

JOURNAL

OF THE

SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

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NEW MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES.

MEMBERS.

- BLACKWELL, DR. ELIZABETH, Rock House, Hastings.
 TUCKEY, C. LLOYD, M.D., 14, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, London, W.
 WINGFIELD, HUGH EDWARD, M.A., Caius College, Cambridge.

ASSOCIATES.

- ADAIR, MRS., Glenavon, Cookstown, Co. Tyrone.
 AINSLIE, AINSLIE DOUGLAS, 24, Lennox-gardens, Cadogan-square,
 London, S.W.
 BEWLEY, MISS MARY M., Netherton House, Clapham Common,
 London, S.W.
 BUTLER, GERARD W., B.A., F.G.S., Blenheim Lodge, Surbiton,
 Surrey.
 CECIL, LADY FRANCIS, Stocken Hall, Stretton, Oakham.
 MITCHELL, MRS. C. W., 28, Hyde Park-gate, London, S.W.
 MURRAY, SYDNEY J., 70, Cecile Park, Crouch Hill, London, N.
 SHEPPARD, W. F., M.A., Trinity College, Cambridge.
 SHOVE, MISS EDITH, 25, St. Mark's-crescent, Regent's Park, London,
 N.W.
 SHERBURN, HENRY ARTHUR, Savings Bank Department, General Post
 Office, London, E.C.

MEETING OF COUNCIL.

At a Meeting of the Council held on March 1st, the President in the chair, the following Members were also present :—Dr. A. T. Myers, and Messrs. Walter Leaf, F. W. H. Myers, Frank Podmore, and H. Babington Smith.

Mr. Thomas Barkworth, J.P., and Mr. Walter A. Raleigh were elected as co-opted Members of the Council for the current year, in accordance with Rule 17. Three new Members and 10 new Associates, whose names and addresses are given above, were elected.

A vote of thanks was passed to the Rev. C. L. Dodgson for a present to the Library.

Several matters of routine business were attended to; and the next Meeting of the Council was fixed for Friday, April 5th, at 5 p.m.

A PROPOSED NEW CENSUS OF HALLUCINATIONS.

We are sending round with this number of the *Journal* some papers about hallucinations, which we much hope that our Members and Associates will exert themselves to get filled in.

The subject of sensory hallucinations of sane and healthy persons,—their frequency, their cause, and their nature—is one which is of great interest and importance to all who are interested in psychology. But to us members of the Society for Psychical Research—especially to those who believe that hallucinations are frequently the manifestation of telepathic communications from one mind to another, and, perhaps, also of communications from the dead,—the subject has a quite special importance. This is not only on account of the interest of “veridical” hallucinations in themselves, but because it is absolutely essential to our investigation to know enough about the frequency of non-veridical hallucinations to enable us to estimate whether the veridical ones—those, that is, which correspond with real events,—can be accounted for by chance coincidence.

It may be thought that the collection made by Mr. Gurney of 5,705 answers on the subject, and discussed in *Phantasms of the Living*, Vol. II., chapter xiii., show very conclusively that they cannot. But Mr. Gurney had hoped to make a much larger collection than this, and always intended to renew the effort at some future time. Though 5,705 answers are probably enough, notwithstanding some opinions expressed to the contrary, to furnish an estimate, sufficiently accurate for our purposes, of the proportion of the number of persons who have had hallucinations to the number of persons who have not, it is very far from sufficient for determining the relative frequency of veridical and non-veridical hallucinations. To answer this last question, Mr. Gurney had to make assumptions, necessarily very hypothetical, as to the size of the circle from which our *veridical* cases are drawn. The argument based on these assumptions appears to me valid; since I hold that he rightly assumed this

circle to be the largest that it can reasonably be supposed to have been; so that the error, if any, in his calculation must tell in favour of the explanation by accidental coincidence against which he was arguing. Still I find that those who cannot bring themselves to believe in telepathy have endeavoured to justify their position by supposing that the size of the circle from which our cases have been drawn has been under-estimated; and though I cannot adopt this view, I think that we have not at present the means of completely disproving it. But if we could extend the census to, say, ten times its original size, we should obtain sufficient data to enable us to dispense with any disputable assumptions.

