

SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES IN MAN

AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

**BY
EUGENE OSTY**

**TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY
STANLEY DE BRATH, M.Inst.C.E.**

"We live on the surface of our being."

WILLIAM JAMES

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

IT is the bounden duty of a translator to give to the utmost of his power the meaning of the author who entrusts him with this responsible task, without introducing any colour from his own thought.

This is doubly imperative in the case of a scientific work on a highly controversial subject, one, moreover, to which the application of the experimental and non-controversial method followed in this book is so highly desirable.

I have endeavoured to avoid every kind of locution that might tend to colour the author's meaning in any way. I have kept in close touch with Dr. Osty during the progress of the work, and have retained the terms meta-normal, para-normal, and super-normal—which he uses as signifying “beyond,” “outside,” and “above” thought, but not as implying separate modes of cognition. I have been asked by a distinguished psychologist why the word “cognition” has been used in some places and “knowledge” in others. As I understand it “cognition” refers to the process, “knowledge” to the result.

“Thought” is used in its psychological sense to include all mental action, conscious, subconscious, and transcendental to Time and Space. “Modality” is used as it is by Caird in the sense of “collective modes.”

“Psychism” is used to cover the psychic activity in a human being; “dynamo-psychism,” as used by Geley, a psychic energy pervading Nature and individualised in man—a dynamic psychic power. “Synergy” is used as synchronic and connected energy.

As this very important study of a special function is intended for students as well as for the general public, the references to other French works have been left as in the original, where no English translation is available: to translate them would be to give a false impression and to debar them from reference by those who may wish to consult them.

Some readers may consider that the words “metagnomy” and “metagnomic” occur more often than literary style requires; but Dr. Osty has not only to bear in mind the scientific accuracy of his sentences, but also the misrepresentations of a certain class of critics who do not scruple to detach from their context passages which, standing alone, would convert into general statements

those which are only applicable to metagnomic sensitives ; i.e. persons whose special faculty is the delineation of human lives. For this reason he has found it necessary to stress very frequently the special characteristic of the faculty in action. Dealing with subject-matter that excites the violent and unreasoning hostility that perverts every unwelcome fact, I think it due to the author to retain his purpose by stressing that the whole work is upon one aspect only of the whole faculty.

“Cryptesthesia ” and “Metagnomy.”

The author writes to me :

“Cryptesthesia signifies ‘a hidden sense’ and therefore implies a sensory system registering vibrations unperceived by the normal senses. This may be correct for telepathy, vision at a distance, discovery of hidden water-springs, etc., for we naturally imagine these phenomena as resulting from sensations. But when a percipient reveals an event that happened yesterday or a hundred years ago ; still more when that event has not yet taken place, it is no longer possible to suppose that his faculty is registering vibrations of any kind.

“I am aware that the term I have chosen is strange and may seem uncouth, but I use it because it implies no more than the fact of supernormal cognition of human lives.”

STANLEY DE BRATH.

WEYBRIDGE, August 12th, 1923.

PREFACE

IN 1913 I summed up in my book, *Lucidity and Intuition*, the results of three years' experimental work on the strange faculty possessed by certain persons of revealing the sequences of individual lives independently of normal intelligence, of normal sensorial information, and also of the unavoidable obstacles which Time and Space place in the way of ordinary perceptions.

In succeeding years I have continued to explore this department of an unknown psychology. The book, which in 1913 reflected my knowledge of the subject, satisfies me no longer though it contains many observed psychological facts that remain unchanged. It will not be reissued.

Wishing to resume this study and to define its foundations before proceeding to the mysterious origins of human thought, I found myself obliged to start altogether afresh.

By way of introduction I first wrote a book, *Le sens de la vie humaine*, in which I endeavoured to trace the progressive mental evolution of humanity and to show how Man appears to impartial and informed Reason under the aspect of his "thought-function."

I now present to informed readers this new book, which has a double purpose—to trace the main outlines of the problem of supernormal cognition, and to make a general psychological study of the conditions under which that study is most fertile; namely when a person endowed with supernormal faculty, exercises it upon a human personality. Readers of *Lucidity and Intuition* will not find the present work merely an enlarged, pruned, and corrected edition of the former book; but an entirely new summary of the results of twelve years' investigations, just as if I had written nothing previously on the subject.

Except in the first part, in which I pass rapidly over the various manifestations of supernormal faculties, I shall not cite authorities. The book is not a work of erudition, but an entirely original study of personal experiment, independent of reading, and conducted without intentional reference to any influence but that of the observed facts. In face of phenomena that have been affirmed, denied, distorted, and very diversely explained and interpreted, I have set aside all that has already been said, being resolved to accept no suggestions but those of the experimental facts themselves.

The book is not a summary of other men's work with additions of my own, but is my contribution of personal research in Metanormal psychology.

The biological problem set forth is so important in itself and in its implications, that I do not doubt that the scientific world will wish to verify the exactitude of my experimental data. I hope that men of science will not remain indifferent or merely passively interested spectators of the psychological drama exhibited in the following pages.

The phenomenon of supernormal cognition is, as will be seen, reproducible at will, provided that its processes are known. It does not depend on any faith in the witnesses, nor on any beliefs, whether positive or negative, but on exact observations and on experiments that can be renewed at any time. It is not to be judged by any dicta such as *I believe* or *I do not believe*, but by precise verification of the facts.

In publishing these results of personal research, I take the whole responsibility of placing the scientific world in a position to reproduce the series of experiments from which I have received data on one of the most profoundly interesting problems presented to mankind.

I hope that a committee of unbiassed men of science only desirous of truth and holding such positions as will make their verdict decisive, may, after reading this book, verify experimentally the soundness of its conclusions.

Such a confirmation of my observations would result in bringing into the realm of science phenomena that have hitherto lain outside its purview because they have been considered (without examination) to be absurd. Treated as scientific data they should receive investigation at the hands of many competent experimenters, and speedily lead to fruitful results.

PARIS, July, 1922.

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SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES IN MAN

PART I

SUPERNORMAL COGNITION UNDER ITS DIFFERENT ASPECTS

CHAPTER I

MAN, KNOWN AND UNKNOWN

FROM a view of mankind emerging from the depths of the past, it is easy to perceive that the concept Man has formed of his own personality has grown *pari passu* with the progressive stages of his thought.

Until modern times, through lack of intellectual discipline in observation and research, his concepts have been built up under the suggestion of introspective observation and emotional and mystical tendencies. His desires and beliefs have taken form in various religious and philosophic systems. Religious and philosophical explanations have the quality of the epochs and of the nations in which they appeared; they are at the level of the mentality of those who conceived them and of the human groups that accepted them.

By long training of thought, Man has in these present times been led to the discovery of exact rules for investigation and inference in research. He has invented the experimental method of physical science beginning with the study of facts and inferring laws which allow of phenomena being foreseen and often of being reproduced.

Successively applied to astronomy, physics, chemistry, and all dynamic manifestations of Matter, this method has brought about a vast development of these sciences from their early rudimentary forms.

We are now, it may be said, beginning to apply this experimental method to the study of human beings,

Man has ceased to consider himself as an exception in the universe, but rather as an integral part of it. Henceforth he

studies humanity from outside, no longer projecting upon his fellows the results of his introspective observation. And at this point cognition splits into two parts—on the one side the speculations which ultimate in opinions and beliefs, but not in knowledge; and on the other demonstrable, verifiable and communicable knowledge proceeding from scientific method and fruitful in useful applications.

Scientific research is closed to sentiment and to the traditions that are so tenacious of life because born of our desires and illusions. The man of science now studies life without taking any account of the aspect which beliefs may have given to it. The human being has become an object of study on the same basis as all other forms of organized matter; only more complex than others because at the summit of the series of animal evolution, and therefore having a larger number of inherited and acquired aptitudes.

For about a century, anatomists, physiologists, biologists, anthropologists and psychologists, have undertaken the study of physical man, convinced that there is within him much that is unknown but nothing unknowable.

What stage has this knowledge now reached?

I shall not here endeavour to draw up a balance sheet of that knowledge which has grown almost entirely under the eyes of the present generation. Its total is large, and even astonishing if we compare the long period that man has existed with the progress made in one century.

General human structure, its functional mechanism, and the constituent elements of the tissues, have been explored up to the limits that instrumentation allows. This is the easier part and the most advanced.

The *processus* of activity in the diverse functions has been studied in its main outlines, and general laws have been established governing digestion, assimilation, excretion, respiration, the secretions, sensibility and motricity, which throw light upon one another and lead to conclusions on the functional co-ordination of the human body, variable indeed, but increasingly clear and useful.

The most complex of all those functions—the function of thought—has been studied in the same manner, integrating it with the general functioning of the organism. Analysis has endeavoured to disentangle its confused and interwoven elements. Starting from the study of simple sensori-motor reflexes, analysis has proceeded to psychic-reflexes, association-reflexes of increasing complexity, and to the method by which psycho-physiological habits are formed. Cerebro-psychic inter-relations—the reactions of organic states on the function of thought, and of thought on the

organism—have been closely studied. This study has been comparative, having regard to age, race, health, sickness, and the different stages in physical life.

These positive investigations have resulted in an important total of knowledge which has led to many useful discoveries in many directions and given greater security to life.

Nevertheless this total, so large considering the time during which it has been amassed, still leaves the mystery of man unsolved. That still remains to be discovered.

The organising energy in the fertilised ovum concealing so many potential activities and heredities, which transform that microscopic complex into a human being with all its human intricacies and capacity for thought, still remains entirely mysterious.

The intimate detail of sickness, old age, and death are still unexplored biological secrets. We cannot give even the beginning of an explanation how individual life originates nor how it ceases.

And what shall we say concerning that function of thought which through succeeding centuries has been developed and adapted to life under the influence of life, and, after its long infancy, has, almost in our own days, discovered the method of research that leads to permanent and useful acquirement? What can we say of that thought-function which has formulated so many hypotheses on the meaning of life, has surmised so many aspects of the possible, and desiring to satisfy every curiosity has sought to explain itself and all else? What can be said of a force that presses so persistently against the bounds of the small aggregation of matter in which it is confined?

Man is himself the profoundest enigma yet encountered, the more insoluble as knowledge increases. The increasing data do but extend the problem of life beyond any limits that we can foresee.

Man in fact only knows himself and the external world by the senses that systematize the information he receives, more especially by sight—the most informing of any. Whence comes the difficulty unsurmounted, despite the most ingenious ancillary instruments, of penetrating the actualities of life which we imagine to be reducible to that incomprehensible thing—Energy?

Life, its associated dynamisms, their nature, their modalities, their laws and their interactions are realities of which our normal or assisted vision can only perceive the results—cells, organs, muscular movements, chemical products, and the like. Life, in its fundamental reality, beyond sensorial appearances, escapes us, and, seemingly, will continue to escape us. Our intelligence is only equipped for the perception of forms and relations.

Scientific men of to-day are usually fully aware of this: they

know that man, under the limitations of his senses cannot hope to know anything beyond "phenomena" and that his sciences deal with "appearances." There are, however, men of science, some of high repute, who have thought well to give a biologic explanation of the human being, based on the very restricted information now available and the data furnished by a psychophysiology still in its earliest stages and as yet uncertain what line to take. Having only as yet been able to study the common manifestations of the principal organic functions, and unable to penetrate deeper, they have imprisoned human life within the circle of their few superficial acquirements. They have treated human personality, raised so far above other living forms by religions and philosophies, as a mere machine for the transformation of energy differing from all other organisms only in being more complex. They have made the thought-function nothing more than the sum of accumulated reflexes co-ordinated and maintained as organic habits reacting to external stimuli. They have judged Consciousness—that amazing enigma—to be a resultant, a sensation superadded to other sensations, a potentiality dominating the physico-chemical reactions of the body, an epi-phenomenon.

Certainly the method of scientific study has had the merit of leading to positive knowledge, to useful acquirements and to the hope of more and more fruitful research, while the subjective methods of former times were biologically sterile; but why should we retain the same temper as our predecessors and become in some sort a priestly hierarchy in science? Why, after having destroyed the useless and misleading speculative metaphysic, should we forthwith begin to speculate with the few results attained? Certainly we must endeavour to build up a complete positive biology, a positive and progressive science of Man; but why clog the first steps to that knowledge by definitions assigning limits to what Man is? How much infantile simplicity underlies the self-sufficiency of many scientific men! No man worthy of that name is a doctrinaire, he earns the name by the scientific temper disciplined by research and the criticism which accepts what is demonstrated, and that alone.

Entering on a scientific study of Man, all phenomena of Nature must be looked upon with a mind alive to the immensity of the problem of Life and the slenderness of our means of knowledge, which only touch realities under the very restricted modes of what they appear to be. It is necessary to purge our minds resolutely of all prejudgments and all beliefs which involve hasty, and necessarily erroneous explanations. We should accept nothing that is not demonstrated, but should venture on no denials.

Such is the prudent attitude. If man of the ordinary type is

still so enigmatical, if his life has attained a complexity that makes him a little world in himself—a thought issuing from matter which has grown eager to explain itself and the universe—a far more astonishing spectacle is presented to our eyes when we find ourselves in presence of human individuals endowed with psycho-physiological faculties so unexpected from the point of view of ordinary psycho-physiology. This spectacle reveals to us in a flash our profound ignorance of what life is and should fill us with pity for the self-sufficiency of doctrinaires.

The few scientific men who during the last fifty years have extended their curiosity to research on the supernormal phenomena produced by certain human beings generally called "magnetisers," "occultists," spiritualists, and the like, have found themselves faced with a category of dynamo-psychic manifestations which have obliged them to abandon their previous concepts of life and made them almost despair of being able to construct others.

They have observed beings endowed with ability to act on matter by a power emanating from them not reducible to any known force, but enabling them to move objects by mere apposition of their hands, or at a distance without any contact at all.

They have observed beings who in hypnosis and sometimes, though more rarely, in a waking state, can produce nebulous, quasi-vaporous matter developing in a few seconds, under the eyes of the observers, to a solid state plastic to some indeterminate power which creates forms, usually human (hands, heads, etc.) having all the characteristics of life.

They have observed beings connected with their environment by channels of cognition other than any known sensorial means, and, under certain conditions, able to discern water, minerals, metals, or subterranean cavities, to reveal the contents of closed boxes and sealed letters, or to perceive distant occurrences as if present to their eyes.

They have observed beings having the faculty to reveal the consecutive events in the individual lives of others—past events subsisting only as memories, and future events incalculable by reason. From these experiences, repeated for some thirty years past, they have been led to certitude that the human being is a focus of psycho-physical energy with potentialities far surpassing its ordinary manifestations in daily life.

Reverting to the history of past ages, they have recognized here and there supernormal manifestations analogous to those now observed, but deformed by superstitions. Only from the phases of humanity near to our own day have they been able to reconstruct a history of the supernormal with some degree of precision. Prior to that time the subject is a chaos in which the real supernormal is buried under innumerable creations of mystical

imagination. The true cannot be disentangled from the merely probable or the certainly false. On the confines of history the human supernormal is immersed in legend. In the age of mythos there is no distinction between the natural and the supernatural ; all nature is one marvel, Gods and men intermingle their lives in daily affairs. These are the dreams of nations with the mentality of childhood.

Diverse aspects taken by the human supernormal succeed these—Hindu wonder-workers, Hebrew prophets, pythonesses, sibyls, Chaldean magi, Christian ascetics of old time . . . sorcerers, inspired persons, demoniacs, occultists of the Middle Ages . . . initiates and occultists of all eras, trying to wrest from Nature the secret of superhuman power.

In our own day since the Fox sisters attributed their power of unconsciously moving objects by mere contact or at a distance to discarnate spirits, the diffusion of theoretical and practical spiritualism has produced conditions eminently favourable to the release and cultivation of the dynamo-psychism latent in man. These mystical marvels showed so many verifiable facts capable of being reproduced, that they drew the attention of some scientific men. After making all allowances for illusion and fraud, there still remained an output of phenomena of the highest importance to the study of the human dynamo-psychism.

The received explanation of supernormal human faculty, like that of normal human faculty, has been parallel with growing mentality. It comes from the past on two currents—credulity and undisciplined research—resembling one another so closely as to seem identical.

Divine influence was the first explanation of human supernormality, at least this is the first recorded in history. Apollo, enamoured of Cassandra, gives her the gift of prophecy. Sibyls and pythonesses writhed under the possession of a god speaking by their mouth. The Hebrew prophet was the voice of Jehovah to his people. Evil spirits also endowed men with supernormal power : it is related that Simon of Samaria, called the Magus, celebrated and venerated in the Roman world, was precipitated from the air into which two demons had raised him, at the prayer of Simon Cephas, our Saint Peter.

Sooner than is usually recognized, the spiritist concept appears. In the second century A.D. Tertullian affirmed before the Roman Senate the existence of divination by tables, and spoke of it as a current practice. According to Plutarch a phantom warned Brutus of his approaching defeat and death at Philippi.

Catholic orthodoxy in the Middle Ages divided the possessors of supernormal powers into two groups—those divinely inspired, receiving during adoration or ecstasy the power of rising from the

earth, of vision at a distance or into the future; and those possessed by the devil, obtaining their powers by that possession, by the dark practices of the Kabbala or by sorcery. The former were venerated as saints; the latter were persecuted and expiated in torments the possession of exceptional but human faculties.

To-day the mystical explanation remains on the level of prevailing human mentality. It finds its sustenance in classified and recorded phenomena that can be reproduced. These phenomena, still inexplicable by any known physiology, are necessarily presented under an aspect pertaining to the theological or spiritualist doctrines held by most of those from whom they proceed, and are thought to be due to the intervention of human discarnate spirits or to thought projected by impulse from certain psychical conditions on to the spiritual plane.

Side by side with this explanation by beliefs has grown the explanation by research. Psychical researchers, repelled by mystical suggestions, have sought a less naïve solution to the phenomena observed; but in the absence of directing method they have followed where chance has led and marked time without progressing, collecting indeed some observed facts worthy of retention, but heaping up an enormous mass of fanciful matter unadaptable to human realities, and therefore useless. This is the balance sheet of the "occult" and "esoteric" sciences. They were probably engendered in the ancient civilization of India, and passed from temple to temple, from nation to nation, and from age to age, added to, distorted, re-edited, and transformed in each. Fabre d'Olivet has recently been at the pains of reconstructing them.

They still have adepts. In the modern world we still find "magi," kabbalists, and astrologers, etc., who think to acquire supernormal power or knowledge by applying the chaotic doctrines of these "sciences." Any man disciplined by real science who touches on these things is amazed that time and labour should be given to these pseudo-sciences whose history is one long demonstration of their futility. No useful discovery has ever come from them.

Esoteric sciences and mystical explanations will continue until experimental science succeeds in explaining human supernormality.

Attracted by curiosity or impelled by mystical desire, many have recently been led to cultivate the supernormal, and they have brought to light phenomena of exceptional import. Subjects have appeared, called "mediums" (because thought to be intermediaries), who have come under the observation of some of the *élite* of the modern scientific world. In England, William

Crookes, Oliver Lodge, Alfred Russel Wallace, and others ; in Germany, the astronomer Zöllner, the psychologist Schrenck-Notzing ; in Italy, Lombroso, Morselli, and others ; in Poland, Ochorowicz ; in Russia, Aksakoff ; in France, Charles Richet, Arnould de Gramont, Camille Flammarion, Joseph Maxwell, de Watteville, de Rochas, Émile Boirac ; to cite only a few of the early pioneers who have undertaken to verify and classify supernormal phenomena without troubling themselves about the hostility excited. They have created a science dealing with the forces latent in man and given a strong impetus to it. This science, still unrecognized by the universities, grows by the labours of isolated experimenters ; it will soon be a branch of psycho-physiology.

Henceforward, despite the tendency to hasty mystical explanations that sterilize research, and despite the ridiculous obstinacy of scientific dogmatism, the supernormal is an admitted reality, and will remain under scrutiny by men of science firmly resolved to study these aspects of human life (new to them), and will seek their applications.

Thus human supernormality has gone through the evolutionary phases of all human knowledge. Just as astrology, alchemy, the notions of Hermetic forces, and miraculous cures, have become astronomy, chemistry, physics, and medical science, so human supernormality has become a chapter in human biology. The occult gestation is complete and a new science is born whose development will bring many surprises.

CHAPTER II

NORMAL AND SUPERNORMAL COGNITION

HOWEVER dissimilar in their aspects, normal and supernormal phenomena proceed from the same dynamo-genetic focus—the human being. As far as I know no one sensitive has been discovered capable to presenting every aspect. No doubt in the end some will appear having all the physiological conditions favouring *all* kinds of supernormal manifestations, but up to the present these faculties are, as it were, specialized. This compels the student to separate both the phenomena and the human subjects into classes, and to define the exact ground on which his research must be localized.

For convenience of statement psychists arbitrarily divide supernormal phenomena, always more or less intermingled, into two principal classes: (1) physical or objective phenomena; in which the human being acts on matter by physiological processes other than those known to science, and (2) mental or subjective phenomena; in which thought functions and cognizes under conditions that official psychology cannot explain.

This book deals with the latter class. To close observation this class is really but one supernormal faculty with diverse manifestations. I purpose to take a survey of these manifestations and to determine exactly the point at which, ceasing to explore them superficially, I shall endeavour to go deeper.

In the first place—what is to be understood by “supernormal cognition?” It is best defined by stating the limits of normal cognition, since the former begins where the latter ends. It is therefore necessary to recall some points of elementary psychology.

In men of the ordinary type “knowledge” is the result of a process initiated by sensation, and ending, by the specific action of the brain, in concrete reflections of external things, and general images and ideas resulting from the process of abstraction.

