." In the later part of the year Professor Barrett read a further Report on the Divining Rod.

The year from the Annual Meeting in 1900 to that in 1901 was the most eventful in the Society's annals. In January, 1901, Mr. F. W. H. Myers was elected President during his absence on the Continent. He was spending the winter abroad, under medical advice. He was unable

to deliver his Presidential Address until the General meeting on May 18th. Shortly after this it became known that Professor Sidgwick was very seriously ill. His life closed within a few weeks. Mr. Myers was able to take active part in the work of the Society during the summer and autumn. At a General Meeting on November 16th he gave an Address in Memory of Professor Sidgwick—his last public act in connection with the Society. In December he again went abroad, and on the 17th of January, 1901, before his year of office as President had expired, his life terminated at Rome.

Owing to this event, and to the passing away of the late Queen Victoria almost immediately afterwards, the Annual Meetings which had been arranged for January 25th were not held. At the 111th General Meeting held on March 8th, 1901, Addresses in memory of Mr. Myers by Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor William James, Professor Chas. Richet, F. Podmore, and Dr. Walter Leaf were read.

At General Meetings in April, May, and June of that year, Papers were read—by Dr. Van Eeden (of Bussum, Holland) on some sittings with Mrs. Thompson; by Dr. Abraham Wallace, entitled "Difficulties and Disappointments in the Practical Application of Psychical Research—The Case of the Missing Stockbroker, Mr. Percy L. Foxwell"; by Dr. R. Hodgson, on "A Case of Secondary Personality"—known as the "Watska Wonder"—Mary Lurancy Vennum; and at a Meeting held in November a Paper was read by Mr. J. G. Piddington, "A Record of Two Sittings with Mrs. Thompson."

At the end of 1901 the total number of names on the list of the English Society was 951, and the list of the American Branch 481.

The question of a successor to the Presidency of the Society claimed long and serious consideration. The position was ultimately accepted by Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S., who, on the 31st of January, 1902, gave a Presidential Address—just twenty years from the time when the Society was established.

The Address from the Council to the Members and Associates of the Society, which was adopted at the Meeting of the Council in April, 1901, and which is printed in the *Journal* for June, 1901, together with the Presidential Address on January 31st, 1902, may be looked upon as closing the first epoch of the history of the Society for Psychical Research, and as inaugurating the second.

Of the enthusiastic band of Researchers who were the leaders in the organization of the Society in 1882, there remains only one who continuously took an active part in its work during the twenty years—Professor W. F. Barrett, F.R.S. Among those who are now

carrying on the work, there is no one else who joined in it at the commencement. There is therefore a special fitness in the recent election of Professor Barrett, as President, on the retirement of Sir Oliver Lodge.

It may also be worthy of record, as an instance of work uninterrupted during so long a time, by illness or any adverse circumstances, that the present writer acted as Secretary to the Council at every regular meeting from the first, in February, 1882, to the last previous to his retirement in March, 1902; and that he made the arrangements for, and was present at, every General Meeting of the Society, from the first, held in July, 1882, to the 116th, held at the Westminster Town Hall, on the 31st of January, 1902.

CHAPTER II.

THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED:—ITS CHARACTER AND AMOUNT.

THUS far we have drawn a historical sketch of the more important features of the first twenty years work of the Society. What was the character and amount of the work accomplished? The position from which the Society started is thus described in its first official oft-quoted document:—"There appear to be an important body of remarkable phenomena, which are *prima facie* inexplicable on any generally recognised hypothesis,* and which, if incontestably established, would be of the highest possible value." Have any new facts been incontestably established? The phenomena which have engaged the attention of the Society are arranged in the three Groups indicated in the Introductory paragraphs.

As has already been stated, the Society started with no collective belief. It has never assumed, and it is never likely to assume, any collective belief. The Papers and Addresses which have been presented at the General Meetings, and the reports which have been published, represent only the views of their respective authors. Among the Members of the Society there has always existed the widest possible range of opinion on almost every subject which has engaged its attention. At the same time there has been what may be called a public opinion within the Society, and the trend or change of that public opinion has been steadily in one direction. A continuous stream of alleged phenomena has been and is being brought into the class of unquestioned phenomena. The attempts to classify and explain such phenomena are gradually succeeding in linking them on to, and bringing them into harmony with recognised science. A new illustration seems to be afforded of the truth of the line :

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole."

This was both the expectation and the devout hope of those who

* Proceedings, S.P.R., vol. i., p. 3.

founded the Society. We will now briefly consider the Problems which the Society commenced to face in 1882, under these three Groups.

GROUP I.

THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE, OR TELEPATHY.—The question, put in the simplest form, is—Do the five senses comprise all the modes by which knowledge is conveyed from one mind to another? The study of this question as recorded in the *Proceedings*, in the *Journal*, and in “Phantasms of the Living,” brings before us an enormous amount of experimental work of very varied character, and a large collection of statements of occurrences bearing on the subject. An attempt to sum up this work, approximately, gives the following figures:—Thought-Transference Drawings:—Fac-similes of over 600 illustrate the Society’s printed pages. The number of recorded experiments with cards, numbers, and in other similar ways, amounts to about 12,000. There are also over 700 “cases” examined in “Phantasms of the Living,” a large proportion of which afford evidence of Thought-Transference. The number of experimentors, with drawings, and in miscellaneous ways, exceeds forty. These approximate figures may safely be considered as below the mark. It may therefore be said, that the conclusion come to as to the reality of Telepathy, is based upon the enquiries of forty different investigators carried on in regard to thirteen or fourteen thousand experiments and cases. This disposes of any allegation that attempts have been made to raise a structure on an insufficient foundation.

HYPNOTISM.—From the point of view of a mere observer of the progress of human thought, the history of Hypnotism in England during the twenty years from 1882-1901 is very remarkable. The following paragraph is partly quoted and partly summarised from Dr. J. Milne Bramwell’s recent work.*

To the Society for Psychical Research we owe the first attempt since Braid’s time to subject Hypnotism to vigorous and far-reaching scientific investigation. At an early date in the existence of the Society a Committee was appointed for the purpose of investigating Hypnotism, the subjects for experiments being almost invariably healthy men. The Reports of the Committee were published from time to time in the *Proceedings* of the Society, besides valuable articles by the late Edmund Gurney and Frederick Myers. The views of the former were markedly in advance of those held at that time, while Myers’

* “Hypnotism: Its History, Practice and Theory,” pp. 34-37.

attempt to explain the phenomena of Hypnotism by the intelligent and voluntary action of a secondary or subliminal consciousness, still remains the most important of recent contributions to the theoretical side of the subject. The commencement of the present revival of Hypnotism in England was apparently due to Dr. Lloyd Tuckey, who happened to be in the neighbourhood of Nancy in August, 1888, and visited Liébeault out of curiosity. He then went to Amsterdam and Paris to see the cliniques there, and on his return commenced to employ Hypnotism among his own patients. In 1891 the British Medical Association appointed eleven of its members to act as a Committee "to investigate the nature of the phenomena of Hypnotism, its value as a therapeutic agent, and the propriety of using it." The following year the Committee presented a unanimous report. The first sentence of this report runs thus:—"The Committee having completed such investigation of Hypnotism as time permitted, have to report that they have satisfied themselves of the genuineness of the hypnotic state." The report was referred back for further consideration. In 1893 it was again presented, with the addition of an important appendix consisting "of some documentary evidence on which the report was based." Even then, at the Annual Meeting of the Association, an amendment was moved and seconded, "that the report should lie on the table." A resolution was ultimately carried to "receive the report" only, and to thank the Committee for their services.

It is worthy of note that it was not until five years subsequent to the publication of the work of Edmund Gurney in the *Proceedings* of the Society, and in "Phantasms of the Living," that the British Medical Association appointed a Committee of Inquiry in regard to Hypnotism; and that it is not eleven years since they "received" a report of that Committee which solemnly proclaimed "the genuineness of the hypnotic state," and which contained the opinion of its members that "as a therapeutic agent Hypnotism is frequently effective in relieving pain, procuring sleep, and alleviating many functional ailments."* They then added their opinion that "when used for therapeutic purposes its employment should be confined to qualified medical men."

These two subjects, Telepathy and Hypnotism, have been rescued from the outside wilderness, and brought within the circle of scientific investigation as real and legitimate branches of enquiry. A result of this will be that the rising generation of literary and scientific students will grow up in the mental attitude towards Telepathy and Hypnotism that they are problems to be faced, not superstitions or myths to be ignored.

* "Hypnotism : Its History, Practice and Theory," pp. 36-37.

GROUP II.

This Group comprises several subjects in relation to which facts, hitherto unrecognised as such, have been undeniably proved to exist, but as to which the cause and the origin are in obscurity.

HAUNTINGS.—A few cases of “haunted houses,” some of them quite recent, afford evidence of phenomena of sight and sound incapable of normal explanation. As to determining the source of such phenomena, or the means by which they are produced, no progress seems to have been made.

APPARITIONS.—Here again the position is similar. The reality of Apparitions, both of the “living” and of the “dead,” apart from all possible explanation of illusion or delusion, or any kind of imposture or fraud, appears to be incontestably proved in hundreds, if not in thousands, of instances. Here again as to the nature or source of the phenomena we are quite in the dark.

THE DIVINING ROD.—Due mainly to the labours of Professor W. F. Barrett, F.R.S., continued through many years, no doubt can now exist in the mind of anyone who has given a reasonable amount of attention to the subject, that water is found by means of the rod in an abnormal manner. Much has been written, by Professor Barrett and others, in explanation of the means by which this is accomplished. Professor Barrett’s own views have undergone some modification during the enquiry. But no theory seems yet to have been advanced that will satisfactorily cover all the facts.

AUTOMATIC ACTION.—Automatic Action, resulting in speaking, writing and drawing, ordinary consciousness often being retained, must be regarded as an established fact. As to the source of the Phenomena, whether the latent intelligence of the individual is in all cases sufficient explanation, or whether the aid of other intelligences must be admitted, the widest differences of opinion exist.

THE TRANCE CONDITION.—The fact of the existence of a real and genuine condition of Trance (apart from Hypnotism) in which the subject manifests intelligence by means of speaking and writing, is also now absolutely demonstrated. Here again, what or who, causes the trance, are matters on which very diverse hypotheses are brought forward.

In regard to the five subjects forming this second group, the first great step towards a solution has been made. The reality of Phenomena has been established which are inexplicable on any accepted theory, and which at present are not linked with generally recognised Science and Philosophy.

GROUP III.