Fifty thousand is only the number originally aimed at by Mr. Gurney, but at that time the work was apparently too novel in character, the difficulties encountered too unforeseen, to be readily met, and the misconceptions as to its object too great to admit of its being very generally undertaken. That the publication of *Phantasms of the Living* has done much to familiarise many with the importance of submitting the phenomena to a quantitative test, can hardly be doubted. It is now confidently hoped that the information thus spread may make itself felt in the large increase of helpers in the future. There is a special reason for recommencing the work of collecting now in the fact that there is to be a Congress of Physiological Psychologists at Paris in August next, which is likely to afford good opportunity for spreading interest in the subject and getting it widely taken up both in our own and in other countries. It is because we hope that others who are interested in the subject from an entirely different point of view to our own may help in the work that we have left out all mention of the Society for Psychical Research in the papers which we are circulating on the subject.

At the same time, we think that the success of the undertaking must in a great measure depend upon the energy with which it is taken up by our Society. If every one of the 632 Members and Associates were to provide only one paper of 25 answers, a collection of 15,300 would at once be obtained—a marked advance on the former 5,705. We hope, however, that many of our Members and Associates will endeavour to obtain the co-operation of outsiders in the task of collecting. The work is one in which all may help who will.

It will be perceived by the question on the accompanying paper for the entry of answers that the scope of the present inquiry as to hallucinations is somewhat wider than the former one, but that, on the other hand, dreams are entirely left out of consideration. A careful perusal of "Instructions" to collectors on the back of the form will, it is hoped, serve to make quite clear the rules to be observed in the

inquiry, and in particular that it is quite as important to collect "noes" as "yeses." It is, however, needful to add specially for members of our Society that cases included in the former census can also be included in this, as the calculations based on it will be entirely independent.—ED.

GENERAL MEETING.

A General Meeting of the Society was held at the Westminster Town Hall, on Monday, March 18th, at 8.30 p.m., the President in the chair.

MR. F. W. H. MYERS read a completion of the late Mr. E. Gurney's paper on "Apparitions Occurring Shortly after Death." This paper will appear in the forthcoming Part XIV. of *Proceedings*. Among the cases read that which excited most comment was a narrative by General Barter, C.B., who, on a mountain path at Murree, in India, beheld a phantasmal group representing Lieutenant B. (who had been dead for some months) supported upon a pony by two syces. General Barter had been barely acquainted with Lieutenant B., but that gentleman had built the hut which General Barter was occupying, and had frequently ridden down the mountain path on a pony resembling the phantom pony seen. There were also details in the phantom's appearance which corresponded with Lieutenant B.'s appearance when he died, though not with his appearance when General Barter knew him.

MR. BIDDER, Q.C., commenting on this and on the other cases cited by Mr. Myers, remarked that there seemed to be an important difference between apparitions occurring at the time of death and those occurring some time afterwards. Those occurring at death were mainly *personal*; they were observed, that is to say, by friends of the dying person, on whose minds he might naturally desire to produce an effect. But the cases which had been read that night were all of them more or less *local* in character; that is to say, the apparition was observed by persons who were strangers, or nearly so, to the deceased, but in some place in which the deceased had lived or died, and which might, therefore, have an interest for him which the stranger who happened to be present in that place could not possess. Points of contrast like these between different classes of cases deserved careful consideration. He further doubted the adequacy of the theory suggested by Mr. Myers that the appearances seen might be a kind of reflection of a dream of the dead person's, on the ground that the appearances presented themselves from a point of view *external* to the supposed agent.

MR. BARKWORTH said that though there was undoubtedly a local element in the cases read, there was also in all of them some degree of personal connection between the percipient and the supposed agent, and

he thought it probable that this would generally be found to be the case with appearances shortly after death. An analysis of the 25 cases given in Mrs. Sidgwick's paper on "Phantasms of the Dead" (*Proceedings*, Vol. III.) showed that the great majority can be classed as either (A) personal, non-local, and recent, or (B) local, non-personal, and remote; meaning by recent that the death had taken place within a year, and by remote over a year. He also called attention to the possible importance of the chill so often experienced in seeing an apparition, as throwing light on the nature of the phenomenon, and urged that this should be more fully inquired into.

MR. HAYES observed, with reference to the alleged comparative frequency, in the case of apparitions, of a previous compact between persons to appear to each other, that the resultant state of expectancy might be the sole cause of the apparitions, and that in Miss Lister's case, cited by Mr. Myers (and already given in the *Journal*, Vol. III., p. 292), the subsequent experience of the wife might be accounted for by thought-transference from Miss Lister.

