

# SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL MEETING ON

*Thursday, November 22, 1883.*

The fifth General Meeting of the Society was held at 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, on Thursday, November 22, 1883.

PROFESSOR HENRY SIDGWICK, PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

### I.

#### FOURTH REPORT

OF THE

#### COMMITTEE ON THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE.

[The Report has been somewhat enlarged since it was read.]

*Committee*:—EDMUND GURNEY,\* M.A. ; F. W. H. MYERS,\* M.A. ;  
and PROFESSOR W. F. BARRETT,\* *Hon. Sec.*

Since the last report was presented to the Society, the Committee on Thought-transference have been steadily pursuing their inquiries, and have not only obtained a considerable amount of additional evidence confirmatory of their previous work, but also evidence of a new and important character. Moreover, we are happy to find that the inquiry is beginning to be pursued by independent groups of investigators throughout the country; some of these have communicated with us and have courteously permitted us to examine their mode of experiment, and gladly availed themselves of the precautions upon which experience has taught us to insist. To Mr. Malcolm Guthrie, J.P., of Liverpool, we owe our warm thanks for his most capable and courteous co-operation, and we are glad to say that he has lately joined our Committee. Since the extensive and careful series of experiments published in Part IV. of our Proceedings, Mr. Guthrie has enlarged his range of experiments and obtained remarkable success in the transference of visual impressions—diagrams and the like—of tastes, and of pains. The only sort of distinct sensation of which the transference yet remains to be obtained, is that of *smell*,—there being, of course, special difficulties in so arranging the experiment that a “subject” shall have no opportunity of detecting

\* THE COUNCIL HOLDS ITSELF GENERALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE REPORTS OF ITS COMMITTEES. AT THE HEAD OF EACH REPORT THE NAMES OF THOSE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE WHO ARE SPECIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS COMPOSITION ARE MARKED WITH ASTERISKS.

by direct means any strongly odorous substance which the "agent" is smelling close by. In many of Mr. Guthrie's later experiments the sole "agent" has been himself, or one or other of the gentlemen engaged with him in the investigation.

We trust that Mr. Guthrie's example will stimulate others among our members to conduct experiments of the same kind. Not all investigators, indeed, may have similar advantages of wide command of "subjects" for experiment; but anyone among us may very possibly find in his own family circle some one "subject" of value; and it is, of course, in the family circle that it is easiest to secure that continual and patient repetition of experiments which seems essential to any marked success.

### 1. *Transference of Tastes.*

The experiments which we shall first detail have reference to the *transference of tastes*. This particular form of transferred sensation had been often experimented upon, by ourselves and by others, with "subjects" in the hypnotic state; but, so far as we know, Mr. Guthrie was the first person to procure the phenomenon when agent and percipient were both of them in a normal condition. There was no chance of collusion, conscious or unconscious; for the taste to be discerned was known to no one except the actual experimenters; and the sensations experienced were verbally described by the "subjects" (not written down), so that all danger of involuntary muscular guidance was eliminated.

The following series of experiments were made in Liverpool during the first week in September, 1883:—

A selection of about twenty strongly-tasting substances was made. These substances were enclosed in small bottles and small parcels, precisely similar to one another, and kept carefully out of the range of vision of the "subjects," who were, moreover, blindfolded, so that no grimaces made by the tasters could be seen. The "subjects," in fact, had no means whatever of knowing, through the sense of sight, what was the substance tasted.

*Smell* had to be guarded against with still greater care. When the substance was odoriferous the packet or bottle was opened outside the room, or at such a distance, and so cautiously as to prevent any sensible smell from escaping. The experiments, moreover, were conducted in the close vicinity of a very large kitchen, from whence a strong odour of beefsteak and onions proceeded during almost all the time occupied. The tasters took pains to keep their heads high above the "subjects," and to avoid breathing with open mouth. One substance (coffee) tried was found to give off a slight smell, in spite of all precautions, and an experiment made with this has been omitted.

The tasters were Mr. Guthrie (M.G.), Mr. Gurney (E.G.), and Mr. Myers (M.). The percipients were two young ladies employed in Mr. Guthrie's establishment, whom we will call R. and E. The tasters lightly placed a hand on one of the shoulders or hands of the percipients. During the first experiments (September 3rd and 4th) there were one or two other persons in the room, who, however, were equally ignorant as to the substance tasted. During the experiments silence was preserved. During the last 15 experiments (September 5th) only M. G., E. G., and M., with the two percipients, were present. On this evening Miss E. was, unfortunately, suffering from sore throat, which seemed to blunt her susceptibility. On this occasion none of the substances were allowed even to enter the room where the percipients were. They were kept in a dark lobby outside, and taken by the investigators at random, so that often one investigator did not even know what the other took. Still less could any spy have discerned what was chosen, had such spy been there, which he certainly was *not*.

A very small portion of each substance used was found to be enough. The difficulty lies in keeping the mean between the *massive* impression of a large quantity of a salt, spice, bitter, or acid, which confounds the specific differences under each general head, and the *fading* impression which is apt to give merely a residual pungency, from which the characteristic flavour has escaped. It is necessary to allow some minutes to elapse between each experiment, as the imaginary taste seems to be fully as persistent as the real one.

*September 3, 1883.*

EXPT.	TASTER.	PERCIPIENT.	SUBSTANCE.	ANSWERS GIVEN.
1	M.	E.	Vinegar	"A sharp and nasty taste."
2	M.	E.	Mustard	"Mustard."
3	M.	R.	Do.	"Ammonia."
4	M.	E.	Sugar	"I still taste the hot taste of the mustard."

*September 4.*

5	E. G. & M.	E.	Worcestershire sauce	"Worcestershire sauce."
6	M. G.	R.	Do.	"Vinegar."
7	E. G. & M.	E.	Port wine	"Between eau de Cologne and beer."
8	M. G.	R.	Do.	"Raspberry vinegar."
9	E. G. & M.	E.	Bitter aloes	"Horrible and bitter."
10	M. G.	R.	Alum	"A taste of ink—of iron—of vinegar. I feel it on my lips—it is as if I had been eating alum."
11	M. G.	E.	Alum	(E. perceived that M. G. was <i>not</i> tasting bitter aloes, as E. G. and M. supposed, but something different. No distinct perception on account of the persistence of the bitter taste.)

*September 4 (continued).*

EXPT.	TASTER.	PERCIPIENT.	SUBSTANCE	ANSWERS GIVEN.
12 ...	E. G. & M....	E.....	Nutmeg .....	"Peppermint—no—what you put in puddings—nutmeg."
13 ...	M. G. ....	R.....	Do. ....	"Nutmeg."*
14 ...	E. G. & M....	E....	Sugar .....	Nothing perceived.
15 ...	M. G. ....	R.....	Do. ....	Nothing perceived. (Sugar should be tried at an earlier stage in the series, as, after the aloes, we could scarcely taste it ourselves.)
16 ...	E. G. & M....	E.....	Cayenne pepper .....	"Mustard."
17 ...	M. G. ....	R.....	Do. ....	"Cayenne pepper." (After the cayenne we were unable to taste anything further that evening.)

*September 5.*

18 ...	E. G. & M....	E.....	Carbonate of soda .....	Nothing perceived.
19 ...	M. G. ....	R.....	Carraway seeds .....	"It feels like meal—like a seed loaf — carraway seeds." (The <i>substance</i> of the seeds seem to be perceived before their <i>taste</i> .)
20 ...	E. G. & M....	E.....	Cloves .....	"Cloves."
21 ...	E. G. & M....	E....	Citric acid .....	Nothing felt.
22 ...	M. G. ....	R.....	Do. ....	"Salt."
23 ...	E. G. & M....	E.....	Liquorice .....	"Cloves."
24 ...	M. G. ....	R.....	Cloves .....	"Cinnamon."
25 ...	E. G. & M....	E.....	Acid jujube.....	"Pear drop."
26 ...	M. G. ....	R.....	Do. ....	"Something hard, which is giving way—acid jujube."
27 ...	E. G. & M....	E.....	Candied ginger .....	"Something sweet and hot."
28 ...	M. G. ....	R.....	Do. ....	"Almond toffy." (M. G. took this ginger in the dark, and was some time before he realised that it was ginger.)
29 ...	E. G. & M....	E.....	Home-made Noyau ...	"Salt."
30 ...	M. G. ....	R.....	Do. ....	"Port wine." (This was by far the most strongly smelling of the substances tried; the scent of kernels being hard to conceal. Yet it was named by E. as salt.)
31 ...	E. G. & M....	E.....	Bitter aloes .....	"Bitter."
32 ...	M. G. ....	R.....	Do. ....	Nothing felt.

\* In some cases *two* experiments were carried on simultaneously with the same substance; and when this was done, the first percipient was of course not told whether her answer was right or wrong. But it will perhaps be maintained that, when her answer was right, her agent unconsciously gave her an intimation of the fact by the pressure of his hand; and that she then coughed or made some audible signal to her companion, who followed suit. Whatever the theory may be worth, it will, we think, be seen that the success of the second percipient with the nutmeg was the only occasion, throughout the series, to which it can be applied.

We should have preferred in these experiments to use only substances which were wholly inodorous. But in order to get any description of tastes from the percipients it was necessary that the tastes should be either very decided or very familiar. It would be desirable, before entering on a series of experiments of this kind, to educate the palates of the recipients by accustoming them to a variety of chemical substances, and also by training them to distinguish, with shut eyes, between the more ordinary flavours. It is well known how much taste is helped by sight and determined by expectation ; and when it is considered that the recipients in these cases were judging blindfold of the mere shadow of a savour, it will perhaps be thought that even some of their mistakes are not much wider of the mark than they might have been had a trace of the substance been actually placed upon their tongues.

The interest and novelty of the foregoing experiments consist in the fact, already mentioned, that the "subjects" were apparently in their normal waking state. It has long been on record that such transference of impressions may take place between a mesmeriser or hypnotist and a sensitive "subject;" and some instances will be given in the subjoined report of the Mesmeric Committee. But here no preliminary mesmeric passes nor fixation of the eyes had been resorted to ; nor indeed have the "subjects" ever been mesmerised.

