

JOURNAL

OF THE

SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

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NEW MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES.

MEMBERS.

- CAVE, CHARLES J. P., 13, Lowndes-square, London, S.W.
 ELDER, MRS., Campden House, Kensington, London, W.
 KINGSTON, H. D. R., M.B., Stormont Lodge, Willesden, N.W.

ASSOCIATES.

- BLACKIE, MISS J. L., 10, Stratford-place, London, W.
 BUCKLER, W. H., Trinity College, Cambridge.
 DAINTRY, CHARLES J., Petworth, Sussex.
 DICKINSON, MRS., Bramblebury, Wandsworth Common, S.W.
 DUNN, EDMUND A., 92, Regent-street, London, W.
 ELLISON, REV. JOHN H., 4, Warwick-square, London, S.W.
 FEILDING, HON. EVERARD, Newnham Paddox, Lutterworth.
 HILLS, MRS., Corby Castle, Carlisle.
 MACLAGAN, MISS M. M., 4, West Cromwell-road, London, S.W.
 MORISON, MRS. MILLER, Morison House, Hetland, Ruthwell, N.B.
 PONSONBY, HON. MRS., 9, Chapel-street, Grosvenor-place, W.
 REYNOLDS, MRS., Millington House, Thelwall, near Warrington.
 ROUSE, ROLLA E., M.D., 2, Tisbury-road, West Brighton.
 SHILTON, ALFRED J., F.C.S., 36, Castle-street, Reading.
 SOLOVOY, MICHAEL, 9, Mokovaia, St. Petersburg.
 VILLAMARINA, THE MARCHESA DI, Palazza Reale, Quirinale, Rome.
 WARTER, MRS. TATHAM, 10, Upper Phillimore-gardens, Kensington, W.
 WEMYSS, MISS A., Washwell House, Painswick, Gloucestershire.
 WIGAN, W. L., Larkfield, near Maidstone.
 WINGFIELD, MRS. EDWARD, 40, Albion-street, Hyde Park, W.

HONORARY ASSOCIATE.

- SHIELD, MRS., Bowers Gifford Rectory, Essex.

ASSOCIATES OF THE AMERICAN BRANCH.

- ARNOLD, J. N., 19, College-street, Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A.
 BIGELOW, HORACE P., Waterville, Oneida Co., New York, U.S.A.
 CASE, MISS M. R., 120, Commonwealth-avenue, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.
 CHANDLER, MRS. H. P., Forest Hill-street, Jamaica Plain, Mass., U.S.A.
 CHANDLER, MISS, Forest Hill-street, Jamaica Plain, Mass., U.S.A.
 CHAPIN, IRVING, Puritan Club, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.
 DALL, N. HASKELL, Hedgecall, Glen-road, Jamaica Plain, Mass., U.S.A.
 DALLAS, GEORGE M., 263, South 4th-street, Philadelphia, U.S.A.
 DUCEY, WILLIAM L., Muskegon, Michigan, U.S.A.
 DUNHAM, MISS E. L., 137, East 36th-street, New York, U.S.A.
 ESTY, PROFESSOR W. C., Amherst College, Amherst, Mass., U.S.A.
 FROTHINGHAM, P. R., 8th-street, New Bedford, Mass., U.S.A.
 GAGE, LYMAN J., The First National Bank of Chicago, Chicago, U.S.A.
 GARDINER, PROF. H. N., 23, Crafts-avenue, Northampton, Mass., U.S.A.
 GOODING, MISS MARY, Concord, Mass., U.S.A.
 GRAHAM, PROFESSOR ANDREW J., 744, Broadway, New York, U.S.A.
 HARRIS, REV. J. ANDREWS, D.D., Cheshunt Hill, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.
 MCVICKER, J. H., McVicker's Theatre, Chicago, U.S.A.
 NEWCOMB, C. A., 1145, Woodward-avenue, Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.
 NIMS, F. A., Muskegon, Michigan, U.S.A.
 OSBORN, PROF. F. W., 491, Classon-avenue, Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A.
 PECKHAM, ORVILLE, The First National Bank of Chicago, Chicago, U.S.A.
 PRATT, J. H., Spring Hill, Kansas, U.S.A.
 REES, MRS. JANET RUNTZ, Wayside, Scarsdale, New York, U.S.A.
 STRAUSS, ALBERT, 344, West 55th-street, New York, U.S.A.
 THAYER, DR. D., Hotel Lafayette, 200, Columbus-avenue, Boston, Mass.
 WESTBROOK, DR. R. B., 1707, Oxford-street, Philadelphia, U.S.A.

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL.

The Council met on the 7th and 28th of March. Colonel Hartley was in the chair on the first occasion, and the President on the second. The following Members were also present at one or both of the Meetings:—Dr. A. T. Myers, and Messrs. T. Barkworth, W. Crookes, W. Leaf, F. W. H. Myers, F. Podmore, H. Arthur Smith, R. Pearsall Smith, and H. E. Wingfield.

