

JOURNAL

OF THE

SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

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NEW MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES.

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS.

HARTMANN, DR. EDUARD VON, Gross-Lichterfelde, Germany.

JANET, PROFESSOR PIERRE, Havre, France.

MEMBERS.

ROSS, A. GALT, 7, Edinburgh Terrace, Victoria Road, London, W.

STODDON, JOHN COLE, M.A., 18, Clement's Inn, London, W.C.

ASSOCIATE.

WITHERBY, ARTHUR GEORGE, B.A., 117A, Earl's Court Road, S.W.

MEETING OF COUNCIL.

At a meeting of the Council, held on the 3rd inst., the following Members were present:—Messrs. Edmund Gurney, Richard Hodgson, C. C. Massey, J. H. Stack, and F. Podmore. Mr. J. H. Stack was voted to the chair.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and signed as correct.

Dr. Eduard von Hartmann, of Gross-Lichterfelde, Germany, and Professor Pierre Janet, of Havre, were elected Corresponding Members.

Two new Members and one new Associate, whose names and addresses are given above, were also elected.

The Council recorded with regret the death of the Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton, an Associate of the Society.

In accordance with his request, it was agreed that the name of Mr. A. W. Dobbie, of Australia, should be transferred from the list of Members to that of Associates.

Presents to the Library were announced from Drs. Berjon and

R

Burot, of Rochefort, and from Dr. Puel, of Paris, particulars of which appear in the Supplementary Library Catalogue. The Council desired to convey its thanks to the donors.

A vote of thanks was also passed to Miss Bertha Porter for a donation of £5, in aid of the work of the Literary Committee.

The cash account for the preceding month was presented in the usual form, and one account passed for payment.

The Council being informed that Professor Sidgwick desired to be relieved of the Editorship of the *Journal*, Mr. Edmund Gurney was elected to take his place.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Friday, the 4th of June, at 4.30 p.m.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL MEETING.

A General Meeting of the Society was held on the evening of Monday, May 3rd, at the Rooms of the Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall.

In the absence of the President, the chair was taken by Mr. F. W. H. Myers, who invited Mrs. Sidgwick to read her paper, "Results of a Personal Investigation into the Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism, with some Critical Remarks on the Evidence for the Genuineness of such Phenomena."

Mrs. Sidgwick explained that by the physical phenomena of Spiritualism she meant those which, if correctly described and not due to conscious or unconscious trickery, nor to hallucination on the part of the observers, exhibit a hitherto unknown force acting in the physical world, otherwise than through the brain or muscles of the medium. They are thus distinguished from the automatic phenomena, of which writing by the medium's hand, trance speaking, and table turning with contact are examples. The list of physical phenomena includes raps, movements of tables without contact, materialisations, psychography, &c.

She stated that her own experience in Spiritualism had begun in 1874, but had been entirely inconclusive except in cases where it was proved that the phenomena were due to the action of the medium. She narrated some of her experiences, including series of séances with Mrs. Jencken, Mrs. Fay, Miss Wood and Miss Fairlamb, Mr. Bullock, Mr. Williams, and Dr. Slade, and showed how she had obtained strong circumstantial evidence of deception in the case of Miss Wood, direct proof of it in that of Mr. Bullock, evidence pointing strongly to it in the case of Mrs. Fay and Mr. Williams, and good reasons for attributing Dr. Slade's performances to conjuring. She concluded the first part of her paper with an account of some séances with Mr. Haxby, at which

he was seen himself acting the part of a spirit which professed to materialise and dematerialise outside the cabinet.

In the second part of her paper Mrs. Sidgwick went on to discuss various causes of error. She did not believe that hallucination—i.e., perception without objective counterpart, which is an explanation of what is seen at séances suggested by v. Hartmann and others—had ever occurred at séances within her experience ; but she thought the erroneous interpretation of what is perceived—a mistaking of what is inferred for what is actually seen, was very common. She said that from what she heard and read, she believed this often occurred in the recognition of friends and relations in the "materialised" forms. She adduced a few examples, and gave arguments from the history of spirit-photography pointing to the same conclusion, and also stated that it was often too hastily assumed from appearances that the form could not be the medium disguised.