THE PHYSICAL PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.—In the original "Objects of the Society," the fifth among the subjects entrusted to special Committees, was an enquiry "into the various physical Phenomena, commonly termed Spiritualistic, with an attempt to discover their causes and general laws." In his first Address as President of the Society, Professor H. Sidgwick, said :—

The first question I have heard is, Why form a Society for Psychical Research at all at this time, including in its scope, not merely the phenomena of thought-reading, . . . but also those of clairvoyance and mesmerism, and the mass of obscure phenomena commonly known as Spiritualistic? Well, in answering this . . . I shall be able to say something on which I hope we shall agree ; meaning by "we," not merely we who are in this room, but we and the scientific world outside, and . . . it may be as well to bring this into prominence, namely that we are all agreed that the present state of things is a scandal to the enlightened age in which we live. That the dispute as to the reality of these marvellous phenomena,—of which it is quite impossible to exaggerate the scientific importance, if only a tenth part of what has been alleged by generally credible witnesses could be shown to be true,—I say it is a scandal that the dispute as to the reality of these phenomena should still be going on, that so many competent witnesses should have declared their belief in them, that so many others should be profoundly interested in having the question determined, and yet that the educated world, as a body, should still be simply in the attitude of incredulity.*

It is a remarkable thing, we are inclined to say, one of the most remarkable things in the history of the Society, that this branch of enquiry should have been—it is hardly an exaggeration to say—absolutely barren of result. It may also be said that the result has been barren in proportion to the simplicity of the alleged phenomena. As to the moving of tables and other objects without contact, the production of audible raps, and of visible lights, opinion, even within the Society itself, to say nothing of the outside intelligent world, is in the same state of chaos as it was twenty years ago. The question of the movement of tables without contact is exactly in the state in which it was left by the Dialectical Society in the year 1869. Even then, the fact of the movement of a heavy dining-room table, untouched by anyone present, and not in the presence of a professional medium, was attested by a number of well-known men. If it was "a scandal that the dispute as to the reality of these phenomena should still be going on," when

* Proceedings, S.P.R., vol. i., pp. 7, 8.

Professor Sidgwick gave his first Presidential Address, how much more, of a scandal is it that now, after the lapse of nearly another quarter of a century, "the educated world as a body should still be simply in the attitude of incredulity." In the whole series of volumes issued by the Society there is no light whatever thrown on these simple alleged phenomena of seeing and hearing. With regard to the higher physical phenomena which imply intelligence for their production, such as "direct writing," and "spirit photography," some investigation has been made, but to a large extent, though not entirely, with negative results. The most important enquiry was one into alleged phenomena occurring in the presence of Eusapia Paladino. Several leading members of the Society took part in more than one series of sittings with this medium, and came to very different conclusions. This in itself was a remarkable illustration of the difficulties involved in what appeared to be a problem of comparative simplicity.

INTELLIGENCES OTHER THAN "THE LIVING."—This problem is embodied in the title which Mr. Myers finally selected for his great work: "Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death." If a man die, shall he live again? This question can only be determined by means of communications from or intercourse with "the dead." Hauntings, apparitions, automatic action, and the trance condition, were included in the second Group of Phenomena, because the reality of a mass of facts in relation to all of them has been, beyond any reasonable doubt, demonstrated. We can scarcely claim to be in an equally strong position with regard to "Other Intelligences." The question to be asked is—Do the facts which have been established necessitate the belief in operating intelligences other than the persons present in the flesh? And if so—Who and what are these Intelligences? Individual members of the Society hold strong and different convictions as to these questions. The possible powers of the human mind, and its action on the body, have been shown to be so much greater and more varied than was recognised twenty years ago, that the necessity for the introduction of an independent intelligence has receded farther and farther into the background. There are, however, a number of established facts which appear to be outside all such explanations. Such facts are increasing in number and definiteness. It seems therefore likely to become more and more difficult for unbiassed minds to avoid the conclusion that other intelligences are at work in the production of some of the phenomena, and that in some cases these intelligences are the continued personality of "the dead." Patient, persevering, open-minded investigation is the requisite for further progress.

In the volume brought out by the present writer last year,* a few cases were quoted from those collected by the Society, which present strong evidence of the reality of the phenomena in the different branches of enquiry. The reader who is not familiar with the subject is referred to them as a basis. The further evidence now to be adduced will serve to support the conclusions then drawn. It will be convenient to arrange the evidence under the three Groups indicated above. To this the three following chapters are devoted.

* *The Society for Psychical Research: Its Rise and Progress, and a Sketch of its Work.*" (R. Brimley Johnson, London, 1903.)

CHAPTER III.

EVIDENCE OF THE PHENOMENA—GROUP I.

TELEPATHY.

FACSIMILES of three pairs of Thought-Transference drawings were given in the sketch of the work of the Society published last year. Similar results were obtained by several other groups of experimentors in different parts of the country. Four pairs are now selected from a series of experiments carried out at Liverpool, by Mr. Malcolm Guthrie, J.P., a well-known man, the head of a firm which gives employment to many hundreds of persons, and Mr. James Birchall, the hon. secretary of the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society. To keep to the phraseology before employed, Mr. Guthrie and Mr. Birchall were the "transmitters," and Miss Edwards and Miss Relph, two young ladies in the employ of Mr. Guthrie's firm, were the "receivers." Describing the whole series of drawings, Mr. Guthrie says :—

"These drawings must speak for themselves. The principal facts to be borne in mind regarding them, are, that they have been executed through the instrumentality as agents [transmitters], of persons of unquestioned probity, and that the responsibility for them is spread over a considerable group of such persons, while the conditions to be observed were so simple,—for they amounted really to nothing more than taking care that the original should not be seen by the 'subject' [receiver], that it is extremely difficult to suppose them to have been eluded."*

In the four selected examples, there was no contact between transmitter and receiver.

The series of drawings from which these four examples are taken forms part of an article contributed by Mr. Malcolm to the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R.† They were considered so good evidentially, that the series was reproduced in "Phantasms of the Living,"‡ and also by Mr. Myers in his work on "Human Personality."§

A very remarkable series of eight pairs of "Diagrams illustrative of Thought-Transference," by Mr. J. W. Smith, of Brunswick Place, Leeds, and his sister, will also be found in Vol. II. of the

* Phantasms of the Living, Vol. i., p. 37.

† Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. ii., pp. 24-42.

‡ Phantasms of the Living, Vol. i., pp. 36-48.

§ Human Personality, Vol. i., pp. 601-611.

*Proceedings.** Professor W. F. Barrett saw the “transmitter” and “receiver,” and was convinced of the genuineness of the results, and was struck by the care with which the experiments had been conducted. They were made throughout without contact. The object of referring to this series here is to introduce a small group of experiments of quite a different character, between the same parties. The results were filled up by Mr. J. W. Smith on one of the forms supplied by the S.P.R. as follows:—

EXPERIMENTS ON THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE.*		
Agent or Agents.		Percipient.
J. W. SMITH.		KATE SMITH.
Date.	Object selected.	First Trial.
March 11th.	Figure 8 ...	Correct first time.
”	Figure 5 ...	Correct first time.
”	Black cross on white ground	Correct first time.
”	Color blue ...	Correct first time.
”	Cipher (o) ...	Correct first time.
”	Pair of scissors...	I did not say what (<i>i.e.</i> what form of experiment—figure, colour, or object) was to be next, but carefully and without noise laid a pair of scissors on a white ground, and in about one minute and a half she exclaimed, “Scissors !”

Our next case consists of a series of 497 scrupulously guarded trials with playing-cards, numbers, and words, made by the Committee, that is, by Professor Barrett, Mr. Edmund Gurney, and Mr. F. W. H. Myers. Contact was excluded, and knowledge of the selected object—and therefore the possibility of collusion—was confined to themselves. In this series of experiments the Misses Creery were the “percipients.” In some later experiments, in which one of the Misses Creery also acted as “agent,” some signalling was detected. Of course, as soon as this was discovered, all those experiments were discarded as worthless. All previous experiments with the Misses Creery in which any one of them acted as “agent” were also, from that time ignored by the Society as valueless. The experiments to which we are now referring, stand, however, on an entirely different footing, seeing that the possibility of collusion rested solely with the Committee whose

* Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. ii., p. 216.

PLATE I.

ORIGINAL DRAWING

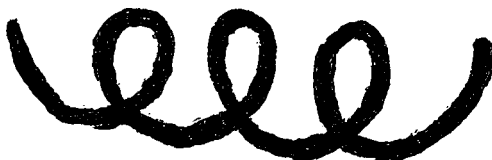


REPRODUCTION



Mr. Birchall and Miss Relph. No contact.

ORIGINAL DRAWING



Mr. Birchall and Miss Relph. No contact.

REPRODUCTION



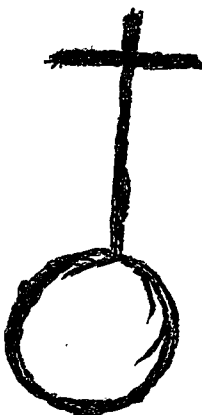
Miss Relph said she seemed to see a lot of rings, as if they were moving, and she could not get them steadily before her eyes.

PLATE II.

ORIGINAL DRAWING



REPRODUCTION



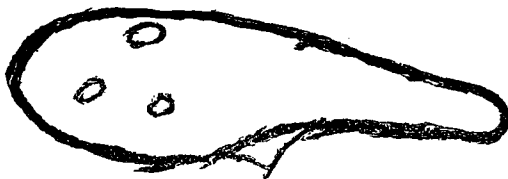
Mr. Guthrie and Miss Edwards. No contact.

ORIGINAL DRAWING



Mr. Guthrie and Miss Edwards. No contact.

REPRODUCTION



Miss Edwards almost directly said, "Are you thinking of the bottom of the sea, with shells and fishes?" and then, "Is it a snail or a fish?"—then drew as above.

names are given above. This evidence would, therefore, seem to be such as would satisfy Professor Sidgwick's "highest ambition" as expressed in his address on "Canons of Evidence"; although the writer has been informed that Professor Sidgwick himself did not consider it conformed to the standard he had laid down. Also, Mr. Myers decided to omit all reference to the Creery experiments in "Human Personality." Notwithstanding this, it seems scarcely scientific or fair to ignore such results as these, by reason of defects in other experiments, in which the possibilities of collusion were so entirely different. See "Phantasms of the Living," Vol. i., p. 25.