The following were elected, under Rule 17, as Co-opted Members of the Council for the current year:—Gerald W. Balfour, Esq., M.A., M.P., William Crookes, Esq., F.R.S., Rev. A. T. Fryer, and Hugh E. Wingfield, Esq., M.A.

On the proposition of Mr. F. W. H. Myers, Mrs. Shield, of Bowers Gifford Rectory, Essex, was elected an Honorary Associate for the current year.

At the two Meetings of the Council three new Members and twenty new Associates, whose names and addresses are given on a preceding page, were elected. The election of twenty-seven new Associates of the American Branch was also recorded.

At the request of Mr. J. Russell, his name was transferred from the list of Members to that of Associates.

It was agreed that the names of eight persons who from various causes had virtually ceased to be Members of the Society should be struck off the List.

The Lists of Corresponding Members and of Honorary Associates were read over and the following were re-elected for the current year:—

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS.

- PROFESSOR A. ALEXANDER, Caixa, 906, Rio Janeiro.
 PROFESSOR H. BEAUNIS, 29, Rue des Ecuries d'Artois, Paris.
 PROFESSOR BERNHEIM, Hôpital Civil, Nancy.
 PROFESSOR H. P. BOWDITCH, M.D., Harvard Medical School, Boston, U.S.A.
 PROFESSOR NICHOLAS M. BUTLER, Columbia College, New York, U.S.A.
 DR. MAX DESOIR, 27, Köthener Strasse, Berlin, W.
 DR. FÉRÉ, 37, Boulevard St. Michel, Paris.
 PROFESSOR STANLEY HALL, Clark University, Worcester, Mass., U.S.A.
 DR. EDUARD VON HARTMANN, Gross-Lichterfelde, Germany.
 PROFESSOR PIERRE JANET, Bourg-la-Reine, France.
 MAHADEVA VISHNU KANÉ, B.A., Dharwar, Bombay.
 PROFESSOR KOVALEVSKY, The University, Kharkoff, Russia.
 DR. A. A. LIÉBEAULT, Nancy.
 PROFESSOR J. LIÉGEOIS, Nancy.
 PROFESSOR C. LOMBROSO, 43, Corso Oporto, Turin, Italy.
 HANS NATGE, Berlin-Tempelhof, Berlin.
 PROFESSOR E. C. PICKERING, The Observatory, Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A.
 DR. F. FREIHERR GOELER VON RAVENSBURG, 4, Nettelbeckstrasse, Berlin, W.
 PROFESSOR TH. RIBOT, Office of the *Revue Philosophique*, Paris.
 PROFESSOR CHARLES RICHTER, 15, Rue de l'Université, Paris.
 BARON A. VON SCHRENK-NOTZING, Klenze-Strasse, 64, Munich.
 H. TAINE, Menthon St. Bernard, Haute Savoie, France.
 PROFESSOR N. WAGNER, Imperial University, St. Petersburg.

HONORARY ASSOCIATES.

- CURTIS, MISS MARY, Laugharne, St. Clears, South Wales.
 FRYER, REV. A. T., 4, Upper Vernon-street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C.
 GRUBB, EDWARD, M.A., Rye Croft, Fulford-road, Scarborough.
 JAMES, CAPTAIN, 68, Hereford-road, Bayswater, London, W.
 JENKINS, E. VAUGHAN, Energlyn, 31, St. Margaret's-road, Oxford.

KEULEMANS, J. G., 4, St. Mark's-crescent, Regent's Park, London, N.W.
KLEIBER, JOSEPH, St. Petersburg.

MACDONALD, REV. J. A., 43, Hill Side-road, Stamford Hill, London, N.

NISBET, E. T., 51, Eldon-street, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

ROBERTSON, MISS N., 11, Kilburn-square, London, N.W.

SAXBY, MRS., Mount Elton, Clevedon.

SCUDAMORE, MRS., 36, Albion-road, Stoke Newington, London, N.

SHIELD, MRS., Bowers Gifford Rectory, Essex.

SUDGEN, REV. E. H., B.A., B.Sc., Bradford, Yorkshire.

WALWYN, MRS., 9, Sion Hill, Clifton, Bristol.

Thanks were voted to the donors for two or three small presents to the Library.

The Finance Committee presented a report at the Meeting on the 7th which received careful attention. It was agreed as far as possible to carry out the recommendations contained in it.

Some other matters of routine business having been attended to, the Council agreed to meet on Friday, the 9th of May, at 3 p.m., at the Westminster Town Hall, previous to the General Meeting arranged for 4 o'clock on that afternoon.