Proceeding to conjuring of a less special kind, she said that from many accounts of Spiritualistic séances it was obvious that sufficient precautions had not been taken to exclude it, and that in others the absence of any mention of such precautions suggested that they had not been taken. But even cases which as described seemed inexplicable, could not prove anything unless a very wide margin for conjuring were allowed, since conjuring tricks, as described, were also often inexplicable. She thought the fact that leading Spiritualists had avowed a belief that certain conjurers were mediums, proved that they underrated the possibilities of conjuring. A wide margin not only for conjuring, but for mistakes and mal-observation arising from other causes, was required all the more because the evidence was so seldom experimental—that is, the observer so seldom knew beforehand what would be the precise phenomena and conditions. She thought the arguments used to prove that with mediums phenomena were obtained under conditions more unfavourable to trickery than with conjurers, were fallacious, and that on the contrary conjurers could only compete on equal terms with mediums if they too were allowed to fail whenever they pleased, and if they too were observed by witnesses doubtful as to the nature of the performance. She described some experiences in slate-writing which she and friends of hers had had with an amateur conjurer, under the same conditions as Dr. Slade, and which had seemed at the time inexplicable. These had been very valuable to her, not only in confirming her view about the wide margin required for conjuring, but also in showing her how very limited were her own powers of continuous observation—a lesson she had already partially learnt with Dr. Slade.

Mrs. Sidgwick said that two arguments against the reality of the

physical phenomena of Spiritualism gained in force every year. These were (1) the absence of phenomena about which there could be no question of conjuring, and (2) the fact that almost every medium who had been prominently before the public had been detected in fraud.

Nevertheless, Mrs. Sidgwick said that she thought there was some evidence which could not be neglected, and which formed a *prima facie* case sufficient to make it our duty to seek for more, but she thought it waste of time to seek it with established or professional mediums, under the conditions at present imposed.

In conclusion, she urged those who might find in themselves or their friends the beginnings of "mediumship," to approach the subject with as little prejudice with regard to the conditions under which phenomena will occur as possible. It is certain that there has been a great deal of very hasty assumption about these conditions, and as preconceived ideas in this matter have, on psychological grounds, a tendency to work themselves out, it is important to keep as free as possible from any not absolutely true. It is probable that many of the conditions supposed to be necessary, and which complicate and increase the difficulty of the investigation, have been invented merely to facilitate trickery.

At the close of the paper some questions were asked with the view of eliciting further details concerning Mrs. Sidgwick's experiences with the conjurer, and Mr. F. W. H. Myers then gave a brief account of some experiments in mesmerism at a distance which he and his brother, Dr. Myers, had recently witnessed in France.

Mr. E. M. Clissold described an experience of his own in mesmerising at a distance; and then, referring to Mrs. Sidgwick's paper, said that whilst recognising her evident sincerity and honesty of purpose, he could not but be struck with the meagre results obtained, after so many patient and laborious investigations. He accounted for this by supposing that in this branch of inquiry something more is required of the investigator than candour and ability. He asserted that in consequence of some want of natural mental or spiritual power, a person otherwise adequately endowed might be unable to verify a single spiritual phenomenon. He reminded the audience that no amount of negative evidence could weaken one fact honestly and fairly obtained; and he claimed that there was abundant and ever-accumulating evidence in favour of the genuineness of many of the alleged facts.

Mr. Bidder objected to the results obtained by Mrs. Sidgwick being described as of a negative character. In his opinion they were very positive indeed—as to imposture.

The meeting then assumed a conversational character.

RIVAL THEORIES AGAIN.

BY THE HON. RODEN NOEL.

As the Editor permits me a few more words on the subject of my controversy with Mr. Myers, I should like to say first that Mr. Myers, though lively and amusing, perhaps permits himself a little too freely to make mere banter do duty for serious criticism. This method has led to some grave misrepresentation (of course due to misunderstanding) of my own position. Mr. Myers objects strongly to my use of the word "intuition." I have used, it seems, the same term for the ordinary perception of an external world, and for the inward vision of seers. Well, I think it is a very good word for immediate unreasoned knowledge, or belief; and my reading of philosophy has taught me that it is so understood by students of philosophy in general. I spoke of the visions of seers, such as St. Theresa, St. Catherine, St. John and St. Paul, of their conviction of the objective reality of those who had appeared and communicated revelations to them, urging that Mr. Myers' physiological diagrams, mapping out the brain, with algebraical formulæ appended, did not seem to explain away such a conviction, which I called an "intuition" on the part of such great revealers; to whom, after all, we do owe a few trifling benefits, such as Bibles, religions, and social reformatations. For I argued that if physiology does not explain ordinary perceptions, no better can it explain abnormal perceptions. And now Mr. Myers assures me that when I ask him if he thinks physiology does explain perception, I might as well ask him whether he thinks the moon is made of green cheese. Well, I am extremely glad to have elicited this confession from him, but then I await also with some interest the supplementary information which seems needed, as to why he makes the diagrams, and invents the formulæ. Of course I have no objection. Indeed, it pleasantly reminds me of the School Board, and elementary text-books.

