

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

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### EXPERIMENTS OF H. M. WESERMANN.

A recent addition to the Edmund Gurney Library is a little German book called *Mesmerism and the Universal Language*,\* published in 1822, by H. M. Wesermann, Government Assessor and Chief Inspector of Roads at Düsseldorf, &c.

By "the universal language" Wesermann means thought-transference and clairvoyance, and his book is a review of the German literature on "Animal Magnetism," mainly of the second decade of this century, from a psychical point of view. He gives some account of about 40 volumes, and extracts from them narratives of various experiments and observations on such subjects as mesmerism at a distance, thought-transference, transferred sensations, clairvoyance, premonitions, phantasms of the living and the dead, and the power possessed by clairvoyant patients of prescribing for themselves and others, and of accurately perceiving the lapse of time. Many of these are of great interest, though in estimating them we have to remember that in Wesermann's time the power of "suggestion" was not understood, and may frequently, therefore, have been the real though unobserved cause of some of the observed phenomena.

Space will not allow of our giving any extracts from the main body of the work, and our principal object is to call attention to the introduction, where in the course of 50 pages Wesermann discusses some of the problems presented by the phenomena described, and gives some experiments and observations of his own. The most important of these is an experiment of which an account is quoted in *Phantasms of the Living*, Vol. I., p. 101, from the *Archiv für den Thierischen Magnetismus*, Vol. VI., and about which we here find some valuable additional evidence. Mesmer's opinion that all might know what was happening to a friend who was thinking of them, were it not for the stronger impressions received through the senses, suggested to Wesermann to try

\* *Der Magnetismus und die allgemeine Weltsprache.*

to transfer mental images to sleeping friends at a distance; all the more, probably, because he had once succeeded in doing so some years before, though at the time inclined to attribute his success to chance. Accounts of four experiments in which he was successful in thus imposing dreams on his friends are given in *Phantasms*. His fifth experiment, at a distance of nine miles, is the one about which we now have additional evidence—in fact, a first-hand account from one of the percipients, of which the existence was not known to Mr. Gurney. We give the account in full, translated from the work before us (p. 28).

A lady, who had been dead five years, was to appear to Lieutenant —n in a dream at 10.30 p.m. and incite him to good deeds. At half-past ten, contrary to expectation, Herr —n had not gone to bed, but was discussing the French campaign with his friend Lieutenant S— in the ante-room. Suddenly the door of the room opened, the lady entered dressed in white, with a black kerchief and uncovered head, greeted S— with her hand three times in a friendly manner; then turned to —n, nodded to him, and returned again through the doorway.

As this story, related to me by Lieutenant —n, seemed to be too remarkable from a psychological point of view for the truth of it not to be duly established, I wrote to Lieutenant S—, who was living six miles away, and asked him to give me his account of it. He sent me the following reply:—

. . . . On the 13th of March, 1817, Herr —n came to pay me a visit at my lodgings about a league from A—. He stayed the night with me. After supper, and when we were both undressed, I was sitting on my bed and Herr —n was standing by the door of the next room on the point also of going to bed. This was about half-past ten. We were speaking partly about indifferent subjects and partly about the events of the French campaign. Suddenly the door out of the kitchen opened without a sound, and a lady entered, very pale, taller than Herr —n, about five feet four inches in height, strong and broad of figure, dressed in white, but with a large black kerchief which reached to below the waist. She entered with bare head, greeted me with the hand three times in complimentary fashion, turned round to the left towards Herr —n, and waved her hand to him three times; after which the figure quietly, and again without any creaking of the door, went out. We followed at once in order to discover whether there were any deception, but found nothing. The strangest thing was this, that our night-watch of two men whom I had shortly before found on the watch were now asleep, though at my first call they were on the alert, and that the door of the room which always opens with a good deal of noise did not make the slightest sound when opened by the figure.

S.

D—n, January 11th, 1818.

From this story (Wesermann continues) the following conclusions may be drawn:—

1. That waking persons, as well as sleeping, are capable of perceiving the mental pictures of distant friends through the inner sense as dream images.

For not only the opening and shutting of the door, but the figure itself—which, moreover, exactly resembled that of the dead lady—was incontestably only a dream in the waking state, since the door would have creaked as usual had the figure really opened and shut it.