The following is a brief statement of the arrangements that have been agreed to in regard to the American Branch of the Society for Psychical Research. A proposal from the American Society for Psychical Research having been laid before the Council on November 1st last, the effect of which would be to convert it into a branch of the Society for Psychical Research, its Members having certain privileges as "American Associates," it was, after discussion, unanimously agreed that the proposal be accepted for a year's trial. It was subsequently agreed that Professor W. James and Mr. S. P. Langley should constitute an Advisory Committee, with power to obtain any reports they may require from Mr. R. Hodgson, as Secretary and Treasurer of the American Branch, and in conjunction with him to elect Associates of the American Branch. This Committee is to be called together at the request of either of its Members and to report to the Council if desirable. The names of Associates of the American Branch so elected are to be transmitted by Mr. Hodgson to the Council. The annual subscription of Associates of the American Branch is to be three dollars; and those who wish may, with leave of the Council, become full Members of the Society by the annual payment of ten dollars. Associates of the American Branch shall be entitled to receive the *Proceedings* and *Journal* free by post as issued. The cost of the *Proceedings* and *Journals* supplied to the American Branch, whether for distribution among the Associates or for sale by the Secretary, and the

cost of postage and of despatching the same, will be paid to the Treasurer of the Society for Psychical Research in England from the funds of the Branch. By the *cost* of a copy of the *Proceedings* or *Journal* is here meant the total cost of printing divided by the whole number of copies printed. The balance of the amount of subscriptions is to be expended in the promotion of psychical research in America. So far as relates to publications, this arrangement commences with *Proceedings* Part XV. and with the *Journal* for January, 1890.

GENERAL MEETING.

A General Meeting was held at the Westminster Town Hall, on Friday, March 28th, at 8.30, the President, Professor Sidgwick, in the chair.

COLONEL TAYLOR read a short paper, in which he described the result of 20 experiments, which he said might be regarded as experiments in thought-transference by diagram, with the element of the transference of thought eliminated. They were conducted by getting 50 diagrams drawn on each of 40 forms previously marked Agent 1, Percipient 1, &c., and then comparing the agent papers with the percipient papers of the same number.

The object of the experiments was to ascertain what chance alone would do in producing correspondences in the diagrams, and the result went to show that this had been sufficiently allowed for in the Society's work. Of the 1,000 trials registered only 20 could, in his opinion, be called successes, whereas, on looking over the diagrams figured in Vols. I. and II. of our *Proceedings*, he had only to count 42 trials to find 20 correspondences between agent and percipient so nearly alike that had they been found in his collection he would have noted them.

Professor Minot, in Vol. I. Part IV. of the *Proceedings* of the American Society for Psychical Research, speaks of a tendency people have to draw certain diagrams, and when they do so to draw them early in a series, and considers it premature to accept our proofs of thought-transference so long as his "law of relative frequency" is disregarded. Colonel Taylor, treating his collection as 2,000 separate diagrams, explained that, tabulating them much as Professor Minot had his 5,000, he also found a tendency to draw certain diagrams, but not the same diagrams as in the American experiment. He found no tendency, however to draw the most frequently repeated diagram early in a series. Finally, Colonel Taylor pointed out that if Mr. Minot's law operates the number of apparent "successes" should be more numerous at the beginning of a series of experiments in thought-transference than at the end, but this did not appear to be the case.

The PRESIDENT said that experiments such as Colonel Taylor's were

valuable, and, indeed, almost indispensable for an exact estimate of the evidence of thought-transference obtained by the drawing of diagrams. His accidental successes, moreover, gave a striking illustration of the degree of correspondence that might be obtained by mere chance, and would bring home to the most unmathematical mind how entirely the proof of thought-transference must depend on the proportion of successes to failures.

PROFESSOR ALEXANDER, of Rio de Janeiro, then read an account of some observations made by himself and a friend in Rio on some apparently abnormal phenomena occurring in the presence of two little daughters of the latter, aged respectively $12\frac{1}{2}$ and $9\frac{1}{2}$ years. The phenomena consisted, among other things, of raps, movements of heavy objects, and writing on slates apparently not executed by human hands, and they frequently occurred under circumstances which Mr. Alexander thought precluded the possibility of trickery, even had the children been inclined to it, which he did not believe. This account will form part of the evidence to be reported on shortly by the "Physical Phenomena" Committee.

MR. GILBERT ELLIOT observed that he had seen similar phenomena in India, and also spoke of a séance with the Davenport Brothers, which greatly impressed him.

DR. MYERS asked Mr. Alexander whether any attempt had been made to measure the physical force exhibited. Mr. Alexander replied in the negative.

MRS. SIDGWICK asked whether the "direct writing" obtained ever gave definite answers to questions asked at the time, so that it could not have been prepared beforehand. Mr. Alexander answered that it sometimes did.

MR. BARKWORTH inquired whether information unknown to any of the sitters was ever given at the séances. From Mr. Alexander's reply this seemed very doubtful.

A GENTLEMAN asked whether Mr. Alexander had ever met with an instance of such occurrences as he had described, which at the time seemed genuine, and afterwards proved not to be so.

MR. ALEXANDER said he had not, but mentioned a case in which he had caught another young medium tricking, though she afterwards exhibited what he considered to be genuine phenomena at the same séance.