But I admit that, perhaps, Mr. Myers makes "a hit, a palpable hit," when he chaffs me about the "common-sense of madmen." I own that does sound startling! and I am not so sure of my right application of this term to their case. It appeared to me, however, that it was applicable to any unreasoned and immediate conviction of the objectivity and externality of any sensible percept. I argue that dreams (at the time of dreaming) and abnormal visions have all the psychological characteristics of a normal percept, and probably the physiological also—save, indeed, one, the agreement of waking and normal perceivers. But on that exception I remarked (a remark of which Mr. Myers takes no notice) that these abnormal seers being admittedly in a different mental condition or sphere, the agreement of normal and waking persons in their perceptions can hardly be expected; you might as well wait for the general consent of blind men to the seeing of colour, or of dreaming persons before allowing the objective validity of normal waking percepts. Now, I intend these remarks seriously; they are not mere assertions; though I can assure Mr. Myers I do not wish to be dogmatic; but they are positions which I have used argument (bad or good) to maintain, and therefore I do not recognise mere jokes, however lively, as a valid answer. And really the joke about the madman who believes himself the Archangel Michael is no answer at all, even as a *reductio ad*

absurdum, because it altogether ignores my point: I did not say that the convictions of madmen, or *anybody else*, were necessarily true (otherwise I should have to admit that the secondary-self theory of Mr. Myers is so, which I do not!). But I suggested that when a madman, or a delirious person, has what we (from our point of view, and quite conveniently) call and may call "hallucinations of sense," and when a dreamer has distinct perception in dreams, it is difficult to prove that whereas our percepts have objective validity, and are *external to our individual selves*, his are no such thing. And for this proposition I gave reasons (valid or invalid).

We do not depend on the agreement of others for our conviction of an object's externality, seeing that, in order to consult them, we must first *assume* their externality to ourselves; though we may modify our impression of *what* an object is by their verdict concerning it, as also by tests, which our own judgment may devise.

But I have several strings to my bow! Mr. Myers only one to his! The strange *idées fixes* of madmen I have suggested (by analogy of the facts recently brought to light in connection with mesmerism) may with high probability be assigned to the domination of ideas impressed on them by unseen intelligent agents, perhaps not more necessarily evil and malicious than the French mesmerist, who impressed on the clairvoyante that she must shoot her own mother.

The disturbance, or abnormal condition of the brain cells, or of the blood, may very well *accompany* any such psychological agency; but I hope we are now agreed that it *accounts* for no more than does their normal condition? Mr. Myers says he does not admit that spirits influence even *some* dreams, only that minds of other persons do.* But by a "spirit" I meant a person, or individual possessed of a mind; I called him a "spirit," because I suppose his body of flesh and blood is not concerned in such dream-influence. Nor did I argue that because some dreams are thus produced, all must be. I only said that the influence of a virtually disembodied spirit on dream was now proved to be a *vera causa*, and that (without prejudice to brain centres and nerves, &c., which are no sufficient cause of dream) hence it became an entertainable hypothesis, in the absence of a better, that all dreams *might* be thus originated; though no doubt the dramatising faculty of the sleeper must also be taken into account. After all, recollect that even where we only fancy, invent, remember, this prior sense-perception is implied as material for reconstruction by the mind. Surely the object is still there, *present in some sense*, if it ever was at all; even though Mr. Myers should not accept exactly my representation of what is involved in memory. By the way, I have found out that Fechner has a very similar conception to mine in his "Life after Death"; so he is one "eminent philosopher" to the good, I suppose! There is still an influence from other minds, seeing that "objects" can only be concepts in some mind; so idealism teaches. Individuals co-operate in all thought; for all

* All that I understand Mr. Myers to regard as yet proved, is that telepathy occurs between persons in the body. We should not be justified in assuming from this, without further evidence, that the "body of flesh and blood is not concerned," for if it were true that the impression is transmitted by "brain waves," brains would be required in the process.—KID.

thought is universal, as well as particular ; but it is particularly obvious and certain in the case of *sense-perception*, where externality to the individual is the primal postulate and distinctive feature. I think that here we get some clue, however, to the puzzling fact that there are *degrees* of distinct perception, that fancies may gradually pass *into* perceptions, as some of the instances of so-called hallucination, collected by our Society, tend to show : they do so in the case of somnambules, and biologised persons under dominant suggestion from without. The degree of subjectivity, and objectivity, may, no doubt, however, vary in a perception ; that is, the investing, inventing, dramatising faculty of the individual may contribute more or less to the result in any given case ; a percept may be transferred from another mind, ready made, or the raw materials of it, to be worked up in you, or me. But what I suspect is that when it is vividly real and objective, it must be almost equally the same in another mind, and *shared*. At any rate, I think there is no such self-sundering in dream as Mr. Myers alleges. For his secondary self is assumed to have a *subjective experience of its own, not shared by the primary*. But in a dream that is not so :* the dream persons we fancy (if they are not real persons, as I suggest) have likewise no subjectivities of their own ; they are exhausted, I mean, by the pictures we frame of them, by the replies they make to us, or the questions they ask : what is behind that is *only our own comprehension, and hearing of that* ; our ordinary one subjectivity is enough for them, and they have no other ; this is true also of the *dramatis personæ* of a poet. But Mrs. Newnham's second self is supposed to hear and digest questions put, and think out the answers before she answers, while Mrs. Newnham's primary self writes and reads them. Hamlet is not thinking about the murder of his father unknown to Shakespeare, though Shakespeare may imagine such thought in the character of Hamlet which he has conceived ; and the dreamer only hears questions put, or remarks made, or questions answered by some person he imagines ; that person is not thinking these out in a subjectivity of his own (that is, if Mr. Myers' theory of his being only an invention of the sleeper be correct) ; hence he gets no help for the secondary self he wants in the Newnham case from this source, even though my suggestion be incorrect, that the personages of a dream-drama may be distinct individuals. In a dream we retain our own individuality, seeing and hearing ourselves, and conversing with other persons, as in every-day waking hours.