The REV. DR. KLEIN called attention to the importance of the alleged behaviour of General Barter's dogs, as indicating that the appearance had an objective character.

MR. R. PEARSALL SMITH said that among the illustrations of the claim that animals have a perception of these extraordinary alleged apparitions after death might be mentioned one occurring to a neighbour of his own, a prominent barrister at Philadelphia. He had parted, under painful circumstances of controversy, with a friend who had later gone to Italy for his health. Afterwards, while camping out in the wilds of the Adirondacks, one day his horse became excited and refused to advance when urged. While engaged in the contest with the horse, the barrister saw before him the apparition of his friend with blood pouring from his mouth, and in an interval of the effusion he heard him say, "*I have nothing against you.*" Soon afterward he heard that his friend had at that time died during a discharge of blood from the lungs. Mr. Pearsall Smith was prevented from procuring a statement directly from the barrister, by the fact that, after relating it to his friends, the recollection of the incident had become so painful to him that he declined to converse again on the subject. He added that it may be easily conceived that the barrister, under painful recollections of the parting interview with his friend, and with the knowledge of his ill-health, might picture his friend forgiving any supposed injury, and also his dying scene. The extraordinary features are the coincidence of time and manner between the vision and the death, with the added circumstance of the alarm of the horse previous to the apparition.

MR. MYERS made a brief reply, of which the following is the substance: It is certainly true, and an important fact (as Mr. Bidder and Mr. Barkworth have urged), that the *local* character of some of these post-mortem apparitions is decidedly more marked than was the case with apparitions occurring at the moment of death. But there were a good many cases in *Phantasms of the Living* where a local element appeared, and Mr. Gurney and I had discussed in slightly different ways the difficulty which this imports into the explanation of apparitions as hallucinations telepathically induced by one mind in another mind. That difficulty is now intensified. In such a case as General Barter's we are almost compelled to assume that it was the place rather than the person which determined the exercise of energy—whatever that may have been—on the part of the deceased Lieutenant B. We can hardly avoid the conjecture that Lieutenant B. would have been imagining himself on that mountain path, even if General Barter—a casual acquaintance—had not been there to see him. I may observe—not as a solution of the difficulty, but rather as an extension of its range—that many of the cases in *Phantasms of the Living* are both personal and local—that is to say, the decedent appears to persons in whom he is interested, but also in a place in which he is interested. Now assuming, for the sake of argument, that in such instances his real determining interest lay in the *place*, it is obvious that as time went on his appearance would become more and more manifestly local in character. It often happens that the people whom we have loved leave the places which we have loved; and if we then appear as ghosts in the old places, it is plain that we are not appearing for the sake of the new people. Push the date far enough forward, and our appearances *must* be local. The "haunting ghost" has no one left, so to say, to care for; if he appears to revisit anything, it can only be his old home in stranger hands. As regards the behaviour of General Barter's dogs, I think it was strictly in accordance with canine precedent. I can remember no case where a dog—or any animal—is stated to have been present when a phantasmal sight or sound occurred, and *not* to have shown terror. Perhaps some careful reader may be able to find some exception to this rule. In any case we must remember that if a dog had been present when his master saw an apparition, and had shown no alarm, his master might very likely forget altogether to mention his presence.

MR. H. B. SMITH then read an account of some experiments at Pesaro, in Italy, seemingly exhibiting thought-transference—the persons engaged in which he had had the opportunity of visiting. This paper will appear in the supplement to the next number of the *Proceedings*.

CASES SUPPLIED TO THE LITERARY COMMITTEE.

L. 824 A^d P^a

The following case has been received from a lady (Sister X., known to the Rev. A. T. Fryer) who does not wish her name published. She writes from a religious and charitable institution, of which she is the head, under date February 7th, 1889.