“To know” is therefore, definitely, to have in thought the sensorial representation of things, or their conceptual transformation into the symbolism of internal language.

Whatever the capacity for abstraction possessed by a human

mind, and whatever its constructive power, permitting it to develop its thought far beyond the raw material of sensation, the fundamental psychological fact, and first condition of mental work, is *Sensation*—the transposition in the brain of impressions into sensations corresponding to the five vibratory classes registered by our five senses, under some unknown mode of energy. This psychological necessity limits both the field of information and the functional activity of thought.

Man, of course, now knows how to supplement his senses. He extends and adds to them by instruments, and thus indirectly comes to perceive forms of energy of which, without those instruments he would be unaware. He takes cognizance of the dynamic modes of ultra-sensorial vibrations—the infra-red, the ultra-violet rays of the spectrum, the X-rays, radiation from matter, etc. etc. He has become aware of worlds too distant and too small for unaided vision. Inventive ingenuity will extend the field of sensorial perception beyond any limit that we can foresee ; but we cannot hope to extend it outside the modes of the sensorial system. This sensorial determinism limits knowledge.

The man of the ordinary type only knows such realities as he perceives directly, or which others perceive and transmit to him by gesture and expression. Of the past he knows only the content of his own memory or that brought to him by his fellows through spoken or written language, or by archæological remains, and the like. This always resolves knowledge into present sensations reproducing vanished sensations.

Of the future he can perceive nothing, and therefore, strictly speaking, he can know nothing. The unknowable treads close upon the actual. But we must not confuse dissimilar things by verbal analogies.

We speak of scientific foresight. The astronomer knows the year, day, and minute when a planet will pass a given point of the zodiac, he knows the time of return of a comet, and the moment of an eclipse. The chemist and the physicist foresee the phenomenon whose conditions they have prepared. The physician foresees the death of a patient. These are previsions of the same kind as that which foresees in the night the return of day—it is the experience of the past projected into the future, it is an extension into the future by repetition of past perceptions. Should some cosmic or medical discovery supervene, prevision is no longer adaptable to the actual past. Science foresees on the hypothesis that the environment will remain in the future what it has always been.

Moreover, we customarily reckon on the future of nations, families, and individuals, from their past. According to what we have already perceived, we presume what will occur. How often

our conjectures play us false ! The human being is a dynamo-
psychic focus in perpetual reaction to external things, and infers
consequences according to changing impressions of causes. Our
suppositions of the future are but frail hypotheses. "Destiny"
—that regent of the unrealized—symbolizes the certitude that
man has acquired of his inability to penetrate beyond the actual,
—beyond sensation.

Closely bound up with sensorial information, human knowledge
is brought up short against limits that it can enlarge, but cannot
cross—limits of "space" which confine perception to the field
of vision ; limits of "time" which stop it on the threshold of
that which has not yet occurred. These, at any rate, are words
which we place on the frontiers of our field of information.

We can therefore take as "supernormal" all knowledge which
reaches us by other means than by the activity of the mind
working on the direct or indirect reports of the known senses.

CHAPTER III

THE DIVERSE ASPECTS OF SUPERNORMAL COGNITION

(I) SUPERNORMAL SELF-COGNITION

(a) *Autoscopy.*

SOME years ago psychologists and psychiatrists have added to the five known senses another specialization of sensibility to which they have given the name of "cœnesthesia"—a sort of vital or interior sense by which impressions arising from the intimate connection of bodily conditions reach the brain, (apparently) through the sympathetic nervous system.

Of all the influences originating in the different tissues and organs, the part that normally reaches consciousness is very restricted; it amounts to those dim and undefinable sensations which sum up a state of health in one synthetic sensation of physical alacrity, general well-being, or the reverse, by disturbed physiological equilibrium, uneasiness, suffering, diffused or local pain, and so on. Ordinarily the mental representation of the body and of its intimate conditions is very feeble.

But when, from this point of view we place ourselves in a condition to observe the function of thought outside its conscious exercise, we perceive that impressions originating in the viscera furnish to the subconscious brain constant impulses which arouse very little or no consciousness. We can verify, for instance, that in sleep cœnesthetic impressions may provoke and direct dreams. This has given rise to the idea that the illusions of dream might reveal obscure bodily conditions, and more particularly latent pathological processes at the beginnings of maladies.¹

It is chiefly under hypnosis and in mental affections causing increased subconscious psychic activity that the most curious phenomena of supernormal cognition of the organism have been observed. The increased sensitiveness developed under these conditions gives exceptional acuteness to the cœnesthetic sense, and the cerebral mechanism unchecked by will or attention to other things, gives a mental representation so complete that it passes into hallucination. In these para-physiological states some persons have been found capable of taking momentary

¹ Vaschide and Perron. "La psychologie du rêve au point de vue médical." *Actualités médicales*, 1902.

cognizance of the exterior form of their body as if they saw it before them (external autoscopy), and of the interior of their body as if they saw into it (internal autoscopy).¹

Dr. P. Sollier has communicated to the Psychological Society,² twelve cases of external autoscopy, representing almost every degree and variety of the phenomenon, from simple cœnesthetic representation in which the double is felt and recognized as identical with the subject without being seen, up to visual autoscopy in which the phantom is identical with the subject who sees himself as in a mirror.

Observation II. . . . A case of major hysteria (Marie F——). Various disturbances of sensibility, both general, sensorial and visceral; with frequent and profound variations of personality. At nightfall, but never in the daytime, she saw about three yards distant, a phantom resembling herself and dressed similarly but smaller. This terrified her and she stopped still, and if she was alone it sometimes lasted an hour. Then the phantom turned to the right always keeping its distance and disappeared behind her; she said, "It is like a shadow turning with the sun." This agitated her, and interfered with her breathing. The autoscopic phantom disappeared as soon as light was thrown on it.

Observation X. . . . A young girl of twenty-two, Jeanne O——, major hysteria . . . one evening when sitting by a table on which was a small lamp, doing nothing and musing, she suddenly saw herself as in a mirror, same dress, hands and face. But what terrified her was to see the frightened look in the eyes. She saw herself breathing and living in unison with herself. It was a perfect case of visual hallucination. This lasted for about an hour, then all became dark and she found herself numbed and trembling in her arm-chair.

Sollier assimilates these facts of autoscopic hallucination with the case of Guy de Maupassant.

". . . one of his intimate friends reported to me that in 1889, when he was entering on a state of general paralysis, that he had this same hallucination very clearly one afternoon and told me of it the same evening. Seated at the table in his study, into which his servant had been forbidden to enter, he seemed to hear the door open. He turned round and was not a little surprised to see his double come in, sit down facing him, the head resting on one hand, and began to dictate to him what he was engaged in writing. When he had finished he got up, and the hallucination vanished. . . ."

¹ Féré. "Note sur les hallucinations autoscopiques ou spéculaires et sur les hallucinations altruistes." *Compte rendu de la Société de Biologie*, p. 451.

Lemaître (Geneva). "Hallucinations autoscopiques et automatismes divers chez les écoliers." *Archives de Psychologie*, Vol. I, 1.

Dr. Comar. "L'autosuggestion de l'organisme chez quelques hystériques." *Revue de Neurologie*, 1901, p. 491.

"L'auto-représentation chez les hystériques." *Presse médicale*, Jan. 17, 1900.

Dr. Buvat. "L'auto-representation organique ou hallucinations cœnesthésiques chez les hystériques." *Gazette des Hôpitaux*, Nov. 25, 1902.

Dr. Bain. "L'auto-représentation des hystériques." *Thesis*, 1903.

Dr. Paul Sollier. "Les phénomènes d'autoscopie (Alcan)," a monograph summing up the preceding with personal observations and an explanatory study.

² "Les hallucinations autoscopiques." *Bulletin de l'Institut général de Psychologie*, 1902, 1.

From his study of these phenomena Sollier concludes that the subject does not see himself by visual hallucination, as would seem to be the case, but that cœnesthetic sensations are objectified and projected externally.

This para-normal power of perceiving one's own external aspect is verified and explained by that of perceiving the internal aspect, both modalities being sometimes co-existent in the same person.

It was in the application of hypnosis to hysterical subjects to restore normal sensibility, and without any intention of research, that Drs. Comar, Buvat, and Sollier observed internal autoscapy.

One of Sollier's patients (Obs. IV, loc. cit.) saw and described, in her own way, "her veins, heart, lungs, bronchia down to the pulmonary vesicles, intestines, ovaries, Fallopian tubes, uterus and appendages, muscles, tendons, and skeleton, including that of the face, and finally the brain. She had no (normal) knowledge of the outer forms of these organs nor of their structure; nor of the ovaries and the brain, of which she described the microscopic structure."

A patient of Dr. Comar described to him the form and functioning of her heart. Another, an uneducated country girl, saw the articulation of her hip and described its perfect state, when under treatment for iliac tuberculosis. In the sequel he satisfied himself that disease was hysterical, it was cured by awakening the patient's normal sensibility. Another patient described the heart, the circulatory system, lungs, stomach, intestines, kidneys, liver, pancreas, and brain, without technical terms, just as her thought translated the visual impressions of the moment.

A quotation from Dr. Comar's "L'auto-représentation chez hystériques (*Presse Médicale*, Jan. 17, 1900) will give some idea of the precision that the brain can obtain concerning the organism with which its nerves connect it.

(Major hysteria.) M——, a patient whom I was treating by mechanotherapy to reawaken normal sensibility, was suddenly taken ill with fever. The temperature went up to 40° C., the only symptom being pain in the right iliac region. . . . In the absence of anything that could explain such a temperature, I expected to find hysterical fever, with some peritonitis in the cœcal region. The febrile condition subsided in three weeks. During this time the patient (under hypnosis) spoke to me several times of the little skin surrounding the intestines, which was very red, especially in one place. With rest and ice the symptoms abated; the patient got up, but did not return to normal food. I left her on liquids, and after some days the same symptoms reappeared more strongly, with nausea, swelling of the abdomen, constipation, lancinating pain at the level of the appendix, and fever.

When the temperature rose to 40° C. I put her into a cool bath. The movements caused an increase of pain, and on the third day a paroxysm, in the course of which the patient told me that the little skin was redder

than ever, and that the little end of the intestine was very bad. I availed myself of the hypnotic state to question her, and ask her what she saw. "I do not see the little end very well, I don't know where it ends." "Why don't you see it?" "I cannot see it because I don't feel it. I see my bowel and the skin around it because I feel them, but I have never felt that little end." "Well," I said, "feel it." She made abdominal movements accompanied by sharp pain, outcries, and words that I transcribe. "Oh, it will be pierced, it is very thin; the little skin sticks, it is double; and between the folds there is a sort of thick, dirty liquid; it sticks and unsticks when I move; it will come apart, it is like a whitlow on the finger, it suppurates; that gives me fever, and all round that place is red. All the little skin is red in the whole belly, but especially on the right side." I said, "Feel more." She made more movements; the pain seemed to increase, and she said, "Oh! the little end is full of dirty matter; oh, how dirty! but it has been like that a long time. It is what hurts me; it can't get away." . . . "Feel more." . . . "Ah! I see the end now." She made a quick movement and stopped on a sudden, saying, "It pricks me." . . . "What pricks you?" . . . "There is something in the end." . . . "What?" . . . "I can't see very well, it is buried in dirty stuff; it hurts me, and I dare not move lest it should burst." . . . "Lest what should burst?" . . . "Why, the little end; there is some pointed thing irritating it, but it is full of dirt, and I can't well see what it is, but if I move I am afraid that the point may pierce the bowel." . . . "Well, go on feeling slowly, taking care that the point does not pierce." . . . She then continued to make gentle abdominal movements which she had previously made to feel the bowel, and said, "It is moving; the little end of the bowel twists about like a worm, it moves the stuff in it . . . that goes up . . . it scrapes me in passing; now it is out of the little end . . . it is in the large bowel."

She continued to make some movements, but stopped, saying that it hurt her too much. I thought it inadvisable to go further on that day, fearing more serious developments; and since the patient stopped of herself, I thought it better to follow than to guide her. Having no proof that what she had said was false, I thought it more prudent to take it for true. In the evening the temperature had gone down two-tenths. Next day I put her under hypnosis again and asked if she could still see the intestine. She said, "Yes; and the little point that hurt me yesterday is still in the same place." . . . "Well, wake up your bowel." . . . She then made fresh movements, and said that the whole intestine was moving, that the little point was displaced, and the dirt round it less thick. . . . "Feel more." . . . A moment later she said, "I begin to see better, but I only see one end—it is like a bit of bone about a centimetre long pointed at one end." She then indicated a place corresponding to the transverse colon. . . . "Feel more." . . . The movements went on. . . . "Where do you see it now?" . . . She indicated her left iliac fossa. . . . "Are you sure?" . . . "I see it quite well." . . . "Then stop, and don't try to feel more." I then administered an injection of water while she was still under hypnosis. On filtering the water I found a small piece of bone of the form and size that the patient had described. I then asked her if she still saw the little point. "No," she said, "it has gone out with the water."

From that day the temperature continued to fall. The patient when questioned under hypnosis declared that the peritoneum was less red, that the foulness which caused adherence was getting less. She seemed to follow from day to day the diminution of the inflammation and the absorption of the exuded matter. . . .

This group of autoscopic phenomena, though far beyond normal sensorial possibility, is, however, that in which supernormal self-cognition is the easiest to study and explain, because it consists in a mental representation of tissues, viscera, and organic functions—that is to say, the transformation of tactile into visual impressions, the tactile impressions not being strong enough to reach consciousness and to be translated into cognition. As soon as we begin to deal with higher degrees of supernormal cognition than these, the source of the information is no longer apparent, and in the present state of knowledge no exact explanation is possible.

(b) Pre-cognitive diagnosis of future developments.

Psychical literature abounds in facts showing that a human being is occasionally aware of events in his life inaccessible to reason. Some of these facts indicate a mental dualism; they imply an anticipatory cognition of his life quite beyond normal thought-functions.

If we wish to begin to understand something of the mass of phenomena known as “presentiments” we must set them in some kind of order by classification. This, no doubt, can only be done arbitrarily, as for all analytical dissociations of functional unities, but we thus bring out some sort of gradation according to the complexity of the supernormal cognition they imply. Some degree of clarity then appears on the mysterious origins of human thought.

A first stage in this pre-cognition of the self consists in a strong and persistent sense of satisfaction or anxiety, which occasionally reflects an event in course of development in a sense contrary to what reason would expect. One may be, for instance, happy at a success close at hand, but the field of consciousness becomes clouded with a dull, illogical, and absurd apprehension. Circumstances develop and an unfortunate sequel follows in place of the anticipated satisfaction. Most men never feel this, and therefore deny it; some verify it at rare intervals; some continually experience this kind of duplication of their lives.

This first degree of pre-cognition is most usually provoked by anticipation of death. In the course of professional practice, a doctor finds patients who speak of approaching death. One says, “Doctor, am I going to die?” in a quiet voice and with a half-smile. One answers with a jest. Says another, “Doctor, I do not think I shall recover”; this is a timid patient who wants a positive assurance that he will be cured. A third will say, “I shall not recover.” I reply, “Why should you not recover from a trifling ailment?” and am answered, “Why? I do not know, but I feel that this illness is my last.”

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Like all physicians at the beginning of their practice I failed to distinguish between these three modes of expression, with their respective tones of voice and varying look in the eyes. But not for long. I soon learned that some patients feel approaching death without there being any clinical indication of the gravity of their case. When I find myself in presence of the resigned attitude that I know so well, the eyes fixed on a certainty, hearing words that no suggestion can alter—however slight the ailment may seem—I begin my diagnosis afresh and look out for the symptoms that may reveal some serious organic weakening. Since I became aware of this I have verified this presentiment of death at the beginning of sickness, and witnessed the inexorable progress of lesion often enough to make me certain that pre-cognition of organic developments is possible.

It may be thought that in such cases coenesthesia carries to the brain such clear information of the morbid state of the organs that it passes into the state of conscious thought in the form of an anxiety such as to compel conviction of approaching death. That would be a phenomenon analogous to internal autoscopy, less precise because not in hypnosis, but abnormal because it passes the limits of non-perception of actuality.

I regret that I have not kept statistics of the cases I have observed, and I wish to call the attention of medical readers to the value of such psycho-physiological records.

The following is an instance of this class of phenomena :

Miss C. M——, aged about thirty, a teacher in a girls' school, went for the Easter holidays (1911) to her family in the Puy-de-Dome. She arrived in good health, but felt rather tired in the days preceding her return to duty. On parting with her people deep sadness came over her; she embraced her parents with unusual warmth, and said, "I feel we shall not see each other again." They were much astonished at these words, and Miss C—— also could not understand how this depression had come to her.

She reached the school on April 24th, somewhat tired, and told her friends about her farewells, blaming herself for having foolishly saddened her parents.

On the 2nd of May I was called to see her. General pain in the back and heaviness of the head made teaching difficult. I had to insist on her keeping in bed.

During the succeeding days there appeared typhoid symptoms of a light type—temperature 38° – 39° C., pulse 80, no functional disturbance, barely observable tightness of the abdomen, no diarrhoea, general state quite satisfactory.

The illness took a form from which the patient nearly always recovers. I had never seen a typhoid case which gave less anxiety. The girl only felt a vague lassitude.

Nevertheless she had the conviction of approaching death. The suggestive power of the presentiment remained strong and was reinforced by the continuance of the disease. To my optimistic words she answered

gently but immovably, "Doctor, I shall not recover." One of her fellow-teachers explained this persistence by telling me of her parting with her family.

As may be imagined, I thenceforward gave most particular attention and caution to the treatment, though the organism as a whole seemed hardly permeated by the infection.

During the afternoon of May 11th, without any previous warning, without any imprudence by the patient or in the nursing, Miss C—— had a sudden intestinal hæmorrhage, so serious that, coming at an urgent call, I found the patient pulseless and her heart beating its last. The bed was inundated with blood, dropping through the mattress and making a pool on the floor. None remained in the body.

Her parents, who had thought it needless to come from so far at the beginning of what seemed a slight illness, were stupefied at the rapid and precise fulfilment of this, the only presentiment that their daughter had ever had. An apparently slight illness and a complication of unusual severity had connected the presentiment with the fact, and justified the words, "I feel we shall not see each other again."

By giving an example of each class, it is easy to graduate the scale of presentiment from the kind above-named in which the latent faculty is aware from the actual state of a human being of what will eventuate (which one may suppose due to increased interior sensation), up to those in which the latent psychism knows the future without any sensorial perception at the moment, and therefore by channels of information and mental processes unknown to us.

I will now give a case in which the supernormal cognition is so much higher in type than the last that only a fanatic in scholastic psycho-pathology could try to explain it by an interior sense. It shows the progressive completion of a presentiment, starting from mere conviction of approaching death and extending to pre-cognition of its date and hour. This fact was related to me by the daughter of M. Dencausse a few days after the event. Dr. Geley, who witnessed the last phase, has thus reported it :

M. Dencausse, aged seventy-six, died on October 31st, 1916. About six months before, although then in good health, he told his family that he would not live to see the winter. . . . From that time forward he re-affirmed his conviction daily. At first the family gave little heed to these "dark forebodings," which seemed to have no foundation. But as his appetite failed, and he became visibly thinner, they became anxious and wished to put him under medical care. M. Dencausse opposed this energetically, declaring all care useless. He added that he would not consent to see a doctor till he knew his last days approaching, and then only for form's sake. About eight to ten days before his death he declared that he knew the exact date of the event, which would be on All Saints' Day.

Very soon, agreeably to his promise, he consented to see a doctor. I saw him for the first time on October 28th. The family had already told me of his obsession. I found the old man very thin, but alert and leading his usual life, and showing no signs of death. I examined him minutely. There was no organic lesion, his heart was good, there was no fever. The only morbid symptom that I could find, a symptom in no way alarming,

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consisted in some signs of slight chronic bronchitis from which he had suffered each winter without its ever causing him to take to his bed.

I tried to reassure the old man, but the suggestion failed completely. He looked forward to his death, which he judged to be very near, with perfect serenity. He said simply that he was glad to see me, that he would follow my prescriptions, but that this would be useless, and he maintained his conviction absolutely.

After my examination—negative from the medical point of view—I was able in some degree to reassure the family; with the reservation that unless nutrition should markedly improve the old man, whose innutrition was obvious, would end by falling seriously ill.

The next day, October 29th, he completed his predictions in a surprisingly exact manner. He said, "I shall die on All Saints' Day, on the stroke of midnight, without suffering or death throes. I shall talk up to the last. At midnight I shall seem to fall asleep, but it will not be sleep, it will be the end. After my death one of you" (the family included his wife, his daughter, and his grand-daughter) "will make an outcry and will have a nervous breakdown. This will impede my release."

Monday, October 30th, passed without incidents.

On All Saints' Day, Tuesday, October 31st, during the morning, M. Dencausse felt a pain in his left side. He went to bed, saying he would get up no more. I saw him in the evening and examined him. There was incipient pneumonia at the base of the left lung, and a temperature of $40^{\circ}.3$ C.

The situation was changing, and henceforward the realization of his prediction became probable, but not at the time foretold, for in cases of pneumonia death does not supervene in the early days. Nevertheless, everything came to pass as announced. He did not suffer; he talked quietly up to the last, giving his final instructions to his family. At 11.30 p.m. he asked his wife, "What is the time?" She, hoping to deceive him, replied, "Two o'clock in the morning." He answered, "No, it is not yet midnight. I shall die at midnight."