The instance of the schoolboy cited in a note by Mr. Myers is, of course, familiar to everybody. Truly the answer to a problem flashing on him in the midst of another train of thought, like inspirations of genius, *seems* to be from the "unconscious." But the only question is, *what is its real explanation ?* My objection was not to the second term in Mr. Myers' phrase, "unconscious ideas," but to the first, my position being that there is and can be no "unconscious" ; and that the unconscious can no more pour "matured ideas" into the conscious mind than we can pass over

* Our dream personages often reply to us in a way that we do not expect, and utter ideas that are novel and surprising to us. I take Mr. Myers' view to be that in most cases such ideas have worked themselves out in our own minds unconsciously to ourselves.—ED.

Westminster Bridge to Christmas Day, for it cannot have ideas, and if it could, could not transfer them to consciousness. What is a matured unconscious idea?

I suggest the transcendent self, which is fully conscious, or some other mind, as the more probable origin.

But is the dream-world so much less real than this?

"Where nothing is but all things seem,
And we the shadows of the dream."

Nay, "we are such stuff as dreams are made on," and in that sleep, with which "our little lives are rounded," as even now, not seldom, in the nightly sleep, may we not find ourselves in a world more real even than the apparent world of every day, a world of stars, which we cannot see for sunlight?

CASES RECEIVED BY THE LITERARY COMMITTEE.

(Continued.)

[The Literary Committee will be glad to receive well authenticated evidence of phenomena belonging to any of the following classes, specimens of which are from time to time recorded in this Journal:

L. *Phantasms of the Living.*

G. *Phantasms of the Dead.*

M. *Hypnotism, Mesmerism, and Clairvoyance.*

P. *Monition and Premonition.*

S. *Miscellaneous phenomena of the kind sometimes described as "Spiritualistic."*

Personal experiences of "sensory hallucinations" of any sort will also be welcome.

Communications intended for the Literary Committee should be addressed to Edmund Gurney, Esq., 26, Montpelier-square, London, S.W.; or, to Frederic W. H. Myers, Esq., Leckhampton House, Cambridge.]

G.—642

The following narrative was sent by Mr. C. FitzGerald, 89, Tachbrook-street, S.W., who says:—

March 7th, 1885.

I send you my own ghost story, rather hurriedly written, but I think full in its details.

My friend B. is, I understand, in England, but I cannot find out his address yet.

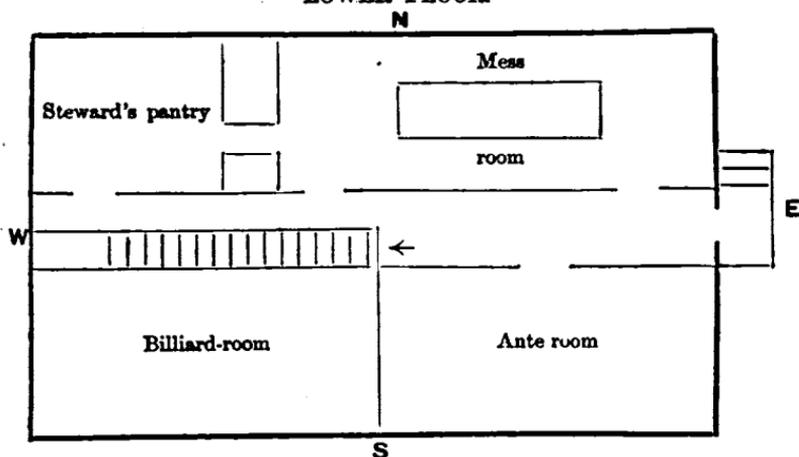
I refrain from giving names in full, as many of the young girl's relatives are alive and here in England.

In 1861 I was stationed with my regiment at N., one of the B. Islands. One Saturday evening, in company with one of my brother officers, I had been spending the evening at the house of one of our friends, and we returned to our quarters about 11 o'clock, together.