TABLE SHOWING THE SUCCESS OBTAINED WHEN THE SELECTED OBJECT WAS KNOWN TO ONE OR MORE OF THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE ONLY.						
Object Chosen.	No. of Trials.	Probability of success by mere chance at each first guess.	Most probable number of successes at the first guess if chance alone had acted.	Number of successes attained.		Probability of attain- ing by mere chance the amount of success which the first guesses gave.
				At the first guess.	At the second guess after the first had failed.	
Playing Cards*	14	$\frac{1}{52}$	0	9	0	.000,000,000,000,7
Numbers, &c.	15	$\frac{1}{10}$	0	4	0	.000,02
Playing Cards*	216	$\frac{1}{52}$	4	17	18	.000,000,1
Numbers ...	64	$\frac{1}{10}$	1	5	6	.007
Playing Cards*	30	$\frac{1}{52}$	1	3	0	.02
Numbers, &c.	108	$\frac{1}{10}$	9	32	11	.000,000,000,2
Words ...	50	$\frac{1}{26}$	13	25	10	.000,1
Totals	497	—	27†	95	45	.000,000,000, 000,000,000, 000,000,01‡

* A full pack was used, from which a card was in each case drawn at random.

† This number is obtained by multiplying each figure of the second column by the corresponding figure in the third column (*e.g.*, $216 \times \frac{1}{52}$) and adding the products.

‡ This entry is calculated from the first three totals in the last horizontal row, in the same way that each other entry in the last column is calculated from the first three totals in the corresponding horizontal row.

The results were submitted to one of the highest authorities on the "Calculus of Probabilities," Mr. F. Y. Edgeworth. The final column is his calculation. His remarks conclude with this paragraph:—

"These figures, more impressively than any words, proclaim the certainty that the recorded observations must have resulted either from *collusion* on the part of those concerned (the hypothesis of illusion being excluded by the simplicity of the experiments), or from *thought-transference* of the sort which the investigators vindicate."*

As illustrating evidence of an entirely different character in support of Thought-Transference, we will now quote at length a case at present almost unique in the annals of the Society. It was published in the *Proceedings*,† and Mr. Myers considered it of sufficient interest to include in "Human Personality."‡

The following appeared in the *Pacific Theosophist*, San Francisco, August 1893.

"The following experiments were conducted by a well-known physician of this city and his wife. Both were somewhat interested in the subject, and upon the latter leaving for a visit in the country it was arranged that at a certain time of each day ten minutes should be devoted to an attempt to communicate telepathically, each alternating as transmitter and receiver.

"The notes, carefully written down while separated nearly a hundred miles speak for themselves. They also make it apparent that the physician accomplished something more than mere telepathy. In receiving supposed messages he several times got accurate information of things which the wife had no idea she was imparting, and in one or two instances actually foresaw occurrences which could not possibly have been known to his transmitter. This shows how intimately our psychic senses blend one with the other, and how hard it is for an untrained person to distinguish just what psychic faculty is active. The phenomena recorded are common-place in their character; the interest lies in their truthfulness, and the scientific accuracy of their observation. The results are as follows:—

May 12th.—Transmitter, Mrs. S. Arrived safely. Pleasant trip. B. feels fairly well. We have a nice place in an old-fashioned house.

May 12th.—Received. Had a good trip. B. slept well. House squarely built and plain; porch surrounded by trees; not fronting the road; rooms very sunny. [All accurate. What follows was seen clairvoyantly, apparently.—Ed.] Landlady wears sun-bonnet with jacket of same. Little boy three years old. [Boy expected, but did not arrive till next day. The description accurate.] Fire in north-east. [Fire occurred next night.]

* Phantasms of the Living," Vol. i., p. 26.

† Proceedings, Vol. xi., pp. 455-7.

‡ Human Personality, Vol. i., pp. 629-632.

May 13th.—Transmitter, Dr. S. Theresa B. and her mother were here yesterday. Also Clara and Emma. Business somewhat dull. W.'s house burned yesterday.

May 14th.—Nothing sent.

May 15th.—Transmitter, Dr. S. E. and R. went to park. Mrs. A. is angry. S. paid his bill.

May 16th.—Transmitter, Mrs. S. Paid a visit to K's. B feels quite well.

May 17th.—Transmitter, Dr. S. Nothing sent ; business prevented.

May 18th.—Transmitter, Mrs. S. B. does not feel well at all. Went for medicine.

May 19th.—Transmitter, Dr. S. Case of D. will come off in the Courts 29th. Business still quiet. Played whist.

May 20th.—Transmitter, Mrs. S. My clothes and shoes are all torn. I have poison oak on my arms. Hope it will not be bad.

May 21st.—Appointment forgotten.

May 22nd.—Transmitter, Mrs. S. Visited springs. Very warm all day. I have a sick headache.

May 13th.—Received. I think Theresa B. was there or is coming. Something I can't make out about business. I think it is bad.

May 14th.—Forgot to keep the appointed time.

May 15th.—Received. Could get nothing definite ; think you collected some money.

May 16th.—Received. You took a long walk. I see a young man with a revolver in his hand. [A young man shot a dog in the garden that day.]

May 17th.—Received. Could get nothing at all. Think you were out.

May 18th.—Received. See a lot of wine casks and demijohns. Something about curtains. [Mrs. S. visited a large wine-cellar on the 17th. The curtains in her room annoyed her very much. But nothing about either was consciously sent.]

May 19th.—Received. Think you had rain. You seem dissatisfied. You are telling me something about D., I am sure. [It did rain, but the fact was not consciously sent.]

May 20th.—Received. You went out riding. I see you holding a shoe in your hand. You have poison oak on your right arm. B. is better. You want me to mail you the *Bulletin* and the *Chronicle*. [Mrs S. did ride out to some sulphur springs. Poison oak was on right arm only. B. gained three pounds. She was hoping for the *Bulletin* supplement only.]

May 21st.—Not at home ; did not sit to receive.

May 22nd.—Received. It must be warm ; I see you fanning yourself ; you were riding ; on a donkey, I think. She rode in a carriage, but saw a donkey on her trip which amused her very much.]

May 23rd.—Transmitter, Dr. S
Up all night. Very tired. No-
thing new.

May 24th.—Transmitter, Mrs. S.
Sent nothing.

May 25th.—Transmitter, Dr. S.
I have a bad sore throat. I am
going to Drs. F. and S. to give
ether. It is a windy day.

May 23rd.—Received. You are
looking very cross and tired.

May 24th.—Received. I see
a big churchlike building—brick.
[Mrs. S. went the evening previous
to a church entertainment. The
description correct. Not sent con-
sciously.]

May 25th.—Received. You have
unpleasant weather. You are trying
to tell me something about Dr. F.
and his partner, Dr. S., but I can't
make it out.

“Mrs. S. was somewhat doubtful about the success or even possibility of such experiments succeeding, and was fairly startled upon comparing inemoranda on her return home. B. is a sister of Mrs. S., for whose benefit the trip was taken. The doctor had never been in that part of the country, and so could not have seen the church and house he so accurately described. The experiments throw much light on psychic faculties other than mere telepathy.

J.S., M.D., Physician and Surgeon.”

The following letter was written by Dr. J. S., to Dr. R. Hodgson, a few unimportant sentences being omitted.

“SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 29th, 1893.

“DEAR SIR,—In reply to yours of November 15th, my statement is that my experiment with my wife in telepathy resulted precisely as you find it given in the *Pacific Theosophist*.

“I came to try the experiment this way : I read in the daily papers of a certain drummer who, when absent from his home, made it a practice to sit at 10 o'clock p m., for about half an hour, his wife the same, and mentally communicate the news of the day to each other, as exchanging letters was inconvenient, he being compelled to change his location every day.

“As my wife was to go away from San Francisco last summer with a sick sister of hers we decided to try the experiment, with the result given in the *Pacific Theosophist*. My wife has grown up in an atmosphere of scepticism, consequently she did not give the subject as much attention as I did, otherwise we might have had better results. Now, of course, her personal experience convinced her of something. . . . We agreed to sit twenty minutes at ten p.m. In sending news, I fixed my mind strongly on the messages, in receiving I made my mind as near blank as I could, excluding all thought. Everything I received came to me as a mental picture. Sometimes I would see things only partly, like half a face. When I saw her arm, with the poison oak, it came very clearly. I almost thought I could speak to her, but I never heard anything like noise. . . .

I don't wish my name to be published, but if anybody should enquire of you privately, I have no objection to your giving them my name and address.

"Wishing you success in your labours, I remain, yours,
DR. J. S."

"I corroborate the above statement in every detail.
MRS. E. S."

Mr. William Emmette Coleman, well known to Dr. Hodgson, and an Hon. Associate of the S.P.R., wrote to him as follows:—

"Chief Q.M. Office, San Francisco, California,
"December 21st, 1893.

"Upon enquiry I find that Dr. J. S. is a reputable physician of character and standing. All speak well of him, and he is considered a man of veracity. I can find nothing against him as man or as doctor.

W. E. COLEMAN."

This case has the advantage of being of considerably more recent date than those adduced in "Phantasms of the Living," or in the earlier volumes of the *Proceedings*. The Society would gratefully receive the aid of those who would attempt anything of a similar kind.

HYPNOTISM.

The long list of articles under this heading in the Descriptive Index, shows how large a space it occupied in the work of the Society, especially during the first six or seven years. We must confine our selection of Evidence to one series of experiments, respecting which Mr. Myers has said:—*

"He [Edmund Gurney] devised and carried through (1885-8) a complex series of experiments, surpassed by no other hypnotist in exactness, either of observation or record, with a definite view to the investigation of two great problems which lie on the borderland between physiology and psychology, and which are apt to seem not less but more perplexing the wider our induction extends. The first question may be phrased as follows: 'Is the hypnotic state ever induced by some yet unrecognized agency—some specific influence of operator on subject?' To this question Edmund Gurney and I were, so far as I can discover, for some years the only writers who maintained the affirmative answer, But it is not, of course, to the mere maintenance of a view then altogether scouted, but now generally gaining ground, that credit is due; but rather to the invention and execution of definite experiments testing the matter in a rigorous way.

*The Work of Edmund Gurney in Experimental Psychology. S.P.R. Proceedings, Vol. v. pp. 367-8.

I must claim, then . . . that Edmund Gurney's long series of experiments on the anæsthetization of single fingers of a healthy waking subject, without his seeing the finger selected or receiving any suggestion as to which finger it was to be—are not only the *best* experiments that have yet been made on this branch of the subject, but are about the *only* experiments where the conditions have for any long time been kept sufficiently rigorous to give the record of what occurred a permanent and objective value. . . . [The results] prove—so far as any one operator's experience in this protean subject can be held to prove anything—they prove that there *is* sometimes in the induction of hypnotic phenomena some agency at work which is neither ordinary nervous stimulation (monotonous or sudden), nor suggestion conveyed by any ordinary channel to the subject's mind."