At twelve o'clock he turned to the wall and seemed to fall asleep. His wife bent over him; but, raising his hand, he pointed to the clock, which was then striking twelve. His hand fell back on the bed, and he died without a sigh.

Only his wife and daughter were in the room, the grand-daughter being in a neighbouring chamber. They went to break it to her; but the girl, highly intelligent and instructed, and usually quite mistress of herself, had a violent attack of "nerves," made an outcry, and remained till day in a lamentable state.

The premonition of M. Dencausse was therefore exactly verified.¹

The series of phenomenal self-cognition will appear in its various degrees from the subjoined examples which show the ascending scale.

A human being in full health, without any data from normal perception feels the approach of accidental death:

M. Domenico Flérés, a barrister of the Court of Appeal at Palermo, was taking a holiday in the country at Bansò with his wife, his daughter, and her little girl. At the end of the time the two latter, who lived at Mestina, returned there. When taking leave, the child kissed her grandmother,

¹ *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, No. 8, 1916.

insisting that she would not see her again. No great attention was paid to this childish saying. On the evening of December 27th the mother was undressing the child for the night, and when putting on her night-socks the child said, "Mother, you are putting on my death-slippers!" She repeated this, despite her mother's protestations and sadness, till she fell asleep.

Some hours later the terrible Messina earthquake supervened. The child was crushed in the ruins of the house.¹

A human being in complete health, without any data from normal perception feels the approach of death and takes cognizance of the place where it will occur :

Six weeks before the night-attack by which Admiral Togo began the Russo-Japanese War the celebrated battle-painter Verestchagin was at Port Arthur, where the German doctor, Armgaard Karl Graves, was on a secret mission. This latter writes in his *Souvenirs* : "I am proud to think that he called me his friend. I had attended him during an attack of malaria, and we were drawn together by literary and artistic tastes. I have met many artists and writers in the course of my life, but Verestchagin will be unforgettable.

"One night we were sitting on the verandah of the Casino. It was one of those nearly tropical crystalline, silent nights peculiar to those regions. The wonderful harbour of Port Arthur lay before us under fairy moonlight, and the great ironclads anchored in the bay stood out clear like huge marine monsters sleeping on the waters. We were smoking while we talked, and, after having recalled the history of the old Manchu and Tartar dynasties, we spoke of the barbaric invasion of Goths, Huns, and Vandals. Verestchagin laid before me all the treasures of his wonderful and picturesque erudition, and the night was far advanced when I took leave of him, saying that I feared to abuse his welcome. Stepping close to me, he placed his hand familiarly on my shoulder and said, 'My dear doctor, you are doing me a kindness in staying by me. I feel nervous this evening. I have a presentiment that these mountains will echo the sound of cannon. . . .' He added, low, as if speaking to himself, 'And Russia will be defeated, but I shall not see it.'

"He stood up and shook himself, as if to chase away an oppressive thought : 'I feel I shall meet my death here.'

"An undefinable melancholy came over me. I am not impressionable, but I had to make an effort to tell him that these forebodings arose from the fever which was still upon him, and from the strong doses of quinine I had made him take. 'No doubt you are right, doctor,' he replied, with a curious smile.

"Before leaving me he gave me a little sketch of Port Arthur, which I preserve carefully in memory of one of the most remarkable men I have met. Verestchagin, it is well known, was not mistaken. He perished a short time after in the ironclad commanded by Admiral Makaroff."

A human being in complete health, without any data from normal perception has circumstantial cognizance of his approaching death as if witnessing the event :

At the beginning of the year 1895, Mme Lukawski, the wife of a high functionary at the Russian Admiralty, was awaked one night by the wails

¹ Reported by Dr. Caldérone and abridged by Dr. Geley. *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, Aug.-Sept., 1916.

of her husband, who in his sleep was crying out, "Help! Save me!" and was struggling like a drowning man. He was dreaming of a terrible accident at sea, and when completely awake told how he seemed to be on board a large vessel which foundered after collision with another: he had felt himself thrown into the sea and swallowed up by the water.

On completing his tale, he added, "I am sure that the sea will cause my death." So strong was his conviction that he began to put his affairs in order, like a man who knows that his days are numbered. Two months passed, during which the impression of the dream was weakening, when he received an order from the Admiralty to be ready to leave with all his staff for a port on the Black Sea.

When taking leave of his wife at the Petersburg station, Lukawski said to her, "You remember my dream?" . . . "Oh, why do you ask me?" . . . "Because I am sure I shall not come back; we shall not see each other again." Mme Lukawski tried to persuade him, but in a tone of great sadness he said, "You may say what you will, my conviction will not change. I feel that my end is near and that nothing can stop it. . . . Yes, I see the port, the ship and the moment of collision, the panic on board, and my end . . . all returns before my eyes. . . ." And after a short pause he added, "When the telegram announcing my death reaches you and you go into mourning, I beseech you not to wear that long veil that I dislike." Unable to reply, Mme Lukawski broke into sobs. The whistle of the train gave the signal for starting, M. Lukawski kissed his wife tenderly, and the train left.

After two weeks of acute anxiety, Mme Lukawski learned from the newspapers that there had been a collision between two ships in the Black Sea—the *Vladimir* and the *Sineus*. In great grief she telegraphed to Admiral Zelenoi at Odessa to get news, and received the answer: "No news of your husband up to the present, but it is certain he was on board the *Vladimir*." News of the death reached her a week later.

It must be added that in his dream M. Lukawski had seen himself struggling for life with a passenger. The incident was realized with exactitude. In the accident, a passenger on the *Vladimir*—a M. Henicke—had leapt into the sea with a life-buoy. M. Lukawski, already in the water, tried to reach the buoy as soon as he saw it, and the other cried out, "Don't take hold, it won't hold two; we shall both be drowned." Nevertheless, Lukawski grasped it, saying he could not swim. "Then take it," said Henicke. "I am a good swimmer, and I will do without it." A great wave separated them. Henicke was saved, but Lukawski met his fate.¹

It will be noticed that the foregoing facts all relate to death. This is a remark which naturally occurs to all who compile a collection of these phenomena—that death or danger of death are the most frequent themes in supernormal self-cognition, no doubt because the cessation of life is the capital event of it. All the serious episodes in a life are, however, capable of being the subject of occasional presentiment or precognition.

As soon as the reality of phenomena of this kind is assured, it becomes evident that the human being is a psychic personality which has two aspects.

¹ Narrated by Baron Joseph Kronhelm of Podolia (Russia), published in *Light*, 1899, p. 45. Reproduced by M. Bozzano in *Les Phénomènes prémonitoires*, p. 77 (Alcan).

We ordinarily know it under one aspect only, by the exercise of thought working on the reports of the classified senses and according to a determinate mental process ; but the ordinary condition of mental working which seems to be the whole of thought is far from being its totality. There is, one may say, another plane on which thought functions ; a plane on which a latent intelligence receives information from sources other than the sensorial, and constructs its cognitions by other processes than those of the conscious mind. From this point of view it is "supernormal."

This super-rational thought, latent in all human beings, manifests itself here and there on the occasion of some important event in a life. Although a large number of such instances have been collected,¹ these occasional manifestations are relatively rare. It would seem that this kind of thought finds great difficulty in entering the field of consciousness. Its effort to reach consciousness ultimates differently in different cases. It may appear as a vague sentiment of mental pain accompanied by an unreasoned conviction of approaching death. It may also, as we have seen above, be translated into a real pre-cognition, the reflect of an anticipated reality.

Certain states of consciousness as yet inexplicable will be better understood when the experimental conditions (of which this book is an analysis) and the determinism of these occasional phenomena have been brought to light by study of those conditions. It will be seen that those persons who are called "intuitive" are those in whom certain cognizances, built up in the para-conscious stage, pass into consciousness with varying degrees of facility and with varying results. It will be seen that certain "melancholics" are sensitives troubled by a painful future. It will be seen that there are fixed ideas that disturb mental equilibrium, proceeding from the super-rational plane of the mind which should be examined in order to effect a cure by methods other than those which apply to fixed ideas resulting from the normal ; though the known causes of fluctuation in emotional consciousness will be supplemented by the notion of another cause when joy and sadness shall have been demonstrated to be connected, more often than is supposed, with events not yet come to birth.

To consider the human being as a sentient body which proceeds through life responsive only to the rhythm of passing phenomena, feeling only the immediate present and knowing only what has been fulfilled, is to condemn oneself to failure to understand the

¹ See the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research (London). Camille Flammarion, *L'Inconnu et les Problèmes psychiques*, *La Mort et son Mystère* (Avant la mort), English translation by Latrobe Carroll (Fisher Unwin), and E. Bozzano, *Les Phénomènes prémonitoires*.

interior life of the mind and the complex activity of thought working not only on the reports of the senses, but also on that which arises more or less dimly from a super-rational gestation. Intuition and reason are in constant collaboration.

Most men are still in the stages of ignorance, of systematic denial, of indifference, or mere astonishment in face of the manifestations of supernormal thought.

(2) SUPERNORMAL COGNIZANCE OF THE EXTERNAL

(a) *Supernormal cognition of the immediate environment.*

Para-normal perception by the sense of touch. In this, as at the beginning of the study of supernormal self-cognition, we are at the outset so close to ordinary physiology that the first class of phenomena, despite their unusual nature, may seem if not explicable, at least intelligible and rational. As the hypnotic state increases sensorial acuity in certain persons and under certain conditions, it is understandable that tactile impressions, unconscious in the normal working of the nervous system, should occasionally be perceived and interpreted.

I borrow the following typical example of para-normal cognition of external things, physiologically analogous to the facts of auto-scopy, from the experiments of Émile Boirac, the late rector of the Academy of Dijon, recounted in his book *La psychologie inconnu* (p. 245).

M. Boirac had occasion to see in Paris Mme V—, who claimed, when hypnotized, the faculty of reading by her finger-tips. He verified that when her eyelids were closed by gummed paper and a thick bandage placed over that she could not only read visiting cards and printed papers, but letters written in ink or pencil in characters so small as to be almost imperceptible. She could similarly describe photographs, and even tell the time by a watch by simply passing her hand over the glass. She also took the precaution of wrapping the watch-case in a handkerchief, because, as she said, the gold gave her a sense of burning.

This experiment gave him the idea and the wish to reproduce this phenomenon with a new subject who had never heard speak of such a thing, who had no idea of it, and whom no one had previously hypnotized.

"Chance brought me such an one at the beginning of the winter of 1904. Ludovic S—, aged twenty, was a designer in a large factory. I experimented with him mainly in November and December, 1904, and in the six or seven early months of 1905.

"In the course of our first sittings I tried to reproduce the phenomena observed with Mme V—, and asked him if he would try to reproduce them. 'Do you think that I could read with closed eyes?' he said. 'I do not know,' I answered, 'but let us try.'

"Taking a letter from the file at random, I put it in his hands and, at his request, explained how to set about it. 'Do as Mme V— did. Pass your fingers over the paper, put it to your forehead and to the pit of your stomach till you feel something.' After trying for some time he said, 'I

feel nothing ; it is an impossible thing. There must have been some trick.' I pointed out that he was giving up too soon ; no doubt time and effort would be necessary, and invited him to begin afresh. He began feeling and pressing the paper very attentively, and then suddenly gave a shiver, 'What is it ?' I said. 'Nothing,' he replied. 'But it must be something to have made you shiver.' . . . 'No ; it is impossible, absurd.' . . . Well, it seemed to me that there must be written 'Mon cher Camille.' . . . 'It is not "Mon cher Camille," it is "Mon cher Émile." Perhaps it is but a coincidence ; let us try again.'

"Remembering that Mme V—— had said that it is well to begin with large printed letters, I put a newspaper into his hands, and said, 'Read the title of this paper.' He asked me to indicate the exact place, passed his fingers over it, and said, 'Is it not *Le Progrès de Lyon* ?' 'Very good,' I replied ; 'but perhaps it is another coincidence, for the paper has a considerable circulation hereabouts. Here is another.' . . . 'Is it not *Le Moniteur des Tirages financiers* ?' . . . 'Now doubt is impossible ; bravo, my friend ! you see you can read with closed eyes.'

"To my great surprise he answered, 'No, sir, I do not read.' . . . 'What, then, do you do ?' . . . 'I feel nothing under my fingers, I see nothing before my eyes ; only it comes into my mind, I cannot say how, that it must be this or that ; I fancy that your thought suggests it to me.' 'After all,' I said, 'that is possible, though I do not think so. We will try to clear it up another time.' With that I awakened him, and he took his leave.

"It was only at the third trial that I could discover the part that I personally had in the phenomenon. At this sitting a large number of persons were present, to whom I first showed the fact of reading by the finger-tips as above described. One of them asked whether the reading were really done by the fingers or by thought-transference from me. I answered that I did not know, that the subject himself had that idea, and the occasion was a good one to test it. I therefore asked my interlocutor to write a phrase of his own composition on a piece of paper. This was folded, so that I should not know the contents, and was given by me to S——, who opened it and read it without difficulty, except that he made one mistake in the initial letter of one word. Indeed, owing to peculiarity in the writing a person reading with open eyes might equally have made this mistake.

"But another experiment made at this same time showed still more certainly that the subject perceived directly and not by transmission of any outside influence. One of those present took a book and, opening it at random, placed it in the hands of the percipient S——, who began to read the page at which the book had been opened. This time neither I nor anyone else knew the text, so that there could be no mental suggestion nor transmission of thought.

"In all my subsequent experiments I tried to analyse this curious phenomenon."

Proceeding to explanatory research, Boirac was led to verify that the subject did not seem to be affected by colours nor by a shape to which there might adhere a greater or less amount of printer's ink :

That he described photographs by passing his hand over the surface, and could even distinguish details through glass :

That he came to be able to read with his fingers a paper placed at a distance, provided that his sensibility were suppressed according to de Rochas' method :

That all results were positive and conclusive in complete darkness ; and, more strange still, that the interposition of another person between

the subject and the writing did not impede the phenomenon ; just as if that person were a conductor of the impressions.

From this well-devised series of experiments M. Boirac concluded that the results were due to supernormal conscious interpretation of tactile impressions habitually unperceived.

Perception, whether awake or under hypnosis, of "fluidic emanations" from magnets, electric currents or human bodies, etc., notified by some observers, would find their place in this class of phenomena.

Para-normal cognition of hidden material things. The next higher grade in supernormal cognition of the environment is the group of facts by which a human being shows a capacity for perceiving without contact, forms of Matter under conditions when they seem entirely remote from normal sensorial perceptions.

The "dowser" with his hazel twig, until recently disdained by the scientific world, is the representative of this physiological power.

More or less everywhere men of science, stimulated by the incessant repetition of the facts, have at last had the courage to brave the superstitious dogmatism of their fellows by attempting the solution of this enigma. Their observations have already had the effect of revealing a new field for study which has also a practical value.

They have verified that some persons are really endowed with the power to discern the existence of a subterranean stream when they approach it or pass above it, by the movements of a rod held in their hands.¹

They have verified that the traditional forked stick is only an instrument translating unconscious perception of the sheet of water into involuntary movements, and that the phenomenon occurs with rods of all kinds—different woods or metals, and with other instruments—a ring or a watch oscillating at the end of a string (pendulum), even, according to Marage, "with Marey's recording cylinder, whose lever registers the movement of the two hands each in an india-rubber sheath."

They have verified that by these methods some persons can not only indicate the underground flow, but its direction, depths and volume. They have verified that in this manner some persons can discern underground cavities, strata of coal, oil, and metallic masses, distinguishing one kind of metal from another.

Before 1910 the German Government employed dowsers in its African colonies. In 1913 the French Minister of Agriculture in

¹ This faculty would seem to be so general that Dr. Marage, particularly fitted by his studies on dowsing and his own gift of this kind, estimates the number of persons capable of being influenced by underground water, at 50 per cent of the normal.

the first place, and afterwards the Academy of Sciences, named two commissions of investigation. The second Congress of Experimental Psychology brought together a number of dowzers under conditions so unfavourable that it is a marvel that the result of the enquiry was not entirely negative.

On November 17th, 1913, M. d'Arsonval communicated to the Academy of Sciences the work of Dr. Marage on dowsing with rod and pendulum by M. Landesque, an engineering expert (Ponts et Chaussées) in Tunisia, who though denying the facts, wished to make a personal trial, and to his great astonishment found himself to be an excellent dowser. Out of nine experiments followed by borings—seven on the road from Enfidaville to Kair Kairouan over 31 kilometres (about 18 miles); two between Enfidaville and Zaghouan over 19 kilometres (11 miles)—M. Landesque had nine successes as to location, seven being very remarkable, and two errors as to depth.¹ In 1913 M. d'Arsonval read to the Academy of Sciences a communication by M. Armand Viré, professor of subterranean geology at the Paris Museum, of which an extract here follows :

We experimented (1) on metals, (2) on bones, (3) on water and underground cavities.

We examined various persons : professionals, such as Messrs. Probst, Pélaprat, the Abbé Mermet ; and amateurs, such as M. Prodel and others. We followed and confirmed their indications with the hazel rod.

Metals.

At Luzech (department Lot), within the wall of the old Gallic town Impernal, M. Pélaprat and myself felt, at a point which we carefully marked, some unknown body, not water, four yards underground. On digging there was found at that depth a small heap of iron dross, some iron arrow-points, and some bronze rings : excavation for some yards round yielded nothing.

In another place an iron arrow-head was announced by M. Pélaprat at 65 cm. underground and was duly found. The same took place at Baumes-messieurs (Jura). It was found, as stated, 45 cm. down.

Skeletons.

At Puy-d'Issolud, in the Commune Vayrac (Lot), M. Pélaprat announced two graves at 1 m. and 3 m. depth. A third, 2 m. deep, contained, according to the dowser, a piece of iron. Excavation yielded a skeleton and a sceax or large knife of Frankish origin.

At Limogne (Lot) he indicated a skeleton buried 1½ m. deep, the upper part of which lay under the foundation wall of the church, which was found correct. At Luzech he indicated at the same depth bones which were found as stated.

One inexact description was given : at Puy-d'Issolud he indicated a deposit of bones near the spring of Oulié, at 2.4 m. deep. Excavation to this depth revealed a layer of pottery with some bones of animals.

¹ Lecture by Dr. Marage at the Collège de France. *Bulletin de l'Institut général psychologique*, 1919.

Dr. Marage. "Ce qu'il faut penser de la baguette des sourciers." *Revue scientifique*, Feb. 14, 1920.

Water, and Subterranean Cavities.

The experiment at the grottos of Lacave (Lot) by Messrs. Probst, Pélaprat, and the Abbé Mermet was very characteristic.

We had an unpublished plan from a careful survey made ten years before by an engineer, Mr. E. Brunet, which had been kept quite secret. A partial and mutilated version of it to a small scale had been published, sufficient for the use of tourists, but which, if studied by fraudulent dowzers, would have misled them by several hundred yards. We had therefore a quite ideal test. The dowzers, working independently of each other, began by marking out on the surface of the ground over a length of 350 m. an artificial tunnel 2.5 m. wide and 2 m. high leading to the grottos. It had an elbow turn, and was at a depth of 75 to 100 m. beneath their feet. They followed all its bends, down to the smallest, and arriving at the natural galleries, they followed their walls.

A very exact plan was drawn after the experiments to the same scale (1 : 1000) as M. Brunet's plan, with which it coincided to a millimetre.

The experiment was repeated with equal success by M. Probst.

These gentlemen also marked out two kilometres of unknown caves which will be sought for, and also a subterranean stream, followed for 1200 m. of its course. The upstream side could not be verified, but the lower part, which, according to M. Probst, bifurcated twice, was indicated by him along its course, ending at the cliff fronting the Dordogne, just over four intermittent springs, which at that moment were dry, but were well known to us, and began to flow after the October rains.

Supernormal cognition of human personalities. Under this aspect supernormal cognition takes on an entirely different aspect from the preceding, dealing no longer with para-normal perception of things, but with the revelation of past events in human lives. This class consists of cases in which one person in presence of another shows a faculty of cognizing facts that normal senses and reason could not suggest concerning the latter.

As I have decided in this first part of my work to quote most of my instances from the works of others, I will illustrate this order of facts by the case of Professor Bert Reese, whose strange and rare faculties have been verified by some eminent men of science in America, and by many highly placed persons in other countries.¹

I give below an extract from the report of a séance that Mr. Hereward Carrington had with Reese, May 3rd, 1911 :

Mr. Bert Reese visited me to-day, saying that he would give me a demonstration of his powers. He remained in one room under observation by Mrs. Carrington, while I went into the adjoining room. I closed the door and wrote my questions, sitting at my desk. The paper on which I wrote was an old envelope torn into small pieces.

Mr. Reese asked me to write the name of the first woman I had loved, and that of one of my former professors. The other four questions were left to me. At my own desk and on my own paper I wrote :

1. Will our journey to Canada be successful ?
2. Will the Magazine succeed ?

¹ Reese possessed an extensive scale of hyper-cognition. Besides his gift of revealing character, he was a remarkable dowser, to whom Mr. Rockefeller is said to owe the discovery of some of his most valuable oil deposits.

3. Shall I continue my literary work ?
4. Shall I ever become rich ?
5. Alfred Sansom (name of a former teacher).
6. Winifred Vale (my first "flame").

I folded and mixed these papers so as to be undistinguishable one from another, pressed them closely in my hand, and re-entered the room where Mrs. Reese and Mrs. Carrington were talking.

At his request I placed one each of the folded papers in a separate drawer of a bureau which stood at the end of the room, opposite Reese. I emphasize the fact that Reese never touched the papers at all. I myself placed them in the drawers without their having left my hand. Mr. Reese did not touch one of them, and I never approached him within a yard.