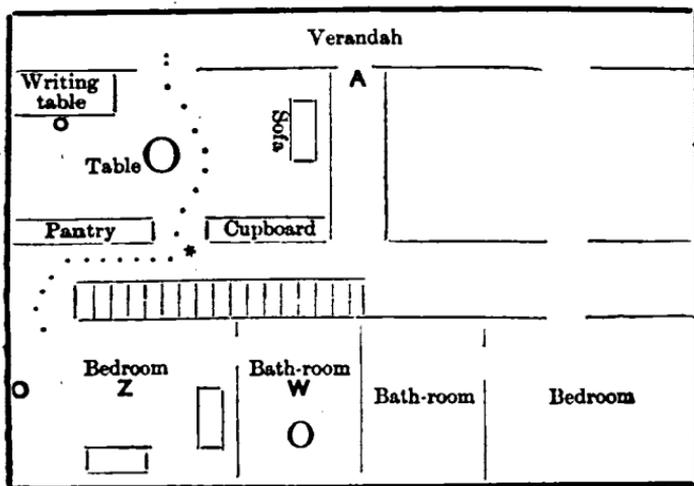
The building in which our quarters were, stood alone in rather extensive

grounds, and at night the only access to the building was by a door at the east side of the house, at which a sentry was always posted. There was a short flight of steps from the ground to this door. About midway down the passage was a flight of stairs leading to the upper floor, where our quarters

LOWER FLOOR.



UPPER FLOOR.



A Door always closed.

were. On reaching the top my companion and myself parted for the night, I to write some letters for the next day's post in the front room on the west side, he to his bedroom on the east side at the back of the house.

I had only been a short time writing when the figure, almost transparent, of a young girl with her face turned from me, entered the room from the verandah, and passed through in the way indicated by the dotted line. She

had long very light flowing ringlets, carried a broad brimmed straw hat suspended by the ribbons, on her right arm, and a bouquet of flowers in her left hand. I watched the figure with curiosity, wondering what it meant. At the moment it went out of the door*, my friend, whom I will call B., came out of his bedroom into his sitting-room. He remained only a few instants. On coming out of his sitting-room into the passage he stopped and called out, "I say, F., who is that girl that came out of your room just now?" to which I replied, "No one came out of my room," at the same time getting up and going into the passage, where I met him near the door*. He insisted that he had seen a girl come out of the room, and thought she must have gone into the bedroom Z. We went in, but finding no one there, looked into the bath-room W, but found that empty. We then returned to the passage and called out to the sentry at the door at the head of steps on the lower floor, asking if he had seen any one come in before we had, answering the description of the girl seen, or since we had come in. He said he had not. B. and myself then agreed to call on an old lady who had been a long time resident in the Island, next day, Sunday, and tell her what had occurred. We did so, and learned that a young girl answering the description given, had died in the house some years before, at about 18 years of age; and that she was reputed to have haunted the house since.

I subsequently saw a miniature painting of the young lady, corresponding, as far as the hair was concerned, with the figure I had seen go through my room.

I may say that both myself and my friend B. were very abstemious.

G.—476—Collective.

From a lady who desires that names may not be published.

9th June, 1885.

I.

'Our mother died while we were all very young; and as I, the fourth child of seven, was the eldest living daughter, I became early acquainted (from my eighth year) with sorrow of various kinds and degrees, principally caused, however, by the harshness and frequent neglect of housekeeper and servants towards my baby brother and sister. The two eldest boys—between whom and myself was a gap of some years, were almost always away from home, and ultimately went abroad, so that from the time I was quite a little child I was continually with my father, who made much of me, and at last I became his constant companion. He never married again, and our love was probably, therefore, a closer union even than commonly exists between a father and daughter while the latter is of tender years. It was a great pain to me ever to be away from him, especially after my 14th year, at which time he began to make me his confidante as well as companion; and we had frequent earnest talks and discussions on many subjects. At length, when I was about 18 years old, a terrible grief befell us, viz., the death of my two elder brothers within a few weeks of each other, while they were still abroad.

My father's sorrow was great; and at the same time he became seriously

troubled with many doubts regarding various points of Christian faith, and so gradually lost nearly all his buoyancy of spirit, and became sadly depressed and worn-looking, though only 48 years old. For a year he thus suffered, when it was arranged that, so soon as he could plan to leave home, he should go to some sea-side place, and try what new scenes would effect. He also persuaded—nay, insisted—that I should go away for awhile, without waiting for him, and accompany some friends to South Devonshire.

This I did that same summer, 1863. All his letters to me after I left him were bright and loving—saying but little of his health—as he and all of us regarded his ailment to be more mental than physical.