### 2. *Transference of Pains.*

The same subjects, Miss R. and Miss E., who proved sensitive to the transference of tastes, were also found sensitive to the transference of pains whilst in their normal waking state. Mr. Guthrie has made a number of experiments in this direction, the record of which he hopes to present to the Society shortly. Here, too, the results are paralleled by those of hypnotic experiments, of which some have been already recorded (*Proceedings*, Part III., p. 225-6) and others will be described in the ensuing Report.

### 3. *Casual Experiments.*

We have received from correspondents in different parts of the country, records of more or less successful trials made amongst members of their own families. As a rule, however, these experiments have been too few and too fitful to be of much value ; at the same time they are of interest as affording information that the faculty of Thought-transference is probably tolerably widely diffused. Here, for example, is the result of a casual trial by one of our members, the Hon. Mrs. Fox Powys, as "percipient," with her husband as "agent."

'I send the results of a trial my husband and I had alone. To me it seemed like magic ! We had tried, I think, three times before this, with

indifferent success. I was the guesser, and he held my left hand with his right, and merely thought of a number. I sat with my eyes closed. The rapidity with which the thing was done astonished us; the number seemed to flash instantaneously into my brain. In fact, so simultaneous was it that I began to think that I, perhaps, had impressed the number upon Colonel Powys' brain first. However, when we reversed the operation, and my husband guessed, he was not at all successful. Here are our experiments; the complete series, including failures as well as successes, is given.

"First we tried single figures, and only one 'guess' was allowed.

NUMBER THOUGHT OF.						RESULT.
3	...	...	...	...	...	I perceived nothing.
2	...	...	...	...	...	I answered 2.
4	...	...	...	...	...	" 7.
6	...	...	...	...	...	I perceived nothing.
5	...	...	...	...	...	I answered 5.
9	...	...	...	...	...	" 9.
3	...	...	...	...	...	" 3.
8	...	...	...	...	...	" 8.

"Here out of 8 trials 5 were right. We now tried numbers of two figures, and where a second 'guess' was given it is noted.

NUMBER THOUGHT OF.					RESULT.	
58	...	...	...	...	24	
36	...	...	...	...	36	
27	...	...	...	...	72	
69	...	...	...	...	28	
100	...	...	...	...	100	
42	...	...	...	...	42	
55	...	...	...	...	55	
22	...	...	...	...	79	
38	...	...	...	...	38	
30	...	...	...	...	42	
22	...	...	...	...	120	
						On a second guess, 27
						" " 82
						" " 97
						" " 78
						" " 20

"Here 5 were right the first time, and 1 the second time,\* out of 11 trials. We tried again the next evening, but out of 20 only got 5 right on the first trial, and 2 right on a second trial. The secret of success the previous evening I believe to lie in the fact that I felt almost absolute confidence in my power to guess correctly, and to this height of confidence I have never since been able to attain."

The coincidences here recorded seem clearly beyond the power of pure chance to account for.

Another correspondent, writing from Brunswick Place, Leeds, sent to us an account of some successful experiments of his own, which, however, seemed probably due to mere muscular interpretation. We explained this to him, pointing out the precautions necessary to guard against the error. In reply he writes to us as follows:—

"I have made a number of experiments since writing to you last; perhaps the best of these was my finding a pin secreted in a purse which was

\* It will be noted that this sixth case was all but a success on the *first* trial—the digits being correctly given, but *inverted*.

in my sister's pocket. I also found the number of a bank note correctly, and correctly discovered 10 figures out of 12. But these experiments were made when contact was permitted, or by my running the 'agent's' hand over a series of figures from 0 to 9. When I tried yesterday to toll the figures *without* contact, I failed completely.

"I then blindfolded my sister, aged 13, and placed a piece of pencil and paper before her. Then I drew, with a piece of chalk on a school slate, a simple diagram (a circle with a cross inside), without her hearing the scratching of the chalk. To my surprise she drew the enclosed,\* in about a minute, there being no contact between us, and I giving no indication whatever, merely thinking and staring at the slate. I then made other experiments in a similar way, and enclose you the results."

These, and a few other diagrams subsequently received, made in all 10 trials, with diagrams of various random and irregular shapes. Of the 10 trials six were as good reproductions of the original as could have been drawn had the child seen the original drawing and attempted to draw it blindfolded. The remaining four bore less, but still some, resemblance to the original. The hon. secretary of the Committee has visited this correspondent in Leeds, and seen the way in which the experiments were made. As far as could be judged from such a visit no information could have reached the percipient through the ordinary channels of sense. The "agent" is a highly intelligent young man, and quite alive to the precautions necessary to be taken to avoid obvious errors of experiment.

The following is an extract from a letter written to one of us by Mr. R. Gibson, of Limerick. He has since supplied us with additional details, and tells us that the "subject" (who has a large apothecary's business), and several of the agents, had previously been quite incredulous as to the phenomenon.

*March 20th, 1884.*

On last Tuesday week we were trying some experiments, at a friend's house, and a Mr. Day who was there told the number thought of in five different cases, by five different people—told them one after the other without a bungle or any hesitation whatever. After these five consecutive trials he got a violent headache, and on trying again could not tell any more. He was successful by picturing to himself (with his eyes shut) a black-board, and the number seemed at once to stand out on it in white.

The headache is an interesting, but (we are happy to say) not a frequent feature of these experiments. The imagining of the black-board is a device worth noting.

\* Some of the drawings made in this series will be engraved for the next number of the Proceedings.

The following account was received, some weeks ago, from Miss Crabbe (Gordon College, Chatham Street, Liverpool), a lady known to two members of the Committee:—

One evening, at a rectory where I have been staying, we were trying pin-finding, when I said I had seen much more wonderful things than that done, and told them of what is done in your Society, such as placing figures and other objects behind people, &c.

They were *very* sceptical about it, said it could *not* be done without trickery, collusion, &c., that it was nonsense, &c., &c., and we had quite a lively argument about it, for I stuck to my point, and vowed it could be, and *was* done. At last the rector said he would try it, for that if anyone was able to do it he would. He acted as agent, and his daughter as percipient. The latter was blindfolded and placed in the usual position; the background was a large piece of white cardboard, and on that I pinned a pink oblong card, and, to my astonishment, in about a minute or two's time Miss — described it; for I must confess I expected a failure on account of the scepticism of all parties.

Of course this success slightly changed their opinion, and they tried again. The next object I placed up was a round fan or hand-screen, which was most accurately described; the order we proceeded in was 1st, colour, 2nd, shape, and 3rd, object. Object after object was tried, and *every* time was a success. They declared it was wonderful. Night after night we tried it, and the whole time I was there Miss — never once made the *slightest* error, and often named the object after the lapse of a *second* or so, with no second guess.

We tried everything we could think of, including spoons, door-keys, oranges. In describing the latter Miss — said: "It is something with a reddish tinge, not quite round but a little flat at the top and bottom. Oh, I see; it is an orange."

After the objects, we tried taste-transference. The effect was marvellous. Salt, sugar, nutmeg, &c., &c., were tasted by Mr. — and transferred to his daughter.

Next we tried the number-reading, which was also a grand success; in this case we *sometimes* reversed the agent and percipient, Mr. — acting as the latter (and not as the former, as on the previous occasions), and either Miss — or I as the agent. Whichever plan we took proved successful, and we tried very many times. The percipient wrote the numbers down while the agent was in contact with either the left hand or the forehead.\*

After the number-writing, we tried objects again, *without* contact. This was also done without an error, Mr. — acting as agent and making a few downward passes while fixing his mind on the object to be described.

Next we tried reading sentences written on the background, *i.e.*, I wrote in large hand on a card "Don't kill dogs"; then, "Thou shalt not kill," both of which were read by Miss —, with the exception of one word, where I stopped her on account of an interruption. Then Mr. — acted as percipient

\* This is not satisfactory, for the reason given at the bottom of p. 10.



and Miss — as agent, and I wrote up, “Be quick.” Mr. — said, “B-e-be, q-u-i-e-t—quiet.” “No,” we said, “not quite right.” “No,” he said, “the last two letters are c-k, not e-t; it is ‘Be quick.’” Miss — however, never even made that much of a failure.

Of all the experiments I have seen performed, I *never* saw any to equal these, which were all so quickly and accurately made. I can tell you I felt elated at having turned “sceptics” into such clever performers.

In a second letter Miss Crabbe adds :—

When I proposed trying taste-transference, I said to Mr. — : “It must be something that has no smell,” whereupon he replied, “Well, write down the name of anything you wish me to taste on a piece of paper.” I did so, writing the word “Ginger.” He then put the paper in *his mouth*, and I suppose imagined he tasted the ginger, for in a minute or two Miss — said what it was. The reason I did not mention this before is that I am not sure whether Miss — actually *tasted* the ginger, or whether the *word* was impressed on her mind, and she felt bound to say it. This was the first experiment in taste-transference; afterwards I always gave the substance to Mr. — to taste himself first, and then his daughter evidently did really perceive the taste.

In the *sentence-reading* I wrote up *first*, “Don’t kill dogs,” but some one entered the room before this was read at all, and an interruption ensued, whereupon I said, “Never mind that one now, don’t tell us anything about it, and I will write another.” I then wrote, “Thou shalt not kill.” This was read correctly, and immediately afterwards Miss — said, “I may as well tell you what I thought the first sentence was. Was it—Don’t kill?” and then she made some remark about the last word being a short one or something of the kind, but I really don’t remember what the remark was.

#### 4. *Unconscious Muscular Action.*

The subject of “Thought-reading” is just now in a rather singular position; for it is obtaining immense vogue throughout the country by dint of public exhibitions which, however clever and interesting, have no claim to be considered “Thought-reading” at all. These exhibitions usually produce a perfect deluge of letters in the local journals, in which the “willing-game” and its results are discussed from every possible standpoint and in every possible key, by believers, disbelievers, and doubters. In the more scientific contributions to this correspondence, expression is usually given to three distinct views, each of which deserves serious attention.

Some contributors are certain to give an adequate explanation of the process of “muscle-reading”—an explanation which easily covers the successes of the public performers, as well as 99 out of 100 cases of success in the “willing-game.”

Some one else is pretty sure to put forward the hypothesis

strongly suggested by the 100th case of the "willing-game"—where what is done is of so subtle or complicated a kind as to raise doubts whether unconscious muscular pressure, or rather *release* of pressure in a certain direction, is adequate to account for it; and one is tempted to look deeper for the springs of action, and to conceive the governance of one organism by another through some sort of nervous induction.