Having placed one paper in each of the five drawers, I gave the sixth to him at his request. I saw that he had no papers in his hands, and, having taken those that I gave him, he struck a match and burnt it before my eyes. He then asked me to designate any one of the drawers. I pointed to the second, and put my hand on the handle, so that it could not be opened unperceived by me. Rising from his chair, Mr. Reese advanced towards the bureau, stopping about two feet from it, and concentrated his attention on the drawer.

He asked me to place my hands on his head, which I did. I did not know which paper had been burned, nor which might be in the second drawer or in any of the others. He then asked Mrs. Carrington to write down what he would dictate, and said as follows :

"The Magazine, which has caused you much disquietude, is not yet settled. You will continue to act as you have done in the past ; the clouds will disperse, and you will not have much to complain of."

When the drawer was opened, neither by me nor by Mr. Reese, who stood about a yard distant, while I continued to hold my hands on his head, but by Mrs. Carrington, it was found that the paper contained the question, "Will the Magazine succeed?"

Mr. Reese then asked me to choose another drawer, which I did. He fixed his attention upon it. Without the drawer being opened in any way he said, "You will remain faithful to literature and will have nothing to complain of." The drawer was opened, and we read, "Shall I continue my literary work?"

I indicated a third drawer. Mr. Reese then asked me to sit at the table, while he took a chair facing me and dictated the following lines :

"You are planning a journey, not exactly in this country, I think in Canada. This will succeed better than you think, and in 122 days (that is, September 2nd) you will realize a project that has been maturing in your mind for some time. In the course of your travels you will meet a man named Peters, against whom you must be on your guard, for he will ask you to join him in an enterprise from which you will gain no advantage. He will not be acting in good faith. You will end by acquiring reputation and money, but this Peters will only cause difficulties."

He finally advised us to leave the house in which we were living at the first opportunity.

Mrs. Carrington then opened the drawer, took out the paper, and read : "Will our journey to Canada be successful?"

Mr. Reese again asked me to designate a drawer. I did so, he standing about a yard away. He looked at the closed drawer and spelt out, letter by letter, "W-i-n-i-f-r-e-d V-a-l-e."

When the paper was taken out it read, "Winifred Vale."

There remained only one drawer. Mrs. Carrington, at Mr. Reese's

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request, took the paper out and held it in her hand. He then said, "Oh, there is only a name, an easy one: Alfred Sansom."

While saying the last word he took the paper from Mrs. Carrington's hand; it bore the name Alfred Sansom. This was the only paper that he touched except that which he burned, and it was not opened till after the words were given.

He then said that he would answer the question on the burnt paper in a general way. "Later on you will be independent financially. The 10th of February will be the happiest day of your life. Something that you have long awaited will then come to pass."

He had then answered all my questions. I placed the bits of paper on the table before him and placed them so as to reconstruct the envelope from which only the burnt portion was missing.¹

(b) Supernormal cognition of environment distant in Space.

In manifestations of this class the percipients show an occasional or permanent faculty for cognition of facts and events which could not come to them through their normal senses. The subjoined facts will give three aspects under which this psycho-physiological possibility is realized.

Occasional and confused perception of an event unknown to the percipient and to those present:

On July 31st, 1914, Count Ugo Baschiéri, a Brazilian doctor well known for his supernormal faculties, was passing through Paris; and at 9 in the evening was giving a séance at the house of Madame J. M., a literary lady who lived in St. Charles Street, not far from the fortifications.

The séance had been in progress for 25 minutes, and Count Baschiéri had been making predictions as to the impending war. Suddenly he said, "To-night or to-morrow some one of importance will be murdered." Then, greatly agitated. . . "To-night, much blood! Look at the time."

The room being nearly dark, some one struck a match—it was 9.40. Continuing to show much agitation, he said, "Something is happening towards the Boulevard des Italiens."²

As is well known, Jaurès was assassinated by Villain in the restaurant where he was dining at the corner of the Rue Montmartre and the Rue du Croissant, between 9.35 and 9.40, about 300 yards in a straight line from the Boulevard des Italiens.¹

Exceptional and precise perception of a very distant event affecting the life of the percipient:

On the 17th March, 1863, in a flat No. 26 Rue Pasquier, Baroness de Boislevé was giving a dinner to several persons, among whom were General Fleury, Master of the Horse to Napoleon III; M. Déviénne, Judge of the

¹ *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, Nov., 1913. See also in the same Review an account of similar séances at Paris, Mr. Reese being on a visit there, by Drs. J. Maxwell and Schrenck-Notzing.

In the August number (1913) of the same Review an account of his séances with Edison, the American physicist; and in the September number the article by Felix Holländer, "Le voyant Reese."

² *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, Nov., Dec., 1915. *Le Comte Ugo Baschiéri*, by C. de Vésme.

High Court; and M. Délesvaux, President of the Chamber (Tribunal of the Seine). During dinner conversation turned on the expedition to Mexico which had been in progress for a year. The son of the baroness, Honoré de Boislevé, a lieutenant of Chasseurs, was in the expedition, and his mother had not failed to ask General Fleury if there were any news of him.

There were none—"no news is good news." The dinner went well and the guests remained at table till 9 o'clock. Madame B.— then got up and went into the drawing-room to order coffee. She had hardly reached it when a loud cry alarmed the guests, who found the baroness in a faint on the floor.

When she recovered she told an extraordinary story. When crossing the threshold she had seen at the other end of the room her son Honoré in uniform, but without arms and without his cap. His face was very pale, and his left eye was a bleeding and empty socket; a stream of blood covered his cheek and ran on to the lace of his collar. She was in a state of mortal terror. The guests sought to comfort her, saying that she must be a victim of hallucination, had had a waking dream; but as she was much prostrated they sent for her medical attendant, who happened to be the celebrated Dr. Nélaton. He was told of the strange adventure, prescribed sedatives, and retired. The next day she had recovered health, but was still much disturbed in mind. She sent daily to the War Office for news.

A week later she was officially informed that on March 17th at 2.50 in the afternoon, at the assault of Puebla, Honoré de Boislevé had been killed by a Mexican bullet in the left eye. The difference of longitude was worked out, and the hour of death was found exactly corresponding with the time of the apparition in the Rue Pasquier.

Dr. Nélaton presented a statement to the Academy of Sciences, drawn up by the hand of President Devienne, and signed by all the guests of the evening.¹

Perception of a remote event relative to life of a person present, but not the percipient :

Mme R—, in September, 1920, missed a platinum brooch. She questioned her servants about it. Soon after, the housemaid, Anna-Theresa H., aged 18, told her of certain suspicions. "Madame, it is your maid who has stolen it. I found her in your room yesterday, and she seemed fluttered when she saw me."

The maid in her turn (a war-widow with three children) came to Mme R— and said, "Madame, I am sure that Anna-Theresa is the thief, and I don't wonder at it, I never liked her."

Mme R—, perplexed between the two statements, put the police on the track, and an enquiry began. Some days passed.

By the advice of a friend, Mme R— went to the Metapsychic Institute, expecting to find mediums there. Dr. Geley named Mme Morel as a clairvoyante who might possibly be useful, she having already given proofs of supernormal faculty in similar cases.

Mme R— went to Mme Morel on October 5th with a friend. This friend interviewed Mme Morel alone, putting into her hands a fur cape belonging to Mme R—, and asking what she could say concerning a jewel lost by the lady to whom the cape belonged.

Mme Morel said, "It has been stolen. . . . I see a long article . . . very bright . . . like a brooch . . . it has not left the house . . . a woman has taken it; she is not very tall, young, chestnut hair . . . she

¹ Camille Flammarion. *La Mort et son Mystère*. Vol. II, p. 180.

is very worried . . . you must go back home quickly . . . the lady must go back home and say nothing about it. If nothing is said, and she behaves naturally, the thief will be still more worried. I see her wrapping the jewel in an old newspaper and throwing it under a table in a long room like a hall. If nothing is said, the jewel will be brought to her in a few hours. Go at once . . . it is the youngest woman in the house who is the thief, not the other."

Mme R—— returned home to Neuilly. At eight the same evening, she being in the dining-room, another servant came and said, "Madame, here is your brooch. I have just found it in the hall in an old newspaper."

The police inspector arrived at the same time. Mme R—— told him what Mme Morel had said and the conclusion of the affair.

Soon after M. Krug-Bass, the magistrate, had the housemaid arrested, her bearing seeming suspicious to him. She vehemently denied the theft. Ignorant of all supernormality, he suspected the clairvoyante of complicity in the theft, went to see her, and threatened her. In the Middle Ages she would have been put to the torture and perhaps sent to the stake.

A month later M. Krug-Bass extorted a confession from the housemaid and declared himself convinced of the existence of transcendental faculties.

The Press gave wide notice to the story of the brooch, the accounts being devoid of any sort of accuracy.

These phenomena are totally inexplicable by psychology, and without confounding them with "thought-transference," these latter may be placed in the same class. All supernormal phenomena partake in this influence. Its experimental demonstration is easy and has often been made.¹

(c) *Supernormal cognition of an environment distant in Time.*

Time, as well as Space, is penetrable by the faculty of supernormal cognition, just as if Time were but an illusory creation of the human mind.

An instance of para-normal cognition in the mode of Time called "present" and in a recent past :

Dr. Dufay, of Blois, had occasion to verify the faculty of hyper-cognition in a young servant of Mme D.—— during hypnosis. Her liability to somnambulatory crises led to her imprisonment on an accusation of stealing her mistress's jewellery. Dr. Dufay put her to sleep, awakened her memory, and proved her innocence. While awaiting her release, the opportunity for an exact and conclusive experiment presented itself.

"On the next day," Dr. Dufay writes, in the *Revue philosophique*, 1889, Vol. I, p. 205, "I was called very early on account of a suicide in the prison. A prisoner, accused of murder, had strangled himself with his cravat, which he had tied to his bed. Lying flat on the floor of his cell,

¹ Experiments by Dr. P. Janet and Dr. Gilbert. *Revue de Philosophie*, 1886, Vols. I and II.

Experiments by E. Boirac, *Psychologie inconnue* and *Avenir des Sciences psychiques* (Alcan).

Experiments by Dr. Ochorowicz. *La Suggestion mentale* (Alcan) and *Revue de Philosophie*, Vol. I, p. 208.

Warcollier. *La Télépathie* (Alcan).

he had pushed himself back with his hands till the slip-knot produced strangulation. The body was already cold when I arrived simultaneously with the magistrate. The Public Prosecutor, to whom the magistrate had told the story of the experiment with the girl on the preceding day, desired to see Marie, and I suggested that we should try an experiment with reference to the suicide. Both magistrates eagerly accepted the proposal. I cut off a piece of the cravat and wrapped it in several folds of paper, tying it up with string.

"Going to the female ward, we found the prisoners just out of the dormitory, and asked the Sister in charge to place her room at our disposal. I signed to Marie to follow us, and without saying a single word to her I hypnotized her by simply placing my hand on her forehead. I then took the paper from my pocket and put it into her hands. The poor girl started violently, pushed away the packet, saying she would not touch it. Of course, it is the custom that suicides in prisons are kept secret as long as possible. Nothing had transpired in the prison, and the Sister was herself in ignorance of the matter.

" 'What do you think there is in the packet ? ' I asked when quiet was restored.

" 'It is a thing which has killed a man.' . . . 'Is it a knife or a pistol ? ' 'No, no . . . I see, I see . . . it is a cravat . . . he hanged himself. Make the gentleman behind me sit down ; his legs tremble so that he can hardly stand.' (One of the magistrates was, in fact, so moved that he was trembling all over.)

" 'Can you tell me where this has occurred ? '

" 'Why, here, you know quite well. . . . It is one of the prisoners.'

" 'For what was he in prison ? ' . . . 'For murdering a man who had asked to get into his cart.'

" 'How did he kill him ? ' . . . 'With a *gouet*.'

"In this part of the country (Loir et Cher) a bill-hook is called by this name ; it is a tool much used by woodcutters and coopers, and I had mentioned such a tool in my report as being most likely the instrument with which the murder had been committed.

"Up to this point Marie's answers had told us nothing that we did not already know. At this moment the judge of first instance drew me apart and whispered that the bill-hook had not been found.

"I asked, 'What did he do with his bill-hook ? '

" 'What did he do ? . . . wait a moment . . . he threw it into a pond. . . . I see it quite well at the bottom of the water.'

"She designated the position of the pond well enough to enable it to be dragged the same day in presence of an officer of the constabulary. The bill-hook was found there. We only heard of the result in the evening, but the scepticism of the magistrates was already much shaken.

"To satisfy their curiosity, I asked the Sister to borrow from some of the convicts some small objects belonging to them—an ear-ring, a ring, etc.—and to wrap them in papers so as to conceal their nature effectively. Marie gave us an exact statement of the facts which had determined each conviction.

Instances of supernormal cognition in the far distant past.

I. Mr. William Denton, professor of geology, published in London in 1863 a book entitled *Nature's Secrets, or Psychometric Researches*,¹ in which he gave his own experiments suggested by the work of Buchanan, a professor of anthropology, on the faculty called by him "psychometry" ;

¹ *A Manual of Psychometry*, quoted by the *Journal sur l'Homme*, Vol. I, No. 2.

meaning by this term the faculty possessed by some persons of reconstituting past scenes by touching an object connected with them.

Mr. Denton had the good fortune to find in his sister, Mrs. Anne Denton Cridge, a remarkably good subject and one sufficiently educated to describe her visions accurately.

After testing the validity of her hyper-cognitions by using (like Buchanan) letters or familiar objects, by contact with which she described the appearance of the writer or possessor, his character, life, and surroundings, he conceived the idea of using this faculty on geological and palæontological questions. For this purpose he used metallic fragments, minerals, fossils, and archæological remains from various countries, which his profession provided him with in plenty. In numerous séances Mrs. Anne Denton, in contact with various objects, seemed to witness great scenes in geologic epochs and in the life of primitive men, and prehistoric groups in different centres of civilization. A single instance will give an idea of the working of the faculty.

She was given a piece of volcanic tufa from Pompeii, all precautions having been taken that she should be in entire ignorance of the nature and origin of the object. She said: "I see mural paintings—large frescoes which seem to decorate the walls of a comfortable house. . . . Then I see . . . a place pertaining to an ancient country and a time long past. The time-impression is very clear. I perceive the detail of buildings of a past age. . . . The wings of the frontage towards the sea are flanked by square towers. I hear the swish of long curtains within the house, moved by the wind. In front of me and to the left, at the end of an enclosure which looks like an inner courtyard, I see some obstacle whose nature I am trying to determine. It seems that this obstacle is a huge mountain, immediately contiguous to this house. Its summit is so high that I have to raise my head to see it. It seems to be a volcano, for now I see smoke coming from it, fiery stones, and steam. The violence of the eruption is such that from a distance it looks like a vast chimney which at a certain height flattens out, and extends over the whole country.

"The mountain presents the appearance of an immense rounded sheath in which is a cavity of unknown depth. The orifice of the actual crater seems to me much smaller than the internal cavity. A second crater develops, and this, though smaller than the other, is much more active. . . . I am now between the two, and am ascending towards the higher of the two. . . . I hear thunders inside the mountain. From what depths does this terrible eruption come? The impression I receive now is not the same as at first. . . . It seems strange that I should not have perceived this at first, for nothing can be compared to what is now given to my sight. The volume of ejected matter is terrible and passes all imagination. It is not lava, quite different, a growing black, inky cloud dropping huge black flakes over the whole country round. I can hardly realize the reality of what I see; it seems so fantastical and unprecedented. It seems to me the work of destruction must be at its height, there is nothing left to be swallowed up. It shrieks like a tempest let loose, boils, and passes like whirlwind.

"Now it seems as if torrents of boiling water are thrown out by the volcano; at first there was only a gigantic eruption of scoria and burning stones, but now great masses of boiling water flow down into the plain, sweeping away everything in their path—cinders, melted lava, and rocks—scooping out a ravine between the two craters. What a devastation of this miserable country! It is no mere earthquake, but an unprecedented cataclysm full of horror and irremediable. All the lower part of the mountain is buried under it, and the shroud of death extends for miles round.

All is covered in thick darkness, which adds to the horror of the scene. Now and then flashes of lightning start from the mountain and are lost in the thick clouds with detonations that shake the whole. I can only attribute this fearful power to electro-magnetic force which alone could produce such tremendous effects."¹

Interesting as are experiments of this kind, they are not valid evidence for supernormal cognition of the past. They were made without reckoning on a factor which must always be borne in mind when conducting such studies. I allude to unconscious mental communication. This is always present to vitiate investigations.

Mr. Denton was only concerned to keep his subject in ignorance of the object placed in her hands. He does not seem to have known that his own thought might be a much more potent suggestive influence, and that the subject might thence draw not only the main features of a pseudo-reconstruction of the events, but a quantity of technical detail. Moreover, it is fatal to the positive value of experiments of this sort that we have no means of ascertaining whether the indications given are conformable to the ancient facts.

From this point of view the only experiment that could be held conclusive would be one in which the subject should reveal events unknown to the experimenter and to any other living person, which details should be confirmed by some document till then unknown to all.

Such conditions must be extremely rare ; I have long sought one in vain. There is, however, one already rendered interesting by a beginning of corroboration, which will, I think, interest the reader, though I do not know if there will be any conclusion, or if such would be confirmative.

II. On March 15th, 1921, M. Lucien Galloy, an engineer, on his return from a commercial mission in Syria, gave me, for experimental purposes, a photograph representing an ill-defined ovoid mass about four inches wide and two inches high. He said : " This is an object whose contents are unknown to anyone. Would you try to obtain information upon it by any of the subjects with whom you have experimented ? "

On March 16th, at 9.30 a.m., I placed this photograph in the hands of Mme Morel in a state of hypnosis.

No other person than M. Galloy in Paris had seen this photograph. Only as the result of a casual conversation, and on searching his portfolio, had the idea come to him that it might be used for an experiment.

The photograph, a bad one, suggested nothing as to the object ; none of those to whom I subsequently showed it could make anything of it. I said to Mme Morel. " Tell me what the thing which I put into your hand causes you to see."

" I see a form, and in a fog an inanimate figure . . . a being disengages itself as a shadow, rather tall, the forehead quite clear. . . . I see something without life like a dead face. . . . It is very far off. . . . I only see dead people . . . it is far. . . . I seem to see groups of persons in a distant land (*un cadre éloigné*). . . . I see there more especially a man with a young face . . . several persons. Ah ! now an old man appears more clearly . . . what am I to look for in him ? "

¹ Quoted from a study by Mr. Joseph Peter, translated from *Die ueber-sinnliche Welt* (Munich). *Annales de Sciences psychiques*, Aug. 1910.

"Look for his mode of life, his surroundings and his profession."

"I see a habitation of unusual form, very large—how large! . . . it is not an ordinary habitation. . . . I see a vaulted roof . . . it is immense . . . cold, very ancient . . . it seems deserted. . . . I see nothing present—(*rien d'actuel*) . . . it is almost like a church. . . . I see gloom everywhere . . . it is immense . . . the ground is cold, the roof very high . . . there are lights in the sides. I see what seems to be coloured windows . . . many stones . . . it is immense . . . the form of the house is round, like a cloister . . . it is immense, immense."

"This man does no manual work, his brain only is active. . . . I see his brain, high above the normal . . . a life entirely of the brain . . . vast thought, vast. . . . I see what looks like a vast field in his brain. . . . I get glimpses of many men around him. He speaks, as if his words were above (the comprehension of) all these people."

"I see this form, sad . . . many thoughts. . . . How remote in time it all is! Very far."

"This man gathers others to him . . . he speaks; his mere words are an action . . . written characters come into his brain almost daily. . . . I see coloured things . . . how abundant is his imagination! He is highly placed . . . at the head of many . . . higher than the normal . . . like a man distinguished above others . . . he gives out much thought."

"Something very sudden and violent stops all this. One would think that a violent death has supervened . . . this man is choking. I see blood. . . . It is sudden! . . . he is not alone . . . many persons are round him . . . how violent! I see a block of stone . . . suddenly I see him on the ground . . . there is a man there, I do not distinguish what he is doing. . . . I only see the other extended on the ground . . . all vanishes."

"What became of this man's body?"

"Oh, what a number of people! It is strange, I see a large concourse, but in their brains I do not see the face of that man . . . there are many there whom he did not know. . . ."

"I see a great crowd of unknown persons. . . . I hear much noise . . . one would say a whole nation behind that man . . . an immense crowd . . . then something military . . . what a concourse, they come from everywhere. . . . I hear cries. . . . I see something very high . . . it is like a strange funeral scene."

"See a few of the crowd?"

"I see people in light-coloured garments . . . it is unusual at a funeral . . . all round that man I see bright colours . . . red on both sides of him . . . then a group dressed in white . . . what a number in white, all together, in groups . . . then I see uniforms . . . then the crowd follows . . . all very bright . . . bright sunlight."

"The uniforms are worn by soldiers, some are very dark, with gold upon the dark colour. . . . I see large head-dresses white, like white plumes . . . others have robes."

"Look for the place where this man is buried."

"I don't see any earth, it is like a small underground house . . . I see a large vault, no earth . . . this man is suspended as it were, placed on something, not on the ground really . . . there seems an empty space underneath, he is placed as if sleeping. . . . I see other dead about him."

"Now look for the object of which you are holding a photograph."