It had been the late Miss N.'s habit to pay frequent visits here,—always once a year, and more often twice; therefore I knew her intimately. On the morning that she died, which event took place in her own house in S—shire, before 9 a.m., I was in chapel, and our Communion service had just finished, and I was in the act of saying a thanksgiving prayer, when I was aware of a rustling noise, like some person moving on the chair next to me. There were three places, or chairs, vacant, beyond where I was kneeling. I looked round, and to my amazement Miss N. passed across me and walked up the chapel towards the altar, and stood there, and then seemed to vanish. I saw no more. It had a strange effect upon my nerves, as I knew her to be ill. The Sisters wondered why I paused when in the act of saying our thanksgiving aloud. I recovered myself in a minute and went on. No one else saw what I did. I told them afterwards; but before the *rustling* a sense of someone breathing near me had been felt and gave me a queer feeling. Of course we had prayed for Miss N., as being seriously ill, at our celebration.

In a later letter to Mr. Fryer, Sister X. adds, in reply to the question whether she has ever experienced any other hallucination: "I have had no similar experience since." Sister X. made no written note of the occurrence, and the Sister to whom she mentioned it at the time cannot now be reached.

Miss d'A., who was with Miss N. at her death, writes as follows:—

(February 23rd, 1889.)

Miss N. died in this house, which was her own, as near as we can say at 8.45 a.m. Sunday, October 29th, 1882. She had not spoken of [the religious house] at the time of her death, but it may interest you to know that it was one of the nurses from [thence] who was attending to her at that time, and also that she was very much attached to the Sister Superior of that house.

Mrs. M., sister of the decedent, says:—

(February 22nd, 1889.)

She could not speak, as she was paralysed.

We have verified the date of death (October 29th) from the announcement in the *Times*, for October 31st, 1882. We learn that the thanksgiving was only read on Sunday mornings at the religious institution, which so far tends to corroborate the coincidence.

L. 825 A^d P^a

From Mr. Henry Green, 13, Fenchurch-avenue, E.C. (through Mr. E. Westlake, Oaklands, Fordingbridge, Salisbury).

April 23rd, 1888.

I had left school, and parted from my chief school friend, some time in the year 1853. About a year later, I heard incidentally that my friend had gone to sea, but I had not seen him or kept up any communication with him since I left school. During the summer of 1858, when the Indian Mutiny was drawing to its close, and the great comet of that year was the nightly object of attention, I was staying with my sisters at the Isle of Wight, where I experienced the dream referred to. I dreamt that I was once more in the old school playground, in the centre of which a high pole had been erected, with a cross pole on the top; from the end of this hung a rope with a hook attached, such, for instance, as one sees depicted frequently in missionary magazines, when the tortures inflicted on themselves by fanatics are described, the poor creatures being hooked in the back, and then swung round in agony. As I looked at this in my dream I became aware that all those present in the playground were dark and Eastern in their appearance, and that the victim hooked upon the swing was none other than my old friend and schoolfellow, who, as he was rapidly whirled past me, looked at me in such an earnest and appealing manner as to have left an impression on my mind which is as fresh to-day as when I awoke from the dream, now nearly 30 years ago. So vividly was I impressed with the experience of this night, that on meeting with my sisters at breakfast the next morning, I related to them what had passed, and said that I felt certain something must have happened to my friend. Of course I was duly laughed at for my fancies, but I stuck firmly to the conviction that something untoward had occurred. I consequently noted down the date most carefully: I told my sisters what I had done, and said to them, "If any person ever saw, and was most piteously, though dumbly, appealed to by another in a dream, such an experience was mine last night." The next day, and for very many days and weeks afterwards, I was haunted by this dream. I most carefully examined every newspaper that I could find, including always the obituary column, thinking, but without any result, that I might possibly find some trace of the death or an accident to my friend. One day, however, I think it must have been at least two months after our return home from the Isle of Wight, I was sitting in our office, where I found a newspaper lying on the table. I at once took it up, and as had been my habit ever since the dream, I carefully looked down the obituary column. How shall I attempt to describe my feelings when I read the announcement of my friend's death, of fever, in Lucknow, on the same date as that of my dream. I have since learned that when my friend gave up the sea he obtained a commission in one of Her Majesty's regiments, and was sent out to India, where he took part in the relief of Lucknow.

Some years afterwards I had the melancholy satisfaction of visiting his tomb in the Residency churchyard at Lucknow.

H. G.

In answer to inquiries, Mr. Green writes :—

May 2nd, 1888.

I fear that I can add nothing more than I have already sent you, with regard to my strange dream. I cannot at this distance of time give you the exact date. At the time of its occurrence I remember noting it down, but I cannot now find the memorandum. The name of my school friend was Robert Synge.