MR. MORELL THEOBALD alluded to raps occurring in his own family 20 years ago, resembling those described by Mr. Alexander.

The PRESIDENT said that the phenomena reported by Professor Alexander were exactly of the class to which, when the Society was founded eight years ago, he had expressed the hope that the attention

of investigators into the physical phenomena of Spiritualism would be mainly directed. Their importance, in his view, lay chiefly in the fact that they were produced without the presence of a professional medium. He hoped that the Physical Phenomena Committee might have opportunities of making investigations of this kind. Of course, in all investigations with private, no less than professional mediums, it was the investigator's duty to take adequate precautions against the possibility of trickery ; otherwise the investigator's testimony added comparatively little to that of the medium.

MEETING OF THE AMERICAN BRANCH OF THE SOCIETY
FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH,

AT ROOMS OF THE BOSTON SOCIETY OF NATURAL HISTORY.
Tuesday, March 4th, 1890, at 8 p.m.

About 200 persons present. Professor Wm. James in the chair.
The Secretary read the records of the previous Meeting, which were approved.

The Chairman drew the attention of the Members to the circular recently issued on behalf of the International Congress of Experimental Psychology, and invited the assistance of persons willing to collect answers to the inquiry concerning hallucinations.

The Secretary read an abridgment of the discussion between Mr. F. W. H. Myers and Mr. Frank Podmore concerning *Phantasms of the Dead*.

The Meeting then adjourned.

R. HODGSON.

CASES RECEIVED BY THE LITERARY COMMITTEE.

L. 837 Ad Pn Visual.

From Miss Berta Hurly, Waterbeach Vicarage, Cambridge.

February, 1890.

In the spring and summer of 1886 I often visited a poor woman called Evans, who lived in our parish, Caynham. She was very ill with a painful disease, and it was, as she said, a great pleasure when I went to see her ; and I frequently sat with her and read to her. Towards the middle of October she was evidently growing weaker but there seemed no immediate danger. I had not called on her for several days, and one evening I was standing in the dining-room after dinner with the rest of the family, when I saw the figure of a woman dressed like Mrs. Evans, in large apron and muslin cap, pass across the room from one door to the other, where she disappeared. I said, " Who is that ? " My mother said, " What do you mean ? " and I said, " That woman who has just come in and walked over to the other door." They all laughed

at me, and said I was dreaming, but I felt sure it was Mrs. Evans, and next morning we heard she was dead.

BERTA HURLY.

Miss Hurly's mother writes :—

On referring to my diary for the month of October, 1886, I find the following entry: "19th. Berta startled us all after dinner, about 8.30 last evening, by saying she saw the figure of a woman pass across the dining-room and that it was Mrs. Evans. This morning we hear the poor woman is dead." On inquiring at the cottage we found she had become wandering in her mind, and at times unconscious, about the time she appeared to Berta, and died towards the morning.

ANNIE ROSS.

February 25th, 1890.

We have received the following narrative from the Rev. H. Kendall, of Darlington, who informs us that the percipient, Alderman Fowler, of Durham, is much esteemed there, and has been five or six times Mayor. Though the date of the experience is remote, it was so simple and definite that there seems little room for error to creep in.

L. 838 A^d Pⁿ Visual.

Manor House, Durham. [1889.]

I was assistant at a shop in Durham, near my present place of business, when a singular circumstance happened to me, which seemed to imply that the spirits of the departed have, at least at the time of their departure, the power to manifest themselves to survivors. I had a brother whom I familiarly called Mat, who was a sailor, and had gone on a voyage to the Baltic. One Saturday afternoon I was attending to a customer, reckoning up the amount to be paid after serving the articles, when I happened to look towards the window, and was surprised to see my brother Mat outside. Our eyes met. I smiled and nodded to him, and said, "I'll be with you presently," or something of that sort. I told my master that my brother Mat had come and was standing outside. I was immediately released from my engagement with the customer and told that I might go to my brother and also bring him to sleep with me that night. When I went out into the street, expecting to find my brother Mat waiting for me, he was nowhere to be seen. I spent all the evening seeking for him at places where I supposed he might have called, but without success. I was so disturbed at this that I went off home to Shiny Row next morning to see if they knew aught, but he had not been there, nor had they heard any news of him. But this was the astounding coincidence which I learned afterwards. Mat died in the hospital at the Elsinore about the time when I saw him standing in the street at Durham.

[The date was October 21st, 1837.]

JAMES FOWLER.

Alderman Fowler adds :—

I have never had any similar experience. The news of death did not reach the family till the return of the vessel from the Elsinore, but the stir caused by my going the next morning to my home, some eight or nine miles

distant, to inquire for my brother, believing him to have gone there; my positive assertion of having seen him the day before and surprise at not finding him at home, caused the family to know the date of my vision and of the death to be the same.

The following three dreams belong to the group printed in the last number of the *Journal*, but were left out for want of space.

P. 643. Dream. Cf. *Phantasms of the Living*, Case (79).

From the Rev. E. D. Banister, Whitechapel Vicarage, Preston Lancashire.