"I see what looks like a large ball, but bigger on one side than the other . . . white, milky, a kind of agate tint. There is a liquid in it, nearly half full, no, nearer a quarter. . . . I see a rusty coloured liquid, like reddened water, thick . . . it is not water . . . there, now I see better

... a quarter full or more, a reddish liquid like clayey water. . . . Ah ! it is like blood with a rusty tint, and above it is a thin layer rather thicker than below . . . it is like blood . . . its colour is like blood somewhat discoloured."

"Look under what circumstances this liquid was put into the object."

"Oh, it is very far in the past, very, very far! . . . while I look at it I see some one dying . . . how far away it is . . . an infinite distance . . . an age which is not ours. It is the moment of his death, as if it were some of his blood. It is not in the surroundings in which that object was placed ; it is in quite a different place. . . . I see mountains and water . . . forests, uncultivated land. . . . How strange . . . how far away ! I see some one bleeding . . . it is his death . . . what a number of people . . . it seems to be in a stone building. . . . I see men around another . . . he has a large wound in his neck . . . a savage scene, a human being martyred, much martyred as if they were injuring another, one only . . . these people do not speak the same language. . . . I see wounds, blood, a savage act. . . . Oh, these men ! . . . robes . . . bronze-coloured. . . . I see one especially with large bright eyes. . . . What a strange face ! . . . a bleeding body.

"Now I see a mountain . . . that man goes up it . . . there is suffering . . . he seems to be going up a bare mountain dragging some heavy thing, black and heavy . . . there is a shock, like some one falling. . . . I see pain and blood. I see blood round his head.

"I see men who gather this blood, first in some vessel, then in that which I am holding . . . this travels far, it is shut up with the body, as one places a memento. . . .

"The blood was put in when the object itself was made. . . . I see sand, then a strong heat to make it . . . it has no opening . . . it is rather hastily finished in one place . . . the air cannot enter."

Verification.

1. What I knew at the time of the experiment. Nothing at all.
2. What M. Galloy knew. He was not present and told me some hours later :

M. Eddet, living at Beyrout, a landowner in the valley of Bekaa (Syria), told him in January, 1921, that he had a sort of little closed bottle, ovoid in shape, of nearly opaque glass allowing the level of liquid inside to be seen. This liquid must have been put in when the glass was blown, for no orifice or place of sealing is visible.

This ovoid is one-third larger than the photograph.

It was found in a necropolis near Baalbec, where are the ruins of the temple of Heliopolis. It appears to be the only object of the kind found in the necropolis of this place or anywhere else.

M. Maspero, custodian of the Museum at Cairo, having seen this object when visiting Baalbec, before 1914, is said to have declared it unique never before seen by him, probably the only specimen in the world, and dating probably from the Roman occupation slightly before the Christian era.

The knowledge thus gained of its rarity caused the object to be deposited in a bank at Beyrout, pending the chance of speaking of it to some archæologist.

The photograph was given by M. Eddet to M. Galloy that he might interest French archæologists in the ovoid and its mysterious contents.

M. Eddet considered that it must contain some rare and precious liquid, having been placed in the tomb of an important personage.

M. Galloy, who had not seen the ampulla, had made no guess at its

contents. He was much astonished to hear that the *voyante* had stated it to be blood.

III. Letter from M. Eddet, posted at Beyrout, April 4th, 1921, answering a request for more precise information:

"You ask me for very precise details regarding the antique ampulla. I haste to give you the details here following:

"The bottle was found in a village now called Kerak, close to the Malaaka Railway Station on the road to Baalbec. There is at Kerak itself a tomb of Roman times, which the Metoualis, since they came into these parts, call 'the tomb of Noah.'

"The tomb in which this bottle was found is situated close to the ruins of an ancient necropolis. The proprietor of this ground, in 1895, wishing to make a nursery for silkworms, brought workmen to dig the foundations.

"While carrying out this work they came upon a large stone closing a cavity. There was a tomb in the middle of this vaulted cavity. On this tomb lay a plate of massive gold on which this bottle rested. Round the tomb were many urns of different sizes symmetrically placed.

"At sight of the plate and the urns, the workmen hastened to seize them and abandoned the tomb. The bottle was carried off and handed over to the proprietor. In these urns were found gold pieces bearing the effigy of Alexander the Great.

"Some hours after the discovery, the Caimakam, the Governor of the Sandjak, having been informed, came to the spot accompanied by the police. He and his companions took away such urns as the workmen had left. No other tomb was found near, no excavations were made. The distance from the temple of Baalbec to the ruins of Kerak is about eighteen miles. I could not tell you whether there were or are any inscriptions in the tomb, the cavity has been covered with earth. No fragments of glass or stone, and no inscriptions were found, and I much regret inability to send you specimens. . . ."

IV. Letter from M. Eddet, in reply to a request for permission to examine the liquid in the ampulla, or its purchase:

" . . . Only the sale of this object is contemplated, and I cannot permit the examination of the contents for its value lies in this substance which was affirmed by the London and Cairo Museums. I said, therefore, that its sale will be considered, and I ask £5000 (Egyptian) as its price. If your friend intends purchase, I would beg you to let him know that the sale will be made at the French Consulate in Beyrout at a time to be indicated by him."

Nothing followed on the transaction proposed.

It is desirable, however, to clear up the whole significance of the experiment.

With only a very bad photograph, giving no notion of the object portrayed, Mme Morel takes cognizance of the life, death, and funeral rites of an ancient personage; she describes the form, dimensions, and appearance of the ancient ampulla of glass and the state of the liquid it contains.

It is obviously impossible to reach any certitude how far her vision corresponds to reality. The events cannot be brought back to our eyes. Compared, however, with the usual checks on the accuracy of past events, these here applicable are exceptionally valuable.

To begin with, the description by the subject is confirmed by the knowledge of Messrs. Galloy and Eddet as far as this goes. The ampulla is actually as described, and was found in a vaulted chamber in a necropolis in the East. This part of the experiment is instructive because it limits the phenomenon to one of two possibilities—supernormal cognition of the

past, or, mental intercommunication at a distance. As in all experiments not specifically repeatable, the good faith of the experimenter and the witnesses must be assumed.

But in addition (and herein lies the interest of the facts) the subject described an event—the dramatic and sanguinary death of an ancient personage, of which unrevealed evidence that can be verified by the senses exists. The real contents of the ampulla are unknown to any living being. Those who know of the existence of the vessel think its contents quite different to that indicated by the subject. It then should be verified that the liquid is other than blood, that would prove that the veridical part of Mme Morel's vision is due to intercommunication of thought, and that alone would, by reason of the distance, be a very remarkable fact. The rest would be mere fabulation.

If the contents should in the future be found to be blood, the probability that the whole events described were true would approach certainty.

I hope that some day the affair will be brought to a conclusion; meanwhile, it is well that the narrative of the facts should precede their verification.

*An instance of supernormal cognition of the future of a human person and incidentally, of an event affecting many.*¹

Dr. Tardieu writes: "This remarkable prediction, of which there are several witnesses still living and whose accuracy I guarantee on my word of honour, occurred in the month of July, 1869.

"My friend Léon Sonrel—a former student at the higher Normal School, and then employed in the Paris Observatory—and myself were often together and became intimate friends. He was a scientific man of the highest type. Thanks to him, when I was on the Paris hospital staff, I became acquainted with many men of science, more especially with Charles Sainte-Clair-Deville and Marie-Davy. I was one of the four founders of the Observatory of Montsouris, along with Sonrel, and by his assistance.

"Léon Sonrel had often astonished me by a kind of hypnotic state that occurred from time to time in the course of conversation when he was quiet and suitably disposed. I listened to him and could verify the fact that he often predicted events which in the sequel proved correct. I should, however, mention that I paid no very particular attention to these states, which I regarded as an access of somnambulism, though his eyes remained open and his countenance underwent no change.

"But on the 23rd or 24th of July, 1869, we were walking in the Luxembourg gardens facing the Pharmaceutical School, when he made the following prediction, which lasted three hours and made a very strong impression upon me. He continued his walk, looking upwards and stopping from time to time:

"Oh! What is this? It is war. You are on the Boulevards—in command. How surprising. You are counting money at the Gare du Nord. . . . Now you are in the train with a number of others. . . . You stop at Aulnoy! Now you come to Hirson. You are at Hirson. You are at Mézières; but where are you going? Sedan. . . . Oh, what a battle! You are in great danger. . . . Oh, my poor country! What a disaster! What a misfortune! Oh, my God! my God!' He stopped a moment and wept.

¹ The facts are reported by M. Amedee Tardieu, consulting physician at Mont-Dore. Published by M. de Vesme in the *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1915, No. 3; and abbreviated by Professor Richet in his *Traité de Métapsychique*.

"He walked on and I followed. He raised his head and seemed looking into space, making some gestures with his arm. He went on :

" 'Oh, what a defeat! what a disaster! Oh, my poor country!' He continued :

" 'You are besieged in Paris. . . . Why! I am a superior officer! What? I shall die in three days!' He seemed to wake up, and turning to me, said, 'I am dying, dying, but of what?'

"For one moment he looked at me normally, and I replied, 'Yes, old man, you were dying at the Siege of Paris, and were a superior officer. That is all right.'

"He returned to the hypnotic state: 'I am dying, dying in the siege of Paris in three days.' He seemed to wake up three times, and went on . . . 'Oh, my God! My poor wife is pregnant of a child whom I shall never see.' He wept. 'Oh, but you are there! You take care of them. How good you are.' He showed great anguish and continued to predict the disasters of the Siege and the dangers I should incur. . . . Then, speaking to me, 'Ah, you think to remain in Paris and work with the Medical School! you are in the provinces—politically employed, but you do not forget my wife and children! Ah, you marry and have children! Ah, my poor friend, how you suffer! you are weeping at the bedside of a dying woman whom you love. . . . Courage, courage, my friend; you will win through your troubles. How sorry I am for you, my poor friend!'

For more than two hours Sonrel revealed his friend's future, and, coming to the revelation of a certain scientific fact which made an epoch in M. Tardieu's life, he broke out :

" 'Another disaster for France. Oh, my God! my country is lost! France is slain!'

"Sonrel wept for some minutes, and was silent. Then he raised his head and, looking up as if inspired, cried out : 'Ah, she is saved; she goes to the Rhine! Oh, France! oh, my dearly loved country, she triumphs, queen of the nations! Her genius shines throughout the world. . . . All admire her!'

Dr. Tardieu sums up the sequel :

"Appointed to medical charge of the 8th Red Cross Ambulance, by my respected chiefs, Drs. Nélaton and Larrey, about August 20th, 1870, I left with three ambulances under orders for the army of Mac-Mahon, who was to leave Chalons to join Bazaine at Metz. But no one knew where Mac-Mahon might be. I thought to follow the valley of the Meuse, and so to find his army somewhere on the way to Metz. The 8th Ambulance was specially attached to the 7th Army Corps under Felix-Douay.

"We passed along the boulevards amid great excitement. I told two of my doctors to solicit help for the wounded. From the Opera to the station we collected 36,000 francs. I counted over this money in the station to the cashier of the Society. At that moment the prediction by my friend came back to me.

"In the train my doctors asked me where we were going, and I replied, 'Towards the northern part of the valley of the Meuse; we shall pass by Aulnoy, Hirson and Mézières to Sedan. Moreover,' I told them, 'I will tell you of a prediction made to me: In ten to fifteen days we return to Paris after a terrible defeat.'

"On August 31st, after traversing Aulnoy, Hirson, Mézières and Sedan, we came to Raucourt by way of Chémery. We had picked up several hundred wounded from the battle of Beaumont. The French Army filed past: the Prussians in pursuit camped at Raucourt and round about. In the evening of August 31st, about 10 p.m., I told my doctors of the

prediction by Léon and said that after the defeat on the morrow, we should return to Paris, which would be besieged.

"All my ambulance staff met my friend Sonrel at Arcueil, where he came and dined with me. They said, 'Now we shall see whether he is appointed a superior officer and dies in three days.'

"Léon was gazetted major in the subsidiary corps of Engineers under the orders of Colonel Laussedat. . . . Fifteen or twenty days later he took black small-pox and died in three days. His wife was in the third month of pregnancy.

"The 8th Ambulance, which was then at Arcueil, was dumbfounded. Together with M. Delaunay, presiding over the Observatory, and President of the Academy of Sciences, I directed the obsequies at the church of Montrouge and the cemetery of Montparnasse.

"It is needless to mention that I thought it my duty to assist the sorrowing widow in every way that I could.

"After the Siege I returned to Auvergne, and was appointed Councillor in the Puy-de-Dôme.

"In his prophecy Léon always spoke of his children. In 1869 he had but one son. The second—Jacques—was born seven months after his father's death, in 1871.

"As Councillor of Puy-de-Dôme, in 1873, I secured the vote for the foundation of the Observatory there. When bringing the project for confirmation I took the opportunity of asking the General Council to support my application to the Minister Jules Simon for a pension to the widow of my friend Sonrel. The Minister granted a pension of 1200 francs.

"I married in 1874. My wife faded slowly from an encysted liver during six years, leaving me with two little girls.

"When, in 1912, the episode of a scientific kind predicted by Sonrel forty-three years before came to pass. M. Tardieu judged the time of the new trials of France to be near. He warned his friends, and in April, 1914, certain that terrible events were near, went to Professor Richet, communicated to him the whole of the Sonrel prediction, and at his request gave it to him written out for publication in the *Annales des Sciences psychiques*. On June 13th I had personal knowledge of it at a reunion of psychical enquiries, and only circumstances connected with the war delayed the publication till August, 1915, when the issue of the war was still very doubtful."

An instance of supernormal cognition of a collective future.

The instance I am about to quote is of a kind which would leave the reader resolutely sceptical if it were not supported by numerous honourable witnesses. No premonitory facts as yet known are at all comparable to it. By its precision in names, dates, and places, and the accuracy of the information given, it is perfect. I envy those who, having been present at the successive phases of this experiment, have acquired absolute certainty that so complete a precognition of the future is possible.

Here follows the premonition as reproduced in the *Revue Métapsychique*, No. 7 of 1921 :

Extraordinary predictions, made during the course of the last Russo-Polish War by an auditory medium, Madame Przybylska.

Madame Przybylska is not a professional medium ; she gives only private séances to friends. She "hears" the messages transmitted to her,

and dictates their contents, which those present take down as uttered. All the following communications were read and recorded by the Central Committee of the S.P.R., Warsaw, immediately after the séances with Mme Przybylska, long before the realization of the predicted events.

The first message, obtained June 10th, 1920, was read at the sitting of the Central Committee on June 16th, 1920, under the presidency of M. Lebedzinski, and the other members then present—Colonel Okolowicz, Mr. Rose, Dr. Sokolowski, Mr. Niemojeviki, Dr. Guirard, Mr. L. Grabowski, Mr. K. Bokowski, Mr. P. Smurlo, Mme Jastrzemska, Mme Wodzinska, Mr. Knechowicz, and Mme Gordon de Jurgielewicz.

The same procedure was followed with all the other messages whose genuineness is certified by numerous and competent witnesses.

The first of the documents reproduced below was obtained June 10th, 1920, at a private séance given by the medium, in presence of the Countesses Marie and Jeanne de Waleska. It was read, as before stated, to the Central Committee of the S.P.R., Warsaw, on June 16th. At that time the Poles seemed completely victorious; they occupied an important part of Russia, and had taken Kieff.

The Bolsheviks were everywhere in full retreat. On June 9th the line of the River Socha had been forced, and on the 10th the victory of the Beresina was officially announced.

The message¹ was received with stupefaction and entire incredulity.

The messages received and the events that came to pass are here printed in parallel columns.

Message of June 10th, 1920.

The Council of Ministers is not yet constituted, but sooner or later you will hear of Witos.

What misfortunes! What disasters! How many dead on the battlefields! A disaster to your troops.

During this month there will be a great change in the Council. Witos will be Prime Minister.

A greater man than your Ministers will give you his friendly help. In August everything will change. A stranger arrives with whom Pilsudski takes counsel; he will have much influence.

The systematic strikes will come to an end. Towards the middle of August your misfortunes will change, but up to that time there will be nothing but disasters.

Events realized.

The disaster predicted, though quite unexpected, did not fail to come about.

A general offensive by the Bolsheviks began June 28th on the northern front. On July 8th the line of the Upper Beresina (550 kil. from Warsaw) was abandoned. Minsk was lost on the 12th, Vilna (440 kil. from Warsaw) was lost on the 16th, and Lida (350 kil.) on the 18th.

The attack on Warsaw began August 13th and 14th, and on the 15th the battle began to go in favour of the Poles.

On the 18th the victory of the Vistula was complete and the Asiatic hordes were routed: but up to the 15th the Polish armies had only defeats.

The arrival of a stranger (General Weygand) and his co-operation with Pilsudsky, had a great share in saving Poland. Victory declared for the Poles in the middle of August (the 15th).

Mr. Witos, till then almost unknown, became Prime Minister July 24th.

¹ The word "message" is used here as in spiritualist circles, as if the subject received her information from an exterior entity.

Message of July 6th, read to the Central Council July 12th.

A great disaster. You will soon get orders to abandon the right bank of the Vistula.

Disasters all through this month.

Message of July 12th, read to the Central Committee July 21st.

Minsk, Kowel, and Vilna are lost. Near Kowel many rich people have been shot. Terrible news comes from that province. But after a month all will change.

The number of your defenders increases.

By the end of July your forces will be greater than those of the Bolsheviks. They will invade your land and there will be terrible disasters.

But the troops of Lenin are dispersed in the month of August. The great change is on August 15th.

A ray of joy comes from your greatest friend. The word for the present is—No disunion, and count on your own strength. That will have much influence at the Peace Conference.

Message of July 21st.

A visitant from Paris brings you an unexpected change. Your patriotism and heroism make a great impression on him.

Great changes in August.

Your strength is in the victories of Kowel and Kovno.

Discord between the Bolshevik leaders and a great and unexpected change.

You will re-take your lost ground more quickly than you lost it, and many guns and prisoners. A great victory towards Vilna and Lida.

Vilna will be occupied by your troops more quickly than it was lost.

On the 1st of August the medium left for Zakopane, a small health resort in the mountains. The communications were sent by post to the S.P.R., read and countersigned by the members.

The five messages received at Zakopane were taken down in presence of Dr. Sochaki, Mr. Cienski, and Mme. Cienska, Mme. Abgarowicz, Count Dzieduszycki, and Countess Dzieduszycka.

Events realized.

The events came to pass exactly. The invasion of Poland by the Bolsheviks began and was closely followed up.

Events realized.

Minsk, Kowel, and Vilna were lost in the weeks following.

It was on August 15th exactly that victory changed sides and Warsaw was saved.

Events realized.

All these events came to pass. After the victory on the Vistula followed those at Kowel, Kovno, Vilna, and Lida.

The rout of the Bolsheviks was complete. They lost most of their artillery and 100,000 prisoners.

DIVERSE ASPECTS OF SUPERNORMAL COGNITION 43

Messages received August 6th at Zakopane.

Russia is victorious and the chief forces are towards Minsk and Terespol. The Polish forces have been beaten everywhere. Suddenly, aid from France, and much joy on the 15th of August. Warsaw will not be taken. Your dispersed armies will draw together again. A great victory for the Poles. The soldiers of the Soviets will be routed and driven out. You know that Warsaw is in despair. All the country round is occupied by the enemy. Every day brings horrible news. At Warsaw they expect the Bolsheviks, but fear will be changed into joy.

At the time of greatest distress it was reported in Zakopane that Warsaw had been occupied by the enemy.

August 13th.

Great changes. France comes to your aid. The Bolsheviks have been driven out of the town of Prznyss. Your old chief takes command and leads you to victory. It is Monday, August 15th. The enemy will not take your town. You are strong. Wait till Monday. Do not despair. Seven more days and you will have great victories. Your love for your country, your heroism and a miracle by the Holy Virgin have saved the town. Pray to the Holy Virgin for strength to wait these seven days.

Message of August 14th, 1920.

What joy! the enemy is dispersed.

Message of August 15th, 1920.

A betrayal and a misfortune at Dzialdovo (Soldau). There is a fraud by the Bolsheviks and the Prussians. Warsaw is jubilant, suddenly overjoyed and radiant. She is marvellously strong. How she fights! The whole world looks on and wonders at her victory.

To-day is the great change: a bridge taken near Modlin. To-morrow a new ray of hope, and after to-morrow such joy and hope. Your country is cleared of her

Events realized.

Exact fulfilment of all details.

Events realized.

Exact fulfilment of all.

Events realized.

The event was not yet realized, but was imminent.

Events realized.

Impossible to be more exact and definite. All is absolutely true. The details of the battle of the Vistula, the alarm at Lemberg, the complicity of the Prussians at Soldau giving passage to the routed army through East Prussia.

The inverted order of this episode should be remarked; it is mentioned first.

enemies more quickly than one could have hoped.

The Bolsheviks try to surround Lemberg; they pass the Strypa. But, I repeat, they will not take Lemberg. They have sworn they will be at Lemberg on Tuesday, but it is not true. Budienny's army is dispersed near that town.

Message of August 19th, 1920.

In a month great victories and a new disaster for the Bolsheviks. Complete defeat of the enemy.

Events realized.

This was the victory of Rovno.

(3) THE LIMITS OF SUPERNORMAL COGNITION

I have wished to give a general notion of para-normal cognition by the instances above cited from other men's works to show what manifestations have been recorded up to the present. I have taken these instances at first in close connection with Psychophysiological science, and it will have been noticed that they diverge from this latter and soon lose, even theoretical contact with it.

In our survey of all these artificially grouped facts, have we explored the whole extent of supernormal cognition?