And finally, some prudent correspondent will point out that—as long as the form of experiment adopted is the performance of some *action*—the problem can never be solved as long as *contact* of any sort is allowed between the "willer" and the "willed"; and will perhaps do us the honour to refer to some of our own experiments, in which success in far more delicate operations than pin-finding and number-writing has been attained without contact.

It is clearly only to experiments performed under ~~the last~~ conditions — ~~a condition~~ which precludes <sup>the possibility of</sup> any unconscious guidance from the "agent" — that the word "Thought-reading" can be safely applied. That name, of course, in no way implies the absence of a physical basis for the phenomena; the theory of brain-waves (which would be only an instance of "nervous induction") has been suggested to supply such a basis. But of such a *physical basis* we know nothing; of the *psychical facts* we know a great deal, all of them being, in various forms, transferences of impression or idea from mind to mind otherwise than by the recognised sensory channels. The difference between these cases and the public exhibitions of muscular and tactile sensibility is, of course, fundamental; and it is unfortunate that the word "Thought-reading" should have become associated with the latter. Even for the genuine cases "*Thought-transference*" is a much better expression—the other term having apparently conveyed to some persons the notion that, if once the reality of the phenomena were established, we should all be able to "read" each other's secrets.

We must emphatically repeat, then, what we laid down in our first report,—that wherever contact<sup>4</sup> is permitted, success in the performance of a desired *action* must be attributed to indications given by the "willer"—that his unconscious and involuntary variations in pressure are unconsciously and involuntarily, or consciously and voluntarily, interpreted by the percipient.\* We have thought it desirable to make a series of experiments to ascertain what can be done in this way; and the results have been most striking, but not unexpected. The note on "Muscle-reading" by one of our members,

\* The same objection naturally applies to all cases where the subject *writes down* something which is in the agent's mind—the *action*, due to unconscious guidance, being then the movements of the pencil or chalk. The objection does not apply to cases where the "subject" gives his notion of the "transferred impression"—word, number, taste, or whatever it may be—*by word of mouth*.

*I do not think he should be allowed to do it at all unless he can be shown to be giving otherwise than through contact.*

published in Part IV. of our Proceedings, shows the result of some such trials. The same gentleman has since given a lecture on the subject in the Ulster Hall, Belfast, where he performed the following muscular feat, as described by a local newspaper. "A £5 note was handed to Mr. W. Gray, who fixed the number of it in his mind, the lecturer being blindfolded. The blackboard was brought into requisition, having five sections or colours marked upon it. Mr. Sugden, whose right hand, holding a piece of chalk, was in contact with Mr. Gray's left, then made the figures 5, 5, 3, 4, 0 with great deliberation, and these were acknowledged as the correct number of the bank-note." Further experiments have been made by the hon. secretary of the Committee with another "subject." Numbers thought of have been written with perfect accuracy by the "subject," when the tips of the agent's fingers were allowed to rest on the hand that held the pencil, *provided* that the agent himself followed the movements of the pencil with his eye. When the "agent's" eyes were averted, and there was no more chance of unconscious guidance, failure was at once the result. Diagrams have been accurately reproduced in like manner, while failure has inevitably followed the closing or blindfolding of the agent's eyes. With a lady as agent, two drawings were even reproduced with a considerable degree of accuracy when her fingers lightly touched the "subject's" left hand, he holding the pencil in his right.

We may conclude with a practical suggestion. Public performances, such as those which are exciting so much interest throughout the country, have this advantage—that they invariably set people to work in private houses; and it would clearly be a great thing if this result could be made useful as well as amusing. We would venture, then, to suggest to those who feel drawn to the pursuit that, instead of repeating the old "willing-game," and merely re-proving what has been proved a hundred times before, they should devote themselves to experiments *without contact*, or else adopt some form of experiment where the "subject" has only to *name* an object or sensation—and so aid in the establishment of facts completely new to science. Cards, numbers, names, diagrams, all supply good forms of experiment; and we may remind our friends that convenient blank schedules for recording experiments may be had gratis by anyone willing to forward the work of the S.P.R., on application to the Assistant-Secretary.

## II.

THIRD REPORT  
OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON MESMERISM.

[The Report has been somewhat enlarged since it was read.]

*Committee* :—W. F. BARRETT,\* M.R.I.A. ; EDMUND GURNEY,\* M.A. ; RICHARD HODGSON, B.A. ; A. T. MYERS, M.D. ; FREDERIC W. H. MYERS, M.A. ; HENRY N. RIDLEY, M.A., F.L.S. ; W. H. STONE, M.A., M.B. ; GEORGE WYLD, M.D. ; and C. LOCKHART ROBERTSON, M.D. and FRANK PODMORE, M.A., *Hon. Secretaries*.

In previous Reports, attention has been frequently called to the affinity between transference of impressions obtained when the "subject" is in a normal state, and those results which have been held to indicate a special sympathy or "*rapport*" between a hypnotist or mesmerist and a sensitive "subject." The latter class of sympathetic transferences has been far longer observed than the former: we may say, indeed, that the recognition of the special case preceded by about a century the recognition of the more general faculty. This was natural enough. Observations in this particular department of hypnotic or mesmeric effects reaped the benefit of all the other striking phenomena which hypnotism or mesmerism had to show. The "community of sensation" was only one more wonder in a veritable wonderland. Here, too, it often presented itself in a high degree of perfection, and (between suitable persons) with a high degree of certainty—in higher perfection and with higher certainty than we can often hope to realise in experiments where the "subject" is in a normal waking state. The narrowing down (so to speak) of the exercise of the faculty to a single channel—the fact that the *rapport* is confined to a single pair of minds—seems to concentrate and enhance the force of the influence. And in these cases, therefore, results were soon manifest the possibility of which, outside mesmerism, was scarcely dreamt of, and which have only lately been seriously looked for and distinctly obtained in cases where no specific *rapport* had been established.

There remains, however, one sort of transference where the relation of the hypnotic to the normal state is harder to establish than might at first sight appear, and presents a certain peculiarity. It is sometimes loosely called the transference of *volition*; but is, more accurately, an influence which takes effect on the *motor-system* of the "subject," either by originating or inhibiting motor impulses. This sort of transference seems to be specially rare when the "subject" is in a

normal state. For we must be careful to avoid interpreting in this way those cases in the "willing-game" where a person, without contact with the "willer," does some action which the latter intends him to do; for in such cases it is, as a rule, merely the *idea* of the action that is conveyed to him; and he acts on the idea merely because he knows he is to do *something*. He is only acting in accordance with the spirit of the game if he does that of which the idea comes across him; but he does not feel any special *compulsion* to do it. Nor can the allegations of certain persons that, *e.g.*, they can make strangers in church or in a theatre turn their heads by "willing" that they should do so, be accepted as establishing even a *prima facie* case; till success and failure in such experiments are accurately noted, *chance* must always be the readiest explanation of the results. We may provisionally say, then, that persons in a normal state seem to be little if at all liable to have their will dominated, or their actions dominated against their will, by the silent determination of another. There are, however, cases where persons who appeared to be in a perfectly normal state, and had not been subjected to any process of fixation or passes, have been impelled to do things by a power which they felt themselves unable to resist; always, however, through the will of some person who had been proved to possess strong mesmeric power. And outside the sphere of mesmeric influence, we have in our possession a few very striking cases of *undesigned* results, where a powerful and emotional desire has influenced the movements of an absent person in a way which it is almost impossible to parallel by a process of deliberate experiment. On the whole, then, the evidence seems to tend to the conclusion that these telepathic affections of the will, or of the motor-system, involve profounder changes in the person influenced than the mere transference of passive sensations; and that, as a rule, they demand in the "willer" either distinct *emotion* or some amount of that specific faculty which we have called "mesmeric."

#### 1. *Transference of Motor or Inhibitory Impulses.*

To proceed now to the experimental work of this Committee:—It will be remembered that in our last report we recounted a series of experiments, in which a hypnotised "subject" had been made to answer, or not to answer, the question "Do you hear?" according to the unexpressed intention of the operator. A further series was carried out last November in his own house, at Dublin, by Professor Barrett; who, for convenience, will now speak in the first person.

The hypnotist was Mr. G. A. Smith. The "subject" was an entire stranger to Mr. Smith, a youth named Fearnley, to whom nothing whatever was said as to the nature of the experiment about

to be tried, until he was thrown into the hypnotic state in my study. He was then in a light sleep-waking condition—his eyes were closed and the pupils upturned—apparently sound asleep; but he readily answered in response to any questions addressed to him by Mr. Smith or by myself.

I first told him to open the fingers of his closed hand, or not to open them, just as he felt disposed, in response to the question addressed to him. That question, which I always asked in a uniform tone of voice, was in each case, "Now, will you open your hand?" and at the same moment I pointed to the word "Yes" or "No," written on a card, which was held in sight of Mr. Smith, but entirely out of the range of vision of the "subject," even had his eyes been open, which they were not. Without the slightest change of expression or other observable muscular movement, and quite out of contact with the "subject," Mr. Smith then silently willed the subject to open or not to open his hand, in accordance with the "Yes" or "No." Twenty successive experiments were made in this way; 17 of these were quite successful, and three were failures. But these three failures were possibly due to inadvertence on Mr. Smith's part, as he subsequently stated that on those occasions he had not been prompt enough to direct his will in the right direction before the question was asked.

The experiment was now varied as follows:—The word "Yes" was written on one, and the word "No" on the other, of two precisely similar pieces of card. One or other of these cards was handed to Mr. Smith at my arbitrary pleasure, care, of course, being taken that the "subject" had no opportunity of seeing the card, even had he been awake. When "Yes" was handed Mr. Smith was silently to will the "subject" to answer aloud in response to the question asked by me, "Do you hear me?" When "No" was handed Mr. Smith was to will that no response should be made in reply to the same question. The object of this series of experiments was to note the effect of increasing the distance between the willer and the willed,—the agent and the percipient. In the first instance Mr. Smith was placed *three feet* from the "subject," who remained throughout apparently asleep in an arm-chair in one corner of my study.