One morning, September 25th, after waking early from a very singular and troubled dream, I found, some hours later, on my breakfast plate, among other letters, one in a strange hand, which I saw on opening to have been written by an uncle, related to me by marriage, but not known to me personally. He said that my father had set out on his long-talked-of tour, and had gone to Dorking for the sake of visiting him and other old friends there, before proceeding to the coast; but he was far from well, seemed much depressed, and was continually talking of me. My uncle advised that I should join him at Dorking as soon as possible, and then persuade him to go to Scarborough, as the most bracing place he (my uncle) could think of.

In half an hour I was in the coach, travelling to Honiton, the nearest railway station, and reached Dorking late in the evening.

My father was dead! He had suddenly fainted in the morning while talking to my aunt; had only roused sufficiently to call me by name several times, and then died, apparently unconscious that anyone was with him.

It would make this narrative too tedious to you were I to relate how a presentiment of such a terrible possibility had weighed upon me all day, and prevented my yielding to a strong girlish temptation to purchase, during my journey, many delicacies displayed in the railway refreshment-rooms, which I thought he might like. Nevertheless the blow was too heavy for me to find relief in tears, and the agony of heart was so intense that even now I recall it with a sense of physical pain.

I went early to bed, to escape the presence and sympathetic ministrations of the many in that kind household who gathered around me; and by my own choice I shared the room of a motherly-looking personage, whom I supposed to be my cousins' nurse. She occupied the larger bed in the room, and I a smaller one placed at some distance from hers. She was soon asleep and breathing heavily; but I was lying in deepest anguish, beset not only with the grief at the sudden loss sustained, but with the wretched fear that my beloved father had died too suddenly to find peace with God, regarding those miserable doubts that had so troubled him. As the night wore on, the pain of heart and thought grew worse and worse, and at length I knelt in prayer, earnestly pleading that my distressful thoughts might be taken away, and an assurance of my father's peace be given me by God's most Holy Spirit. No immediate relief came, however, and it was early dawn when I rose from my knees, and felt that I must be patient and wait for the answer to my prayer.

Now a longing suddenly seized me to creep into that kind-faced woman's bed, and to feel perhaps less lonely there. Her bed was opposite a

window, over which a white blind was drawn, and as I softly lifted the bed-clothes and sat for a moment after drawing my feet up into the bed, I noticed the pale dawn feebly lighting up the window, and the movement of a little bird on the sill outside ; but the room itself was as yet almost dark.

I was just about to slip quietly down into the bed, when on the opposite side of it (that on which the nurse was sleeping) the room became suddenly full of beautiful light, in the midst of which stood my father, absolutely transfigured, clothed with brightness. He slowly moved towards the bed, raising his hands, as I thought, to clasp me in his arms; and I ejaculated: "Father!" He replied, "Blessed for ever, my child! For ever blessed!" I moved to climb over nurse and kiss him, reaching out my arms to him; but with a look of mingled sadness and love he appeared to float back with the light towards the wall and was gone! The vision occupied so short a time that, glancing involuntarily at the window again, I saw the morning dawn and the little bird just as they had looked a few minutes before. I felt sure that God had vouchsafed to me a wonderful vision, and was not in the least afraid, but, on the contrary, full of a joy that brought floods of grateful tears, and completely removed all anguish except that of having lost my father from earth. I offer no explanation, and can only say most simply and truthfully that it all happened just as I have related.

You may find a solution to the occurrence in the sympathy which had existed between my dear father and myself; or, as friends have often insisted, in the condition of excitement and exhaustion which I was suffering at the time; but after all these years of life and experience, the memory of that wonderful morning is ever vividly fresh, and *real*, and *true*.'

The writer's husband adds:—

'The narrative, as related above, is substantially the same given to me by Mrs. P. as early as 1865, and at subsequent periods.

W. B. P.

June 17th, 1885.'

And Dr. and Mrs. C., referred to above, write:—

'16th June, 1885.

The preceding narrative was related to us by Mrs. P., substantially as here recorded, some four or five years ago.

JAMES C.
ELLEN H. C.'

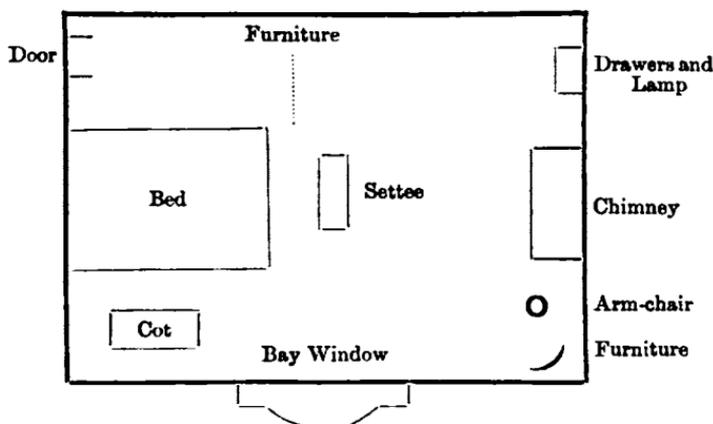
II.