Those who undertake experimental research in supra-normality soon acquire the certainty, based on scientific grounds, that the human being seems endowed with a duplicate psychic personality: the one—the conscious mind, continually functioning on the reports of the senses in a sequence progressing towards knowledge by comparison, abstraction, deduction, induction, and generalisation; the other latent, rarely manifested, disposing of sources of information, and working by mental processes that have no relation to the normal.

In the great majority of human beings the supernormal psychic personality remains always latent—quite latent; nothing ever shows its presence.

In other cases, perhaps, only once in a life-time, on the occasion of some important event, the supernormal psychism informs the plane of conscious thought.

With others this occurs repeatedly.

Only in a few rare cases, the physiological veil that divides the apparent from the latent seems to be raised. With these persons the passage from the stage of sensorial thought to the transcendental is so easy that a true para-normal faculty is manifest, co-existent with ordinary intelligence, and occasionally coming into action spontaneously, but also at will of the subject.

Study of this faculty of hyper-cognition soon reveals that those

who possess it differ so much in their individual powers that no two are alike. It would seem that by reason of shades in psychological constitution, each seizes on some fragmentary part of the whole reality, the part cognized being variable in its nature and extent.

The artificial gradation of phenomena that I have made for convenience of description does not seem to exist for the faculty itself. A subject who is capable of the greater manifestations is not necessarily capable of the lesser. One person may be a dowser and nothing more. Another, having remarkable powers of perception of human personalities and for whom other lives have no secrets, can grasp no other reality. Madame Przybylska, endowed with a semi-divine faculty of perceiving the future, is perhaps incapable of saying what is happening in the next room or of finding a bit of copper buried in the ground.

Those who show hyper-cognition are, up to the present at least, specialized as it were. Supernormal cognition is therefore a function of the temperament of those who are endowed with it ; but to assign limits to its extent and acuity would be to generalise on insufficient data. During the fifty years that a small number of observers have interested themselves in para-normal cognition the phenomena brought to light are so amazing that few perhaps feel able to admit them till they have seen them.

Now that men of science, trained by study of the facts, are on the look out for uprushes from the transcendental plane of human thought ; now that the diffusion of metanormal psychology has multiplied the number of observers, we may expect to discover and record manifestations of supernormal cognition of an order whose existence we do not yet suspect.

CHAPTER IV

SUPERNORMAL COGNITION

DIRECTED UPON A HUMAN PERSONALITY

INVESTIGATION of supernormal cognition in its principal manifestations reveals this psychic faculty under widely different aspects. It is with considerable surprise that the psychologist will note its fragmentary character. Theoretically a psycho-physiological unity can be assigned to the faculty of hyper-cognition by referring all its varieties to the potentialities of the human dynamo-psychism ; but in practice it is found that the range of faculty in each subject possessing this power is very restricted, and specialised. The sequences artificially made among the phenomena do not correspond to progressive degrees in actual hyper-cognition. As before said, a subject capable of the higher manifestations is not necessarily capable of presenting the lower. Subjects who present the most puzzling phenomena, entirely inexplicable by physiological science, are not generally able to produce those other minor manifestations which seem almost intelligible from physiological data.

This fact is not unimportant : each variety of specialization of individual metanormal faculty gives us as many human subjects for study as there are specialized capacities.

I would particularly emphasize this fact of specialization, because neglect of this fact (of which I come across many instances) sterilizes enquiry. It is scientifically useless to undertake investigations into the nature of hyper-cognition by endeavouring to obtain a prearranged set of phenomena, without previously ascertaining the type of human subject employed. Every person possessing the faculty is a special instrument for the investigator who, if he is to get reliable results, must know its modes of working and the conditions under which it can be employed. Investigation of supernormal faculty cannot come to fruition by the study of any single individual however highly gifted ; many human subjects of differing types must be separately studied.

Moreover, the attempt to work from the known to the unknown and from the simple to the complex as in ordinary science is but to create illusions and to lose time. In this matter nothing is simple and nothing can be said to be "known," everything is

complex and obscure. Even what seems akin to our sciences is really as inexplicable as that which seems remote from them, for our knowledge of the psycho-physiology of the human subject may be taken as *nil*, despite the naïve self-sufficiency of certain scientists.

We have to accommodate ourselves to this state of things. As variations in faculty determine the diversity of the phenomena, it is useless to attempt to generalise, and research must necessarily be confined to the particular class of phenomena obtainable with each particular subject suited to that restricted enquiry.

It is for this reason that I have in this book confined myself to one single aspect of supernormal cognition ; and it was in order to lead up to this restricted analysis that I have cursorily surveyed the whole area of hyper-cognition in its many forms, without enlarging on any. The only aspect I now intend to develop is that in which supernormal cognition is directed upon a *human personality* as its objective.

But in order to define still more precisely this limited field of research, it is necessary to remember that phenomena of this class, may, as we have already seen, be accidental ; that is, may appear fortuitously a few times or once only in the lives of certain rare personalities. I put these aside, they cannot be evoked, they are not reproducible and belong to the historic data. The branch of study that I here undertake is that in which the psychologist has at his disposal a certain class of sensitives as his human instruments of research, who are endowed with the permanent faculty (when put in contact with other individuals) of taking para-normal cognition of their personalities and the content of their lives.

No misapprehension on the part of the reader should be possible. And to avoid exposing myself in the future as in the past to objections arising simply from the want of precision attaching to terms commonly used in psychic literature, I deliberately set aside the whole of that misleading terminology which invests the diverse manifestations of supernormal cognition with names which prejudice the method of their production, or allow anyone to interpret them in any sense that he may prefer. "Double sight," "second sight," "vision at a distance," "audition at a distance," "telepathy," "clairvoyance," "lucidity," and the like, are all words which mean too much or mean nothing ; they should disappear from use.

The luminous mind of Émile Boirac justly said, "At their outset nearly all sciences start by taking all their terms from ordinary language ; they speak, one may say, as everyone speaks. But ordinary language is too poor and narrow to describe all the objects and the aspects of these objects which appear to scientific

view as the circle of research extends. . . . Those who have entered upon psychic investigations have not always realized the importance of framing a really appropriate terminology. On the contrary, they have (as indeed was natural) endeavoured to adapt the ordinary vocabulary to needs arising from new facts or to express new ideas ; and these words already carrying old associations, now are obstacles in the way of a more appropriate terminology. . . . Many of the difficulties that arise have no other cause than the insufficiency of the verbal instrumentation."

In his *Avenir des Sciences psychiques* (p. 223), Boirac has proposed (though with an unduly restricted meaning) the word "metagnomy" (*μετα*=beyond, *γνώμη*=intelligence) to designate the phenomenon of supernormal cognition. It means therefore "knowledge of things that we cannot normally know."

I suggest that this term (etymologically correct) should be accepted by psychologists in its full meaning. It presents the advantage that it is adaptable to the ideas to be expressed—"metagnomic information," a "metagnomic subject"—are brief and explicit, and do not go beyond the essential idea.

The investigation here following, labelled with this term till a more definite one applicable to this group only shall be invented, is then—"Metagnomy applied to a human objective."

CHAPTER V

THE METHOD OF INVESTIGATION OF SUPERNORMAL COGNITION DIRECTED UPON A HUMAN PERSONALITY

BY reason of the permanent faculty possessed by some subjects of cognizing human personalities, phenomena of this class can be evoked and reproduced, and are therefore amenable to an experimental treatment adapted to their special nature. Only this kind of disciplined study can produce useful results. Apart from experimental method, investigation remains in the stage of semi-passive observation, and can only accumulate a superabundance of facts. In this, as in other branches of Natural Science, the aim is to discover the causes of phenomena in order to acquire knowledge satisfying to the mind and leading to useful applications.

The stages of development should succeed one another in the order stated by Claude Bernard: (1) Verified facts (phase of observation); (2) Provisional interpretation (phase of hypothesis); (3) Verification (phase of experiment directed by hypothesis); (4) Definition (phase of discovery of laws).

Let us now take a general glance at the manner in which experimental method should be adapted to psychological study in which the subjective factor seems to play so large a part.

When my attention was attracted to "metagnomy with a human objective," I found this future department of psychology hardly outlined, for the work done by those interested in it had chiefly consisted in verifying phenomena and showing their genuineness. Some had obtained metagnomic facts from some subjects by taking down their words and comparing these with the event. Others had collected and compared facts with the purpose of inferring their genesis. As no rigorous investigation had clearly pointed to any one hypothesis, all possible suppositions had been made; some going to the extreme limits of fancifulness. It may be said, that if the accumulation of facts tended to compel conviction, the ingenuity shown in explaining them did not, for the most part, keep pace with the mass of material.

Moreover, it is useless to waste time in convincing people of

the reality of phenomena which their reason does not grasp, which, moreover, most of them have never witnessed. The important thing is to push as far as possible the study of metagnomic phenomena and to acquire precise and extended knowledge of them ; it will then be easy to demonstrate their genesis as far as that is demonstrable at all.

To attain this object, however, observation—that first phase of exact knowledge—must be understood somewhat differently than I have, up to the present, found it to be.

The informing words of a metagnomic subject, when the faculty is in action, are the result of a very complex psychic process. This is the really instructive part of the study, as will be apparent in the two latter parts of this book. A fact of metagnomy applied to a human objective passes through three successive phases : its genesis, which is cryptic, its manifestation by spoken or written words, and the period of verification and check.

To fix on paper the words of a subject and then to check how far they are well founded is easy enough, but has the same degree of value as if one were to take cognizance of a type of motor only by verifying its output. The valuable and very difficult thing is to observe the parts played by the two principal factors in the period during which the phenomenon arises. These two factors are, the metagnomic sensitive and the human object of metagnomic perception.

Both these factors deserve the same attention and the same effort at analysis. Without a metagnomic subject there can, of course, be no manifestations of supernormal cognition, and therefore in the class of phenomena to which I have confined myself, the metagnomic subject seems to play a preponderant if not a unique part ; but it must also be recognized that without a human individual as objective, connected after a certain manner with the sensitive, there is also no metagnomic output. The percipient isolated from other human beings would remain in ignorance of his potential faculty. Every metagnomic fact must therefore be studied as a function of the percipient who seems to be its sole originator, as a function of the human individuality that is its object, and also of the experimenter who evokes the manifestation. To limit oneself to recording the words of the sensitive is to look only at the close of the phenomenon and to make its comprehension impossible.

To make this clearer, I will indicate how a metagnomic observation should be taken in the following manner :

A given person is placed in presence of a metagnomic sensitive for the purpose of studying the quality and *processus* of supernormal perception.

1. The words of the percipient must be exactly recorded.
2. What the sensitive knew relative to what has been said, or might have known, previously to the experiment, should be ascertained.
3. What the percipient might suppose under the given conditions should be taken account of.
4. The thought-content of the person observed at the outset of the experiment and also that of the experimenter with reference to metagnomic information generally, should receive attention.
5. The changes in the thoughts of the person (objective) and of the experimenter brought about by the metagnomic information derived from the sensitive, must not be lost sight of.
6. Comparison of the words of the percipient with reality.
7. Critical examination (censorship) of the metagnomic information relatively to actualities and to the mental content and thought-movements of the person described and of the experimenter.

In dealing with this entirely subjective phenomenon, whose objectivity only consists in its relation to facts, it is of primary importance that the mental contents should be recorded as carefully and thoroughly as the words by which the subject expresses the metagnomic information. All the thought-factors during the production of thought-phenomena should be known as completely as possible.

Observation limited by a plan laid down in advance would seem to leave so much to human testimony that we might well despair of bringing the study of such phenomena within the rigid bounds of experimental method if it were not feasible to make them more objective by causing variations in the metagnomic product by varying its factors. No one who has not conducted such researches can imagine the quantity and precision of the inferences furnished by systematic experiment in every direction by which Nature may be questioned and, in the words of Claude Bernard, be made to speak. To place the same human person at one moment of his life, or at intervals, in presence of a series of percipients of all kinds; to give to one percipient a series of personalities to delineate; to arouse perception of an event in which several persons share, by metagnomic delineation by the percipient of the lives of each of them; and so on, is to approach the psychological problem of supernormal cognition from its many sides and its numerous applications; it is to throw light upon the respective parts played by the delineators and delineated; and it is also to become acquainted with the vicissitudes involved in the genesis of supernormal faculty and its errors. Thus we may penetrate from the apparent and incomprehensible part of metagnomic phenomena

to the deeper latent part that contains the clue to the enigma, search into the obscure mental process, and get a glimpse of the sources of hyper-cognition. Thus it is possible to reach the stage of provisional interpretation which leads to fruitful experiment and exact knowledge, without delaying over the facile and unproductive accumulation of facts that can be evoked at will.

My purpose in this book is to cover the two first phases of knowledge in the general psychologic study of *metagnomic phenomena with a human objective*; firstly, to present the principal authenticated facts acquired by experimental investigation, and secondly, to establish on scientifically observed data the explanatory hypothesis that they suggest.

PART II

THE SEQUENCE OF PHENOMENA IN SUPER-NORMAL COGNITION APPLIED TO A HUMAN OBJECTIVE

A MONOGRAPH on the application of the method sketched in the preceding pages, ought to be an exact report of the séances showing the vicissitudes of every experiment. By reason of its bulk such a work would find no publisher and scarcely any readers. It is therefore necessary to condense the results of observation into an artificial presentment of some kind. This, if less complete, has at least the advantage that the experimental results can be placed in a logical order which brings out their salient points and makes them more intelligible.

In this second part of the book I shall show what experimental production of metagnomy applied to a human objective brings out.

In Part III I shall draw the main outlines of a psychological study on the functioning of this faculty ; and in Part IV, I shall endeavour to elucidate the hidden source whence this faculty gains its information.

Analysis, on whatever it is brought to bear, breaks up Life and immobilizes it in intellectual compartments. Everything falls into set schemes, and is petrified within factitious limits. To give a brief but sufficient notion of the results of metagnomy on a human objective, I am therefore constrained to split up the human personality—to speak of delineation of character, of intellectuality, organic life, relativity, and so on, when in point of fact, all these are fused in the complex whole of a personality and in the information furnished by the percipients. But there is no better means of being understood.

With this purpose of better elucidation, and with that alone, I shall give such instances as may be necessary. I shall choose those that are short but distinctive of their kind. Although I affirm their absolute correctness, and all are open to examination, the reader is not required to take them on faith. My desire is to make him aware of " what can be obtained from metagnomic subjects." When, in the sequel, he has learned " how they may be obtained," he will no longer need to put faith in the witnesses ; his own convictions will be established by the only satisfactory method—personal experiment and observation.

CHAPTER I

SUPERNORMAL COGNITION OF THE ORGANIC STATES OF A HUMAN PERSONALITY

WHAT are the limits within which metagnomic subjects can take cognizance of the organic states of a human being? What is the quality and nature of the information they can give on the state of organs, their functional derangements, on the means of cure, on the future development of pathological causes and, more generally, of a human body?

To these questions I shall give two answers : one in principle, and the other the result of my personal experience.

In principle no limit can be assigned to supernormal perception of the human organism observed. In the first part of this book the facts of internal autoscopy and auto-precognition have shown to what precision metagnomic faculty can attain. There is no reason to think that the few known facts give a notion of the whole perceptive capacity of cognition. The quality of the metagnomic results depends on the powers of the percipients employed. What has already been obtained cannot prejudice what may be reached in the future with other percipients, especially with those that have been trained.

I shall now give the answer to which experience has led me, prefacing this with some remarks on the psychic instruments usually met with and those that have been at my disposal.

Metagnomic subjects, whose metanormal faculties are of the kind specialized for human cognition, are usually able to perceive human personality under all the aspects of life, but they tend to take cognizance of some of these aspects more easily and readily than of others. Some prefer to penetrate into the moral and intellectual side of human personality : others seize upon the events of a life in relation to other persons : others again show particular facility in diagnosing the state of organic health. It is therefore necessary to take account of this sub-specialization in choosing as instruments for experiment those subjects best fitted to the special purpose of enquiry.

From the point of view here taken there is another factor that affects the quality of metagnomic perception—the technical knowledge possessed by the percipient. It is worth while to

touch upon this matter, for in it we discover an important cause of imperfections in the human instruments and obtain indications of the conditions under which they can be rationally used.

By the detail of psychological analysis to be given in the sequel, the reader will learn that the passage of metagnomic information from the latent plane of thought to the plane called "conscious," is a sort of welling-up of concrete or symbolical mental images, frequently hallucinatory, and of some one or other sensorial type—visual, auditory, tactile, motor, or verbal. This psychological *processus* impels the latent intelligence to use the resources stored up in the brain as the only method of communicating what it wishes to make known.

Now, at the outset of this science, in which each investigator is limited by the capacity of his human subjects, these subjects have not the scientific knowledge and technical terms by which the subconscious might communicate exact information to a consciousness able to understand them. They have not acquired visual images of healthy and morbid organs, nor of the symptomatic indications of disease, nor of the words that describe them. The percipients must be used as they are found—unfitted for the precision we desire.

I here give some instances of the manner in which metagnomic subjects without medical knowledge describe pathological states. These will make more intelligible what I shall say later on of the output of these imperfect subjects and of what might be expected if they were rationally trained.

On July 29th, 1920, I asked Mme Jeanne M., suffering from one of obscure affections of which accurate diagnosis seems impossible, and on which every consultant gives a different opinion, to write a few lines on a piece of paper. She copied four lines from a newspaper on a leaf from a school exercise book and signed her first name—Jeanne.

Some hours later, at the end of a sitting directed to other researches, I put this paper into the hands of Mlle de Berly, a metagnomic subject in the waking state, only saying, "Look into the state of this person's health."

The writing was well formed and gave no graphological information which might indicate illness or physical or mental depression. Mlle de Berly was not aware even of the existence of this patient.

As soon as her eyes fell on the writing, and she had nervously crumpled the paper in her hands, she made some slightly convulsive movements, and without reflection or stop, without a word or gesture on my part, she said the following words, which I wrote down as dictated :

"How feeble this person is . . . everything about her is weak . . . what weakness. She must have fever from time to time, for I am thirsty. She falls asleep suddenly, but that does not last . . . she is weak, very weak . . . what a curious brain, heavy and giddy. . . . I should think her used up whatever her age may be . . . her nervous system is exhausted . . . it is the blood that weakens all her organs . . . there is illness of the blood, much water in the blood.

"Her mouth is dry, she is very ill . . . it varies, one thing brings on another . . . an illness of exhaustion . . . she seems used up.

"She has been long predisposed to illness . . . has been incubating it a long time . . . her blood is not healthy. . . . An operation has already been made . . . unhealthy blood . . . lassitude . . . an unusual weakening of the blood . . . she makes starts, has some recuperative power, but it does not last. She seems old . . . a used-up woman. She is nervous sometimes, this makes her eccentric. . . . She complains of her stomach, her back, her abdomen. . . . I see that she has two children living.

"The trouble is of long standing . . . her blood is vitiated . . . she is very impressionable. She sometimes finds it difficult to blow her nose . . . she is nervous . . . the bowels do not act . . . she tends to be infected . . . the whole organism is in a bad state . . . she is difficult to prescribe for because many organs require attention. . . . Her water is rather loaded, thick and reddish . . . loss of phosphates exhausts her brain.

"There are times when she seems about to die. . . . Her stomach is wrong . . . the abdominal organs are so weak that they do not act properly . . . all by reason of the blood. She is near her end . . . the heart works with difficulty.

"The whole illness comes from the heart and the stomach, from digestion, and above all from impure blood.

"She should have light massage of the abdomen . . . strengthen her . . . some depuratives . . . something to strengthen and purify . . . refreshing drinks . . . disinfect her. . . . No poisons, they intoxicate her, she is liable to intoxication. It is an organism hard to prescribe for, so many organs are defective.

"Avoid tasking the kidneys, which are not strong. Alimentation is very necessary . . . she gets poisoned by trifles . . . she needs continual care . . . a long chair in the open air.

"Great weakness of the heart, the nerves and the blood . . . tone up the heart gradually, that will lead to better functioning of the kidneys and other organs . . . tone up the nerves and give the phosphates that are lost . . . tone up the blood.

"She may be relieved, but not cured.

"You can strengthen her . . . her life may be prolonged, but death will be premature in any case.

"Independently of her present illness she is incubating another. The existing illness must first be treated, then look for the other.

"In the future an operation will be suggested. . . . I wonder will she have cancer. . . . I see her living for some years still, but she is menaced by a cancerous affection . . . the blood is predisposed to cancer as well as to tuberculosis. You may prolong life, but she is menaced by premature death."

Censorship. What Mlle de B.— could have known before the séance.

Nothing, absolutely nothing. She had no indication beyond my request, Look into the health of the person who wrote these lines, and four lines of writing which would convey no intimation of illness to a graphologist.

The content of my own thought at the beginning of the séance on the meta-gnomonic indications.

Mme M. was a woman of about fifty, in delicate health for many years.

From 1919 there had been still further weakening. Many symptoms concurred to indicate neurasthenia—notable loss of appetite, very difficult digestion, sensation of cerebral emptiness, general exhaustion,

necessitating long rest on a couch, cardiac attacks coming on suddenly, occasional improvements, anæmia, slight emaciation, the patient being constitutionally thin.

The cause of the organic disturbance was never satisfactorily determined. The various consultants who saw the woman considered the case one of neuropathic digestive trouble. No treatment succeeded in bettering the case. Strong tonics, strychnine especially, increased the functional disorders, sometimes violently. All suitable examinations were made without revealing the cause. Everything that could reasonably be supposed applicable to the disease had been tried in vain.