At three feet apart, 25 trials were successively made, and *in every case* the "subject" responded or did not respond in exact accordance with the silent will of Mr. Smith, as directed by me.

At 6 feet apart six similar trials were made without a single failure.

At 12 feet apart six more trials were made without a single failure.

At 17 feet apart six more trials were made without a single failure.

In this last case Mr. Smith had to be placed outside the study door, which was then closed with the exception of a narrow chink just wide enough to admit of passing a card in or out, whilst I remained in the study observing the "subject." To avoid any possible indication from the tone in which I asked the question, in all cases except the first dozen experiments, I shuffled the cards face downwards, and then handed the unknown "Yes" or "No" to Mr. Smith, who looked at the card and willed accordingly. I noted down the result, and then, and not till then, looked at the card.

A final experiment was made when Mr. Smith was taken across the hall and placed in the dining-room, at a distance of about 30 feet from the "subject," two doors, both quite closed, intervening. Under these conditions, three trials were made with success, the "Yes" response being, however, very faint and hardly audible to me, who returned to the study to ask the usual question after handing the card to the distant operator. At this point, the "subject" fell into a deep sleep, and made no further replies to the questions addressed to him.

Omitting these final experiments, the total number of successive trials at different distances was 43. If the result had been due to accident, there would have been an even chance of failures and of successes,—whereas in fact *there was not a single failure in the entire series.*

I subsequently made a series of a dozen successive trials in an absolutely dark room, conveying my intention to Mr. Smith by silently squeezing his hand, once for "No," twice for "Yea." Every trial was successful. When Mr. Smith was placed outside the darkened room, I handed him the card through a small aperture, which could be closed. Eight trials gave six results quite right, one wrong, and one doubtful. Afterwards 20 trials, made when Mr. Smith was recalled, and the room lighted, were all entirely successful. There was, I need hardly say, no contact between operator and "subject" in any of these experiments.

The difference in the power of the will of the hypnotist and that of any other person was strikingly manifest, and the proof of the existence of a peculiar "*rapport*" between operator and subject was simply overwhelming. I several times exerted my will in opposition to that of Mr. Smith—that is to say, willed that the "subject" should or should not respond, when Mr. Smith willed the opposite, both of us being equally distant from the "subject." In every case his will triumphed. As in the case of Mr. Beard, recorded in our last report, the "subject," on being aroused, stated that he had heard the question each time, but that when he gave no answer he felt unaccountably unable to control his muscles so as to frame the word.

It was noticeable that neither in the normal nor in the hypnotic state was this subject able to tell any word or number or describe any diagram thought of or viewed by the operator. Only his ability to act in a particular way could be controlled, and he was not susceptible to even the most rudimentary form of thought-transference proper.

The following shorter series with another operator, Mr. Kershaw of Southport, and with Mrs. Firth, a nurse, as "subject," though the precautions were less elaborate than in the case just recorded, was to an eye-witness almost equally satisfactory. For the trial was quite suddenly suggested to Mr. Kershaw by the experimenter, Mr. Gurney (who will, for the remainder of the report, speak in the first person). Not only was it planned out of Mrs. Firth's hearing, but Mr. Kershaw himself had some difficulty in understanding what was wanted. A variety of small circumstances combined to show that the form of experiment was entirely new both to operator and "subject."

The trial took place at Southport, on September 7th, 1883. Mrs. Firth, who had been previously thrown into a light stage of trance, was placed in a chair in the middle of a bare room. Mr. Kershaw and I stood about three yards behind her; and sight of us, or of any part of us, on her part was out of the question. The window was in the wall in front of her, but altogether on one side; and there were no reflecting surfaces in the room. I drew up the subjoined list of *yesses* and *noes*, and held it for Mr. Kershaw to see. He made a quiet connecting motion of the hand (not touching me, and being many feet from Mrs. Firth), when there was to be an answer, and an equally quiet transverse or separating pass when there was to be none. I attribute no virtue to the passes, except so far as they were a means of vivifying Mr. Kershaw's silent intention to himself. The passes were almost absolutely noiseless, and the extremely faint sound which they made was, from the very nature of the gentle motion, the same in every case. Complete silence was preserved but for my question, "Do you hear?" repeated time after time, in a perfectly neutral tone; and there did not appear to be the very faintest chance of signalling, even had there been an opportunity for arranging a scheme.

1. Yes..... Right (*i.e.*, Mrs. Firth responded).
2. No ..... Right (*i.e.*, Mrs. Firth did not respond).
3. Yes..... Right.
4. Yes..... Right.
5. No ..... Right.
6. Yes..... Right.
7. No ..... At first no answer, which was right : then I gave  
a very loud stamp, which provoked a "Yes."
8. No ..... Right.
9. Yes..... Right.



The next short series took place at my lodgings at Brighton, on September 10th, 1883. The operator was Mr. Smith, the "subject" a very intelligent young cabinet-maker, named Conway. Mr. Smith and I stood behind him, without any contact with him. I held the list, and pointed to the desired answer each time. The silence was absolute. I repeated the question, "What is your name?" in a perfectly neutral and monotonous manner.

- |             |  |                                       |
|-------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Yes.....  | Right  | (i.e., the "subject," said "Conway"). |
| 2 Yes.....  | Right.   |                                       |
| 3 No .....  | This time the answer "Conway" was given; but when the next question was asked, the "subject" seemed unable to answer for some seconds, as though Mr. Smith's intention had taken effect a little too late. |                                       |
| 4 Yes.....  | Right.   |                                       |
| 5 No .....  | Right.   |                                       |
| 6 No .....  | Right.   |                                       |
| 7 Yes.....  | Right  |                                       |
| 8 No .....  | Right  |                                       |
| 9 Yes.....  | Right  |                                       |
| 10 Yes..... | Right  |                                       |
| 11 No ..... | Right  |                                       |
| 12 Yes..... | Right  |                                       |

## 2. Transference of Pains and Tastes.

The following short series of experiments in transference of pains and tastes was carried out the same evening with the same operator and "subject." Conway sat with his eyes closed, in a tolerably deep trance. Mr. Smith and I stood behind him, without contact, and Mr. Smith preserved absolute silence. I from time to time asked Conway whether he felt anything, but of course gave no guiding hint or indication of whether he was right or wrong.

I pinched Mr. Smith's right upper arm. Conway at once showed signs of pain, rubbed his right hand, then passed his left hand up to his right shoulder, and finally localised the exact spot.

I silently changed to Mr. Smith's *left* arm. In a very few seconds Conway's right hand flew to the corresponding place on his own left arm and he rubbed it, uttering strong complaints.

I nipped the lobe of Mr. Smith's right ear. Conway first rubbed the right side of his neck close to his ear; he then complained of his right leg, and used threats. I then gave a severe nip to his *own* right ear, and he made no sign of any sort. He then rubbed close to the left ear, and finally localised the spot on that ear exactly corresponding to the place touched on Mr. Smith's right ear.

I now pinched the right side of Mr. Smith's right thigh. Conway, without receiving any hint that he was expected to feel anything, immediately began to rub the corresponding part of his *left* leg.

Mr. Smith now put a succession of substances into his mouth, according to my indications, still keeping behind Conway, and preserving total silence. I kept Conway's attention alive by asking him from time to time what the taste was like, but gave not the faintest

guidance, except in the single case of cloves, when—to see if Conway would take a hint—I asked if it tasted like spice and he said it did not.

*Mustard.*—“Something bitter.” “It’s rather warm.”

*Cloves.*—“Some sort of fruit.” “Mixed with spirits of wine.” “Not like spice.” “Tastes warm.”

*Bitter Aloes.*—“Not nice.” “Bitter and hot.” “Sort of harshness.” “Not sweet.” (I had suggested that it was sweet.) “Not nice.” “Frightful stuff.” “Hurt your throat when you swallow it.” “Bitterness and saltness about it.”

*Sugar.*—“It’s getting better.” “Sweetish taste.” “Sweet.” “Something approaching sugar.”

*Powdered Alum.*—“Fills your mouth with water.” “Precious hot.” “Some stuff from a chemist’s shop, that they put in medicine.” “Leaves a brackish taste.” “Makes your mouth water.” “Something after the style of alum.”

*Cayenne Pepper.*—Conway showed strong signs of distress. “Oh! you call it good, do you?” “Oh! give us something to rinse that down.” “Draws your mouth all manner of shapes.” “Bitter and acid, frightful.” “You’ve got some Cayenne down my throat, I know.” Renewed signs of pain and entreaties for water.

The “subject” was now waked. He immediately said, “What’s this I’ve got in my mouth?” “Something precious hot.” “Something much hotter than ginger.” “Pepper and ginger.”

In the next series, which took place on September 20th, 1883, at Heckmondwike, in Yorkshire, Mr. and Mrs. Sidgwick were also present. Mr. Kershaw was the operator. The “subject,” who had come to the place by the merest accident, was Mrs. King, the wife of a neighbouring clergyman. Mrs. King was in a light hypnotic trance, with closed eyes; and was questioned, as to what she tasted, by Mrs. Sidgwick, without the very slightest guidance—Mrs. Sidgwick not knowing herself what the substances were. Mr. Kershaw put the substances into his mouth, according to my directions, in another room. He then stood three or four yards behind Mrs. King, keeping absolutely still.

*Cayenne Pepper.*—“Dry.” “Choking feeling.” “Not so choking.” “Sandy and dry; thirsty feeling.” (I took Mr. Kershaw out to renew the dose.) “Thirsty, parched feeling.” “Just the same”—though Mrs. Sidgwick, who thought it had been changed, had made a remark which would have naturally led her to believe that such was the case. Mrs. Sidgwick said, “Is it cool, hot, sour, acid, dry, or bitter?” “Hot, dry.”

Mrs. King was woke, and said that she had a burning feeling in her throat, and it was suffocating her. She took some water, and was then re-hypnotised.

*Bitter Aloes.*—"Something sour." "As if I'd been eating acid drops." Mrs. Sidgwick said "Not disagreeable," in a tone of agreement. "No." She was given some water—"Mouth's nasty."

*Sugar.*—"Slightly sweet, I think." "Mixture; rather hot, but sweet." "Just the same; rather sweet taste."