'In the year 1867 I was married, and my husband took a house at S——, quite a new one, just built, in what was, and still is probably, called "Cliff Town," as being at a greater elevation than the older part of the town. Our life was exceedingly bright and happy there until towards the end of 1869, when my husband's health appeared to be failing, and he grew dejected and moody. Trying in vain to ascertain the cause for this, and being repeatedly assured by him that I was "too fanciful," and that there was "nothing the matter with him," I ceased to vex him with questions, and the time passed quietly away till Christmas Eve of that year (1869).

An uncle and aunt lived in the neighbourhood, and they invited us to spend Christmas Day with them—to go quite early in the morning to breakfast, accompanied by the whole of our small household.

We arranged therefore to go to bed at an early hour on the night of the 24th, so as to be up betimes for our morning walk. Consequently, at 9 o'clock we went upstairs, having as usual carefully attended to bars and bolts of doors, and at about 9.30 were ready to extinguish the lamp; but our little girl—a baby of 15 months—generally woke up at that time, and after drinking some warm milk would sleep again for the rest of the night; and, as she had not yet awakened, I begged my husband to leave the lamp burning and get into bed, while I, wrapped in a dressing gown, lay on the outside of the bed with the cot on my right hand. The bedstead faced the fireplace, and nothing stood between, but a settee at the foot of the bed. On either side of the chimney was a large recess—the one to the left (as we faced in that direction) having a chest of drawers, on which the lamp was standing. The entrance door was on the same side of the room as the head of the bed, and to the left of it—facing therefore the recess of which I speak. The door was locked; and on that same side (to my left) my husband was lying, with the curtain drawn, towards which his face was turned.

Roughly, the position was thus—



As the bed had curtains only at the head, all before us was open and dimly-lighted, the lamp being turned down.

This takes some time to describe, but it was still just about 9.30, Gertrude not yet awake, and I just pulling myself into a half-sitting posture against the pillows, thinking of nothing but the arrangements for the following day, when to my great astonishment I saw a gentleman standing at the foot of the bed, dressed as a naval officer, and with a cap on his head having a projecting peak. The light being in the position which I have indicated, the face was in shadow to me, and the more so that the visitor was leaning upon his arms which rested on the foot-rail of the bedstead. I was too astonished to be afraid, but simply wondered who it could be; and, instantly touching my husband's shoulder (whose face was turned from me) I said, "Willie,

who is this?" My husband turned, and for a second or two lay looking in intense astonishment at the intruder; then lifting himself a little, he shouted "What on earth are you doing here, sir?" Meanwhile the form, slowly drawing himself into an upright position, now said in a commanding, yet reproachful voice, "Willie! Willie!"

I looked at my husband and saw that his face was white and agitated. As I turned towards him he sprang out of bed as though to attack the man, but stood by the bedside as if afraid, or in great perplexity, while the figure calmly and slowly moved *towards the wall* at right angles with the lamp in the direction of the dotted line. As it passed the lamp, a deep shadow fell upon the room as of a material person shutting out the light from us by his intervening body, and he disappeared, as it were, into the wall. My husband now, in a very agitated manner, caught up the lamp, and turning to me said, "I mean to look all over the house, and see where he is gone."

I was by this time exceedingly agitated too, but remembering that the door was locked, and that the mysterious visitor had not gone towards it at all—remarked "He has not gone out by the door!" But without pausing, my husband *unlocked the door*, hastened out of the room, and was soon searching the whole house. Sitting there in the dark, I thought to myself, "we have surely seen an apparition! Whatever can it indicate—perhaps my brother Arthur (he was in the navy, and at that time on a voyage to India) is in trouble: such things have been told of as occurring." In some such way I pondered with an anxious heart, holding the child, who just then awakened, in my arms, until my husband came back looking very white and miserable.

Sitting upon the bedside, he put his arm about me and said, "Do you know what we have seen?" And I said "Yes, it was a spirit. I am afraid it was Arthur, but could not see his face"—and he exclaimed, "Oh! no, it was my father!"

Now you will say this is the strangest part of the story, and unprecedented. And what could have been the reason of such an appearance?

My husband's father *had been dead fourteen years*: he had been a naval officer in his young life; but, through ill health, had left the service before my husband was born, and the latter had only once or twice seen him in uniform. I had never seen him at all. My husband and I related the occurrence to my uncle and aunt, and we all noticed that my husband's agitation and anxiety were very great: whereas his usual manner was calm and reserved in the extreme, and he was a thorough and avowed sceptic in all—so-called—supernatural events.