In an article under the title of "Recent Experiments in Hypnotism,"* Mr. Gurney thus describes the way in which these experiments were conducted :—

"In outline the *modus operandi* has been as follows : The 'subject' is made to put his arm through a thick screen, extending high above his head, and to spread his ten fingers on a table in front of him. The fingers are thus completely concealed from his view, and the operator's hand is held, without contact, at a distance varying from a third to three quarters of an inch, over one or another of them, according to my selection—with the result that in a very large majority of cases, the finger so treated, and that finger alone, becomes rigid, and insensible to extremely severe treatment in the way of stabs, burns, and electric shocks. From my knowledge of the 'subjects,' and of the circumstances, I regard simulation as practically out of the question. But this not really important, for the hypothesis of simulation has no effect to the frequent cases where the rigidity was tested *before* the anæsthesia. The 'subject' is told to double his fist ; and no desire to deceive could have taught him which particular one of his ten digits was to remain recalcitrant."

Mr. Gurney goes on to say :—

"In the recent series there have been 160 experiments of the described type with five 'subjects.' In all these cases I held my hand in the same position as S's† ; over one of the remaining nine fingers. In 124 cases S. alone produced the effect intended. In sixteen cases S. and I both succeeded ; and in thirteen cases I succeeded and S. failed. In the remaining seven cases, no effect at all was produced."

After giving a variety of details regarding the results, Mr. Gurney

* Recent Experiments in Hypnotism, S.P.R. Proceedings, vol. v., p. 14.

† "S." is Mr. G. A. Smith, of Brighton, a member of the S.P.R., whose name is familiar to readers of the earlier volumes of the Proceedings.

describes the following experiment with one of the "subjects," which, as he says, "is of great interest":—

"Without telling him specially to observe any change in his fingers, one was made insensitive and rigid in the usual way. It was then 'undone' by reverse strokings over the back of the hand, and he appeared to be in complete ignorance as to which particular finger had been the subject of experiment, and could not say which one had been affected. But entranced immediately afterwards, and told to write which finger has been stiffened, and then woke and set to the planchette, he wrote the right one. The experiment was repeated several times with the same result. The planchette gave the information which the 'subject' could not consciously supply."

In Vol. viii. of the Proceedings, pages 536-596, will be found a record of Experiments in Thought-Transference, by Mrs. H. Sidgwick and Miss Alice Johnson, of great interest both from the telepathic and hypnotic point of view. A large number of experiments on the hypnotisation of single fingers were conducted under very stringent conditions, and with marked success. The successful results were enormously in excess of anything that could be ascribed to chance. At the conclusion of the article the authors say:—"We think that the long series of experiments here recorded, add materially to the already accumulated evidence for the fact of telepathy, or communication between mind and mind otherwise than through the ordinary channels of sense."

CHAPTER IV.

EVIDENCE OF THE PHENOMENA.—GROUP II.

HAUNTINGS.

THE "Record of a Haunted House," of which the substance was given a year ago, in the "Sketch of the Work of the Society,"* may be supplemented by the following case of "A Haunted Road." The case is reported at length in the *Journal*† of the S.P.R., and is also included by Mr. Myers in "Human Personality."‡ The following summary is compiled from the two reports:—

Miss M. W. Scott of Lessunden House, St. Boswell's, Roxburghshire, two of her sisters, and also Miss B. Irvine, a governess, at Greycrook, St. Boswell's, on different occasions, saw the figure of a tall man dressed in black, whom they took for a clergyman, on a country road near Miss Scott's home. The appearance of the figure was always practically the same. With respect to one occasion Miss Scott writes:—

"I have had a splendid inspection of his appearance this time. He wears what is likely to be black silk stockings and shoe-buckles, short knee breeches and long black coat. The hat I cannot describe. The man is certainly dressed as a clergyman of the last century, and we have an old picture in the house for which he might have sat."

The same lady writes thus describing the behaviour of the figure:—

"I have again seen the ghost, and under the following circumstances on Sunday last June 12th, at a few minutes before ten in the morning, having occasion to pass that way, I perceived far in front, a dark figure who at that distance was indistinguishable as to whether it were man or woman, but believing the person to be the latter, and one I was acquainted with and likely to meet at that hour, I determined to hurry on and overtake her. I had not gone far, however, when I soon discovered it to be none other than

* "The Society for Psychical Research, &c." pp. 44-46

† *Journal*, Vol. vi. pp. 146-150 and Vol. ix. pp. 298-306

‡ "Human Personality," Vol. ii. pp. 396-9

the apparition we had looked for and failed to see for so many months. I did not then feel at all afraid, and, hoping to get a nearer inspection, boldly followed, running in close pursuit ; but here the strangest part of it all is that, though he was apparently walking slowly, I never could get any closer than within a few yards, for in but a moment he seemed *to float or skim away*. Presently he suddenly came to a standstill, and I began to feel very much afraid, and stopped also. There he was !—the tall spectre dressed as I have described before. He turned round and gazed at me with a vacant expression, and the same ghastly pallid features. I can liken him to no one I have ever seen. While I stood, he still looked intently at me for a few seconds, then resumed his former position. Moving on a few steps he again stood and looked back for the second time, finally *fading from view* at his usual spot by the hedge to the right."

On another occasion when two of the sisters saw the figure, Miss Scott writes :—

" But here the strangest part of it all is, that we found that when the man became invisible to her, *he appeared to me between the part of the road where she and I were standing*. At the time we saw the apparition neither sister knew the other was so near."

Various other persons, besides these four ladies, are reported to have seen the figure ; but of this there is no first-hand evidence. On the other hand, on two occasions, men working on the road, close by where the figure was at the time seen, do not appear to have seen anything. The figure was seen at intervals for a period of over eight years, from May 1892 to August 1900. It was seen in at least four different months. It was seen in the morning, in broad daylight, in the afternoon, and once in the dusk of the evening. We do not think that anyone who will carefully study the two detailed reports in the *Journal*, and Mr. Myers' analysis of them, will consider simple illusion an adequate explanation. There is no evidence whatever as to the identity of the figure. As Mr. Myers says—"the whole force of the case rests on the repetition of the appearance, and its being seen independently by several different persons."

APPARITIONS.

The distinction between Apparitions and Hauntings is somewhat arbitrary. The latter term seems more properly applied to a series of phenomena which appear to be connected with a particular locality. Whereas, in regard to Apparitions, there seems no such connection. Space forbids the selection of more than one case. We will therefore choose a well-attested instance of a well-known living man, occupying

a public position of responsibility, a member of the S.P.R., being "seen" where he "was not."

Dr. W. Wynn Westcott, the well-known Coroner, makes the following statement:—

"On Thursday, April 12th, 1888, I made an arrangement to meet Mr. A. B. and the Rev. T. W. Lemon at the British Museum Reading Room at a quarter to eleven the next morning, Friday (13th). But I caught a cold on Thursday evening, and on Friday I was confined to bed with a feverish catarrh, and I lay there fretting at not being able to keep the appointment, and I fancied their presence at the Reading Room, and their annoyance at my absence.

"I heard subsequently from Mr. A. B. personally, that he and the Rev. T. W. Lemon had met at the Reading Room, and had not been able to find me, but that he had asked some officials, notably one named Ryan, for me, and some habitués among the readers, notably a Miss O'Connell and a Mrs. Salmon. Mr. A. B. also said that Ryan and Mrs. Salmon had both told him that they had seen me in the Reading Room, walking around as if seeking someone, just before he enquired of them.

"A few days after that I went to the Reading Room and saw Miss O'Connell and Mrs. Salmon, when the latter in a jocular way said:—'Is it *really* you to-day or not'! She was so much impressed by the peculiarity of my appearance on the 13th, that for a long time she made the same jocular inquiry when I met her. Miss O'Connell was told of the event at the time, and has repeatedly heard Mrs. Salmon and me refer to the incident. By recent enquiry I find that Ryan is dead, but Mrs. Salmon and Miss O'Connell are both still alive and in England.

"W. WYNN WESTCOTT, M.B., D.P.H.

"P.S.—I am asking the two ladies to read this and sign it, if they agree to the statement."

The two signatures are appended thus:—

"The above is quite correct in every detail.

"ELLEN SALMON.

"THERESA J. O'CONNELL."

Mrs. Salmon has also written as follows:—

"Mr. A. B. asked me if I had seen Dr. Westcott. I said, 'Yes, about five minutes ago; he is sitting where he usually sits.' Mr. A. B. went to the seat and came and told me Dr. Westcott was not there. I said, 'Oh, he must be; it's only a few minutes since I saw him sit down.' I went myself. He was not to be seen. I went to the man who takes the umbrellas and said, 'Have you seen Dr. Westcott?' 'Yes,' he said, 'he went into the room about five minutes ago.'

"This is exactly what took place.

"ELLEN SALMON.

"January 24th, 1898."

Miss O'Connell has also given her account of the incident as follows :—

"I perfectly remember on the occasion in question meeting Mr. A. B. at the entrance to the Reading Room. He asked me if I had seen Dr. Westcott, who came in, as T. W. Lemon was waiting to see him by appointment, and I replied that I had not seen Dr. Westcott. About ten minutes later Mr. A. B. came to me and said : ' It is very queer, I have been four times round the room, and can see no sign of Dr. Westcott ; yet Mrs. Salmon says she will take her Bible oath she saw him come into the room and go direct to my seat.'

"THERESA J. O'CONNELL.

January 24th, 1898."

THE DIVINING ROD.

It is extremely difficult to make a typical selection from the immense mass of testimony to successful results contained in the various Reports in the *Proceedings*. We will content ourselves with four cases from Professor Barrett's "Book II," which present instances of the work of four different professional "dowsers."

THE TIDDINGTON HOUSE (OXFORD) CASE* :—

The following is the substance of a letter which appeared in the *Farmer and Chamber of Agriculture Journal*, for October 18th, 1897.

"Tiddington House, Oxford,

"October, 1897.

"Being without water for my garden and stable, except what was fetched by water-cart some distance day by day, and caught from rainfall, I decided to employ a firm of artesian well borers, in 1883. A spot was decided on, and a boring put down to a depth of 312 feet, which cost me over £300, and no water whatever was obtained ; all I have for my money is the piece of parchment containing the sections of the boring and a few samples of the formation. . . . I engaged Mr. Tompkins to search my property for a water supply and instructed him carefully to search my stable yard. . . . He reported that no water existed there, and that it would be simply useless to attempt to obtain water here. I then informed him of what I had previously done, and the amount of money I had uselessly spent. Thus the water-finder proved correct in his first test. A move was then made into the gardens, and, after going over them, the water-finder reported a stratum of water was running across the corner of the garden, and was an overflow from a spring above. He traced up this stratum of water. The twig he was using was a white-thorn cut in the shape of a V, which he held by the two prongs apex downwards. As he walked over this stratum of water, the twig kept rising in

* *Proceedings*, S.P.R., vol. xv., pp. 176-8.

front of him until he came to the upper part of the paddock above, when it turned completely over and over, and so strong was the upward movement of the rod that it bent considerably in its frantic endeavour to turn over, and on being held firmly by the water-finder, it broke off in his hand. Naturally we were all surprised and astonished at such a remarkable occurrence.