[November 12th, 1885.]

My father, whilst a schoolboy (probably from 1808-1815), had a dream relating to his future, which I and my sister have often heard him relate. In the dream he saw a tablet in the parish church of his native place, on which was inscribed his name in full, the date of his birth, and the day and month, but not the year, of his death. But there seemed to him to be something uncertain about the *month* in the date of his death. The date as inscribed on the tablet was Jun. 9. But as June is seldom, if ever, abbreviated as Jun., he was somewhat inclined to think that it might be Jan. 9.

Many years elapsed after the dream, and nothing occurred to recall the circumstance until on June 9th, 1835, my eldest brother died at the age of two years and ten months. My father at the time was very deeply affected by the loss of the child. The date of the child's death called to his mind the date on the tablet, and though in his dream he distinctly saw his own name, he ever afterwards favoured the idea that the date he had seen was Jun. 9.

On January 9th, 1883, my father died.

Mr. Banister's sister confirms as follows:—

I have seen my brother's letter respecting the dream of which I have heard my father speak, and can only say that the facts are as my brother has stated.

AGNES BANISTER.

P. 644. Dream.

From a lady, whom we will call Miss Dickens, as we are not allowed to give real names or initials.

In the January of 1888, I was in Boston, Mass., U.S.A., and intended returning to my home in London about Easter. I resided with some connections of my married brother. I sailed for England earlier than I intended, and had no idea when I left America that a letter from my home was on the way, telling me that my home had been given up. I tell you this to show that, on landing in Liverpool, I had not the slightest idea I should go and live with my aunt, where I accidentally met Mr. C.

Before I left Boston I had a remarkable dream. I told it at the time to a Miss R., my intimate friend, and she will be a witness to it.

I dreamt my aunt handed me *two feet*. They looked like false ones, but I was not sure about it. I had to bathe them and take care of them. It

distressed me to think I might not be able to tell them apart, when I thought, Oh! they will be left and right! I looked. They were both right feet.

On arriving at my aunt's I thought of this dream the first thing, and she turned to the servant who was in the room, and said, "Mr. C." "What about Mr. C.?" said I. "He has lost his right foot," she answered, "and I told Mrs. S. you would very likely become interested in each other," &c.

I met the gentleman shortly after, and he immediately began telling me of his sad accident. Our acquaintance increased, and he got two false feet during our intimacy. I became his right hand in everything, and the last thing we talked about before his sudden death was my helping him to get a third American foot.

Miss Dickens adds in a subsequent letter:—

Before going to America in 1886, I met Mr. C. once for a few minutes. But I never gave him a second thought, did not remember his name, and I do not remember that he was lame. . . . You will understand Mr. C. did not get a false foot till *after* our acquaintance.

Miss R. writes in confirmation:—

I remember Miss Dickens telling me she dreamed of her aunt handing her two feet to take care of. This was after she had arranged for returning, just before sailing. I had urged her to defer returning a month or two. She said she was leaving Boston earlier than she had intended, as her friends wrote they were going into a smaller house if she was returning to them, and she wished to go into the new house with them as soon as possible.

P. 130. Dream.

The following dream is communicated by the Rev. R. Jamblin, Rector of Wilmington, to Mr. Fryer, who remarks:—

It may be mere coincidence, or the thieves may have attempted his house on the night of his dream and been disturbed.

It will be observed that it was a neighbouring house,—not his own,—that actually was robbed. When the account was first given to Mr. Fryer *vivâ voce* he understood that dream and burglary had occurred on the same night, but on further inquiry Mr. Jamblin finds that this was not the case. He informs us that such a dream is an unusual occurrence with him, and, in answer to our inquiry whether he had at any other time noted a dream in his diary, says:—

I can find no record nor have I any recollection of ever having had a dream of a particular event before the present one.

He was in Belgium when this dream occurred.

Wilmington. *November 30th, 1880*

I enclose the date of the robbery over the village policeman's signature, between 23rd and 24th August.

My diary says:—

"*August 22nd, Thursday.*

"Horrid dream, 2 a.m., that our house had been burglaried."

This note was made at 2 a.m. by my watch. But I ought to say that it was

intended at the time to be a rough note only, a sort of shorthand note to be expanded afterwards. The substance of the dream was that a burglary had been or was being committed, and that the persons concerned in it were, to my certain knowledge, in some fields at the back of the house where the real burglary occurred, and that the alarm bell was ringing at the Hall, the adjoining house.

Then my *thoughts* (distinguishing dream from conscious thought) went naturally to my own home, and I *thought* (still sleepy) that the dream was intended to be and was a presentiment of mischief to my home.

That was why I wrote what I did, and that is the interpretation thereof.

You will see that my dream was 48 hours in advance of the real event.

ROBERT JAMBLIN.