HENRY GREEN.

To further inquiries Mr. Green writes :—

Blackwall-yard, E.

May 11th, 1888.

With this I forward to you as requested

(1) A few lines from my sister to the effect that I had related my dream to her, and spoke of my anxiety before seeing the news of my friend's death.

(2) The memorandum which I undoubtedly made at the time I cannot find, but you may take it as a fact that such a memorandum was made, although I can find no trace of it now, which is not to be wondered at, seeing that the memo. was made in 1853 [an obvious mistake for 1858], and we, like most other people, have had many changes since that time, and during this period the memorandum has disappeared.

(3) I am naturally a very sound, not to say a rather heavy sleeper, and do not, as a rule, dream vividly.

(4) I have never had any dream at all like it, or in any way to be compared to it.

HENRY GREEN.

The enclosure from Mr. Green's sister is as follows :—

7, Percival-terrace, Brighton.

May 2nd, 1888.

You ask me to state whether I can remember your telling me of a dream you had at the time of the Indian Mutiny, relative to the death of a friend.

I can distinctly remember the fact of your dreaming that you saw him dying a painful death, and that the dream so impressed you that you made a note of the date. I subsequently saw in the paper that he had been killed on that very day at Lucknow.

EMMA GREEN.

P. 338

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Since the publication of this case in Mrs. Sidgwick's paper on "The Evidence for Premonitions," a letter has been received from Mrs. E. Raymond Barker, in reply to our request that she would tell us what she remembers about it. She says, "I am sorry to be unable to give you the information you ask me for, concerning my sister's 'Premonition' of the death of my uncle, Carleton Crawford. The whole thing has gone from my memory." The facts therefore rest on Mrs. O'Gorman's unaided memory.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DUPLEX *versus* MULTIPLEX PERSONALITY.

To the Editor of the JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

SIR,—I am anxious to recur to this subject, largely in the hope of inducing the advocates of Multiplex Personality to give us the grounds of their belief, which, as far as I know, have never yet been fairly stated. For instance, in the startling paper under that title which appeared in the *Nineteenth Century* some time ago there is nothing about the subject whatever, except a mere hint in one sentence. Otherwise the cases therein set forth are used to exemplify duplex consciousness, and nothing more. In the case of Madame B., about whom Mr. Myers contributed a very interesting paper last year, there is an account, which is little more than a suggestion, of a third state, but so little comparatively is said about it that it would surely be rash to conclude upon the evidence that it was a truly independent condition, and not merely a phase of one already established.

This seems the proper place for pointing out that alterations of memory, although an evidence of the most important kind in proof of a shifting of the basis of consciousness, do not *alone* necessarily and invariably determine it. Otherwise we should be brought to the *reductio ad absurdum* of an alteration of the consciousness whenever we remember the name of an acquaintance which we had previously attempted in vain to recall. To thoroughly demonstrate the independence of the two modes of consciousness, it is necessary to rely, not only upon their memories, but upon their methods, and their characters, and especially upon their operations being not only separable, but simultaneous. It would be possible in this and other ways to throw some doubt, I think, upon the cases which have been adduced in support of multiplex personality; for instance, the difference between the third and second states of Louis V. as described by Dr. Myers in the *Journal of Mental Science* differ in nothing but the extent of the hemiplegia, while in all the four last states there is much ingenuity of differentiation shown between what seem to be mainly varieties of nomenclature. For instance, what is the difference between "fair" and "moderate," "quiet" and "respectable," "boyish" and "childish," &c. ? I have no wish, however, to insist upon these minor points, which in Louis V.'s case, at all events, leave the main position, as I fully acknowledge, unshattered.

My real contention is of a very different character from a mere carping at details. It is this;—that granting the existence of a multiplex personality to have been never so firmly established in those cases which have been observed, they offer no argument whatever in favour of its existence in the human race generally. For, to begin with, how many such cases are there? There are Louis, and Félicité, and Madame B. There are two or three more mentioned by Du Prel (and although he, throughout his argument, maintains the position of a duallist). There may be very likely some half dozen more at a liberal estimate. If we say there are a dozen recorded cases in which the evidence for multiplex personality cannot be rebutted, we shall be well on the

safe side. To argue from these that multiplex personality is a common attribute of the human race would, as it seems to me, be as reasonable as to quote the Siamese twins and the two-headed nightingale in support of a physical theory of mankind; or the case of the demoniac of Gadara whose name was "Legion, for we are many" as a type of the human race. Indeed there is much in these rare and extraordinary cases which might be held to sustain a theory of possession, but that is no part of my present purpose.