*Alum.*—"Something like sour-bitter." "More sour than bitter." "Don't know the taste." "Not particularly nice nor particularly disagreeable." "Gives a watery feeling." "Tongue feels watery." "Watery feeling, as if I had been tasting something sour." She was woke, and was given a little of the stuff; she said that was just the taste she felt in her mouth.

*Cloves.*—"Like nutmeg." "Spicy taste; nutmeg, or cinnamon, or some other spice."

*Ginger.*—"Saltpetre sort of taste." "Gone." "Salty taste slightly."

In both these series every experiment has been given, and there has been no selection of results. The results would not be convincing, if taken alone; especially since Mrs. King failed completely in similar trials on two subsequent occasions. But no one who had witnessed more conclusive experiments could doubt that the genuine phenomenon was exhibited here, though the faculty was imperfectly developed.

Two other trials made about the same time with two other "subjects," one with Mr. Smith and the other with Mr. Kershaw as operator, gave results about as satisfactory as the above. In both cases, as in the two series just recorded, Cayenne pepper was described as strongly burning.

In the middle of this latter series with Mr. Kershaw, I suddenly pinched the upper part of his left arm. The "subject," who was sitting in a trance about eight feet off, with her back to us, did not know what sort of experiment I was going to try, and was only asked by me "What do you feel?" She instantly started up, as if in great excitement, rubbed the *exactly* corresponding place on her own person, and complained of violent pain. Being woke, she said her arm was dreadfully painful, as if some one had nipped her. A few more experiments on tastes followed, and then I nipped Mr. Kershaw's left little finger, and asked the "subject" if she felt anything beside the taste. She began at once to complain of pain in her left side and arm, all down to the finger ends.

## APPENDIX.

It may be convenient to our readers if we quote or refer to a few cases of transference of tastes and pains to hypnotised "subjects," recorded by previous observers.

Mr. Esdaile, who was for many years Presidency Surgeon in Calcutta, gives the following case of transference of taste between himself and a patient he had mesmerised. The subject was a young Hindoo, Baboo Mohun Mitre, who had been operated upon painlessly whilst in the mesmeric trance.

One day that the Baboo came to the hospital to pay his respects, after getting well, I took him into a side room, and mesmerising him till he could not open his eyes, I went out and desired my assistant surgeon to procure me some salt, a slice of lime, a piece of gentian, and some brandy, and to give them to me in any order he pleased, when I opened my mouth. We returned, and blindfolding Lallee Mohun, I took hold of both his hands : and, opening my mouth, had a slice of half-rotten lime put into it by my assistant. Having chewed it, I asked, "Do you taste anything?" "Yes, I taste a nasty old lime:" and he made wry faces in correspondence. He was equally correct with all the other substances, calling the gentian by its native name, *cheretta*; and when I tasted the brandy, he said it was *Shrâb* (the general name for wine and spirits). Being asked what kind, he said, "What I used to drink—brandy." For I am happy to say he is cured of his drunken habits (formerly drinking two bottles of brandy a day) as well as of his disease. (*Practical Mesmerism*, by J. Esdaile, M.D., p. 125.)

Rev. C. H. Townshend, in his *Facts in Mesmerism*, gives several examples. (See especially pp. 68, 72, 76, 122, 150, 151, 184.) The following experiments were made on a servant of his own, in whom he had produced the trance-condition.

Wine, water, and coffee were handed to me successively, in such a way as to prevent the patient from perceiving, by any usual means, what the liquors were. He, however, correctly named them in order. The order was then changed, and the results of the experiments were the same. Flowers were given me to smell. I was holding the patient by one hand at the time, but turning altogether away from him to a table, over which I bent, so as to interpose myself between him and anything that might be handed to me. He, however, when I smelt of the flowers, imitated the action, and on my asking him what he perceived, replied, without hesitation, "Flowers." Upon this, one of the party silently changed the flowers for a bottle of *eau de Cologne*, when he observed, "That is not the same smell; it is *eau de Cologne*." With the manner of conducting this experiment and its results, all who were present declared themselves perfectly satisfied.

"Three of my sleep-wakers," Mr. Townshend says in another place, "could in no way distinguish substances when placed in their own mouths, nor discriminate between a piece of apple and a piece of cheese; but the moment that I was eating, they, seeming to eat also, could tell me what I had in my mouth."

The next case is also one of Mr. Townshend's.

Did any one strike or hurt me in any part of the body when Anna M. was in sleep-waking, she immediately carried her hand to a *corresponding* part of her

own person. Then she would rub her own shoulder when mine was smarting with a blow, manifesting that the actual nerves of that part were, *pro tempora*, restored to their functions. Once an incredulous person came near me unawares, and trod upon my foot, which was quite hidden under a chair. The sleep-waker instantly darted down her hand and rubbed her own foot with an expression of pain. Again, if my hair was pulled from behind, Anna directly raised her hand to the back of her head. A pin thrust into my hand elicited an equal demonstration of sympathy.

Stimulated by Mr. Townshend's experiments, the Rev. A. Gilmour, of Greenock, made some experiments on one of his servants. He described the results in a letter to Professor Gregory (quoted in *Animal Magnetism*, p. 211), in which the following passage occurs:—

I could throw her into the mesmeric sleep in 40 seconds. She is able to tell what I taste, such as soda, salt, sugar, milk, water, &c., though not in the same room with me. When my foot is pricked, or my hair pulled, or any part of my person pinched, she feels it, and describes it unerringly.

Professor Gregory himself says (*Animal Magnetism*, p. 23):—

I have seen and tested the fact of community of sensation in so many cases that I regard it as firmly established. No one who has had opportunities of observing this beautiful phenomenon can long hesitate as to its entire truth—such is the expression of genuine sensation in the face and gesture, besides the distinct statements made by the sleeper.

The following account is given by Dr. Elliotson in the *Zoist*, Vol. V., pp. 242-245.

I requested my butler to enclose, in five different packets of blotting-paper, salt, sugar, cinnamon, ginger, and pepper. These were wrapped in one common cover when given to me, and I handed them over to Mr. Scarlet, the eldest son of Lord Abinger, who gave me one packet after another, any that he chose, as each was done with by me. The Archbishop of Dublin and several clergyman and other friends were present.

When I put each into my mouth, I was ignorant of its contents, and learnt its nature as the paper became moistened and gave way. The first was salt, and I stood with it in my mouth at Mrs. Snewing's side and rather behind her, saying nothing. Before a minute had elapsed she moved her lips, made a face, and said, "Oh, that's nasty enough." "What do you mean?" "Why you've put salt into my mouth, you needn't have done that." I removed the packet of salt, and took another, which proved to be cinnamon. Presently she said, "Well that is odd; I never heard of such a thing; to put such things together into one's mouth!" "Why what do you mean?" "Why now you've given me something nice and warm, very pleasant, but you've mixed salt with it." The impression of the salt thus still remained. "What is it?" "I don't know the name of it, but it's very nice; it's what we put into puddings; brown, and in sticks." She puzzled a long while and then on my asking if it was cinnamon, "Yes, that's it," she replied, "How odd that I shouldn't recollect the name." I then removed it, and took into my mouth another packet, which proved to be sugar, and I observed that Mr. Scarlet very properly peeped into it before he gave it to me. After a minute or two she began, "Oh, that's very sweet; I like that; it's sugar." I removed it from my mouth and took another packet, which proved to be ginger.

After a minute or two she exclaimed, "Well, this is the funniest thing I ever heard of, to mix salt, and cinnamon, and sugar, and now to give me something else hot." "What is it?" "I don't know; but this is very hot too. It sets all my mouth on fire." In fact, I felt my mouth burning hot. After some difficulty, for she was puzzled between these conflicting impressions, she said it must be ginger, and went on complaining of the heat of the mouth. I took a glass of cold water, and she instantly said, smiling, "That isn't hot, that's nice and cool, it makes my mouth quite comfortable." "What is it?" "Why it's water; what else can it be?" The last packet was now put into my mouth, and proved to be pepper. She cried out, "Why you're putting hot things again into my mouth. It gets down my throat, and up my nose; it's burning me," and she soon declared it was pepper. I could scarcely endure it, and took a draught of water. She was instantly relieved, and said, "How cool and nice that is." She could not have seen what was doing had her eyes been open.

A gentleman now came beside me and pricked one of my fingers with a pin. She took no notice of it at first, but, after a few minutes, slowly began to rub the fingers of her corresponding hand, and at last rubbed one only, that corresponding with my finger which had been pricked, and complained that someone had pricked it. The back of one of my hands was now pricked. She made no remark, but remained in quiet sleep. The pricking was at length repeated at the same spot, and pretty sharply, in silence. Still she made no remark. We gave it up, and my other hand was pricked in silence. After a little time, she began to rub her hand, *corresponding with that of mine which was the first pricked*, and complained of its having been pricked at the very same spot as mine. Gradually she ceased to complain, and was still again. After the lapse of another minute or two, all the party observing silence, she complained that the other hand, corresponding with that of mine last pricked, was pricked, and wondered that any person should do so. This is a most remarkable circumstance; perfectly corresponding to the phenomena of sympathetic movements in the Okeys, which often came out so long after the movement of the operator had been made. Indeed after he, in despair of any effect, had made another motion for them to imitate, and when he was expecting the latter, the first would take place. It shows how easily persons ignorant of the subject and unqualified to make experiments may come to false conclusions, and set themselves up as the discoverers of failures and imposition. In my patients the movement given for sympathy and not productive of apparent effect has often come out again in a *subsequent sleep-waking*, the impression remaining unconsciously in the brain. The heat and taste of the pepper still remained in Mrs. Snewing's mouth, and she went on good-naturedly, as always, complaining of it. While she was complaining, I suddenly awoke her, and asked what she tasted and whether her mouth was hot. She looked surprised, and said she "tasted nothing" and her "mouth was not hot;" and she smiled at the questions.