The following is the enclosure referred to by Mr. Jamblin:—

3, Broad-lane, Wilmington. *November 27th, 1889.*

A burglary was committed at Clayton Croft, Dartford Heath, Wilmington, the residence of Mr. C. J. Morgan, between the hours of 11 p.m., 23rd, and 6 a.m. 24th August, 1889.

MOSES G. KITNEY, Police Constable.

The following is an extract from a letter from Mr. Jamblin to his wife, which was posted at Courtrai on August 23rd:—

August 22nd, 11.30 p.m.

I do hope you will be careful with regard to the house. This morning at two I awoke in a dream. I had a frightful idea that the vicarage was being broken into. I thought I was at the Losiers and heard the alarm bell ring. I almost determined to write home at once and ask you to have H. Mitchell to sleep in the house. Had it been possible I should have started for home at once, so fixed was the idea of danger in my mind.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ARE APPARITIONS OBJECTIVE OR SUBJECTIVE?

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

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me a few words apropos of the theories of Messrs. Myers and Podmore on apparitions? It seems to me that their explanations are exceedingly *far fetched*—*telepathic* ones naturally would be; and, more than that, they by no means cover many well-authenticated ghost stories. Their theory of the percipient being affected by mental influences from friends of the dead, or by *deferred* latent impressions on his own mind, is not only an exceedingly complicated one, but, to my mind, utterly inadequate as any explanation (save in a very few instances) of the recorded phenomena. The whole subject is wrapped in a cloud of high-sounding words sufficiently puzzling to the uninitiated, and I expect, for that matter, to many of the *savants* themselves!

Their theories as to the apparitions being *always purely subjective* (for I presume they mean that?), I dissent from *in toto*. I firmly believe that all *bonâ fide* apparitions of the dead are disembodied souls—made of a finer

element than any gas known to science, but still material to *spirit* sense, though not always so to *ours*; that they occupy space and move from spot to spot; can touch us sometimes, and we are sensible of their touch; can (being atomic) *pass through molecular obstructions* as easily as we can pass through the air; can displace furniture and produce real noises; that, in fine, they are *external realities*, and not merely impressions. Of course, I am talking of *genuine ghosts*, and not of hallucinations or mental images made on diseased or excited brains.

I feel as sure of life after death as I do of my present existence; but were it not so, the fact of our loved ones returning would be *proof conclusive*.—
Yours, &c.,

F. B. DOVETON.

P.S.—I consider the *re-appearances* of the dead as fully proved as, say, the Binomial Theorem. There are countless well-authenticated ghost stories in which any transference of impressions quite out of the question, in my opinion. The percipients are wholly unprepared and in perfect health, and, so, reliable witnesses. The room or locality is *haunted*.—F. B. D.

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

Mr. Doveton's letter, printed in this number of the *Journal*, suggests the need of some discussion as to the propriety of applying to apparitions and cognate phenomena such terms (on the one hand) as "subjective," "immaterial," "ideal," or (on the other hand) the contrasted terms "objective," "material," "real." These questions are not easy to handle; and Mr. Doveton's very definite view may furnish us with a convenient starting-point. But first I must notice one sentence in his postscript which should not, I think, be printed in this *Journal* without protest. "There are," he says, "*countless well-authenticated ghost-stories* in which any transference of impressions is quite out of the question, in my opinion." Now if, as persons of ordinary caution will admit, it is needful that a story should at least be told at first-hand before it can be called "well-authenticated," this statement is surely much in excess of the truth. How many first-hand narratives from "reliable witnesses," including any circumstance to distinguish the post-mortem apparition from a mere "spectral illusion," can Mr. Doveton adduce, outside of those,—fewer than 100, I think—which we have ourselves printed? Do his "countless" cases amount to 100? or to 50? Inasmuch as I am endeavouring to collect as many such cases as possible for a forthcoming work on *Phantasms of the Dead*, I am anxious to get hold of all that are worth considering. But I feel sure that there is *not* this indefinite store of "well-authenticated ghost-stories" which Mr. Doveton assumes to exist; and I wish that those who share Mr. Doveton's more sanguine view would first take the trouble to collect and tabulate the evidence to which they so confidently appeal.

To pass on to the theoretic problem, "I believe," says Mr. Doveton, "that all *bond fide* apparitions of the dead are disembodied *souls* . . . that they occupy space, and move from spot to spot . . . can touch us sometimes . . . can displace furniture and produce real noises," &c.

Now, let me point out that *veridical dreams* are a frequent form of "bona fide apparition." A man asleep, or between sleeping and waking, sees the form (say) of a friend dripping with water, and learns afterwards that that friend was drowned at or about the time of the vision.

It is clear that Mr. Doveton does not insist on distinctions between what we have classed as Phantasms of the Living or of the Dead; and obviously in such a discussion the whole range of phantasmal appearances must be taken together.

Well, then, is the dream-figure a disembodied soul? Does it occupy space? Can it displace furniture? And if, as sometimes happens, it persists for a short time into waking moments, does it thereby acquire substantiality?