On the other hand the evidence for a duplex personality is to be found in every subject of hypnotic experiment; in all the facts connected with sleep and dreams; and even (as I endeavoured to show in my paper read before the Society) in the common experiences of our waking moments.

But not only is the evidence for multiplex personality utterly inadequate in quantity to sustain the inferences deduced from it, but it is almost equally assailable in regard to quality. For who are the subjects of these strange phenomena? They are either lunatic, epileptic, or hysterical patients. Their position is therefore confessedly pathological and therefore abnormal.

Now to rest an investigation of mental or physical laws upon the symptoms of a pathological condition, without having previously mastered the laws of being in a state of health, is to put the cart before the horse. It is not only unreliable in its results, but positively and certainly misleading in its conclusions. For the facts of health are stable and uniform, but the facts of disease vary in every instance, and moreover can be appreciated only relatively, *i.e.*, in their difference from the normal standard.

Now the science of inductive psychology is as yet in its infancy. We need for a long time to come to multiply observations, to enlist observers, and to accumulate facts. When we have done this to an extent sufficient to be able to codify the laws which govern the human consciousness in its normal and healthy condition (and when will that be?), it will be time enough to turn our attention to those occasional aberrant manifestations which will even then, however, be of interest chiefly to the expert and the alienist. In the meantime the observation of them is not only useless, but probably harmful, as tending not only to mislead the inquirer, but to foster an appetite for sensationalism which it is most important for the Society's work to discourage. What we need in this, as in every science, is habits of trained observation which will note seemingly commonplace and trivial incidents for the sake of the principles which underlie them. It was by the fall of an apple and not by the crash of worlds that the law of gravitation was discovered, and who knows that in some equally commonplace incidents of our daily life may not lie the germs of great discoveries?

There is still a further objection to the evidence for multiplex personality in that it is not only deficient in quantity, and bad in quality, but that its defects are just those of the kind which most weaken the conclusions it is made to bear up. Hysteria is not only a disease, and therefore abnormal, but it is a disease of which one of the

most prominent symptoms is simulation. It is notorious that hysterical patients assume the symptoms of other diseases to an extent that will sometimes mislead a medical man. There is often, too, associated with accessions of hysteria a moral cachexia which shows itself most frequently in a tendency to falsehood.

In hysterical cases, therefore, we need to be especially on our guard against deceptions; and if a patient asserts herself to be Queen Victoria at one time, and Lady Macbeth at another, or to be Léontine at one time, and Léonore at another, it really proves nothing more than that something has got loose in her head.

I have scarcely left space to insist on the importance of the question of duplex personality; an importance so great as fully to justify my calling attention to it at such length. For with the modification (or may we not say destruction?) of the old view of uniform personality, we are confronted at once with the necessity of seeking for the irreducible Ego. Because if it cannot be found, and if the soul is a mere congeries of different conscious entities, as the body is an organised conglomerate of protoplasmic cells, the inference will be hard to resist that death, which dissolves the physical continuity of the one, destroys also the bond of identity in the other, and that as the body turns to dust, so will the "soul" to vapour, returning naked into the womb of force, the common mother of all life. Hoping as I do that an irreducible Ego is to be found on the hypothesis of a duplex personality, I would notice some other points of interest connected with it. It is in harmony with the old tripartite division of man into body, soul, and spirit. It gives an answer, as unlooked for as it is complete, to the challenge of the sceptic, "Can three be one?" It offers, as I shall perhaps endeavour to show on a future occasion, a ground of reconciliation for the champions of free will and determinism, and a line of frontier dividing human from merely animal intelligence.

But I write, of course, only as a student. My first object has been, as I began by saying, to elicit the views of those who have gone so much further, and worked so much longer than myself, and if I succeed only so far, I shall not have written in vain.

THOMAS BARKWORTH.