2. That many apparitions and supposed effects of witchcraft were very probably produced in the same way.

3. That clairvoyants are not mistaken when they state that a stream of light proceeds from the magnetiser to the distant friend, which visibly presents the scene thought of, if the magnetiser thinks of it strongly and without distraction.

Wesermann's third inference is less sound than his other two, but we quote it because it has led him to state what we think he has stated nowhere else in the book, that in his experiments he concentrated his mind strongly on the subject to be transferred. It is much to be regretted that so little information is given to us as to his mode of action and as to other points. We have no reason to think that those with whom he experimented were persons whom he had mesmerised, or with whom he was in any way in special rapport. Lieutenant S—, indeed, was a complete stranger to him, but this proves little, as his impression may have been received from Lieutenant —n. Again we are left quite in the dark as to how often Wesermann tried similar experiments, but it seems probable that he sometimes failed, since he tells us in a letter contributed to *Nasse's Zeitschrift für Psychische Ärzte*, Vol. III., p. 758, that he had observed that these dream-pictures are only transferred to the sleepers if they are of a kind to interest, move, or surprise them. From the same source we learn that, in his view, apparitions such as that described above could seldom be produced; only, in fact, when the Agent is brought into a very emotional and excited state about the subject chosen to be transferred, and when the Percipient, whether owing to his physical or his mental constitution, is specially susceptible. He tells us, however, that he could relate more experiments if space permitted, but that he had found few friends who obtained such successful results as these. In the paper in the *Archiv* quoted in *Phantasms*, he says that two only of his friends succeeded. On the other hand he had convinced one of his strongest opponents—a doctor of law—who had himself caused his daughter to dream of a sudden attack of illness which had seized him in the night.

We have thought it worth while to dwell thus at length on this subject, not only because of the additional evidence here given on an interesting case, but because this class of experiment forms an exceedingly important link in the chain of evidence relating to thought-transference, and one which is frequently ignored or overlooked. It is a kind of experiment in which others besides Wesermann have succeeded, which all can try, and which ought to be tried much oftener than it is.

## CASES RECEIVED BY THE LITERARY COMMITTEE.

The lower value of dreams as compared with waking experiences in affording evidence of supernormal knowledge is a topic familiar to readers of *Phantasms of the Living*, and of many of the papers in our *Proceedings*. As pointed out by Mr. Gurney,\* the elements of weakness are mainly two. The first is that, dreams being often somewhat dim and shapeless things, when the actual facts are learnt, a faint amount of resemblance may often suggest a past dream; the real features and definite incidents which are now present to the mind in close association with some general scene or fact which actually figured in the dream, will be apt to be unconsciously *read back* into the dream. The second evidential weakness of dreams arises from their frequency. Among the multitude of dreams, one here and there is sure to correspond *in time* with an actual occurrence resembling the one dreamt of; and still more frequently must such accidental resemblances be found when an indefinite time is allowed for fulfilment, as it is in most "premonitory" dreams. And when a dream thus "comes true," unscientific minds will note and store up the fact as something extraordinary, without taking the trouble to reflect whether such incidents occur oftener than pure chance would allow. Even reflection, however, will not solve the question. There are two difficulties; it is almost equally impossible to determine what proportion of dreams do exhibit a striking correspondence with real events which could not be divined by the dreamer, and what proportion we should demand before we consider that the hypothesis of chance is strained in accounting for them. In the case of certain limited classes of dreams such an estimate may be possible, and Mr. Gurney has attempted it in the case of dreams of death coinciding in time with the actual death dreamt of. But, at any rate, in most classes of dreams we not only are without the necessary data for forming a decision, but it would be exceedingly difficult to obtain them.

With this preface we present to our readers a little collection of dreams exhibiting a more or less striking correspondence with present or future events, or in the case of L. 835, with another dream. In all of them the possibility of "reading back" has been almost excluded, as regards the main incidents, by the dream having been told beforehand.

L. 835.

## SIMULTANEOUS DREAMS.

From Mr. and Mrs. H., who do not wish their names to be published. The dreams took place in July, 1887, and the account was sent to us in August.