Or take an apparition of a man undoubtedly dead, seen by a man undoubtedly awake; say (General Barter's vision of Lieutenant B. held on to his pony by two syces. Were the pony and the syces disembodied souls? And, if so, how did the disembodied soul of Lieutenant B. secure their attendance?

The familiar objection as to the *ghosts of clothes*—powerless as against a theory which regards the ghost as a *picture*—is fatal to the view that the ghost is necessarily "atomic" and "material to spirit sense." Is the matter of his ghostly clothes extracted (as some advocates of the objective reality of ghosts suggest) from his real clothes? And, if so, what happens to him when his real clothes have perished on the dust-heap? Has the Cavalier ghost kept his best ruffles and jackboots safe somewhere in Limbo? Or to turn to a case where we can trace the actual facts more closely, when Mr. S. H. B., lying asleep in bed, appeared phantasmally in evening dress to the Miss V.'s, did his disembodied soul extract the necessary rudiments of attire from the white tie and tail-coat reposing in his wardrobe?

If now we try to look at the questions involved a little more closely, we shall find it no easy matter to place our phantasms under even the widest and most general of recognised categories. Our standard classes of real or supposed entities have been framed under the influence of preconceptions which this new evidence deeply disturbs.

Let us take the distinction between "objective" and "subjective," as defined (for instance) by Sir William Hamilton. "Objective," he says, "means that which belongs to or proceeds from the object known, and not from the subject knowing; what exists in nature, in contrast to what exists merely in the thought of the individual."

Now take a case where Miss X. sees in a reflecting surface a picture representing Mrs. N. in a bath-chair. Miss X. considers it very improbable that Mrs. N. should have employed that vehicle; but it turns out that at or shortly before the time of the vision Mrs. N. was in fact in a bath-chair. This is an actual instance of a kind of telepathic or clairvoyant vision of which we have printed a good many examples. Now, are we to call this crystal picture an objective or a subjective thing?

Let us start from the case of ordinary vision. The thing directly recognised is an impression on the retina, and the object perceived is an interpretation of sense-indications. The image does not "exist in nature"

except on the retina of the observer. Now consider the perception of an image in a mirror; here again there is no real object where the image is seen, only rays of light reflected on the retina in the same way as in direct vision. Now turn to the *hallucinatory* image; say the image of an imaginary dog, whose presence is suggested by the hypnotiser. Does this image correspond to any physical effect upon the retina? We cannot answer this question decisively; but at any rate it is not due to rays of light reflected from any external object similar to the image.

Now let us take a crystal picture, representing (as some of Miss X.'s have seemed to represent) an actual scene going on elsewhere at the time. Is there here any impression on the retina? If so, how was it produced there? Has the fact any optical cause, or is it the pure effect of self-suggestion? On the one hand, though some of these crystal-visions have been apparently magnified by the interposition of a lens, their appearance in the crystal is not deducible from optical laws. On the other hand, where they are veridical they cannot be called merely subjective. The agency which has caused their presence is unknown; but if that agency should some day become familiar, we may come to consider the image produced by crystal-vision as on the same level of objectivity with an ordinary visual image. It may be objective without being optical.

It may be said that the crystal-vision is unshared, and therefore subjective. But we do not know for certain that it is always unshared. And there are plenty of sensory impressions which are unshared in the sense that only one species of animals can receive them. If we had only one bloodhound his impressions of scent would be unshared, but they would be objective nevertheless. A captive female moth will be perceptible to males of her own species for an indefinite distance, but to no other known organisms. And whether crystal-visions be ever common to two persons or no, we have, at any rate, cases of phantasms which several persons together see or hear. A sight or sound of this kind is difficult to classify as either subjective or objective in the common sense of those terms. The ordinary contrast between subjective and objective, in short, fails when we are dealing with a communication of knowledge without the agency of the recognised organs of sense. That is an unknown process which we cannot as yet insert into our old-fashioned predicaments.

We certainly have no right to call the phantasmal figure material simply because it is seen by several persons. This mere fact of collective vision cannot assure us that the figure possesses inertia, or a constant weight, or that it extrudes air or anything else, from the place of its apparent presence. The figure, no doubt, sometimes appears to produce effects on the material world which would require the exertion of force, if not the presence of matter. But before discussing these real or apparent effects, we must consider one perplexing characteristic which (I believe,) is frequently found in every class of phantasmal vision.

Veridical visions are not always—not even generally—correct transcripts of any fact which is passing elsewhere. They *signify* such facts, but they do not usually *reproduce* them. Nor is their deflection from reality comparable with any kind of optical distortion,—as though they had to make their way through some refracting medium. It is a *symbolical* deflection; it consists

in the introduction of features which, while not in themselves accurate transcripts of fact, do yet produce an impression of the purport or meaning of actual facts. I see my drowned friend (suppose) dripping with water. But he is not in fact dripping, for he is immersed in the sea.