To the Editor of the JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

SIR,—I welcome the opportunity which Mr. Barkworth's letters afford me for saying a few explanatory words on my conception of "Multiplex Personality." Mr. Barkworth and other critics have argued that any such conception would be destructive either to human responsibility, or to our hope of existence after death, or to both. The force of their argument depends on the meaning to be attached to the word "personality," on which it is important that we should all agree. I find that I have given it a narrower meaning than my critics, for I have expressly intended to confine it to our *terrene* self-manifestation—to human beings as we see them here and now—and thus to leave on one side the question whether or not there is something in us which is pre-terrene or post-terrene, or both—a soul, in fact, which survives death. I should prefer to call our persistent being our

individuality, rather than our personality; for this distinction of terms has become pretty general, and seems necessary for clearness. In the present paper I will (with my critics) assume that such a soul does exist in us; and will try to show that "multiplex personality" in no way interferes with that belief. What I shall say now I conceive that I have in fact said already in various places; but I will not waste space by trying to prove this. Nor, on the other hand, will a little repetition need apology in a subject which is both novel and complicated. The argument, then, which is urged by Mr. Barkworth and others I take to be as follows:—

I. It is a fundamental truth that each of us possesses an "irreducible Ego" or persistent soul; a principle of continuous conscious identity.

II. The theory of "duplex personality" fits in with, and helps to prove, this great truth. For one of these personalities may be the "animal soul," or at least a temporary manifestation of ourselves, closely dependent on the body; while the other personality may be our "spirit"; or at any rate, something with larger powers (telepathy, clairvoyance, &c.), existing outside the range of our ordinary consciousness; not obviously dependent on our nervous organisation, and therefore capable of expanding untrammelled when the body falls away.

III. The theory of "multiplex personality," on the other hand, assails the existence of a soul; for it splits up our psychical being into a number of co-ordinate personalities, each of them closely dependent on a special state of the nervous system.

Now, if the reader will look at my definitions of "personality" and "individuality," as given above, he will see that the sentence in clause II., "*the other personality may be our spirit*," is not, in my view, correctly expressed. I should call our "spirit" our individuality; and should say that in "duplex personality" there was an individuality manifesting itself in two aspects—wearing two terrene masks—and that in "multiplex personality" the individuality was manifesting itself in several aspects—wearing more than two terrene masks. But it exists behind the masks as truly in the one case as in the other. There seems, then, to be little more at issue than the connotation to be given to the word "personality." And my only reason for not defining my use of that word more clearly before was my fear that, to the *other* class of opponents—who disbelieve in a soul—the very definition would appear to be a kind of begging the question. "You define personality as a terrene self-manifestation," they would say, "but how do you know that there is anything that is not terrene to be manifested? Your *individuality* is a mere mystical fancy which you try to bring in by limiting the meaning of 'personality'—which really expresses all that there is to express."

For the present, however, we are not considering this agnostic set of objections. We are assuming a human soul, and considering how our notion of that soul works in with certain views of its earthly self-manifestation. And here we must resort to metaphor—nay, to more metaphors than one—if we would picture to ourselves anything so abstract and hypothetical. The excuse for attempting such a feat lies in the urgent need which the experiments of MM. Janet, Binet, Liégeois, &c., indicate, and which Mr. Bark-

worth's paper reflects, to get some hint for a crude provisional co-ordination of those phenomena of consciousness and memory which are every day becoming more difficult, not only to understand, but even to record intelligibly. (See for instance, M. Binet's paper, "Sur les Altérations de la Conscience," in the *Revue Philosophique* for February.)