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\* *Phantasms of the Living*, pp. 298-300.

I dreamt that I was walking in Richmond Park with my husband and Mr. J. I saw notices put on several trees to the effect that "In consequence of the Jubilee, Lady R. will give a garden party on the 24th of June." I remarked to my husband that I hoped she would invite us. My husband said that he hoped she would not do so, as it would be extremely difficult to get back to town. Mr. J. then said, "Oh, I will manage that for you," and struck a blade of grass with his stick, upon which a carriage drove up. I then awoke and my husband said, "I have had such a vivid dream. I dreamt we were walking in Richmond Park, and I was told that Lady R. was going to have a party. We were invited, and I was very much troubled in my mind as to how we should get home, as the party was at 10, and the last train went at 11, when my friend J., who was walking with us, said, 'Oh, I will manage that for you.'"

(Signed) M. H. and J. B. H.

L. 836. (THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE IN A DREAM.)

From a gentleman who does not wish his name to be printed. His wife has sent us a similar, though somewhat less full account of what occurred.

*December 9th, 1889.*

On Sunday morning, November 24th [1889], I was at home reading carefully Sir William Hamilton's *Lectures on Metaphysics*. After finishing Lecture xx., I felt somewhat drowsy, and very soon fell asleep. This was at about 12 o'clock. I slept for about 10 minutes, and during that time I dreamt that a friend of mine appeared before me and said, "I say, you owe me twopence for postage in connection with that mortgage." "All right," I replied, "business is business," and saying this I put my hand in my pocket, and drawing it out gave him the twopence he required. With this I woke.

My friend has been managing some mortgage business for me during the last two months.

My wife had gone out about 10.15 a.m., intending to visit a church she had not been to before. Finding it rather farther than she expected, she thought she would like to take the tram back. But she had left her purse at home. However, being near a friend's house (the friend I saw in my dream), she called in and asked for the loan of twopence. His wife lent my wife sixpence, and he himself accompanied my wife to the church, which was very near. It was just before 11 o'clock. After the service my wife took the tram, and arrived home about 1 o'clock. My dream had made so great an impression on my mind that I immediately told her about it, and to my utter astonishment she related the story of borrowing twopence, which she said she would not have thought it worth while mentioning otherwise.

L. 1072.—A° P°.

From Mrs. Anderson, 8, Chester-terrace, S.W.

*March, 1889.*

One morning I received a letter from my sister (who was in Scotland),

to tell me that my baby niece, aged six weeks, was ill with erysipelas which covered her from the crown of her head to the tips of her tiny feet. In the evening I went to see some friends, and as I entered the house my hostess met me and said: "Your little niece is very ill." I looked astonished and she continued: "Don't say a word but listen. Last night I dreamt that I saw a tiny child coming towards me; she was swollen out of shape. I said: 'You poor little object, who are you?' and she said, 'I am M. C.'s little girl.'"

In answer to questions, Mrs. Anderson writes:—

1. The dream occurred, if I mistake not, in February, 1872. 2. I did not keep my sister's letter. 3. The dreamer is dead. Her name was Mrs. William Eversley. 4. Her daughter and husband can both verify it, and you shall meet them some day. 5. I think I certainly told my sister of it, but cannot vouch for her remembering it. 6. The same lady had many dreams which came perfectly *true* in every particular.

A. G. ANDERSON.

Miss Elizabeth Eversley gives us the following account of the dream dreamt by her late mother, the particulars of which were written out by Mrs. Anderson.

I remember perfectly my mother telling us one morning that she was sure M. C.'s baby girl was ill, as she had in a dream that night seen a little girl coming towards her swollen out of all shape. My mother exclaimed, "You poor little object, whose child are you?" The child answered, "I am M. C.'s little girl."

The following statement is made by Mr. Eversley as to the dream of Mrs. Eversley, told by Mrs. Anderson and Miss E. G. Eversley.

I perfectly remember my wife telling me she had a dream in which she saw a baby, all disfigured and swollen, and on asking the child who she was, she said, "I am Mrs. C.'s baby." Mrs. Anderson, sister to Mrs. C., came to our house a day or two after, and was about to tell us of her little niece's illness, when my wife said, "Stop! let me tell you my dream," and when she heard it, Mrs. Anderson said, "That is just the description I have had of the child from my sister."