A few weeks afterwards, I repeated these experiments with all the same precautions, in the presence of Mr. H. S. Thompson and Mr. Chandler, who are very accurate observers, Mrs. Thompson, and a few other friends. I stood quite behind her large high-backed leather chair. Mr. Chandler gave me the packets at his own pleasure, and, on tasting each, I wrote on a slip of paper what I tasted, and held up the slip at a distance behind her, that all might judge of her accuracy and my truth. These were the same articles as in the former experiments; but, as they were on both occasions taken at random, the order, of course, turned out to be different. In addition, Mr. Chandler gave me a piece of dried orange-peel from his pocket; and I tasted water and wine. She named each

article with perfect accuracy, and readily ; remarking that it was very strange she once could not recollect the name of cinnamon. Indeed, on the first occasion, she described the taste and the external character and uses of the various articles with perfect accuracy, but hesitated in giving the names of the cinnamon and ginger and pepper ; a fact showing that the sleepiness extended a little more over the mental powers than one might imagine. In a note sent me lately by Mr. Thompson are the following remarks :—

The patient's lips moved, and in a very short time after you had detected its nature, she appeared to taste it as well as yourself ; and when it was anything disagreeable begged you would not put the nasty stuff into her mouth in this way. She told, without the slightest mistake, everything you tasted : salt, sugar, cinnamon, pepper, ginger, orange-peel, wine, water, and some others. Not a word was spoken by any of the party to each other, and the only question that was asked the patient was, what she had in her mouth that she complained of. After the spices, when you drank water, she seemed to enjoy it much, saying it cooled her mouth ; but at other times, as you drank it very freely, she requested that you would not give her any more water, for that so much water was disagreeable to her. There were present, Mr. Chandler, Lord Adare, Baron Osten, a friend of his, whose name I do not know, myself, and my wife. We were all perfectly satisfied with the entire success of the experiments.

I then smelt eau de Cologne, without any noise. She presently said, "How nice ; what a nice thing you've given me to smell." But she could not tell what it was ; when I mentioned its name she recognised it. I did the same with water. She made no remark. I asked her if she smelt anything. She replied, "No, I don't smell anything ; what should I smell?"

I put snuff to my nostrils : she almost immediately complained of snuff being given to her.

## III.

AN ACCOUNT OF SOME EXPERIMENTS IN THOUGHT-  
TRANSFERENCE,

Conducted by MALCOLM GUTHRIE, J.P., and JAMES BIRCHALL, Hon. Sec. of  
the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool.

By MALCOLM GUTHRIE.

After Mr. Irving Bishop's visit to Liverpool in the spring of this year, it became a favourite amusement to imitate his skill in pin-finding; and some persons also made experiments in reading numbers thought of by others, they themselves meanwhile being blindfolded. Out of experiments made in this casual way arose the systematic study which it is my business to recount in the present paper. A party of young ladies amusing themselves after business hours found that certain of their number, when blindfolded, were able to name very correctly figures selected from an almanack suspended on the wall of the room, when their companions, having hold of their hands, fixed their attention upon some particular day of the month. There, so far as the young ladies were concerned, the matter ended. They had their few evenings' amusement, and other occupations and interests supervened.

It so happened that about this time I read an article by Mr. F. Corder in the February number of *Cassell's Magazine*, which was written with such an air of truthfulness, and spoke of Thought-transference as a matter of such very ordinary experience, that for the first time I began to think that there must be some foundation in fact for the belief so confidently expressed. Up to that time I had been thoroughly sceptical, nor had I read any literature on the subject. I thereupon determined to try the experiments, as described in Mr. Corder's paper, upon my son, a nervous and susceptible fair-haired boy of ten years of age. Much to my astonishment, and his own, he named quickly and without difficulty objects which I placed behind him when blindfolded under the usual conditions. He, however, would not perform more than two or three experiments at a time, saying that it made him "feel queer." Moreover, after the first experiments, when I asked others to witness the curious phenomenon, he seemed disposed to ensure success by taking a sly peep at the object, which indeed made me suspicious of the whole thing. Under these circumstances of the boy's reluctance and the difficulty of imposing stringent conditions, I abandoned him as an unsuitable subject for study, more particularly as other satisfactory means shortly afterwards came under my notice. I,



however, at a subsequent period, tested my son's powers under proper scientific conditions with the assistance of Mr. Birchall; and we were both satisfied as to his possession of the faculty, although we did not consider him a useful subject for study.

It was after the discovery of my son's powers of receiving impressions that I heard of the casual experiments before referred to; and having tested the accuracy of the reports which I had received, I mentioned the matter to the Council of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool, asking for assistance for the purpose of a scientific study of the phenomena. Mr. James Birchall, the Hon. Secretary, to whom the subject was quite new, having, I suppose, some confidence in my good judgment, agreed to give me the advantage of his assistance, and we thereupon held our first meeting. From the very beginning it was arranged between us that Mr. Birchall should make a full and complete record of every experiment, and I have to tender him my grateful thanks for the exactitude and care with which this record has been kept. He has performed his office as a man free from any prepossessions, and simply as a matter of official duty. His suggestions have all been in the direction of stringency of conditions, and I may state that he very shortly became convinced of the *bona fides* of the experiments, and interested in the scientific prosecution of the study. I very much regret that he is not able to be present at this meeting as we had arranged, in order personally to present the valuable and interesting register of the experiments which he has prepared. I hope, however, that he will be able to attend some future meeting with a report upon experiments which we are continuing week by week.

And now as to the party of young ladies to whom I referred, as having discovered the possession of the power of Thought-transference. You must know that I am a partner in one of the large drapery establishments in the city of Liverpool, and that the young ladies are connected with one of the show-rooms of that establishment. A relative of mine (entered in Mr. Birchall's report as Miss C.), also in the business, had been present at the careless, offhand experiments made in imitation of Irving Bishop, and, recognising their genuine character, informed me of the circumstance, being aware of the experiments I had made with my son.

One of the most important considerations connected with my study has been that I have been made cognisant, through this relative, of the very beginnings of the affair. I have, as it were, been behind the scenes from the first, and through my representative have been informed of almost every experiment which has been made outside our weekly meetings,—although after the first month the young ladies agreed only to practise at these meetings, as I (rightly or wrongly) thought it desirable on considerations of health

to limit their work in this direction. Thus I have had the advantage of studying a series of experiments *ab ovo*. I had not to enter upon an examination of the achievements of people who had been working together for years; but have been acquainted with the origin and whole development of the manifestations and have witnessed the genuine surprise which the operators and the subjects have alike exhibited at their increasing successes, and at the results of our excursions into novel lines of experiment. The affair has not been the discovery of the possession of special powers, first made and then worked up by the parties themselves, for gain or glory. The experimenters in this case were disposed to pass the matter over altogether as one of no moment, and only put themselves at my disposal in regard to experiments in order to oblige me. The experiments have all been devised and conducted by myself and Mr. Birchall, without any previous intimation of their nature, and could not possibly have been foreseen. In fact they have been to the young ladies a succession of surprises. No set of experiments of a similar nature has ever been more completely known from its origin, or more completely under the control of the scientific observer.

As to the young ladies concerned, I have known them all for many years, and am able to speak in the highest terms of their probity and intelligence. I know also that they have a high regard for me, and would not willingly lead me into any error.

The two "subjects," Miss R. and Miss E., are about 20 years of age, engaged at business all day from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., in the same show-room, and they discovered their aptitude with their companions in the same room as operators or "agents." They do not meet elsewhere, as all the assistants live with their friends, and do not board on the establishment. The lady, Miss R—d, who is supposed to have the principal influence in conveying impressions, is the head of the room, and occupies a position of great trust and responsibility.

The experiments were commenced with simple shapes, such as diamonds, circles, triangles, &c., cut out of brightly-coloured ribbons, and exhibited upon a black background; also with cards, and letters of the alphabet printed in a bold type. Afterwards objects were introduced, and short words were formed of the letters. The first series of experiments were of a *visual* kind, and were very successful. They were conducted in the presence of Mr. Birchall, myself, several lady companions of the subjects, and usually one or two members of the Literary and Philosophical Society. In the earlier experiments the "subject" was in contact (that is to say clasped or touched hands) with Miss R—d or some other lady friend. I need not say that the "subject" was always effectually blindfolded, and that the object was placed in such a position that it could not be seen

by her, even if she were not so incapacitated for observation. These conditions apply to all the experiments, and, to save iteration, I state them once for all.

After a short time experiments of this description were performed without any contact whatever. This was a suggestion of my relative, and under her superintendence the first set of experiments with Miss R., under these new conditions, was completely successful, and will be found recorded in Mr. Birchall's report.\* At the next meeting after this discovery, the experiments were tried without contact, and were almost uniformly successful. The party sat in a semi-circle before Miss R. or Miss E., the object being placed behind her, and the attention of all being concentrated upon it, the object was very speedily described and sometimes named. It is noteworthy that the idea or name of the object did not come first to the percipient, but the appearance seemed to dawn gradually upon the mind, and sometimes it only presented itself in its general features, so that very often it could only be described and not named. First the colour impression was received, then the general shape, and afterwards any special characteristic, and finally, the name. This was the usual order of the process. As an illustration, take the case of a blue feather. The "subject" said, "It is pale? It looks like a leaf; but it can't be a leaf—looks like a feather curled. Is it a feather?" Again a key was described as "A little tiny thing with a ring at one end and a little flag at the other, like a toy flag." Urged to name it, she said, "It is very like a key."

The foregoing is a summary of our work during the first few weeks. All our regular meetings were successful, but in our desire to exhibit our discovery to our fellow members, we had some extra meetings, which proved total failures, much to our chagrin and much to the disappointment of our subjects. It would appear that any mental disturbance on the part of the operators or on the part of the "subjects," due to anxiety to succeed, or to the novelty of the *entourage* of persons or things, very much interferes with the success of experiments. I may here remark that the result of our experience is that success or failure depends as much (if not more) upon the condition of the agent as upon that of the percipient. It has happened that after a complete failure before strangers, the agent and percipient have been almost immediately able to obtain a successful transference of a number of impressions—the previous failure having been probably due to the mind of the agent occupying itself with the presence of the visitor, instead of

\* The first series of experiments was summarised and reported by Mr. Birchall at a meeting of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool, and the experiments referred to are included in his report. This report is a record of every experiment made—with only two exceptions, when the subjects were hurriedly called upon to exhibit their powers to callers.

being directed exclusively upon the object to be described. As regards the condition of the agent, I may say that although I have been very successful myself in giving impressions to each of the "subjects" without the presence of any other person, still, under precisely similar conditions, when I have not felt equal to the required effort of concentration, I have been unable to repeat the success. We have also found that wandering attention on the part of the agents is misleading; and it would, I think, be fair to explain in this way one or two failures of the following type—that although a certain article was placed for observation, a picture hanging on the wall a little above it was described. On account of the disturbance of the agent's mind as well as that of the "subject," it is judged that experiments in a drawing-room, before a large miscellaneous company, are not likely to be successful.