“I instructed Mr. Tompkins to prepare me an estimate to sink a well four feet diameter in the clear, and to supply and erect a wind engine and storage tank. The well was put in hand, and at a depth of 30 feet water was struck. The well was steined up before sinking deeper, and a strong pump put down to keep the water under, and before sinking many feet it became necessary to put on seven men to keep the water going. From the inrush of water the bottom men were working up to their knees in water, and the moment the pump and buckets stopped they were in danger of being drowned out. The work proceeded under these circumstances for a week or so, until it became useless to continue the work owing to the abundance of water; 10,000 gallons per day being the yield of the spring at a depth of 37 ft., and this site is at a higher elevation than my stable yard. I cannot speak too highly of Mr. Tompkins' practical success, both, as regards his finding water, and the satisfactory way in which he has carried out the work.

“G. W. BENNETT.”

In a letter to Professor Barrett, under date of October 9th, 1899, Mr. Bennett confirms the above statements, and adds:—

“My well has never gone dry, neither this summer nor last. . . There are (not) and never have been any wells near where Mr. Tompkins found the water with the divining rod.”

THE CHELFORD (CHESHIRE) CASE * :—

The writer of the following paragraph is Mr. Charles William Nasmith, of Bella Vista, Heaton Moor. He is the head of a well-known firm of chartered accountants in Manchester. His letter appeared in full in the *Manchester City News* for October 23rd, 1897. After narrating how he also endeavoured to obtain a supply of water for a house in Cheshire by the aid of a firm of artesian well borers, considerable expense having been involved in carrying the boring to a depth of about 480 feet, when the attempt was abandoned as a failure, the writer proceeds:—

“I then, for the first time sought the advice of a firm of water-finders who use the divining rod, and having made an appointment with Messrs. John Mullins and Sons, Colerne, Box, Wiltshire, I met a member of their firm on the estate. In the simplest way possible he began to prospect the grounds for what he called a spring, or water-bearing strata. Carrying

* Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. xv., pp. 178-180.

in his hand a V-shaped hazel twig, holding the point downwards, with one fork in each hand, he began to walk across the lawn, and after walking a distance of about 20 yards he suddenly stopped with the twig automatically twisting in his hands. He declared that here a spring existed at a depth from the surface of not more than 40 ft. To convince me that he could not govern the action of the twig in his hands, he requested me to grip the end of the twig, and to try to keep it from turning, but in trying to do so I was quite powerless. After trying for some minutes to gauge the volume of the spring, which he professed to do by the action of the twig, he then gave what he considered to be the approximate yield of water per day, and proceeded to trace the direction in which the spring was running. Having gone into the kitchen garden, he said the spring was only 10 ft. from the bore which had previously been made to so great a depth. In order to prove that he had faith in his own method, he asked to be allowed to undertake the necessary work, and to obtain the supply of water which he had predicted, at the same time undertaking that if his predictions were not substantiated, the work done by him would not be charged for. A contract was entered into on these terms. As a result, the well has been made, and at a depth of 36ft. a good supply of water has been found. The water is of excellent quality."

A LINCOLNSHIRE CASE* :—

The following letter is addressed by Mr. T. Stevewith of Minting, Horncastle, Lincolnshire, under date of February 7th, 1893, to Mr. W. Stone, Bolingbroke Hall, Spilsby, Lincolnshire.

"I beg to inform you that I dug a well at the second place marked by you, viz., about 20 yards from the stockyard in grass field, and found water. I dug a well 42ft. deep, so that I should have a good supply for the yard. We have plenty for ourselves and several neighbours, who fetch it regularly for drinking purposes. I feel sorry I did not know of you sooner; it would have saved me something like £200 in boring 290ft., where I only found salt water at 135ft. deep."

A SCOTCH CASE † :—

Mr. John Montgomerie, managing director of Montgomerie and Company, Limited, Haddington, writes thus :—

"Previous to our communicating with Mr. Gataker we had decided to put down an artesian bore at a different part of our ground. On arrival Mr. Gataker started over the ground at a fair speed with the palms of his hands towards the earth. After proceeding some distance he was able to locate a spring at the end of our new maltings. He then proceeded over a strawberry field belonging to us, and at about 70 yards from where he located the first spring he located another. He guaranteed that from

*Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol., xv., pp. 182-3.

†Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. xv., pp. 183-4.

either of those springs we would get a supply of about 20,000 gallons per day at a depth of from 100ft. to 150ft. We put down a 4in. bore at the first spring, and are pleased to say that at a depth of 102ft. we are getting a supply of about 100,000 gallons per day, and the water is coming up with great force. We believe it will rise to about 40ft. above the surface. We tested it at 13ft., when it overflowed with a strong pressure."

AUTOMATIC ACTION.

The term Automatic Action, as here used, is intended to include that which manifests itself in writing, either by means of a Planchette or some similar instrument, or by a pencil held in the hand, no conscious control being exercised by the operator. The following instances are selected as appearing to afford evidence of the existence of some abnormal faculty or power, and as supporting the testimony in favour of Telepathy, if not of something beyond. Telepathy seems inadequate to cover all the cases, which might be multiplied indefinitely.

Miss L. D. Summerbell, a friend of Mr. Myers, communicates to him this instance:—

"We asked a friend to dictate a question, the answer to which we did not know. She said 'Who is coming to breakfast to-morrow?' Miss Lay and I placed our hands upon Planchette and asked the question. It wrote 'Lucas.' Our friend said that was the name of the gentleman who was coming to breakfast. Neither Miss Lay nor I had ever heard of him before. Our friend said, 'Ask his Christian name?' We asked: it wrote 'William.' 'Is that right?' we asked our friend. 'I don't know,' she answered, 'I never heard his Christian name.' Then somebody else, who was *not* touching Planchette, remembered that there was a song by him somewhere among the music. We looked, and at length found the song by 'William Lucas'—of whom we had never heard before, nor have we heard of him since.—L. D. SUMMERBELL."

"I can thoroughly endorse these statements, and could multiply instances equally curious.—J. M. LAY."*

The two next cases are from the Rev. H. P. Newnham, a member of the S.P.R., who with his wife carried on a long series of curious and interesting experiments, with extraordinary care. Mrs. Newnham sat at a small table with a Planchette. Mr. Newnham sat at another table some distance away, and in such a position that Mrs. Newnham could not see what he wrote. The questions were written down by Mr. Newnham before the Planchette was set in motion, and put carefully aside. The questions and answers were copied each day into

*Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. iii., p. 3.

a diary. Mr. Myers was permitted to make copious extracts from this diary. We select two :—

“I had a young man reading with me as a private pupil at this time. On February 12th he returned from his vacation, and on being told of our experiments, expressed his incredulity very strongly. I offered any proof that he liked to insist upon, only stipulating that I should see the question asked. Accordingly Mrs. Newnham took her accustomed chair in the study, while we went into the hall, *and shut the door behind us*. He then wrote down on a piece of paper :—

“‘What is the Christian name of my eldest sister?’

“We at once returned to the study, and found the answer already waiting for us :—

“‘Mina.’

(“This name was the family abbreviation of Wilhemina, and I should add that it was unknown to myself.”)*

Mr. Newnham here remarks :—

“We soon found that my wife was perfectly unable to follow the motion of the Planchette. Often she only touched it with a single finger; but even with all her fingers resting on the board she never had the slightest idea of what words were being traced out. . . . It struck me it would be a good thing to take advantage of this. . . . to ask questions upon subjects that it was impossible for her to know anything about. . . . I had taken interest in Masonic archæology, and I now questioned Planchette on some subjects connected therewith.”†

Our second case is one of these questions :—

“Q. 182.—Write out the prayer used at the advancement of a Mark Master Mason.

“A.—Almighty Ruler of the Universe and Architect of all worlds, we beseech Thee to accept this, our brother, whom we have this day received into our most honourable Company of Mark Master Masons. Grant him to be a worthy member of our Brotherhood: and may he be in his own person a perfect Mirror of all Masonic virtues. Grant that all our doings may be to Thine honour and glory and to the welfare of all mankind.”‡

Mr. Newnham remarks on this :—

“This prayer was written off instantaneously and very rapidly. It is a very remarkable production indeed. For the benefit of those who are not members of the craft, I may say that no prayer in the slightest degree resembling it is made use of in the Ritual of any Masonic degree; and yet it contains more than one strictly accurate technicality connected with the

*Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. iii., p. 12.

† Proceedings, S.P.R., vol. iii., pp. 12, 13.

‡ Proceedings, S.P.R., vol. iii., p. 14.

degree of Mark Mason. My wife has never seen any Masonic prayers, whether in 'Carlile' or any other real or spurious Ritual of the Masonic Order. Here, then, assuredly was a formula composed by some intelligence totally distinct from the conscious intelligence of either of the persons engaged in the experiment.

"I proceeded to enquire as follows :—

"Q. 183.—I do not know this prayer. Where is it to be found?

"A.—Old American Ritual.

"Q. 184.—Where can I get one?

"A.—Most likely none in England.

"Q. 185.—Can you not write the prayer that I make use of in my own Lodge?

"A.—No, I don't know it." *

In the year 1893, Mr. Myers received from Lady Mabel Howard, of Greystoke Castle, Westmoreland, an account of several of Lady Mabel's own experiences in automatic writing. The following statement, dated Downes, Crediton, Devonshire, April 8th, 1893, is signed by Sir Redvers Buller, K.C.B., and by Miss Dorothy Howard (daughter of Lady Audrey Buller) :—

"Lady Mabel Howard was stopping with us this week. She was writing with her pencil just after arriving. Someone asked: 'Where is Don?' The pencil immediately answered, 'He is dead.' Lady Mabel then asked who Don was, and was told that he was a dog. No one in the room knew that he was dead; but on enquiry the next day it was found that it was so. One of the party then asked how many fish would be caught in the river the next day. The pencil at once wrote three, which was the number obtained the next day. A little girl in the house who attends a school in London, asked, who was her greatest friend at this school. The pencil answered, Mary, which was again a fact absolutely unknown to Lady Mabel."

"DOROTHY E. HOWARD."

"REDVERS BULLER."

Mr. Myers remarks :—

"I defer for the present any discussion of the elements of clairvoyance and precognition which these incidents apparently contain. I quote the case as one where thought-transference from the living seems to play, at least, a considerable part in supplying the contents of the messages."†

One of the most interesting cases of automatic writing which have come under the notice of the Society is that of Miss A., a relative of Lord and Lady Radnor. Her experiences are very various in kind. In chapter VII. of his series of articles on "The Subliminal Self," Mr.

*Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. iii., p. 15.

†Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. ix., pp. 47-48.

Myers devotes nearly 20 pages to a statement by Miss A., and to reports of instances of the writing. Many of these are of a curious and complicated character. They do not easily admit of summary or of condensation. Space therefore compels us simply to refer the studious reader to the record in the *Proceedings*.*

The foregoing selections under this head have been made not with any view as to their instructive interest or importance,—some are strikingly deficient in both these respects,—but with the object, firstly of illustrating the immense diversity in the character of these communications, and in the subjects with which they deal, and secondly, to the evidence they furnish of definite facts being stated, some of which appear to prove thought-transference, and others which seem very difficult to account for without the introduction of an intelligence other than the conscious operators present. The reality of facts unrecognised by science appears to be proved, the explanation of which is shrouded in mystery.

THE TRANCE CONDITION.

In the sixth chapter of the “Sketch of the work of the Society,” already referred to, the “Trance Condition” was described as affording means of communication with what professed to be independent discarnate intelligences. We propose to confine ourselves to the considerations of some features of the “Trance Condition,” as exemplified in the case of Mrs. Thompson, and contained in Part XLVII. of the *Proceedings*. Although recently published, this Part deals almost entirely with occurrences which took place over two years ago, and which therefore come within the scope of our “twenty years.”

A remarkable experience of Mrs. Thompson’s occurred in connection with Professor C. Moutonnier, formerly of Paris, subsequently residing at “Villa Val Fleuri,” Hyères (Var).† It may be summarised as follows :—

At Mr. Myers’ request Professor Moutonnier sent him a full account of how he made Mrs. Thompson’s acquaintance, and of the first regular séance with her. The chief points are these :—

On February 10th, 1900, Professor Moutonnier received from Professor C. Richet, an invitation to attend some psychological experiments which were to take place at his château at Carqueiranne, together with Mr. Myers and Professor Wm. James. The names of the mediums were not mentioned. Unfortunately a few days later he

* *Proceedings*, S.P.R., Vol. ix. pp. 73-92.

† *Proceedings*, S.P.R., Vol. xviii., pp. 194-200 (Part xlvii.)

received a second letter, saying that circumstances prevented the plan being carried out. Professor Moutonnier was at the time on a visit at his daughter's at Monte Carlo, with his family, and was quite unaware that Mrs. Thompson was at the same place. He did not know her either by name or sight. Professor Moutonnier says :—

“On the 1st of March, between 10 and 11 a.m., I was sitting on a bench with my wife in one of the most retired spots of the gardens facing the Casino, where they keep the chamois, and few people go by. While we were chatting together and commenting on the events of the day, I saw coming up to us three persons, a gentleman accompanied by a lady and a little girl, eleven years old. The lady addressed us in English (without knowing our nationality) as old friends, and in such a familiar way as only those already acquainted with the subject could take any interest in our conversation. She told us, *ex abrupto*, and without being questioned, that she came from a château at Carqueiranne belonging to Prof. Richet, where she had been staying some time with the Professors Myers and James, and where Prof. Richet was to meet them for some psychical research, but was afterwards prevented from attending. On my asking whether she would consider the fact as a mere chance, or attribute it to some unknown cause, she answered that she had been guided to me by her little spirit-girl, notwithstanding that her husband insisted on going by another alley; and that, as soon as she perceived us, she saw written before her eyes the word ‘Carqueiranne,’ which gave birth to the whole story I just related. Great was her surprise when I told her we were intimate friends of Prof. Richet, and greater still my joy on learning that she was one of the two mediums I was to meet at Carqueiranne. We took leave of Mrs. Thompson and her family after having made an appointment for a regular séance.”

In reference to this first meeting Mrs. Thompson has written :—

“I shall never forget the strange impulse which made me *attack* the old folks sitting on the seat with their little dog.”

Professor Montonnier continues the account he sent to Mr. Myers with a detailed report of the séance. He says :—

“Our next meeting took place on the 13th of March, at the same spot and the same hour, 11 a.m., on a beautiful sunny day, and in the most romantic resort one could dream of. Were present :—Mrs. Thompson (the medium) and her husband, my wife and self, and my grand-daughter, Violet Fenton aged seventeen. After about a quarter of an hour chatting on different topics, Mrs. Thompson . . . was all of a sudden taken hold of by her spirit-girl who spoke through her in the following manner and terms written down word by word as uttered from the lips of the medium.”

Here follows a series of 25 numbered statements, after which the séance ended. Professor Moutonnier appends “explanatory notes,” numbered consecutively corresponding to the statements. From these

we will select seven. The two paragraphs following each number are the "statement," and the explanatory note.

"1. The lady who is standing back of you says that you have a ring of hers, and you should give it to me.

"The ring was my daughter's, and I am wearing it ever since her death on the little finger of my left hand. (*I took it off and handed it to the medium.*)

"4. You have something that belongs to Harry in your pocket.

"I had in the left inside pocket of my coat a little picture of Harry, my son-in-law—(my daughter's husband) [also deceased]. I handed it to her; she put it on her forehead, but said she could not get anything from it.

"The lady died and she left a little girl, and she is going to have the ring, but in a long time to come.

"Both my daughter and her husband died leaving a girl—then six years old, their only child. [The grand-daughter, Violet Fenton, mentioned above.]

"10. Harry says that you have a stud that belongs to him. It is not to make you feel bad; but he is very funny, you know; he is rather reserved dignified, and wants to be somebody.

"On the very day of the séance I had on my shirt, hidden under my necktie, and invisible to anyone, a diamond stud belonging to my son-in-law. I must say I was quite unaware having it on that day. Harry was rather a dignified and very ambitious man.

"17. You have some hair in your pocket; I wish you gave it to me.

"I had in the left inside pocket of my coat wrapped in paper and in an envelope a lock of my daughter's hair and a few words written on a note signed by the name of 'Marie' (her Christian name). I handed the envelope containing the hair to the medium, who put it on her forehead, holding it for some time.

"18. There is a Marie connected with it. The hair was first brown, then chestnut colour.

"My daughter's hair was of a chestnut colour.

"19. The lady died; she was quite well and was not to die. I cannot understand why she died.

"My daughter, Marie, caught the influenza from her sister, and was taken away in the course of five days by the dreadful plague, February, '92, in the prime of her life, at the age of 29."

Professor Montonnier remarks:—

"As will be seen from the above message and the explanatory notes, it is obvious that an outside influence was at work to give to the medium all these minute and private details on family matters only known to us, and some of which none of us three were thinking of at the moment of the sitting."

This long letter is signed—

C. MOUTONNIER, PROF.

Part XLVII. of the *Proceedings* (forming part of Vol. XVIII.), from which the above is taken, is almost entirely devoted to a long and carefully written article by J. G. Piddington, extending to over 200 pp., "On the Types of Phenomena displayed in Mrs. Thompson's Trance." We can refer to only one other of the 18 sections into which the article is divided—"The Automatic Writing." It must be borne in mind that the automatic writing now to be described is produced, not in the normal, but in the trance condition.

Mr. Piddington says :—

"I have referred parenthetically in the course of this paper to the existence of a control which purports to represent the late Professor Henry Sidgwick, whom Mrs. Thompson had met several times. His control communicated directly by the voice, but also by means of writing. The matter in neither case is of much evidential value; the manner both of speech and of writing is, however, of great interest."*

Mr. Piddington devotes ten pages to a description and discussion of this matter, and introduces facsimiles of the alleged writing of Professor Sidgwick, and also facsimiles of his actual writing. Several references to Mr. Myers occur, and the alleged signature of Mr. Myers comes in once. The following few lines from near the end of the ten pages will, we hope, incite some readers to give the whole account the study it deserves :—

Mrs. Sidgwick, in a letter addressed to Sir Oliver Lodge, speaks of "the unmistakable likeness of the handwriting"; and Mrs. Benson, (sister of Professor Sidgwick), in a letter addressed to her after examining the various sheets containing the script, says of them :—
"The more I look at them, the more I am struck with the likeness."†

* *Proceedings*, S.P.R., Part xlvii. (Vol. xviii.), p. 233.

† *Proceedings*, S.P.R., Part xlvii. (Vol. xviii.), p. 242.

CHAPTER V.

EVIDENCE OF THE PHENOMENA.—GROUP III.

THE PHYSICAL PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

AS has been remarked in a previous chapter, there is no branch of the projected work of the Society which shows so little advance during the twenty years, as the investigation of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism. The simpler the phenomena the more strongly does this appear. For instance: Is there through the whole series of the *Proceedings* and *Journal* the record of one single attempt to solve the problem of the “rap”—or even to settle the question whether the “rap” is an abnormal fact or not?

The progress that has been made, and this is not by any means to be despised, consists in the establishment of the validity of certain records of the past, while some of those who took part in the experiments and were witnesses of the phenomena were still living. This has been done, and effectually done, in relation to two series of phenomena of first-class importance.

(1) The phenomena alleged to have occurred in the presence of D. D. Home:—

In the year 1889 Prof. W. F. Barrett and Mr. F. W. H. Myers presented a report on these phenomena in the form of a review of “D. D. Home: His Life and Mission,” by Madame Home. This was printed in the *Journal*,* but never published. In “Human Personality”† Mr. Myers gives a brief summary of this review, and adds other matter. Professor Barrett and Mr. Myers discuss these three questions: (1) Was Home ever convicted of fraud? (2) Did he satisfy any trained observer in a series of experiments selected by the observer and not by himself? (3) Were the phenomena entirely beyond the known scope of the conjuror’s art? The answer given to the first question is—Home was never convicted of fraud. As to the second question the writers say: “Home in this respect stands pre-eminent; since we have

**Journal S.P.R.* vol. iv. pp. 101-116, and Appendices pp. 116-136.

†“*Human Personality*,” vol. ii. pp. 578-582.

the evidence of Sir William Crookes, corroborated by the testimony of the Master of Lindsay (now Earl of Crawford and Balcarres), himself a savant of some distinction, and the privately printed series of careful observations by the present and the late Lord Dunraven." As to the third question, the writers say: "Many of them (the phenomena), especially the 'fire tests,' and the movements of large untouched objects in good light, seem inexplicable by this supposition." The full report in the *Journal* must be read for the evidence to be appreciated.