In conversation with Miss Eversley on March 30th, 1889, I learnt that she also remembered Mrs. Anderson coming to the house on the Sunday—the dream having occurred, as Miss Eversley believes, on the preceding Friday night,—and beginning to tell of her niece's ailment. Mrs. Anderson was then interrupted by Mrs. Eversley, who narrated the dream.

Miss Eversley had no doubt talked over the matter often with Mrs. Anderson, but she told me that she had not done so in the interval between my meeting Mrs. Anderson and my calling on Miss Eversley, so that the latter has apparently a clear independent recollection of the circumstances.

The late Mrs. Eversley was in the habit of dreaming frequently

dreams which "came true." Such dreams were always clear and vivid, and she would relate them to her family in the morning. Miss Eversley was fairly confident that dreams thus related by her mother did as a rule "come true." She cannot, however, remember details of many at this distance of time.—F. P., *April 8th*, 1889.

P. Cl. 129.

From Captain Parker, through the Rev. A. T. Fryer.

Hythe Vicarage, Southampton, *April 16th*, 1889.

DEAR MR. FRYER,—On referring to the only notes I have, I find I cannot fix the exact date of the occurrence of which you want particulars. It was, however, during the latter half of June, 1886, as I find it was then that the man arrived whose coming I dreamt about.

I was then in charge of a Division of Coastguard, and it was a part of my duties to visit the various coastguard stations within the limits of that division of the coast. The dream, as nearly as I can remember it, was as follows: That I was visiting an outlying station where there were several coasting vessels moored, their heads out seaward, and sterns secured to the shore with hawsers. Two navy bluejackets landed from one of the craft, quite to my surprise, and on asking where they were from, one of them said he had been sent from Wick for duty at Sandhaven (a village in my division).

The details of the dream were so vividly impressed on my mind on waking, which is quite unusual with me, that I told my housekeeper about it at or about breakfast time—as far as I know the only time I ever told her any dream at all—and for the time thought no more of it, but soon after, I think the same day, when the post came I received an official letter appointing a man from Wick for duty at Sandhaven.

I was so astonished at this coincidence that I at once said to my housekeeper:

"You remember the dream I told you about a man coming from Wick for Sandhaven. Here is his official appointment."

A further curious coincidence in connection with the above is that in the ordinary course of events this man would have proceeded from Wick to Aberdeen by steamer, and from thence north by rail, and in fact that was how he was ordered to go; but on this occasion, which sometimes happened, the steamer stopped off Fraserburgh and landed the man there without my knowledge at the time, until I found a strange bluejacket at my quarters, and on asking who he was and where he had come from, he told me he had landed from the steamer from Wick, and was sent for duty at Sandhaven. At that moment all the details of the dream again came to my mind, and the fact of the man landing on the coast instead of coming by rail was also in accordance with the details of the dream. It is hardly necessary for me to remark that nothing occurred beforehand that would lead me to expect a man being sent from Wick, or I should not have thought that the dream was curious or worth a moment's thought.

I have no doubt my housekeeper remembers something of this occurrence as she has a better memory than I have for most things. I have not written to her on the subject, as I thought you might prefer to have her evidence without any reminder from me to her about it.

Y. F. H. PARKER.

The following is from Captain Parker's housekeeper.

Fraserburgh, *April 18th*, 1889.

In answer to your inquiry about Captain Parker's dream, I remember him telling me about it. He said that in his dream he left the house, and soon after met the coastguard man, and asked him if he was the man that was come to Sandhaven station from Wick, and he said, "I am." Mr. Parker said, when telling me about it next morning, "How I wish to see that man." He saw him soon, to his astonishment, the exact image and likeness as in his dream.

ELIZABETH MACDONALD.

P. 638.

In the following case we are requested not to give names, lest it should be painful to the parents of the lady who died.

*September 19th*, 1887.

In November, 1884, my daughter, then 16, said to me one morning, "Oh, mother, I had a terrible dream last night about B. I dreamt that you, she, and I were walking along the street, coming, I thought, from some musical entertainment, as I heard the music still in the distance. Suddenly B. appeared faint, and leant against some railings we were passing at the time. I tried to support her against the railings, but she gradually subsided and fell to the ground—dead. I thought I ran for a doctor, but could not find one, and in the confusion I awoke."