Let us take, then, the metaphor of a *manufactory*, which I have before employed. Here the soul, the individuality, the "irreducible Ego," is represented by the *motive power*. We need not now speculate whence this motive power is derived, or whether it is itself invariable in quantity or direction. Assume it a simple uniform power, and consider how it is applied to the millions of looms in our imaginary cerebral factory. A certain group A of these looms are kept working at a certain rate, and in connection with each other. These form our conscious stream of existence. A certain other group B are constantly kept at work, but at a slower rate, and represent our underlying animal life. Group B is usually disconnected with group A, but any loom in group B, when worked beyond a certain rate, comes into connection with group A. Groups A and B compose our normal self, reduced to its simplest expression. Neither group is unchanging. Depressed and exhausted, I eat a good meal. Group A is greatly modified thereby. Its constituent looms change their respective rates of motion, and some fresh looms are hitched on, as my memory and intellectual energy improve with the stimulus to nutrition. This is a difference of *mood*, but not yet a difference of personality. Push the stimulus further, and you have the difference between "Philip drunk and Philip sober,"—a marked difference of character, with an incipient formation of a secondary memory. Or suppose the man asleep and dreaming. Fewer looms are now driven at a high rate, and those that are driven fastest are linked in new ways. They form a group C, a group less coherent than A, but perfectly recognisable. Now let the man be thrown into the hypnotic trance. Straightway a new group of looms, D, is formed, with a new character and a new memory; for we know that it is usual for a hypnotic subject to forget his trance experiences when he is awake—that is to say, the looms in group D are not hitched on to the looms in group A. Nor is the hypnotic state a homogeneous, definite condition. Leaving aside cases like Madame B.'s, to which Mr. Barkworth objects as exceptional, and which are in no way needed by the argument, we have the familiar variations of the hypnotic condition—the "three stages" of Charcot, or the "light and deep" state on which Mr. Gurney made so many experiments as to alternation of memory. From those experiments it was seen that in an ordinary healthy subject *two* new chains of memory can easily be created, each distinct from the other, and from the waking memory. It is easy, that is to say, to connect the looms in a new group, E, different from group D, which was the first result of our hypnotisation.

I need hardly push the enumeration of these groups further. What name we give to the psychical modifications which in this metaphor they represent is a subordinate question, though still an important one. Of course, the groups are not wholly distinct from one another; the patterns which they weave resemble each other more or less. It is a question of degree. When the

induced difference is slight, we call it an alteration of *mood*; but it is sometimes so great—character and memory are so profoundly affected—that it seems to me (as to Ribot, &c., before me) to deserve the name of an alteration of *personality*. And, still holding to our assumption of an irreducible Ego behind all these manifestations—a force which works continuously, though now through one concatenation of looms, now through another—we may obviously suppose this force to be as great as we please, for the groups of looms through which it works need not exhaust it, and it may, for aught we know, be doing other work outside the manufactory.

And this conception is so far from being a fantastic or morbid one, that it will be seen on reflection to be a mere extension and generalisation of conceptions to which we are led by the commonest phenomena of life. The changes from infancy to manhood, from manhood to senility, from vigilance to dream, from sobriety to intoxication, from sanity to insanity—all these indicate that if there be an irreducible Ego persisting throughout, this Ego at any rate finds at different moments very different channels or capacities of self-manifestation. My metaphor of the manufactory and the looms would hold good even of these familiar and ordinary changes; the novelty lies only or mainly in the more rapid succession of changes which is now observed to be possible, and the more conspicuous unhitching and re-hitching of the links of memory. We all know that the dying man will sometimes speak in the tongue which he learnt in infancy, but has forgotten in adult life. Why should we shrink from multiplying such interruptions and such *rapprochements*, or fear that the Ego behind the chequered lives of a Félicité or a Léonie has lost by temporary diversification its pre-existing unity?

I trust that these explanations—which lack of space must here curtail—may meet Mr. Barkworth's main objection. I cannot hold out any prospect of retreat from my position for lack of evidence; for the evidence in France is growing monthly, quite beyond my power to reproduce it for English readers. The *Revue Philosophique* contains many of the papers to which I refer; and Professor Janet, of Havre, has a considerable book in preparation.

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS.

THE ETHER AND PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

Lieut.-Colonel A. T. Fraser, R.E., Associate of the Society for Psychical Research, has communicated to the Society a paper in which he suggests that if correct ideas can be obtained of the etherial medium which fills space, the result will be to place psychical phenomena on a sounder, because more tangible footing.

He argues that if the ether be, as is supposed, an incompressible solid, "we can personally only pass freely through it in all directions, by a momentary exchange of atoms of matter of which our bodies and clothes are composed with the atoms of the etherial medium." And he adds that "the admission that all the objects which we see move in the ether by exchange of their atoms at every instant of their progress in this solid and are made up of the same material identically as itself,

renders credible the disappearance even of a person and their re-
apparition at a distance away by showing how it can physically be
accounted for."

The physical speculation appears to me to be of somewhat too
hypothetical a character to be suitable for publication in the *Journal*
or *Proceedings* of our Society; but those Members and Associates who
are interested in the subject can obtain Colonel Fraser's manuscript
for perusal on application to the Assistant-Secretary, at the rooms of
the Society, 19, Buckingham-street, Adelphi, W.C.—[Ed.]

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