At the conclusion of the first series of experiments some new departures were made.

First we tried the experiment of producing an article in the absence of the subject from the room and after concealing it re-admitting her, and, after blindfolding and isolating her, asking her to describe the object we had been looking at. This experiment was tried both before and after the summer interregnum and was successful. Thus a lady's purse, in form of a satchel, with a bright metallic frame and steel-bar handle above, was thus described: "Is it something not quite square? Something bright in the middle. Is it a purse? There's something very bright at the top. Has it anything else over it? Don't know what this is—whether it belongs to the purse. I've lost it—is it a bag?" On another occasion a key was correctly named, and Mr. Johnson's gold watch-chain, hanging in a curve from his watch-pocket to a button-hole of his waistcoat, elicited the answer: "Is it a chain, a watch-chain, hanging from a pocket like this?" the patient then describing in the air a curve similar to that formed by the chain we had been looking at but which was now concealed. Then she added, "There is a little pendant at the end of it."

Proceeding a step further we agreed, in the absence of the subject from the room, to imagine some object, and, under similar conditions, to ask her to describe it. This experiment was also successfully performed, on several occasions, by both subjects. A gold cross, pine-apple, and other objects imagined in this way have been correctly named.

We tried also the perception of *motion*, and found that the movements of objects exhibited could be discerned. The idea was suggested by an experiment tried with a card which, in order that all present should see, I moved about and was informed by the percipient, Miss R., that it was a card, but she could not tell which one because it

seemed to be moving about. On a subsequent occasion, in order to test this perception of motion, I bought a toy monkey, which worked up and down on a stick by means of a string drawing the arms and legs together. The answer was: "I see red and yellow, and it is darker at one end than the other. It is like a flag moving about—it is moving. . . . Now it is opening and shutting like a pair of scissors."

We have also tried experiments in the transference of real or imaginary *pains*, which Miss R. is able to receive from Mr. Birchall. This branch of our studies has not as yet been carried very far, for want of time, although I think it more likely to throw light upon the nature of the mode of transmission than any other branch of the inquiry. In particular, it would be desirable to ascertain by observation or even experiment, if the part affected in the subject shows signs of physical change, such as contraction, tension, rush of blood, redness, or any other physical change similar to that produced upon the person of the agent in causing the pain.

At the conclusion of our Spring Session, we tried (without contact) the transference of names, short quotations, &c., all the company thinking of the word, or words. In this we met with but little success, but on one occasion, the proverb, "Time flies," having been thought of by the company, elicited the answer, "Is it two words?—is it 'Time flies'?"

On this occasion, seeing that the subject was so apt, I proposed to the company that we should think of a historical scene, and two experiments were made, which are published in Mr. Birchall's report. They were imperfect, viewed critically, each of them having been done at the second instead of at the first attempt; but if the fact of Thought-transference is accepted as proved on other grounds, they are suggestive of further experiments in the same direction.

We discontinued our experiments at the end of May, on account of press of business and arrangements for holidays; and I am told by the "subjects" that no experiments whatever were made until we resumed our meetings, towards the end of August, in preparation for a visit by Mr. Myers and Mr. Gurney. As I expected, after the interregnum we met with very little success, and I wrote to those gentlemen not to expect much under the circumstances. And, indeed, the "subjects" were able to do very little, and our visitors would have gone away disappointed, had not our inquiries taken the direction of experiments in transference of *tastes*. As to these you have just heard the report prepared by Mr. Myers, and he and his coadjutor appeared fully satisfied as to the genuineness of the transference of impressions.

I may add the results of a few casual experiments, made in the course of the last week in London, which illustrate the partial

transference of somewhat more complex visual impressions than most of those above described.

One evening I called Miss E. and a friend of mine, Mr. Lee, out of the room, and requested them to assist me in imagining the large stained glass rose-window in the transept of Westminster Abbey, opposite to which Miss E., Miss R., and I had been sitting at the service the same afternoon. I then asked Miss R. to say what object we were thinking of. After a while she said, "I cannot tell what you are looking at, but I seem to be sitting in Westminster Abbey, where we were this afternoon." After another interval she said, "I seem to be looking at a window," and again, "I think it is the window in the chancel with the figures." When afterwards told which window it was, she said that she did not see any window distinctly, and certainly not the rose-window thought of.

I next proposed another object, and decided upon something which had struck our attention in a lampshop in New Bond-street, a lighted lamp with a stuffed monkey clinging to it—the lamp at the same time revolving, and the monkey moving a cocoa-nut, which was suspended from its foot. This experiment took a very long time, and was only partially successful. First Miss R. said she thought of a cat, or it might be a dog. After a while she said it was something long, dark, and hanging—describing the size and shape pretty well with her hands. Then she said that she saw something hanging straight down, and moving up and down. After the removal of the blindfolding, she looked at the gas chandelier, and said, "Was it not that?" and then immediately, "No, it was not that—it was a lamp and it was lighted." Asked if the cat she saw had anything to do with the lamp, she said "No."

The following completely successful results in the simpler forms of Thought-transference were also obtained on the same occasion as the above.

I proposed to Miss R. to tell a name thought of by myself, Mr. Lee, and Miss E., without contact and blindfolded. The name "Polly" was written on a card and passed round in strict silence. In a few minutes Miss R. said, "I can only think of Polly."

The name "Isabella" was then selected by me, and passed round silently. After a longer interval Miss R. said, "I don't know what it can be. Somehow I can only think of my own name." Asked what was her name, she said "Isabel."

Mr. Lee proposed thinking of a number, and as only single numbers had previously been thought of it occurred to me to take a double one—34—which I wrote down and passed round. Miss R. shortly said, "Are there two figures?" I said "Yes." "One is 4 and the other 3." She did not know whether it was 34 or 43.

Our endeavours recently have been towards the ascertainment of individual powers on the part of the agents in regard to each of the two "subjects." The test selected has been the production by the blindfolded "subjects" of copies of drawings placed behind them. An improved method has been to place the drawing on a stand, with a wooden back between the agent and the "subject," and the agent placing himself on the opposite side of a small table, either joins hands with the "subject," or, by preference, does not touch her at all, and gazes at the drawing until the "subject" says she has an impression thereof. The drawing is then taken down and concealed, the blindfolding is removed, and the "subject" being already provided with drawing materials, proceeds to delineate the impression she has received. In most of these cases, no one besides the agent and the "subject" has been present in the room, and the result is held to establish the relative power of each agent in giving off an impression of this kind. In this way it has been found that all the agents have been successful in giving information individually to each of the subjects, although the range of experiments is not yet complete, because some new operators we have introduced have not yet had time to develop or settle down properly to their work. However, it has been found that both Miss R. and Miss E. have been able to receive impressions of drawings singly from myself, Mr. Birchall, Miss R——d, Mr. Steel, President of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool, and imperfectly from two or three other gentlemen. Since my arrival in London, a very successful producer of impressions has been discovered in the person of one of your members, Mr. F. S. Hughes. Mr. Gurney was also successful at one of our meetings.

Under these circumstances about 90 drawings have been produced in Liverpool, and 60 in London. It is difficult to classify them. A great number of them are decided successes; another large number give part of the drawing; others exhibit the general idea, and others again manifest a kind of composition of form. Others, such as the drawings of flowers, have been described and named, but have been too difficult to draw. A good many are perfect failures. The drawings generally run in lots. A number of successful copies will be produced very quickly, and again a number of failures, indicating, I think, faultiness on the part of the agent, or growing fatigue on the part of the "subject."

The originals of the Liverpool experiments and the corresponding copies have all been mounted, and I shall be pleased to show them at the close of this meeting. Every experiment, whether successful or a failure, is there in the order of trial, with the conditions, name of "subject" and agent, and any remarks made by the "subject" specified at the bottom. Some of the copies exhibit the curious phenomenon of inversion. These drawings must speak for themselves. The principal

facts to be borne in mind regarding them are that they have been executed through the instrumentality, as agents, of persons of unquestioned probity, and that the responsibility for them is spread over a considerable group of such persons ; while the conditions to be observed were so simple—for they amounted really to nothing more than taking care that the original should not be seen by the “subject”—that it is extremely difficult to suppose them to have been eluded. The results may thus be considered a solid addition to the evidence for the transference of impressions from one mind to another otherwise than by the ordinary channels of sense.

The originals of the following diagrams were for the most part drawn in another room from that in which the “subject” was placed. The few executed in the same room were drawn while the “subject” was blindfolded, at a distance from her, and in such a way that the process would have been wholly invisible to her or anyone else, even had an attempt been made to observe it. During the process of transference, the “agent” looked steadily and in perfect silence at the original drawing, which was placed upon an intervening wooden stand ; the “subject” sitting opposite to him, and behind the stand, blindfolded and quite still. The “agent” ceased looking at the drawing, and the blindfolding was removed, only when the “subject” professed herself ready to make the reproduction, which happened usually in times varying from half-a-minute to two or three minutes. Her position rendered it absolutely impossible that she should glimpse at the original. She could not have done so, in fact, without rising from her seat and advancing her head several feet ; and as she was almost in the same line of sight as the drawing, and so almost in the centre of the “agent’s” field of observation, the slightest approach to such a movement must have been instantly detected. The reproductions were made in perfect silence, and without the “agent” even following the actual process with his eyes, though he was of course able to keep the “subject” under the closest observation.

In the case of all the diagrams, except those numbered 7 and 8, the “agent” and the “subject” were the only two persons in the room during the experiment. In the case of numbers 7 and 8, the “agent” and “subject” were sitting quite apart in a corner of the room, while Mr. Guthrie and Miss E. were talking in another part of it. Numbers 1-6 are specially interesting as being the complete and consecutive series of a single sitting.



NO. 1. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



NO. 1. REPRODUCTION.