The dream seemed to have been a peculiarly vivid one, but after mentioning it to some other members of the family we thought no more of it. Just about a week, or rather more, after the dream, we were shocked to receive news of B.'s sudden death—in the street—coming from an afternoon operatic performance. Strangely enough we were so shocked by the news that for several days we did not remember I.'s dream.

On hearing the details of B.'s death, some months later, from her mother, who was with her, I was more than ever struck with the dream. She had become faint close to some railings, and for a minute leant against them, then gradually fell to the ground—dead. I cannot remember the exact date, but am positive it was about a week before the death actually occurred.

I have omitted to mention that B. was my niece, and had been so much with us that she was more like a sister to my daughters than a cousin.

The following is the percipient's own account, written nearly two years later.

A week previous to my cousin's death, I dreamt that she, and I, and some others were walking past a public building, in which some musical



entertainment was being held at the time, and, as we passed, the strains of music seemed to reach us quite distinctly. Opposite the building were railings, and close by them my cousin seemed suddenly to become faint, and sank on the ground. I tried to raise her and support her against the railings, but she slipped from my grasp, and I saw that she was dead.

I set about procuring medical aid, but certainly in a very dream-like way. First I went to the house of a doctor who had left the town years before; then, not finding him, to that of another who had been several years dead. I cannot at all remember whether this latter returned from the land of shadows to my help or not, for at this point everything became confused.

In the letter which accompanied this account, the percipient adds:—

It seemed very curious to us all at the time, as the last accounts of my cousin had been very favourable, and in any case she and I had never had any interests in common.

The sister of the percipient writes in November, 1888:—

I distinctly remember her telling her dream exactly as my mother has written. My sister E. was sleeping with her at the time, and remembers I. telling her of it in the morning.

I. is of a very impressionable nervous temperament, and in fact we consider her a trifle "uncanny." A few weeks ago she was staying in K., and one night she dreamed that there was a great fire in High-street, and that the fire engine would not work. In the morning she was quite as much surprised as anybody else to hear that there had been a fire that night, and the engine would *not* work.

The percipient herself says:—

My dreams frequently seem to come true. Only last week I had a night of horrible dreams. I seemed to be left in charge of two babies, each of which, one after the other, died quite suddenly under my care.

Next morning a letter from my brother informed me that the baby of a friend of ours had quite suddenly and unexpectedly died that same afternoon.

I have had many other experiences of a similar kind, but do not now remember the details.

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P. 639.

From the Rev. J. M. (Name given in confidence, not for publication).

*December 19th, 1884.*

About fourteen or fifteen years ago when I was vicar of a coal mining parish I dreamt that I baptised the child of a lady parishioner of mine in Jordan water. There was nothing in the world that I know of to make me think of Jordan water at the time. And certainly there was nothing to make me think of any child of the young lady of whom I dreamt. At that time she was very young—not out of her teens,—unmarried, and so far as I know not even engaged; still the dream as I lay in bed seemed quite a natural one, that is, there was nothing in it that presented any difficulty or unpleasantness. The baptism as I dreamt of it was a public one in the parish

church, and the father did not appear on the scene at all, neither was I given to understand who he was. But this did not seem at all to concern me.

In the morning on coming down stairs, not a little impressed by my dream—at any rate being amused and interested with it—I was surprised to find a letter from the Holy Land, enclosing some leaves and flowers from the Mount of Olives. These had been sent by a friend—a clergyman—who I thought was at the time at Birmingham. Unknown to me he had been presented to a benefice, and before entering upon it had taken the opportunity of going to Palestine. The coincidence of the Jordan water with plants from the Mount of Olives I thought curious, but still I did not attach any importance to it.