(2) The physical phenomena alleged to have occurred in the presence of William Stainton Moses.—The reader is referred to Mr. Myers' article in the *Proceedings*,* and also to "Human Personality."† The quotation of one paragraph must be sufficient. Summing up his judgment on these phenomena, Mr. Myers says:—

"That they were not produced fraudulently by Dr. Speer, or other sitters, I regard as proved, both by moral convictions, and by the fact that they are constantly reported as occurring when Mr. Moses was alone. That Mr. Moses should have himself fraudulently produced them I regard as both morally and physically impossible. That he should have prepared and produced them in a state of trance I regard as both physically incredible, and also as entirely inconsistent with the tenor both of his own reports and of those of his friends. I therefore regard the reported phenomena as having actually occurred in a genuinely supernormal manner."‡

Several other investigations into what may be called the higher physical phenomena of Spiritualism were made at various times, mostly resulting in a verdict of not proven. A few of the more important are the following:—

"Slate Writing."—Chiefly in connection with Eglinton.

"Spirit Photography."—The article by Mrs. Sidgwick is a very careful resumé, down to the date at which it was written.

"Eusapia Paladino."—A large mass of testimony in relation to phenomena alleged to occur in the presence of this Italian "Medium" is given in Vols vi. and vii. of the *Journal* of the Society. No report respecting her has been published in the *Proceedings*. But much has happened in regard to this enquiry since it was closed by Professor Sidgwick in the *Journal*, in April, 1896.

It would, we think, be difficult for any unbiassed investigator, coming fresh into the field, to demur to the application to these questions of the

* *Proceedings*, S.P.R., vol. ix., p. 245, vol. xi. p. 24.

† "Human Personality," vol. ii. pp. 223-7.

‡ "Human Personality," vol. ii. p. 227.

opinion expressed in the second paragraph of the original "Objects of the Society":—"There appears to be, amid much illusion and deception, an important body of remarkable phenomena, which are *prima facie* inexplicable on any generally received hypothesis." With regard to what is perhaps the most puzzling subject in the above group—"Spirit Photography"—the present writer had a conversation with Dr. Traill Taylor, shortly before his death, at the Rooms of the S.P.R., at 19, Buckingham Street. Dr. Taylor, a trained Photographer, and the Editor of a Photographic Journal, remarked on leaving, that when he had completed the series of experiments on which he was then engaged he thought he should give the subject up, for the further he went the more puzzled he seemed to be.

INTELLIGENCES OTHER THAN "THE LIVING" AND THE REALITY OF INTERCOMMUNICATION.

We now come to the last and highest problem, the crown of all. Have we evidence of the action of intelligences other than human beings in the flesh, and, if so, does inter-communication take place between them and us? In the "Sketch of the Work of the Society" published last year, four instances were cited "in which the evidence of the continued action of a deceased person is so strong as to have brought conviction to many minds."*

By far the most interesting and important item of new evidence is contained in the few sentences by Mr. J. G. Piddington, describing his own personal experiences, in the long Report, from which we have already quoted, in the previous Chapter. Mr. Piddington, after describing a sitting with Mrs. Thompson, says:—

When the sitters had left I asked Nelly (Mrs. Thompson's "control") if Mr. Gurney was present. Nelly made the cryptic answer: "About the trio." "Who are the trio?" I asked. "Henry Sidgwick, Edmund Gurney, and Mr. Myers," replied Nelly. "Henry Sidgwick is here." The Sidgwick control then made its first appearance, and though the words spoken were few, the voice, manner, and style of utterance were extraordinarily lifelike; so much so, indeed, that had I been ignorant of Professor Sidgwick's death and had happened to hear the voice without being able to tell whence it was issuing, I think I should have unhesitatingly ascribed it to him.

*"The Society for Psychical Research," p. 48. The references to the four instances are:—(1) Abraham Florentine, Proceedings, S.P.R., vol. xi., pp. 82-85; (2) George Pelham, Proceedings, S.P.R., vol. xiii., p. 330 and pp. 405-6; (3) case described by Dr. Van Eeden, Proceedings, S.P.R., vol. xvii., pp. 77-78, 82, and 83-4; (4) Blanche Abercromby, Proceedings, S.P.R., vol. xi., pp. 96-99.

The next sitting was on January 21st, 1901, and directly trance came on and before the sitters entered the room, Nelly began: "Where's Henry Sidgwick? He's coming to talk after the sitting." As soon as the sitters left the Sidgwick control made an ineffectual effort to speak. Nelly then came to the rescue and gave the following message: "Mr. Piddington, he *can't* talk. He wants to write himself, when you're not thinking of him . . . She will write it at 4.30." "Who," I asked, "will write it? The medium?" "Yes," said Nelly. The Sidgwick control then took Nelly's place; and again the impersonation was most extraordinarily lifelike. The only two occasions on which I have been émotionné, or have experienced the slightest feeling of uncanniness during a spiritualistic séance, or have felt myself in danger of being carried away, was during these two manifestations of the Sidgwick control. I felt that I was indeed speaking with, and hearing the voice of, the man I had known; and the vividness of the original impression has not faded with time.*

With this dramatic incident, this Chapter may fittingly close. He would have been a bold prophet who would have foretold that such a Chapter could have been written within twenty years of the foundation of the Society, and that an intelligence, professing to be that of its first President, would have been in communication with its Honorary Secretary, with the effect above described.

* Proceedings, S.P.R., Part xlvi. (vol. xviii.), pp. 236-7.

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSIONS.

THE Address delivered to the Society in 1889, by Professor Sidgwick, on "The Canons of Evidence in Psychical Research"* may well be taken as the text book on the subject of conclusions. After speaking of the probabilities of testimony being false, he says :—

"It is for this reason that I feel that a part of my grounds for believing in telepathy, depending, as it does, on personal knowledge, cannot be communicated except in a weakened form to the ordinary reader of the printed statements which represent the evidence that has convinced me. Indeed, I feel this so strongly that I have always made it my highest ambition as a psychical researcher to produce evidence which will drive my opponents to doubt my honesty or veracity; I think that there are a very small minority who will *not* doubt them, and that if I can convince them, I have done all that I can do; as regards the majority even of my own acquaintances, I should claim no more than an admission that they were considerably surprised to find me in the trick."

Taking up the different classes of phenomena in the order in which we have been considering them, it will be interesting to note the conclusions to which the evidence brought before them has led some of the leading workers in the Society.

THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE OR TELEPATHY.

Mr. Edmund Gurney towards the close of the chapter, entitled "General Criticism of the Evidence for Spontaneous Telepathy" in "Phantasms of the Living," writes thus :—

"In our view, the reality of telepathy (even apart from a consideration of the experimental evidence) may be not unreasonably taken as proved. Having formed this view we are bound to state it; but we expressly refrain from putting it forward dogmatically, and from saying that to reject it would argue want of candour or intelligence."†

After speaking of the general character of the evidence, Mr. Gurney proceeds :—

"The ideal collection would, of course, be one where every independent

* Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. vi., pp. 1-6.

† "Phantasms of the Living," Vol. i., p. 166.

instance should be so evidentially complete that it must be either (1) telepathic, or (2) a purely accidental coincidence of the most striking kind, or (3) the result of a fraudulent conspiracy to deceive, in which several persons of good character and reputation have taken part. In our view, this point has been reached in a sufficient number of the examples here given to exclude the second and third alternatives." *

Again, in the second volume of "Phantasms of the Living," in the Chapter on "The Theory of Chance Coincidence," Mr. Gurney says:—

"Figures, one is sometimes told, can be made to prove anything, but I confess that I should be curious to see the figures by which the theory of chance-coincidence could here be proved adequate to the facts. Whatever group of phenomena be selected, and whatever method of reckoning be adopted, the estimates founded on that theory are hopelessly and even ludicrously overpassed. . . . But after all allowances and deductions, the conclusion that our collection comprises a large number of coincidences which have had some other cause than chance will still, I believe, be amply justified.†

Now let us turn to the "Report on the Census of Hallucinations," which is signed by five Members of the Society, including Professor Sidgwick and Mr. Myers, and published in 1894. In Chapter xiii on "Chance Coincidence" there is a calculation that in 1,300 cases of "recognised apparitions," the number of death-coincidences was 440 times the probable number which chance would have produced.‡ And, in the concluding section the report says:—

"We have shown—that after making the most ample allowance for all ascertainable sources of error—the number of these experiences remains far greater than the hypothesis of chance-coincidence will account for, thus confirming the conclusions already arrived at by Mr. Gurney in "Phantasms of the Living." *Between deaths and apparitions of the dying person a connexion exists which is not due to chance alone.* This we hold as a proved fact."§ [The italics are in the report.]

Mr. F. W. H. Myers, writing in 1900, gives his individual testimony in "Human Personality." He says:—

"We were led to believe that there was truth in the thesis . . . that a communication can take place from mind to mind by some agency not that of the recognized organs of sense. . . . Edmund Gurney . . . set forth this evidence in a large work, 'Phantasms of the Living,' in whose preparation Mr. Podmore and I took a minor part.

† "Phantasms of the Living," Vol. i., p. 167.

‡ "Phantasms of the Living," Vol. ii., pp. 21-22.

§ Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. x., p. 247.

§ Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. x., pp. 393-4.

The fifteen years which have elapsed since the publication of this book in 1886 have added to the evidence on which Gurney relied, and have shown (I venture to say) the general soundness of the canons of evidence, and the line of argument which it was his task to shape and to employ.*

Mr. Myers, in the Epilogue in "Human Personality," carries telepathy into a higher kingdom. He says:—

"Nay, in the infinite Universe man may now feel, for the first time, at home. The worst fear is over; the true security is won. The worst fear was the fear of spiritual extinction or spiritual solitude; the true security is in the telepathic law.

"Let me draw out my meaning at somewhat greater length. As we have dwelt successively on various aspects of telepathy, we have gradually felt the conception enlarge and deepen under our study. It began as a quasi-mechanical transference of ideas and images from one to another brain. Presently we found it assuming a more varied and potent form, as though it were the veritable ingruence or invasion of a distant mind. Again, its action was traced across a gulf greater than any space of earth or ocean, and it bridged the interval between spirits incarnate and discarnate, between the visible and the invisible world. There seemed no limit to the distance of its operation, or to the intimacy of its appeal."†

HYPNOTISM.

In his article on "The Work of Edmund Gurney in Experimental Psychology," Mr. Myers says:—"The Society for Psychical Research was founded with the establishment of Thought-Transference—already rising within measurable distance of proof—as its primary aim, with Hypnotism as its second study, and with many another problem ranged along its dimmer horizon."‡ Mr. Myers claims that Edmund Gurney "was the first Englishman who studied with any kind of adequate skill the psychological side of hypnotism, making therein experiments, cut short of course, by his premature death, but already of the highest value . . . and which mark, it seems to me, an epoch in the study of Hypnotism in England." After speaking of the works of Elliotson, Esdaile and Braid, in the earlier part of last century, Mr. Myers goes on to say:—

"Incredible as it may seem, in all the long interval from (say) 1855 to 1883—the date of publication of Edmund Gurney's first experiments—there was scarcely an experiment performed in England which added anything further to our knowledge."