For my own part I thought it one of those unclassified affections of the nervous system restricting the output of nervous energy, due to impoverishment of the blood by reason of failure in the tissues generating red corpuscles; and I hoped that sooner or later some happier remedial measures or natural tendency to normality might restore Mme M. to her previous delicate health. No reason for fatal prognosis existed, and no doctor had made any such.

I knew, however, that more than twenty years previously she had had a surgical operation for uterine prolapsus.

Comparison of the words of the subject with the actuality.

Mlle de B.—stated exactly the symptoms of the disease, according to the nature of her knowledge, expressing them in ordinary language.

Given this simplicity in delineation it is to be remarked that the subject was able in a few minutes, and under the conditions stated, to sum up a very difficult pathological case which I mention because of its obscurity. Whatever may have been the source whence the subject drew her unconscious information—whether from the thought of the distant patient, from my thoughts or from elsewhere, the fact is a fine instance of metanormal faculty.

But there is one part of the metagnomic information which has no reference to what I already knew, and diverged from my opinion. This is the precognition of the issue. The sequel was as follows: it should be compared with the words of the subject:

"From July 29th, 1920, the day of the séance, to June, 1921, Mme M.'s illness remained much the same, with alternating improvements and relapses, but on the whole neither better nor worse.

"On June 14th, 1921, obstinate constipation, accompanied by local pain, led me to ask for a consultation with Surgeon T. His diagnosis was—Neuropathic state, and much anæmia due to innutrition. His advice was to increase the nutrition fearlessly.

"To have her under better observation he had her brought to his hospital. Radiograms only showed prolapse of the stomach and adhesion along the principal curve to the left iliac fossa. In view of the long duration of the case and the possibility of finding and remedying the cause, he proposed an operation. Mme M. refused and returned home.

"From the first days of August the constipation became so severe and caused so much pain that the family decided to accept surgical aid, which alone held out hopes of avoiding the danger from prolonged arrest of nutrition.

"Dr. T. operated August 19th, without much hope, the weakness of the patient rendering the operation risky. There was found:

"Transverse colon prolapsed and adherent in its median part to the parietal peritoneum at the level of the pubis, duodenum thickened and nodulous to the touch. Some mesenteric ganglions somewhat enlarged.

"Dr. T. (like Mlle de B. a year previously) said, 'I wonder if there is cancerous infiltration from the duodenum?'

"To give the patient a better chance and to shorten the operation, he made a second opening to the jejunum from the stomach. The whole abdomen was explored without anything more being discovered.

"The immediate sequel was unhopd for. On August 20th and 21st, Mme M. was better, but during the 22nd there was collapse and she died in a few hours."

I will now give a brief and simple instance of supernormal perception of disease unperceived by any of the persons interested.

In September, 1920, Mme de D., a young war-widow, came for the first time to Mlle de Berly, who had never seen her and did not know her even by name. The latter proceeded in her usual way to give a delineation of the life, spoke of Mme de D.'s recent loss and happened to say, "What a charming child you have! I see by you a little boy about eight years old . . . (physical and moral description here followed) . . . his health seems good and you have had no anxiety on this score . . . but, believe me; have the child's blood examined and put him under medical care . . . his blood is affected and great trouble might arise in the future."

Mme de D. took her child to Dr. N., asking him to examine the blood. A very positive Bordet-Wasserman reaction was found. There was nothing to lead the mother to apprehend a syphilitic taint. It was a painful surprise to her.

Another instance of metagnomic diagnosis. I beg to be excused for quoting it; I do so because its brevity and nature shows the manner in which certain metagnomic subjects perceive organic life in those present.

M. Louis M., very curious on metanormal psychology and a good observer, was with Mlle de B., completely absorbed by the revelations made and the need of rapid writing so as not to lose any of her words.

While continuing to speak, Mlle de B., unperceived by Mr. M., touched the bell. A servant came, and was told, "Therese, show Mr. M. the W.C."

Mr. M. looked up much astonished, but was quickly aware of his need. He laughed and obeyed, and returned relieved.

Mlle de B.— had felt, as if the case were her own, what Mr. M., absorbed in what he was doing, was not yet conscious of. It will be seen in later chapters that metagnomic subjects often take cognizance of pathological states by cœnesthetic mental images.

I will now give two examples of metagnomic prognosis, one of cure and one of death, neither being expected by the family nor by the doctors.

1. In August, 1920, I received an urgent call to visit Mme A.-C., somewhat tired during the preceding days and suddenly prostrated. I found this woman, aged about thirty-eight, in a state of collapse, pulse 120, temperature 36°, tendency to syncope, unable to raise her head from the pillow. The patient could hardly speak, and the family could give no useful information. Methodical examination of the body disclosed nothing abnormal. Strong tonics improved the patient's condition.

On the following day the improvement continued.

Next day, August 17th, about 5 p.m., another urgent call, the patient much worse, her family fearing immediate death. I found her pulseless, soft, quick cardiac sounds, state near to syncope, patient unable to speak or even to make a gesture. Another examination, made when she was better, revealed nothing on the cause of the heart failure.

On the 18th Mme A.-C. was better, though fatigued. I got her to write a few lines, intending to submit them to Mlle de Berly. I asked the family to take the patient's temperature as nearly as possible every hour till my next visit.

The same evening, about 9 p.m., after a séance, I placed the paper in the hands of Mlle de B., asking her to tell me briefly whatever might come to her on the state of health of the writer.

She looked at the writing, crumpled the paper, held it to her forehead a moment and said :

"How feeble she is . . . deadly weak . . . a frail body that does not react against her illness . . . the whole nervous system relaxed, especially the heart. . . . The body is infected, there is inward fever. . . . You will soon know what is the matter . . . they will think her about to die . . . but you will discover the cause of the trouble and will cure her quickly."

On the morning of the 19th August I went to see her. Under the influence of tonics her general state had become good. Temperature had remained normal since the previous day. A fresh examination disclosed nothing but a rather more extended area of dull sound over the spleen. I left the patient and the family reassured.

But on the same day, at 6 p.m., in response to a very urgent call, I found her worse than ever—pulse imperceptible, profuse sweat, in almost a dying state. I took hasty restorative measures, and made inquiries as to their observations of the temperature. At noon 36.6° , at 1 p.m. 40.5° , then varying round about 40° up to 5 p.m., and collapse soon after.

All became clear. Close inquiry revealed the origin of the previous crises. The case was one of tertian malaria ending by a sharp fall of temperature bringing on heart-failure in a patient predisposed to this. Appropriate treatment was immediately begun and no further crisis supervened. During the following days the spleen was much enlarged and painful. Mme A.-C. had never had malarial attacks and lived in a place where such were unknown before the war.

Now, after two years, her condition is quite satisfactory ; prolonged treatment has probably got rid of the malarial taint.

2. In August, 1913, Mme C., aged about thirty-five, and living in the country, had severe hepatic colic. On coming to Paris soon after she had herself examined by Dr. T., a hospital surgeon, who called in Dr. G. These two eminent practitioners verified a gall-bladder enlarged by gall-stones, and considered an operation for their extraction necessary.

Dr. G. advised Mme C. to go back to the country, to ride, and even to hunt, intending to operate after the holidays, the case not being pressing. On the eve of a hunting party, September 8th, 1913, the severe pain in the region of the liver returned. I was called in, and found, below the liver, on a line with the gall-bladder, a swelling of the size of a small pear, clearly defined and painful to the touch. No other abdominal symptoms, no peritonitis. Temperature 39.2° , pulse 80.

Knowing that an operation had been decided on and thinking that this recrudescence might make it desirable to advance the date, I advised

that the patient should return to Paris as soon as the pain diminished. This was done the same day.

Drs. T. and G. examined her on her arrival. They were agreed in thinking that there was biliary cystitis provoked by the calculi under the action of physical exercise. They decided that she should remain in Paris, but that there was no occasion to advance the date of operation fixed for September 23rd. The case seemed benignant, and Dr. G. would not be resuming his surgical practice till about that date. During the ensuing days Mme C. grew better. The doctors, the family, and the patient herself were optimistic. The resection of the gall-bladder was an easy task for so experienced a surgeon as Dr. G.

Mme C.'s husband, unanxious about the issue, and deeply interested in my researches on supernormal cognition, asked me to name a subject whom he might visit to obtain personal evidence. I dissuaded him from the attempt, seeing no scientific end in view, and thinking that he might hear painful anticipations, false or true; but on his insistence I gave him the addresses of some very good professional subjects. On September 19th he visited Mme Fraya, and asked her to speak of his life, without putting to her any precise question. Among other things, she said, "I feel you are in anxiety, concerning the illness of some one dear to you—your wife. . . . She is to undergo an operation soon. . . . I fear that things will not go as well as expected. There will be an unfortunate surprise. . . . Days of great sorrow are approaching . . . you will not keep your wife long . . . etc."

From the 19th to the 23rd all went well. The operation took place on that day and there was indeed a painful surprise. Instead of the gall-stones the gall-bladder and vessels were full of pus and the whole outlook was different.

On November 13th I was present at her death. She succumbed, with great serenity of mind, to failure of the liver and kidneys, due to infection from the biliary ducts.

These few examples give but a vague notion of what supernormal cognition applied to organic life do actually produce and might produce. In a single chapter of a book it is impossible to give a systematized view, one is limited to a few special instances.

Metagnotic diagnosis is not separable from the medical knowledge possessed by the subjects. This psychological fact must again be emphasized. Subjects medically untrained are devoid of special knowledge and can use only the current phraseology. Their metagnotic perceptions outrange the scale of their language and their power of expression. This furnishes a general explanation of the manner in which they behave when applying their faculty to medical purposes.

Sometimes they name the trouble. They have often spoken to me of appendicitis, cancer, diabetes, pregnancy, meningitis, reumatism, etc., in the course of experiments in which I sometimes knew the ailment, but more often did not.

This strange faculty is even capable of diagnosing far ahead of the appearance of disease. Thus, in the winter of 1914, Mme Fraya predicted to Dr. N. Vaschide, joint-director of the laboratory of pathological psychology, that he would die of pneumonia

in his thirty-third year. He was then thirty years old. On the 13th October, 1907, the prediction was fulfilled. Such precision is far from being the rule. The experimenter often observes fruitless efforts of the double psychic function—the latent and the conscious—to understand and to be understood.

Thought on the conscious plane endeavours to reach the meaning of defective mental images—inexact because usually symbolical—and the indications given do not always result in useful information.

Except for errors whose causes will be studied later, in most of these experimental cases the function of the metagnomic percipient, untrained in science, may be compared to that of the sportsman's dog. The percipient brings the physician to the disease, as the dog brings his master to the game. It is for the physician to know the psychic instrument he is using sufficiently well to judge of the quality of indications given, to understand them and make his deductions. Thus understood, metagnomic subjects may sometimes be of very great assistance.

Among the ailments in which such assistance is most valuable I would name psycho-neuroses.

In the chaos of organic and mental disturbance of neuropathic patients, it is often difficult to perceive the causes which originate or maintain the general depression, and a metagnomic subject, skilfully used, can often reveal this. If the indications given are not always quite clear, because words and technical knowledge are alike wanting, they are often sufficiently impressive to enable the preponderant pathogenetic cause to be discerned among the symptoms that complicate or mask it.

Fixed ideas, the latent parasites of thought, which disturb mentality, unbalance it, and fill it with evil impulses, phobias, and apprehensions, can be revealed by this means, and can be brought within the field of consciousness in which normal reason can disperse the injurious action they have while in their occult condition. One or two séances with a metagnomic subject may reveal what is rarely gained by hypnotism, and much less often than has been claimed by the untrustworthy and somewhat ridiculous artifice of psycho-analysis.

This mode of investigation also leads at times to the revelation of the circumstances that brought about the toxic emotions with which the depression or mental upset is connected ; circumstances that the patient does not avow, whether because he does not connect it with his troubles and is unwilling to make useless confidences, or for other reasons.

A further field of usefulness is opened by the power of metagnomic subjects to cognize character, and to make in a few minutes an analysis far more complete than the best psychologist

could do after long hours of study and minute conversations. By revealing the mental reactions of a sensation, the subject can often furnish both the explanation of the want of moral adaptation to circumstances, and indicate the method by which calm and harmony may be restored to the unbalanced mind.

From such considerations it will appear that the metagnomic subject is a far more useful auxiliary in the treatment of psychoneurosis than in other ailments. The revelation of the initiatory cause, usually psychic, and the profound analysis of character are data which, judiciously used, economize time, avoid errors in research or interpretation, and may lead to the cure of neuro-pathic states whose obstinacy distresses the patient and family, and wearies the physician.

The medical value of supernormal cognition is less for other kinds of disease, the technical ignorance of the subject being an insuperable bar. From the best of them only an indication of the general trend that treatment should take can be expected.

Where the metagnomic subject excels is in prognosis. Scientific words and knowledge are no longer required when the ultimate issue is indicated; ordinary language suffices. It is understandable that it should be as easy for the subject to anticipate the issue of an organic derangement as that of some external event in a life. And here, as in the case of auto-presentiments, the event most readily perceived by the subjects is death. A fatal issue is the easiest of precognition and one on which they make fewest errors, always excepting dates, in which errors are frequent.

These conclusions are valid for subjects untrained in medical knowledge. The quality and extent of the possible usefulness of supernormal faculty must not be prejudiced by existing conditions, for these are not such as they ought to be. The really favourable conditions which would produce the best output (and, doubtless, unexpected results) would be that a physician well acquainted with metagnomic processes should have at his disposal subjects chosen and specially trained for the part they have to play.

When, however, the purpose is to verify the reality and the modes of metagnomy applied to perception of organic conditions, the percipient is put in relations with a pathological case entirely unknown to the experimenter, so as to eliminate thought-transference. In this simple case a given percipient is placed in relations with a given patient to ascertain what can be revealed by the percipient.

But this method, satisfactory in a certain stage of psychological study, does not by any means furnish the best obtainable. The most full and precise metagnomic information is obtained when

the subject works first in relation with the patient and then with the physician who has previously examined the patient with all the means at his disposal.

I am fully aware that this assertion, based on the sum of my researches, will not be fully intelligible to the reader at the present stage. After reading the whole book it will be more comprehensible. Later on I hope to make a complete and exact statement of the method of using metagnomic subjects for the healing art.

CHAPTER II

SUPERNORMAL COGNITION OF EMOTIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL STATES OF A HUMAN PERSONALITY

MAN is born with strongly individualized psychic potentialities that determine his reactions to external things. At whatever instant his life may be considered, that moment represents a point in the development of his emotional and intellectual potentiality under the influence of circumstances that diminish and deviate, or amplify and develop constitutional tendencies.

Whether or not the person contemplated be in a quiet back-water of life, his psychic temperament is always extremely complex. The environment by its innumerable succession of forms brings about an uninterrupted sequence of reactions that make mentality at each successive impression a little different from what it was before.

According to the masterly demonstrations of Henry Bergson man is a psychic being developing from birth to death to the rhythm of world-evolution. He is not to-day what he was yesterday or what he will be to-morrow. His emotional and intellectual stages cannot be foreseen by reason.

This incessant transformation of the constitutional psychic basis in response to external influences renders psychological analysis of a human being difficult if not impossible if we aim at something more than a superficial appreciation of momentary psychic states. The introspective data given by the person studied depend on his clear-sightedness, his impartiality, his frankness. These qualities are seldom very prominent, they are severally rare and still more rarely united in one person. On the other hand, scrutiny by another demands much time and favourable conditions if it is to be instructive, and in any case must be incomplete. Under the latter condition analysis can only deal with the external life of the person observed—his acts and words. From these obvious reactions we infer his inner motives, his

psychical tendencies, his intellectuality and his character. But to reach this end he must be studied throughout a considerable part of his life. A man cannot be known in a short time. Having witnessed some of his reactions, we generalize on his behaviour and think we hold the key to his mentality. New circumstances arise and produce unexpected reactions; we are surprised and find we do not understand him. The personality we thought we knew and on whom our judgment was formed, was that of a special moment and due to special circumstances. Another moment and other circumstances have modified it.

The changes that have taken place in the estimates formed of historical personages, immobilised as they are in the past, illustrates the difficulties of psychological analysis. Especially at the present time we see the verdict of eminent historians and of contemporaries favourably placed to form opinions, reversed on men whose notoriety should have made them easier to know than most men. This collapse of estimates once thought to be final, comes about because they think themselves more able to reconstruct the mentality of a statesman or other public man from his letters, memoirs, and suchlike data; but these vestiges do not necessarily reflect psychological actualities, but rather momentary aspects and attitudes of mind deliberately assumed.

We know little of the dead, and still less of the living who are constantly adapting themselves to the events of life. We know our own selves but little, and especially others are little understood. Such and such a man seems worthy of honour or contempt according as our view of him is distant or intimate. Acts and words are very fallacious bases for an estimate, we imagine their psychic motives without directly perceiving those motives, whence much error arises.

But this cognition of character which is so difficult for the cautious and informed psychologist, is easy to some metagnomic subjects. Their supernormal information comes from a plane which is other than that of appearances. Their supernormal cognitions arise from a sense which pierces down to the intimate constitution of a human personality in the whole course of its growth. It is immediate, without any other conscious effort than the will to see.

This facility in perceiving the life of the mind caused Émile Boirac to say:

“Certain subjects are able to disentangle all the potentialities—latent, emotional, intellectual and active—which go to make up the ‘character’ of a person when, without previous data, and without any apparent reflection, they make in a few minutes an analysis of that person’s character far more complete and exact than any professional psychologist with all the resources of science

at his command and with minute information at his disposal could possibly make." (*Avenir des Sciences psychiques*, p. 198.)

I will now give some instances of diverse kinds and values.

Ex. 1. *An episode in the moral life of a child, dimly perceived by a subject during delineation of the life of its mother.*

Conditions of the experiment.

Mme M——, a Swedish lady, came to live in Paris in 1921. Living alone for the time, she went on January 14th, 1922, to Mme Fraya for a metagnomic delineation of her life. Mme Fraya did not know her, and no words were exchanged but those of ordinary courtesy.

According to her custom, Mme F. took the hands of Mme M——, and, speaking of the time then present, said, "There is a woman in your life whom you love deeply, she lives far away (here an exact description) . . . she is near your child . . . yes, a charming child, intelligent, quiet, and very fond of play-acting. She is not with you; you have left her with your friend. . . . Well, believe me, you must not leave her there, she ought not to be playing with other children, it is better that she should not play with others. How much I wish that you would take her away as soon as possible. She will soon come back to you in any case. This separation will soon cease—a very good thing."

Mme Fraya could not say what kind of danger the child was incurring.

Censorship.

Mme M—— had in fact left her little girl, aged ten, at Brussels, with a dear friend who looked after her like a mother. She knew the child to be as well cared for as if with herself. Mme Fraya's words suggested an illness or an accident at the school the child was attending. Much impressed by the séance, excellent in all matters that she could verify, she wrote to her friend to take every possible precaution. The answer she received quieted her fears.

Nearly three months went by. The anxiety was forgotten, when on April 13th Mme M—— received a letter from her friend at Brussels, asking her to come. Some days after the mother learned that the child had made to the housemaid some naïve confidences which showed sexual knowledge really abnormal, obtained from one of her school companions. The child's morals were so affected that Mme M—— found it necessary to remove her child.

Ex. 2. *Monition of the evolution of a child's character. Metagnomic cognition of a latent tendency.*

Circumstances and conditions.

In March, 1919, there was placed in the hands of Mme Morel, hypnotized, the visiting card of M. Émile D——; in order to obtain a delineation of his life at the time. The subject did not know M. D——; the experimenter was his friend and familiar with his surroundings.

Speaking of his father's life, Mme M., passed of her own accord to his family, and said:

"There is a woman in his surroundings, she scarcely exists, so to say, she is so insignificant that she does neither good nor harm—brainless. I see a little girl, the eldest of the children, whom her father loves much more than the others. How mistaken he is! He does not know her . . . the child is ill-disposed . . . violent and passionate, shaking and striking

her brothers and sisters. She is full of spite. Oh, what a wicked child ! No one must excel her in anything, she wants always to be first. She is very haughty. But destiny walks in strange paths and cannot be avoided . . ."

Censorship.

The child of whom the subject was speaking, whom we will call Denise, was the eldest of three, and ten years old. Her parents, who were wealthy, accustomed her to a personal luxury such as it is unusual to allow to children. But Denise was a most attractive little being, gentle, amiable, without any arrogance, very sympathetic, and charming by her grace of manner.

The experimenter considered that the subject had not seen aright.

What seemed false at ten, became true at thirteen. Mme Morel had taken cognizance of a latent tendency which came out at one of the periods that transform personality—at puberty.

The first Denise, whose appearance was still maintained before her parents and adult friends, was succeeded by another Denise at the end of 1921, who was characterized by outrageous and increasing egoism. There appeared a personality infatuated with herself, discontented with her childish surroundings, meanly spiteful, despotic, imposing her will on all her companions, and jealous of all around her ; for instance, hiding books, exercise-books, and music belonging to her sister, in order that she herself might excel . . . a plague of a child, with a perverted character, as yet unperceived by her parents, which they made no attempt to correct by suitable mental training.

Only for purposes of comparison with Mme Morel's presage (for it is a premonition which only the future can verify), it is psychologically interesting to report here an accidental vision of Mme de Berly which came a few days since when the name of Denise (whom she did not know) was mentioned in her presence :

She exclaimed—"What a haughty child ! How vain she is of her wealth of her prettily dressed hair ! What airs she gives herself ! Fortune's wheel turns. One day she will be glad if anyone will give her a mantle. Her marriage will bring her to misery. She will have a dreadful life !"