Some years passed by. My young lady friend and her younger sister were both married, and had families. The husband of the *latter* called upon me one day, to ask me to fix a time for baptising their child, suggesting a certain day, and saying that he and his wife had been promised some Jordan water by a friend, which they hoped would reach them in time for the baptism. I promised to use it if it should arrive in time. But while promising I laughed outright and said it was the child of the *wrong* sister. Then I told him of my dream about baptising a child of his wife's sister, and it seemed as if the dream was going to have a sort of half fulfilment. However, the Jordan water expected did not arrive in time, so the child of the younger sister was baptised in ordinary water, as indeed had been, up to that time, every child baptised by myself. There seemed no likelihood of my being called to baptise any child of the elder sister's at all. Her husband was a Presbyterian and lived in Scotland, and in fact her first child was baptised after the Presbyterian form.

But some year or two afterwards she happened to be in England with a second child, and much to my surprise she asked me if I would baptise it—an English gentleman and his wife having offered to stand sponsors for the child. I gladly complied with the request, and the mother before I left her said she had some Jordan water, and she would be glad if I would use it for the baptism. This I promised to do, and this I did. The father of the child being out of health at the time, was not present at the service. Thus my dream of many years before seemed somehow to have had a remarkable fulfilment.

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P. 640.

The following narrative was obtained for us by Mr. W. Leadham Crowe, of 4, Bishopsgate-street Within, from a friend of his.

21, Cranley-gardens, South Kensington, S.W., *May 25th*, 1889.

According to promise I give you an account of my dream in 1857.

On the night before the Derby I went to bed in a discontented frame of mind, as I was not allowed to go to Epsom.

In the winter I had backed the then favourite, Blink Bonny, to win for a small sum at 10 to 1. She ran in the One Thousand and was badly beaten, and went back in the betting to 66 to 1. I did not lose my faith in

my choice, but took £600 to £10. Well, you will understand that a boy of 19 had a great stake in the race.

In the early morning of the Derby Day, I dreamt that I was on the Epsom course (where I had not then been), at a point which I have since recognised as Tattenham Corner. I saw the horses go by, and followed with the crowd after the horses, and when I got up to the telegraph board I heard people shouting, "Blink Bonny has won." I looked at the board and saw the following numbers :—

19

4

23

On this I awoke, got out of bed (it was a splendid morning), took an envelope from my coat pocket and put down the numbers.

I went early to the station at Greenwich, and awaited the arrival of two friends who were going to the race, Charles West and W. R. Brander. I went up with them to London Bridge, where I bought a card. Blink Bonny was No. 19. I only had £2 in my pocket. I asked Brander to put it on for me. (He did not do it, saying he thought I was mad.) The numbers of the other horses I did not take much heed of when I found that No. 4 was a horse called Black Tommy, which was an extreme outsider I had never heard of ; nevertheless the result of the race was—

No. 19 Blink Bonny	1
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„ 4 Black Tommy	2
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„ 23 Adamas	3
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This is of course an extraordinary circumstance, and after 32 years a rather difficult thing to get corroborated, but I send you herewith a letter from West. Brander I have seen ; he says he remembers something about it, but that the changes which have occurred in his life have deprived him of the memory of his early days.

I may mention that I have dreamt numbers once or twice since, but they have not proved the *correct* ones.

J. S. CHRISTIE RENNECK.

Mr. West writes to Mr. Renneck as follows.

Lloyd's, London, E.C., *May 20th*, 1889.

I can endorse your statement as to the episode in connection with Blink Bonny's Derby, and I remember perfectly well your statement to us, before the race had been run, that you had dreamt a certain number had won, and that it turned out to be true ; it made a strange impression on my mind at the time.

CHAS. WEST.

We took some trouble to ascertain what the numbers of the first three horses in the Derby in 1857 actually were, and learn from Mr. H. Darling that they were as follows :—

21 Blink Bonny	1st
----------------	-----

4 Black Tommy	2nd
---------------	-----

3 Adamas	3rd
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Mr. Renneck's recollection of the numbers is not therefore quite

accurate, which is of course not at all surprising after an interval of 32 years, during long periods of which he has, as he tells us, never even thought of the dream. He is sure that he dreamt the right numbers.

There is a special difficulty in estimating the probability that a true dream about a race is not a mere coincidence, because races are undoubtedly very frequently dreamt about.

Mr. Renneck, it will be noticed, mentions that he has had one or two such dreams that have not come true. The following account of a false dream—vivid and acted on—was sent to us *à propos* to Mrs. Sidgwick's paper on *Premonitions*.