As the weeks passed on my husband became very ill, and then gradually disclosed to me that he had been in great financial difficulties; and that, at the time his father was thus sent to us, he was inclining to take the advice of a man who would certainly—had my husband yielded to him (as he had intended before hearing the warning voice)—have led him to ruin, perhaps worse. It is this fact which makes us most reticent in speaking of the event; in addition to which, my husband had already been led to speculate upon certain chances which resulted in failure, and infinite sorrow to us both as

well as to others, and was indeed the cause of our coming to ———, after a year of much trouble, in the January of 1871.

In the earlier part of this long letter I have given you the address of my uncle,* to whom we gave a full description of the facts the morning after their occurrence; but he was—and is—a great sceptic in all such matters, and, probably, through not being in my husband's confidence regarding his circumstances, and therefore seeing no feasible reason for such a manifestation of God's power and love, he was the more incredulous.

Up to that date my husband, too, was quite as sceptical as Uncle ———; and, indeed, none of us were particularly ready to believe in such evidences, notwithstanding my experience at my father's death, because we had regarded that as a special answer to prayer; so that no condition of "overwrought nerves," or "superstitious fears," could have been the cause of the manifestation, but only, so far as we have been able to judge by subsequent events, a direct warning to my husband in the voice and appearance of the one that he had most revered in all his life, and was the most likely to obey.'

Dr. and Mrs. C., friends of Mrs. and Mr. P., add the following note:—

'16th June, 1885.

This narrative was told us by Mrs. P., as here recorded, some years ago.

J. C.

ELLEN H. C.'

Mr. P. confirms as follows:—

—————,
'17th June, 1885.

Without wishing to add more to the incidents recorded herein by my wife, I would simply note that the details of No. 2 are quite correct, and that the occurrence took place as stated. * * *

W. B. P.'

G.—641.—Transitional.

The following narrative was kindly procured for us by Miss Brownlow, of 4, Carlyle-terrace, Chesterton-road, Cambridge, who is a near relation of Mrs. A. B.; Mr. A. B. died in South Africa, the lady who dreamt being in England.

Letter from Miss A. L. B. to Mrs. A. B., widow of the "Uncle A." spoken of:—

March 4th, 1885.

I got your letter asking about the dream this morning. It was this:—

Mamma dreamt one night that she was sitting at table at a supper party. There was, she thinks, a good large party, but the ones she remembers being present were her own father and mother, who sat at the top and bottom of the table, your father and mother, my father and Uncle A., and yourself. Only the people who were alive spoke, the others were quite silent. Lady B. spoke a good deal. Uncle A. was sitting next mamma, and you were on the other side of him. He never spoke, but you conversed quite naturally. She

* We were requested not to refer to the "uncle" for corroboration "unless absolutely necessary."

said to you, "I did not know you had come home." You answered, "Oh yes, we have, and don't you see I'm dressed like you now," and you took hold of your dress on both sides and held it out. You were not dressed in widow's weeds, which would have told at once what had happened, but wore some sort of light muslin. Mamma was very much surprised, and wondered if she could really have a dress like that when she awakened. Uncle A. was dead by that time, but we had not heard of it. Mamma says she wondered afterwards she was not more alarmed at the time as she knew that it was only the living people who were speaking, and he never spoke. Mamma of course was wearing a widow's dress at that time. When the letter came mamma called out "That's my dream, and that's why A. didn't speak, and we are dressed alike now." The dream is not the least exaggerated; on reading it over mamma thinks it scarcely gives a vivid enough impression. * * Mamma wishes me to say she told us the dream at the time. * * *

Further inquiries were made as to the details of the case. Our questions and the answers received are as follow.

The answers, with the exception of the first,—obtained from Mrs. A. B.,—were given by Miss A. L. B., with her mother, Mrs. B.'s assent.

1. What was the year, day, and, if possible, hour, of Mr. A. B.'s death?
1871: 18th November, after midnight of the 17th, about 2 a.m.
2. What was the year and day, as nearly as can be remembered, of the dream?—This cannot be remembered, but it was *after* the death, and *before* the news reached home.
3. Did Mrs. B. see the meaning of the dream before the news came?—Not clearly till the letter came; but she had spoken of the dream as if puzzled by it.
4. Was Mr. A. B. the only person in the dream who was believed by Mrs. B. to be alive and who did not speak?—Yes.
5. Was the dream told to anyone, with or without its meaning, before the news of the death came?—Yes, simply as being very curious.
6. If so, to whom?—Several members of her family.
7. Can that person confirm?—Her daughters can confirm.
8. Has Mrs. B. had other vivid dreams which have appeared worth relating at the time, and which have (a) come true (b) not come true?
—No.
9. Has she had waking impressions or presentiments, or seen apparitions?
—No.

"PHANTASMS OF THE LIVING."

It is hoped that this book, which has been so long announced as in preparation, will be published in the course of next month. The terms on which it will be obtainable by Members and Associates will be stated in the June *Journal*.