*"Human Personality," Vol. i., p. 8.

†Human Personality, Vol. ii., pp. 281-2.

‡Proceedings, S.P.R., Vol. v., p. 365.

Mr. Myers then refers to the revival of hypnotism in France, and proceeds :—

“ But to all this movement there was in England no response whatever. Nay, there was no apparent knowledge that such a movement was going on; and when some of us in 1883-4 began to report from personal observation what was being done in France, and to add some experiments and reflections of our own, our papers were received with astonishment bordering on incredulity. Even yet [1888], the *savants* on this side of the Channel are strangely indifferent to what is being done in this subject by *savants* on the other; but, nevertheless there has been progress enough in the past five years to convert a good many of our quondam paradoxes into truisms. To recount the experiments of others, however, is not a difficult task. Edmund Gurney did much more than this. He devised and carried through (1885-8) a complex series of experiments, surpassed by no other hypnotist in exactness, either of observation or of record, with a definite view to the investigation of two great problems which lie on the borderland between physiology and psychology, and which are apt to seem no less but more perplexing the wider our induction extends. The first question may be phrased as follows: ‘Is the hypnotic state ever induced by some yet unrecognized agency—some specific influence of operator on subjects?’ To this question Edmund Gurney and I were, as far as I can discover, for some years the only writers who maintained the affirmative answer.”

After referring to one special series of experiments.* Mr. Myers proceeds :—

“These results prove—so far as any one operator’s experience in this protean subject can be held to prove anything—they prove that there *is* sometimes in the induction of hypnotic phenomena some agency at work which is neither ordinary nervous stimulations (monotonous or sudden), nor suggestion conveyed by any ordinary channels to the subject’s mind The conclusion to which they point so absolutely heterodox a few years ago, is now receiving adhesion from very different quarters. . . . What the precise nature of this influence, or of these influences, may be, is a further question. Edmund Gurney discussed that point in his last published paper on ‘Hypnotism and Telepathy,’ in *Proceedings* vol. iv.; but he did not suppose that the last word, or his own last word, had yet been said on the subject.”†

The second hypnotic problem at which Mr. Myers considered Mr. Gurney worked with marked success, was that of hypnotic memory. Dr. Bramwell places himself side by side with Mr. Gurney and Mr. Myers, when in answer to the question—“Does suggestion explain the phenomena?” he says, the answer “must be a distinctly negative one,”‡

* See ante p. 32

†Proceedings S.P.R., Vol. v., p. 367-8.

‡Hypnotism: Its History, Practice, and Theory, p. 337.

The facts of Hypnotism are real. Suggestion is not an adequate explanation. Beyond this our conclusions cannot go. After Mr. Gurney's death there seemed to be no one to carry on the investigation of the subject on similar lines. As to the effect of Hypnotism on the physical, and on the moral health, some interesting results were however arrived at.

In regard to the alleged dangers of Hypnotism, morally and physically, no one is better qualified to speak than Dr. Bramwell. He says:—

“The difference between the hypnotised and the normal subject is to be found, not so much in conduct, as in the increased mental and physical powers of the former. Any changes in the moral sense that I have noticed, have invariably been in favour of the hypnotised subject. . . . When the act demanded is contrary to the moral sense, it is usually refused by the normal subject, and invariably by the hypnotised one.”*

Again Dr. Bramwell says:—

“Although I am willing to admit that it is possible that harm may be done through the mismanagement of hypnotic cases, I have personally seen no evidence of this either in my own practice or in that of others. Further I have never seen the slightest bad effect follow carefully conducted hypnotic experiments. For several years Sidgwick, Gurney, Myers, and others experimented regularly on the same group of male subjects, and the latter suffered neither at the time nor afterwards.” †

HAUNTINGS AND APPARITIONS.

As to conclusions, under this heading, there is little to be said. Among these who have studied the mass of testimony in regard to Haunted Houses, and to Apparitions, both of the living and of the dead, there is an almost unanimous verdict, that in many instances we are dealing with absolute facts as to which, illusion, or deception, or co-incidence are inadequate explanations. The facts are established, but beyond this there is an unknown land, in the exploration of which there is at present no progress.

THE DIVINING ROD.

It has been clearly established by the Researches of the Society, that many of the results obtained by the use of the Divining Rod, or, as Professor Barrett prefers to call it, the Dowsing Rod, are real, and that ordinary and normal explanations are inadequate to cover them. The evidence industriously accumulated by the late Mr. E. Vaughan

* Hypnotism : Its History, Practice, and Theory. p. 327.

† Hypnotism : Its History, Practice, and Theory. p. 436.

Jenkins, was presented by Mr. Edward R. Pease, in conjunction with enquiries of his own, in an early volume of the *Proceedings*. After a considerable interval, Professor Barrett took up the work. The results of his arduous labours, extending over a series of years, have been carefully arranged in three bulky reports, two of which are already published.* The subject is not yet exhausted. The source of the power which moves the rod is still matter for discussion. Professor Barrett's views are more entitled to attention than those of any one else. Between the issue of his first and second report they underwent some modification. In a chapter on "Theoretical Conclusions"† in Professor Barrett's earlier Report he starts with saying—"Few will dispute the proposition that the motion of the forked twig is due to unconscious muscular action." Towards the end of the same chapter he says:—"Assuming the actual motion of the rod to be caused by involuntary muscular action,"—and then proceeds to give a "summary of the causes determining that motion." Among these he includes impressions from without unconsciously made upon the dowser's mind, from his own trained observation and practice, and from bystanders, through the ordinary channels of sensation. He also adds that in some cases an impression appears to be gained *not* through the ordinary channels of sensation. He believes Thought-Transference will be found to receive remarkable confirmation from experiments with the dowsing rod. But he does not believe that even then the whole of the evidence can be explained. A peculiar pathological effect is produced on the dowser. Though whether this can be traced to abnormal sensibility of a recognised channel of sensation, or is due to some more transcendental psychological condition, can only be conclusively ascertained by persevering and unbiassed investigation.

It is impossible to attempt even a summary of the long and interesting discussion of this problem in Professor Barrett's second report.‡ He adheres to his previous view that the "curious phenomena attending the *motion* of the so called divining rod are capable of explanation by causes known to science" (*e.g.*, involuntary muscular action). But he has become more impressed with the view that the suggestion may arise "from some kind of transcendental discernment possessed by the dowsers' subconscious self."

He says:—"For my own part, I am disposed to think that this cause, though less acceptable to science, will be found to be the truer explanation of the more striking successes of a good dowser."

* *Proceedings*, S.P.R., Vol. xiii., pp. 2-282, and Vol. xv., pp. 130-383.

† *Proceedings*, S.P.R., Vol. xiii. pp. 243-255.

‡ *Proceedings*, S.P.R., Vol. xv., pp. 276-314.

At the conclusion of the Report, Professor Barrett says :—

“This subconscious perceptive power, commonly called “clairvoyance,” may provisionally be taken as the explanation of those successes of the dowser which are inexplicable on any grounds at present known to science.”

AUTOMATIC ACTION AND THE TRANCE CONDITION.

The phrase “automatic action,” as here used, includes automatic writing, drawing, and speaking. The phrase “the trance condition,” is used in the way generally employed by “spiritualists,” and as distinct from any form of hypnotic trance. Automatic speaking is practically the only phenomenon connected with “the trance condition.” Ordinary automatic writing and drawing have been practised by numbers of persons for at least fifty years. Published automatic literature would form a considerable library. And a large gallery would be required to exhibit even the amount of automatic art which is of a character to attract attention. But the source or sources of the intelligence manifested in the production of these results is as much a mystery as ever. As to “trance speaking,” so little attention has been devoted to the subject that the majority of even the members of the Society for Psychological Research are probably in a state of entire uncertainty as to whether the hundreds of so-called “trance addresses” constantly being given all over the country possess any claim to be regarded as phenomena of a psychological or abnormal character. Surely there is here a large and neglected field of enquiry. While this state of things continues, no “conclusions” of any value are possible.

THE PHYSICAL PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

A reference to what is said under this heading in chapter v., will show that we are here travelling still further into a kingdom in which it is at present too early to make any attempt to draw conclusions which can be of value, or which have any chance of meeting with general acceptance.

THE EXISTENCE OF INTELLIGENCES OTHER THAN “THE LIVING,” AND THE REALITY OF INTER-COMMUNICATION.

Here again the word “conclusion” seems out of place, except in regard to the convictions of individual investigators. The question has not got beyond that very early stage in the history of all branches of scientific enquiry, when every enquirer finds it needful to test each step by his own personal experiments. The alleged facts are so unrelated to recognised science that the mind cannot accept them as it does the daily occurring new discoveries in Physics or Natural History,

on faith in the honesty and accuracy of the discoverers. Conclusions—in the ordinary sense of the word—as to unsolved problems of this character must be left to the future.

We have said that “Conclusions,” in the ordinary sense of the term, as to the higher problems of Psychical Research, must be left to the future. But there is a sense in which much may be said even now. These pages cannot conclude better than with the following quotation from the “Epilogue” in Mr. Myers’ “Human Personality.” (Vol. II., p. 280.)

“The time is ripe for the study of unseen things as strenuous and sincere as that which Science has made familiar for the problems of earth. . . . The scheme of knowledge which can commend itself to such seekers must be a scheme which while it *transcends* our present knowledge, steadily *continues* it, . . . gradually unfolding itself to progressive enquiry. Must there not also be a continuous change, an unending advance in the human ideal itself? so that Faith must shift her standpoint from the brief Past to the endless Future, not so much caring to supply the lacunæ of tradition, as to intensify the conviction that there is a still higher life to work for, a holiness which may be some day reached by grace and effort as yet unknown.

“It may be that for some generations to come the truest faith will be in the patient attempt to unravel from confused phenomena some trace of the supreme world, to find thus at last ‘the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.’ I confess, indeed, that I have often felt as though this present age were even unduly favoured, as though no future revelation and calm could equal the joy of this great struggle from doubt to certainty, from the materialism or agnosticism which accompany the first advance of science into the deeper scientific conviction that there is a deathless soul in man. I can imagine no other crisis of such deep delight.”

“HOW BEAUTIFUL IT IS TO BE ALIVE!”

.

“Thus ever towards Man’s height of nobleness
 Striving some new Progression to contrive;
 Till just as any other friend’s, we press
 DEATH’S hand; and having died, feel none the less,
 How beautiful it is to be alive.”

HENRY S. SUTTON. (1848.)

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