Once, 30 years ago, staying with some sporting men in Yorkshire, I dreamt most vividly that I saw the number of the horse who won the Leger run up and heard his name. He was an outsider, and we all sent £1 to the old betting offices and got very heavy odds of course, *but he was not in the running!*

We may point out that in the case of Mr. Renneck's dream, supposing it to be more than a very extraordinary accidental coincidence, it is not necessary to assume a supernormal knowledge of the future. The numbers must of course have been already assigned to the horses at the time of the dream, and it is not impossible that some one with a very complete acquaintance with the horses might have thought that particular result of the race a not improbable one.

#### P. 641.

The following curiously fulfilled dream belongs to the same class as dreams of races.

I think the following may be of interest to you, as Secretary of the Society for Psychical Research. The facts are most minutely correct. Some weeks since, a paper called *The Grove House Budget* announced a "Guessing Competition," first prize for nearest guess, *two guineas*. It was a number to be guessed, and this was to be obtained by the throwing of a die five times by the offerer of the prize, each turn up of the die to be placed in consecutive order, so that the figures *must* be either 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 No 0, or 7, or 9 could be in it. I bought 10 postcards, putting a number on each, such as 52,342, &c., and about two days after I had posted them (I wrote them on the 25th, and posted them two or three days later), on the following Friday or Saturday night, I *dreamt* that the winning number ended with 555. I dreamt the other two figures, but could not recall the one or the position of the other, but was sure there was a 2 in it. On the Sunday, when we were all at dinner (11 of us), I spoke of my dream and how curious it was, and many suggested I should write more cards with this ending, but I did not.

I told *all* about my dream of the ending being 555, and the matter almost left my mind, until I opened the *Grove House Budget* last Saturday,

December 14th, when, to my amazement, I found that the number thrown by the offerer of the prize was 52,555.

FANNY PARSONS.

High-street, Chipping Norton.

December 17th, 1889.

We, the undersigned, vouch for the exact correctness of the foregoing facts :—

SARA PARSONS.

S. A. OWEN.

ALICE RENÉE SHAW.

F. WITHAM.

L. OWEN.

FRANK NOYCE.

GEENA WHITE.

In reply to our inquiry, Miss Parsons says :—

I beg to say that the die was thrown certainly 14 days or more *after* my dream of the number. It was a curious coincidence.

P. 642.

From Mrs. Burkitt, Harvey-road, Cambridge [November, 1889].

About 11 years ago I had a most vivid dream. I thought I was standing in a doorway, holding back a curtain, and looking into the hall of a house, and I knew that house to be Farnley, in Yorkshire. The position of the hall, its furniture—everything about it—was clear and distinct, and so, too, was the sound of a bell, which I seemed to hear ring clearly as I stood there.

Farnley Hall was to me a mere name. I had heard that my mother spent a few months of her early life there, with her uncle, Mr. Hawkworth Fawkes, but I never remember her speaking much about England at all, and never about her old home, or Farnley.

I told my sister of my dream the next morning, and thought no more about it, till I went to stay in Yorkshire, about six or seven years afterwards.

Then, wishing to see Farnley, I asked Mr. Fawkes' leave to see the collection of Turner's pictures which he has, and, with two friends, went over there. On my way I told my friends of my dream, and we were all astonished to find the hall as I had described it.

The Fawkes' were away, but we wandered on, one room leading into another, till we came to one where tea had been prepared for us. I was sitting at the table, when, seeing a curtain opposite me, I felt compelled to find out what was behind it. I held it back, and found myself looking into the hall from the exact point of view that I had seen it in my dream. And then a bell rang.

What seems to me strange is, that the place and almost every detail was vivid for those years, but now that I have seen the reality, it has slowly faded away, and I have now an indistinct remembrance of that part of the house.

In connection with this case we may refer the reader to the suggestion of Mr. Lach-Szyrma in the letter which follows.

ERRATUM.—The cases numbered L. 1049 in *Journal* for December, 1889, and L. 1050 in *Journal* for January, should have been L. 1070 and L. 1071 respectively.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## HEREDITARY MEMORY.