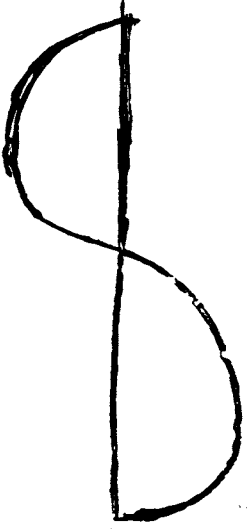


Mr. Guthrie and Miss E. No contact.

NO. 2. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



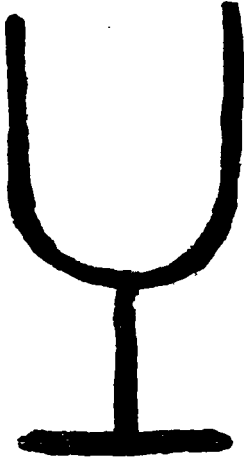
NO. 2. REPRODUCTION.



Mr. Guthrie and Miss E. No contact.

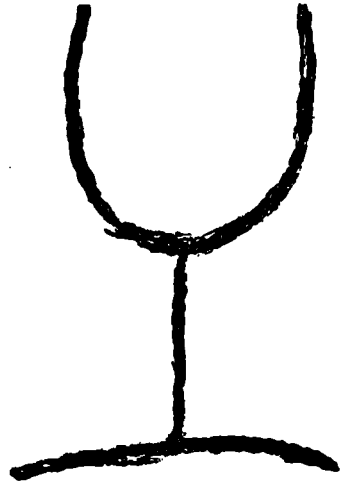
D

**No. 3. ORIGINAL DRAWING.**

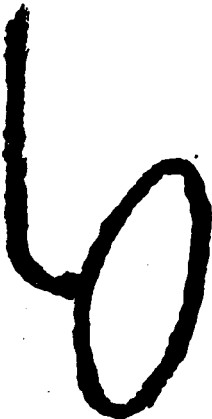


**Mr. Guthrie and Miss E. No contact.**

**No. 3. REPRODUCTION.**

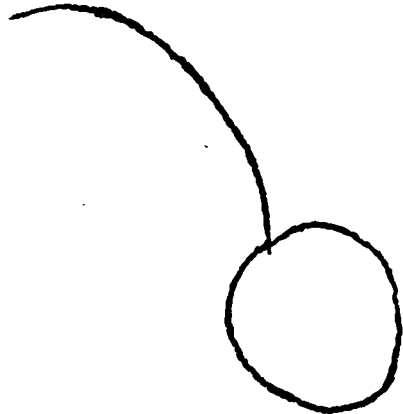


**No. 4. ORIGINAL DRAWING.**



**Mr. Guthrie and Miss E. No contact.**

**No 4: REPRODUCTION.**

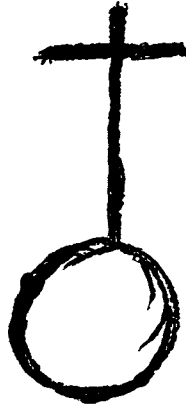


No. 5. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



Mr. Guthrie and Miss E.  
No contact.

No. 5. REPRODUCTION.

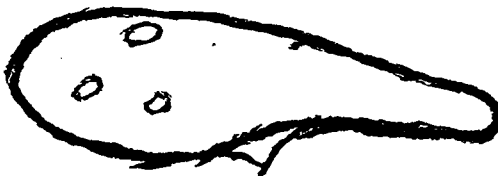


No. 6. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



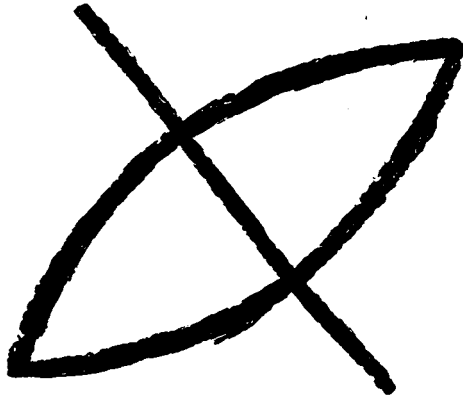
Mr. Guthrie and Miss E. No contact.

No. 6. REPRODUCTION.



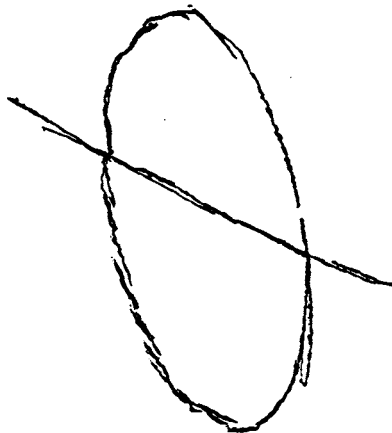
Miss E. almost directly said, "Are you thinking of the bottom of the sea, with shells and fishes;" and then, "Is it a snail or a fish?"—then drew as above.

NO. 7. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



Mr Gurney and Miss R. Contact for half-a-minute before the reproduction was drawn.

NO. 7. REPRODUCTION.



NO. 8. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



NO. 8. REPRODUCTION.



Mr. Gurney and Miss R. No contact.

NO. 9. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



Mr. Birchall and Miss R. No contact.

NO. 9. REPRODUCTION.



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

No. 10. ORIGINAL DRAWING.

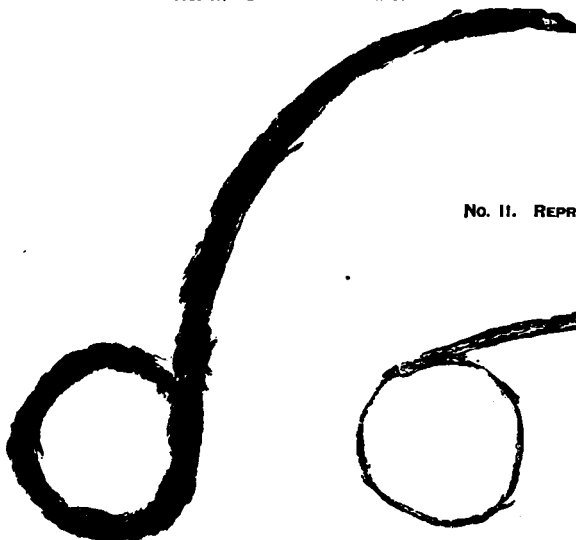


Mr. Birchall and Miss E. No contact.

No. 10. REPRODUCTION.



No. 11. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



Mr. Birchall and Miss E. No contact.

No. 11. REPRODUCTION.

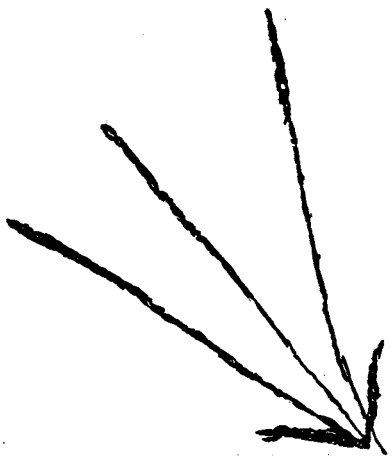


**No. 12. ORIGINAL DRAWING.**

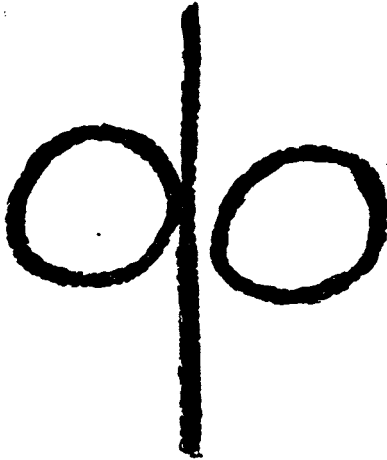


**Mr. Steel and Miss R. No contact**

**No. 12. REPRODUCTION.**

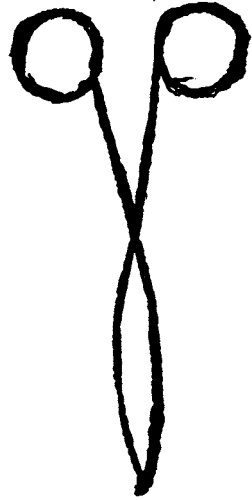


NO. 13. ORIGINAL DRAWING.

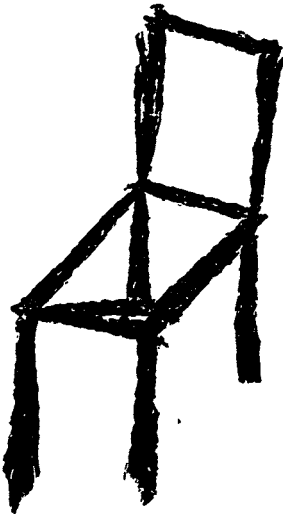


Mr. Steel and Miss E. Contact before the reproduction was made.

NO. 13. REPRODUCTION.

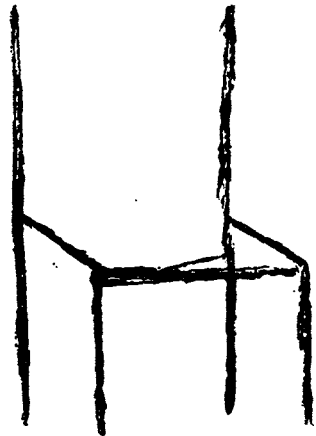


NO. 14. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



Mr. Hughes and Miss E. Contact before the reproduction was made.

NO. 14. REPRODUCTION.



Miss E. said, "A box or chair badly shaped"—then drew as above.

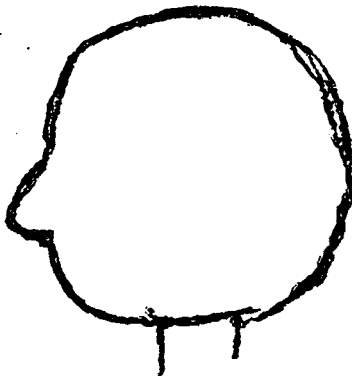


NO. 15. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



Mr. Hughes and Miss E. No contact.

NO. 15. REPRODUCTION.



Miss E. said, "It is like a mask at a pantomime," and immediately drew as above.

No. 16. ORIGINAL DRAWING.



Mr. Hughes and Miss E. No contact.

No. 16. REPRODUCTION.