It is plain that such a modification of the actual reality as this must have a psychical and not an optical cause. It resembles the familiar symbolism of dreams,—as for instance when a displacement of the bedclothes makes us dream that we are at an evening party in insufficient costume. Pictures thus modified have plainly passed through some *mind*; their deflections from literal fact are in some sense intelligent, even if not intentional. By *what* mind they are modified we cannot here discuss; we may merely admit that a symbolical figure seen by several observers may be *objective*, but is not *optical*. Similarly a symbolical noise—and few of our auditory phantasms reproduce a sound being uttered elsewhere—heard by several observers, may be in some sense objective, but is not *acoustic*.

Keeping this in mind, let us consider the cases where a phantasmal figure appears to exert some influence, not permanently registrable, on the material world,—as for instance to open a door and shut it again. Mr. Gurney used to remark that in all our first-hand narratives, whenever a ghost opened a door he *did* shut it again :—meaning, of course, that such apparent physical effects of the phantom's presence were in all cases merely phantasmal, as much a part of the dream-imagery as was the water dripping from the phantom of the drowning man. Once or twice, indeed, it has happened that such movements have been almost demonstrably unreal; as where a handle has been seen to move which could *not* move ;—which was so jammed that to shake it was impossible. In such a case the apparent movement seems analogous to those phantasmal sounds which simulate the noise caused by some specific movement, (as the rattling of windows,) which is visibly not taking place.

Before our ghost can claim materiality, he ought to show a registrable optical presence by affecting the sensitised plate, or a registrable acoustic presence by affecting the phonograph, or a constant weight or inertia by affecting the balance or other mechanical contrivances. Nor is this last kind of test an easy one; since the balance may be affected (as in Mr. Crookes' experiments with D. D. Home) by some unknown exertion of force, not by the presence of gravitating particles. But, on the other hand, it is of course possible that the categories "material" and "immaterial," with the best definitions which we can at present give to them, may be quite inadequate to describe what our ghost really is. The mode of his existence may transcend our mathematical formulæ as completely as it transcends our sensory experience. The impenetrability of matter, which seems our ultimate sensory fact, may be as relative and contingent a property as colour itself. There is nothing to show that all consciousness existing in the universe can recognise a ruby as impenetrable any more than all consciousness existing on earth can recognise it as red. Our mathematics speak of matter as possibly a modification of the ether; but the ether itself, which to us at present seems primary and universal, may be a complex, contingent, limited manifestation of a system of laws wholly beyond our cognisance.

In the case, therefore, of a phantasmal sight or sound perceived by more than one person, we cannot safely say more than simply that an action is going on which is of a nature to affect more than one organism. The action—vibration or whatever else it may be—may possibly require the molecular world for its propagation or transmission. Or this phantasmogenetic activity may involve modifications of the ether, independent of the molecular world. Or it may be absolutely independent of ether and of molecules—of everything which our mathematics can hope to grasp.

What we have to do, in fact, is not to refer these new phenomena to our existing formulæ, but to try to build up in time truer formulæ from the observation of these new phenomena themselves. It should never be forgotten that the most trifling of our telepathic experiments if the conditions are satisfactory probably implies a profoundly different employment of natural forces from that in any class of experiment hitherto known to science.

There is yet another perplexity which affects all classes of phantasms—namely: their relation to *time*. It is pretty clear that even when these phantasms represent a person or scene accurately they are sometimes *after the event*,—an added difficulty, of course, in the way of the supposition that they have anything like a material existence. And there is even some evidence that the phantasm may present itself *before the event*, in which case our previous experience would be transcended indeed!

But, in fact, the upshot of all these considerations is that our existing categories afford us little or no help in classifying these phantasmal phenomena. We cannot ticket any given phantasm as material, objective, or the like, and then infer from that general term that the phantasm possesses any specific qualities—as impenetrability, spatial location, or the like—which are commonly connoted by the wider term. We must simply for the present take each veridical phantasm on its own merits, and ask a number of separate questions about it,—most of which we shall usually have to leave unanswered. Does it exert force? Does it possess inertia? Has it a constant weight? Does it to any extent obey optical or acoustic laws? Is it perceptible individually? or electively? (*i. e.*, by some and not all of the persons present), or collectively by all persons within reach? Is it a symbolical or an accurate transcript of fact? and is the fact which it represents past, present, or future?

Until we can answer these questions rather better than at present, it will be safer to choose our designation for these phantasms with reference to the negative quality which we know to be theirs,—namely, that they are *not* that which at the first blush they appear to our senses to be. This fact, and nothing more, we affirm when we call them *hallucinations*. And if we style them *veridical* or *falsidical*, according as they help us to truth or delude us with falsehood, we shall still be describing them purely in terms of our own experience, without pretending to a theory of their true nature. This frank confession of ignorance will at least leave us unfettered,—ready to adopt any truer classification of our phenomena to which further observation may point. In the meantime something is gained if, having started with the preconception that “all which is not A is B,” we have come to the conclusion that our own subject-matter is neither A nor B, but X.

F. W. H. M.