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

SIR,—There is one obscure subject on which I should like to see an inquiry by the Society for Psychical Research. I mean hereditary memory. I know it is usually accepted, even by sceptical physiologists, that we inherit instincts and habits from our ancestors. The case of an hereditary passion for hunting in certain English families is adduced. Also certain acts, *e.g.*, in women a peculiar mode of threading a needle (as in one branch of my own family) is hereditary. The Stuarts and Bourbons both had a manifest and remarkable heredity of thought (which might result partly from instinct, partly from education.) But may not this power of inheritance extend still further, even to the recollection of certain places by descendants, and may not this account for some cases at least of that well-known mental phenomenon of persons feeling suddenly that they perfectly recollect places and scenes where a moment's reflection shows them they have never been in their lives? I may explain what I mean by my own experience.

In early childhood I was much given to day dreams, as many only children of active imaginations are. Two scenes have haunted me many hundred times, I am sure, though as I attained manhood they faded and were only recollected as childhood's dreams. I will describe each of them. They were two of my dominant scenes to the inner visual organs in childhood.

1. A large village lying northward, with heaving plain and woodlands in the back. In front there is a little stream crossed by a small bridge. It is looked at from a hill. There is one church in that village, and a road going north, and a park to the east. I have thought of that village a hundred times and peopled it with imaginary people and quaint adventures, as children will.

Now when I was an undergraduate in Oxford my mother suggested my going to visit Adderbury, which had been connected with our family since 1800, and where she had spent some of her childhood, staying with her uncle who dwelt there. She intended going herself there, but was prevented. Still she told me to go there and see the old place, full of her childhood's memories. I did so one winter's day. I came to a low hill and there before me was almost exactly the scene of my childhood's dreams—the large village, the little stream, the park, the woodlands, and the church. Now my mother had never described to me Adderbury. It is curious I should have thought of it, for, spending my childhood in Devon, I had conceived a typical Oxfordshire village, totally unlike any place I had seen in childhood.

2. Another scene was more curious and more persistent. It was a large village near the sea facing eastwards. The hill is very steep—so steep that you must descend part of the way by steps. The houses are in terraces one over the other. Above there is a woodland. I always thought I dwelt there and had a house on the north side. Hundreds of day dreams had I of that village and its steps and terraces, and blue sea, but my home was always on the north side and a little inland. Till last July, I never in all my journeys had seen any place like that scene of my day dreams. I was then asked to visit Clovelly in North Devon, where my maternal ancestors

(my great-grandmother was a Cary) had long lived. To my astonishment there were the terraces, the steep hill, the steps down to the sea facing eastward, and, to the north, Cary Court, where for ages our people had lived. I saw in the church seven of the Cary tombs. Clovelly is described in *Westward Ho*, which I only read some years ago for the first time, and the resemblance never struck me.

Are there not many other instances of this ancestral memory?

Newlyn St. Peter, Penzance.

W. S. LACH-SZYRMA.

REVIEW.

An interesting article on "Ghosts," by Mr. R. Hodgson, Secretary of the American branch of the Society for Psychical Research, is published in the February number of a new American magazine, *The Arena*, and is the first of a series in which Mr. Hodgson proposes to explain the aims and methods of the Society, with the hope of arousing a more general and intelligent interest in its work. In this paper he discusses briefly, and in a simple and clear manner, the elementary principles which must be kept in view in attempting to explain coincidental and other apparitions, as well as some of the more obvious and fundamental theoretical difficulties that meet us. Typical cases of the apparitions of living and dead persons, from the collections of the English and American Societies, are given. Mr. Hodgson's next article will treat of "death wraiths" and occurrences in houses reputed to be "haunted."

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- EXPERIMENTAL-PSYCHOLOGIE (Schriften der Gesellschaft für, zu Berlin). *Leipzig*, 1890†
- I. Dessoir (Max) Das Doppel-Ich.
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- IV. Bentivegni (A. von) Die Hypnose und ihre civilrechtliche Bedeutung.
- LOMBROSO (Cesare) Studi sull' Ipnotismo, con ricerche Optalmoscopiche del Professore Reymond, e dei Professori Bianchi e Sommer sulla polarizzazione psichica, 3rd edition .....*Turin*, 1887
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H. ARTHUR SMITH.

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