Ex. 3. Metagnostic delineation of latent intellectual tendency in a child.

In April, 1919, Mme Hélène C—— was with Mme Morel, who, speaking of her life, said to her : "By you I see one of your children, a little girl who looks older than she is. This child is musical and will have a brilliant musical career. Her talent will develop marvellously ; you will be astonished at it. She will pass an examination. I see her received into a great house, a special school. Later on she will play in public."

This little girl was then eight years old. Her parents were well-to-do, and were educating her like most children of her social class, giving her general instruction and having her taught music (piano). The child showed but moderate taste for it and no special aptitude.

This continued till February, 1922. On a change of teacher, the latent faculty, aided no doubt by better instruction, and also having matured, came out so strongly that the child in a few months made such unusual progress as to cause astonishment, and was considered so exceptional that, on the advice of the professor, her parents, despite their fortune, did not hesitate to place her in the Conservatoire, for which she is preparing brilliantly.

Ex. 4. *Another instance.*

On February 15th, 1909, I brought to Mme Auroux a metagnomic subject in the waking state, a little boy of four, Alfred B——, the son of my friend, Dr. B——. Mme Auroux gave a very good description of the child's character. She did not know either the boy or his parents, and described the direction his mind would take, as follows:

"This child will have very marked mathematical and mechanical talent. He will be an engineer."

I will now extract from séances extending over ten years what has been said by different subjects on the child and his parents who have always allowed me to have delineations of their personalities.

March 8th, 1912. The child was seven years old. Mme Fraya said to his mother, whom she did not know, "Your eldest boy is very intelligent, you will be anxious for a long time about his studies, but in the end he will give you great satisfaction."

On December 17th (eight years) M. de Fleurière, describing his father's life, said, "I see one of your children, the eldest, holding a post half intellectual, half material. He will be a certificated engineer, and, perhaps, engaged in manufacture."

December 18th, 1913. Mme de Berly also said to the father (no question at all having been put to her or to any other person), "You have an eldest boy, eight or nine years old, very intelligent and particularly well-endowed for mathematical and mechanical science. You must make him an engineer."

May 14th, 1915. (Ten years.) Mme Fraya said to Dr. B——, "One of your sons, the eldest, will have a real talent, a special faculty which will make him a remarkable man. His first school years will not be remarkable, and you will fear mere mediocrity. You will be uneasy for a long while and will wonder what you can do with him. . . . At a certain age his intelligence will develop in an unexpected manner, and in a direction in which he will excel. You will be very proud of him."

November, 1919. (Fourteen years.) Mlle de Berly said to Dr. B—— in course of a sitting, "Your eldest boy is idle, and you are uneasy about him. He cannot help it, but it is only for a time. His brain is, as it were, in a tangle, and will suddenly develop mathematical ability. You must make him an engineer . . ."

The boy's intellectual development.

From five to ten years of age Alfred B—— went through his primary school. He was hardly up to the average—idle, showing no inclination for any kind of study.

From ten to fifteen at the secondary school it was much the same; he was idle and interested in nothing. His parents were discouraged, and were thinking of withdrawing him from school and putting him into commerce. Only towards the end of his fifteenth year this distressing mediocrity came to an end, and he developed a taste for science which raised hopes. The budding talent grew so fast that in a few months he became the most promising pupil in his class.

When the test for his B.A. in Latin and science came, he was the only one out of thirty-six candidates who solved correctly the difficult problem in mathematics given in the examination that year. This caused him to be recognized in spite of a deplorably bad piece of Latin. But his weakness

in literary subjects led to failure three times in the oral examination, and decided him to try no more for his degree.

On this day in June, 1922, as I write these lines, Alfred B—— is nearly seventeen. He is passionately devoted to science, especially to mathematics. The intellectual tendency noted by the metagnomic subjects has taken great development. After a single year in preparation for the Central School of Arts and Manufactures, his teachers consider that he has an excellent chance of getting in by open competition. In any case it is probable that he will be admitted in his eighteenth year.

Hence I think it is allowable to conclude: (1) That metagnomic subjects without any normal data and without knowing the boy, perceived an intellectual tendency twelve years before his parents. (2) That these intellectual tendencies are psychic potentialities that are released sometimes precociously, sometimes tardily; and that to select the quickest among young children with a view to directing their education accordingly would reject some that are remarkably endowed and deprive them of the opportunity of showing their talents.

Ex. 5. *Delineation of character for domestic employment.*

Circumstances and condition of the experiment.

On December 30th, 1921, Mme H.C. of Paris received a short letter in which a woman living in the Ardennes, Mdle Emilie V——, offered herself as cook, having learned through a friend that Mme H.C. wanted one.

On January 4th, 1922, Mme H.C. put this letter into the hands of Mme Fraya. Mme C—— knew absolutely nothing about Emily V——, had never seen her and never heard of her.

Mme Fraya's only data were the sight of the writing, the contact with the letter and the knowledge that the matter concerned the possible engagement of a servant.

What the subject said.

"This young person is very honest and painstaking. She will be devoted to her employers. I can assure you of her mentality. She is not one of those who will give trouble with lovers, you may be sure; she is afraid of men!

"She is anæmic and will often complain of being tired, even tired of life. She tends to think herself unlucky, even when she is not. How distrustful she is! She is honest, though fond of money. She has little intelligence and no memory. It will take time to accustom her to new ways. Very reserved, obstinate and slow to learn, but there is an ideal in her simple mind.

"In spite of all this I advise you to engage her; she is not the perfect servant, but she is very sincere."

Censorship.

Not much encouraged by Mme Fraya's words, Mme C—— nevertheless decided to engage the girl, and she came to Paris January 15th. She proved exactly as described—about twenty, anæmic and needing care. Very distrustful, speaking very little except to complain of being tired. Very forgetful, with many consequent slips in the housekeeping: so slow in getting the run of things that six months later Mme C—— was doubtful whether she could possibly keep her on. Dominant characteristics, an actual terror of men and an idealism manifest by assiduous attendance at the Salvation Army, Bible-reading in her leisure time and constant hymn-singing.

Ex. 6. *Delineation of character for curative purposes.**Circumstances and conditions.*

In October, 1921, a young lady of twenty-seven, Mlle Christiane X—— was brought to me for obstinate insomnia. I found a person radiating calmness, her gestures polished and quiet, soft and dreamy eyes, her words clear, prudent, and measured.

Behind this serenity I suspected a different personality, which, if I could know it, would allow of a more rapid and durable cure, which cure might also ameliorate a deeper functional disequilibrium in the psychic constitution.

In the two first consultations, one accompanied, the other alone, she defended herself skilfully against the leading questions by which I sought, however discreetly, to discern her true mentality. Accustomed to medical questions, she had acquired the art of keeping psychological enquiries to the surface of her personality. Aware of the service to be done her by fishing out her real mentality in spite of herself, and perceiving that normal methods would take too much time, I decided to use metagnomy. She very willingly gave me the few lines of writing that I asked for, unsigned.

October 25th, I put these in the hands of Mlle de Berly, who did not know even the existence of this young lady. One only question was put, "Please tell me the character of the writer of these lines."

What was said.

Mademoiselle crumpled the paper in her hands, then looked at it somewhat vacantly, and said :

"What a nervous woman ! A curious kind of woman ! A strange mentality . . . false and hypocritical. She is a mental hysteric. Some what idealist at times, however. She lives a strange life. She always has a romance in her head, that helps her to live. She looks for adventures and finds them . . . she bores herself . . . she changes husbands in her mind. What a strange woman . . . she seems to me half insane.

"She is most imprudent ! a hypocrite and a liar . . . the more dangerous that when she takes up with an idea nothing stops her. She is unbalanced, and believes her own falsehoods. The basis of her character is invention, hypocrisy and intrigue.

"How unbalanced ! her eyes are calm, seems very quiet, no one would think it of her. She gives her intimates many surprises. What a strange woman ! She is wild on adventures and morally inconsequent ; a bad case. Steady at times, she will occasionally do the most foolish things. She was born when her parents were old. Apparently she is amiable and inclined to flatter. She is wanting in judgment and good sense ; no heart ; she will have rough adventures. She fears nothing, and is never frightened. She wants her liberty and independence. The longer she lives the less sense she shows. . . . A dangerous woman, very dangerous. Her imagination runs riot ; she has dangerous caprices, more dangerous than those of an insane because people take her seriously. Her insanity turns on men, women, and amorous intrigues—that is the only thing that interests her.

"She is much bored, obstinate, but devoid of real will. I should not like to be her husband.

"I see several men round her ; she provokes them, but there are no consequences because she is so changeable. But she will marry. I see a little boy later on. One of her lady friends will try to get her married.

"She has a sister who is steadier than she is. Her mother is sad and tired,

speaks but little. She is there, quiet and reflective. She will have much trouble with her daughter.

"Sooner or later she will get into trouble with her adventures. She is morally unstable, and her future will be disturbed accordingly. I do not like her future.

"Her brain is impenetrable. She has feeling occasionally, she might be obliging, she occasionally has good impulses . . . they last five minutes. She dozes from time to time but does not really sleep. She is whimsical. Men, flirtation, and indulgence are all she lives for; she is as dangerous as a snake.

"She looks at you with wide eyes and a vague expression. A sensual woman and chronically melancholic. She is not a neurasthenic; she weaves romances and enjoys them mentally more than by her senses.

"She seeks a master. She is the kind of woman that must be dominated, and even be beaten if necessary!"

Censorship.

These indications if not false appeared to me exaggerated, and it was only with the greatest caution that I used them at all. My advice, however, took a direction that mystified the patient and then astonished her. Feeling her real nature known, she became confidential. Masked by the calm of her eyes and manner, she was full of amorous imaginings, always dreaming of some new love and busy with some intrigue, without fear of compromising herself or injuring others, but never going to extremes.

Knowing her mentality and the disturbing cause, I was able to quiet her and restore her sleep.

Ex. 7. Delineation of character for personal defence.

My friend, M. Frederic G——, engaged two months before to a beautiful and very attractive woman of thirty, whose acquaintance he had made on his travels, asked me to give him my impressions of his prospective bride.

I told him that I could not judge of anyone on an hour's conversation, but if he had anything written by her it would be a good opportunity to test Mme Fraya's faculty and so improve his chances if he had made a good choice.

On May 12th, 1921, part of a letter written by Mme Lucie V—— was placed in Mme Fraya's hands; she knew neither the person nor her handwriting. She was only asked to describe the character of the writer.

What was said.

"This person is imperious, overbearing, and devoured by pride and ambition. Her amiable and simple manners do not betray her dominating desire for a brilliant life. It would be well to distrust her gentle and graceful manners, for these show a great power of dissimulation and a will to win confidence in order to attain self-interested ends.

"In intimacy this manner gives place to an irritable and despotic temper. Too satisfied with herself to doubt her own charm, and too accustomed to homage to think that anyone can resist her, she acts with capricious independence. Changeable, impulsive, and incapable of moderation, she follows the impulses of her imagination and her taste for adventure leads her to extravagant actions. She is disturbing and dangerous, and marriage with her would be a great risk.

"She constantly twists the truth, is disposed to calumniate others, and has no scruples in clearing herself by accusing others.

"Audacious, violent, and nervous, and rather unbalanced, her mind disposes her to cruelty and intense egotism.

"Her understanding is unquiet and her judgment deficient. Hysterical incoherence."

Censorship.

Mr. G—— was stupefied, and entirely refused to believe the portrait. I told him "Metagnomy is a human faculty, and as such liable to error. Still, marriage is a serious matter. You know no more of this lady than what she allows you to see. Apart from what you have heard, mere prudence should lead you to make a cautious investigation into her character." Mr. G—— declared that he trusted his fiancée entirely.

A month later he told me that the engagement had been suddenly broken off. An incident occurred in which Mme Lucie V—— showed unexpected traits, which Mr. G—— recognized as those described by Mme Fraya. He made enquiries, and to his surprise found that she had been divorced from her husband, whom she had wounded with a revolver and whose life she had ruined. In order to choose the richer of the two, she was at this very time engaged to a manufacturer, and her whole life was a tissue of intrigue to secure luxury.

I regret that space does not permit of my giving a typical example of each of the many aspects under which moral dispositions can be revealed. But by those given, some of the useful applications of metagnomy may be perceived if it be employed by competent experimenters, and if the results of supernormal cognition are accepted only as indications to be verified by the facts.

Metagnomy would give valuable information on the latent intellectual capacities of children and would enable parents aware of these to give opportunities favourable to their development. It would also indicate predispositions to moral perversion and mental want of balance so that without loss of time it might be possible to avoid the formation of habits which, once formed, are so difficult to correct. Instruction and education would be under the guidance of knowledge of the psychic latencies at the outset of life.

By a wise use of metagnomy the character of persons in our immediate surroundings who come into intimate contact with our lives would be known. We should take care whom we admit as a servant to our home, or as a partner in our business. The risks of marriage would be lessened. We should become aware of the causes for seemingly unreasonable and persistent antipathies to certain persons.

In police cases useful information on the moral character, and sometimes on the acts, of suspected persons might be obtained.

Later on when metagnomy is a faculty admitted by all and judged by its practical results, I am confident that highly gifted subjects will become of very great social value.

CHAPTER III

SUPERNORMAL COGNITION OF HUMAN PERSONALITY IN THE EXTERNAL SEQUENCE OF A LIFE

IN the preceding chapters I have considered metagnomy in its localized applications to various aspects of human personality. I am fully conscious of the arbitrary nature of this course and have adopted it solely for convenience of analysis. In point of fact metagnomic subjects take cognizance of the human being developing in his environment and transformed according to external circumstances and his own tendencies, by reaction upon that environment. By a kind of spontaneous mental specialization each percipient is drawn by preference to apprehend some one aspect more readily than others—bodily states, moral character, or social relations. But all delineate individual lives as integrated in a general whole. I shall now endeavour to show what they can cognize, giving a summary supported by enlightening examples.

It is, I repeat, impossible to inter-relate the series of experiments devised to a particular end by giving full reports of each séance. This might please some scientific readers, but the huge mass of documentary evidence that has gone to the production of this book makes such method impossible. Only a synthesis of metagnomic results is practicable.

There is a temptation to classify the facts according to the phase prevailing at the time referred to by the cognition, to distinguish those concerning the past, the present, and the future. A narrative of actualities would at once show that such distinctions are only concepts of our sensorial intelligence and that the subjects are endowed with a faculty whereby a human life seems integrally present, or rather as an integration of states cognized independently of our notions of Time. One might with the best of motives be led to group the facts according to a seeming gradation in the kind of cognition expressed by the subjects, comparing this with what the person delineated knew at the time of the experiments. This method of statement would be too narrow, and, moreover, would suggest that metagnomic information differs in its origin and nature according as it draws its cognitions from known or unknown data in the mind of the person under analysis.

Deliberate choice leads me to the only really logical grouping of

the facts, a grouping which considers the metagnomic reports according to the relation of delineator and delineated in space and time, and superimposes these factors on the primary conditions of the special experiment. This is, indeed, only to follow in the statement of the fact, the same sequence as should govern the experimental research—to consider (1) the case in which the person delineated is in presence of the metagnomic delineator ; (2) when distant in Space, and (3), when distant in Time.¹

I. THE PERSON COGNIZED IS IN PRESENCE OF THE METAGNOMIC PERCIPIENT

Those who study metagnomy experimentally, with perseverance and from a sufficiently large variety of percipients, will discover, if their experience coincides with mine, that it can take cognizance of the whole content of a life.

To this faculty an individual life is universal life looked at in connection with a particular person, it is therefore a whole complex of persons and things, including the relation of other lives in tangential contact. In practice, this potentiality of hyper-cognition is manifest by a great diversity in specialized powers. So different is the faculty in different subjects that there are scarcely two alike.

One percipient who can in a single sitting give an outline of a whole life, is unable to foretell a theft, an accident or an illness of which the delineated person will be the victim. He states an event in the far distant future, or long past, and is not weighted by any preoccupation with the present. A single sitting exhausts all that his faculty can reveal on the life he delineates ; other sittings will add very little to the first.

¹ This is the place to emphasize a fact which will be readily understood by those who have published or will publish results of metagnomic cognition applied to human persons.

The number of facts that can be selected and presented in a book, bears an extremely small proportion to the data collected. Only fragments, or as it were balance sheets of lives, can be given ; and the experimenter to whose knowledge they have been brought, is bound, it may be, to secrecy, or at least to a discretion compelling him to maintain anonymity in such as he quotes. The author is in the position of a confessor fearing to betray confidences. So very exceptional are those who are indifferent to the opinions of others that, up to the present, I have met but one man who, of his own accord, authorized me to quote this name with reference to a fact concerning himself ; and, moreover, in this case, his wife asked me to suppress her name, thus nullifying her husband's frankness.

The fear of a public confession of great or little things, confines the more salient facts to private records, from which it is only possible to select those which are colourless enough not to betray the identity beneath the anonymous veil.

But as this book is a study of experimental phenomena that can be repeated, it is only vital that the facts cited should be typical of the kind of information given, and it is from this point of view that they must be considered.

As with clinical observations, no patient's name must be given. In metagnomy as in medical cases, the only important thing is the bare fact, always provided that this be verifiable afterwards.

Another, on the contrary, is impelled to perceive an individual life under a succession of small details. I use one who sifts with so fine a mesh that none of the little circumstances through which I have lived in the previous ten months escapes her. Projected on the future her faculty is like a lantern carried on a dark road, revealing all that is immediately near.

There are, therefore, percipients who take the panoramic view of individual lives, and those who go through them with a lantern ; and between these two groups there are all intermediate degrees.

The type of metagnomic subject most frequently met with participates in both extremes. If his faculty is strong and well-developed, in a first sitting he will strike a general balance on the life given him to delineate, sketching the main stages of the past, and indicating the future trajectory. In later sésances, variable in output, knowledge of episodes in the life will come to him spontaneously, and more or less circumstantially. The faculty is permanent in the sense that it can always be called into action, but occasional or fanciful as regards what it may express. For this reason the same person confronted with several subjects on the same day will get from them dissimilar fragments in the episodes of the life they are scrutinising. The same events are viewed from different angles, and some open to one percipient are not grasped by another. On one day and with one subject, metagnomy brings into focus some little fragment of a life laboriously and with difficulty ; on another day the same subject easily reaches important information. This illogical faculty must be left to follow its fancies.

If, therefore, it can be said that a human life is cognizable in all its details by this faculty, that knowledge is not to be reached by any one percipient in a limited number of trials.

Ex. I. Metagnomic delineation of a person : an instance of the summary of a life by supernormal cognition.

Circumstances and conditions of the experiment.

This experiment was made at the time of writing these pages, and in order to indicate what a gifted percipient can grasp, in a single sitting, concerning a person casually brought to him.

On June 5th, 1922, I said to M. de Fleurière : " With your permission I shall shortly bring to you some person whom I shall choose. I shall ask you to reveal all you can concerning that person at a single sitting. I shall take down your exact words and publish them. Do you agree ? " The offer was accepted, and we fixed the séance for June 12th.

My difficulty was to find anyone of strong personality willing to have his life revealed before a witness, willing also to make frank avowal of the facts, and to allow them to be published.

Only one person came forward, her interest in metapsychic science overcoming the natural reluctance everyone feels to lay bare the intimate events of their lives. This lady, whom I will call Madame Magdalena Duplex, made one condition—that her name, which is borne by others, should not be given.

Detail of the sitting.

On June 12th, at 9.45 a.m., I arrived with Mme Duplex at M. de Fleurière's house. Nothing was said but the usual courtesies. M. de Fleurière and Mme Duplex had never seen each other before. I had known her for about two months, superficially, as a mere acquaintance.

Mme D. sat down by M. de F. who, as his custom was, placed his left hand on one of hers, remained in meditation for a minute with half-closed eyes, and then, without stopping, as if he were narrating a known incident, spoke these words that I took down in abbreviated writing just as dictated, and wrote out in full immediately after the séance.

"Your essential fluid is that of a nervous-sensitive, with the addition of a sanguine-bilious-muscular fluid tempered by the emotional-sensitive fluid. In a word it is a fluid of essentially feminine nature, but exalted by a kind of masculine fluid more vigorous and energetic.

"Activity, impulsiveness, and vivacity predominate, and there is great power of physical and moral control.

"Through this fluid can be distinguished a lively natural intelligence, quickened by many general ideas derived from study, reading, intercourse with the world and experience of life. Easily to be discerned are a taste for the beautiful and the good, high aspirations, great cerebral activity, almost too great, somewhat feverish, a passionate interest in philosophical, psychic, and metapsychic questions, and desire to know whatever goes beyond the ordinary and the commonplace, whatever pertains to the transcendental and the marvellous.

"I see that before coming to me you have visited many persons having certain gifts or a certain notoriety. You have a secret desire to express your ideas and impressions on these matters whether by speech or writing. You will write articles for the papers.

"Unfortunately there has always been opposition between your speculative ideals and the positive realities of your life, which up to the present has been full of struggles. These discords have been most frequent in matters of the heart, in your family, and in the pecuniary prospects and professional career of your husband, a career which, I may remark, has certainly been of a liberal and intellectual kind.

"Happily the vital or fluidic energies of your physical and moral personality are still considerable, and give me the impression of a long life. This life will not be without some rough shocks, your health especially will experience some passing ailments, cerebro-nervous anæmia, arthritis, and excess of biliary secretion.

"Nevertheless, on following out the evolution of your life to its decline there is comfort, for it seems crowned as if with a rainbow of four bright colours, indicating favourable conditions from the moral, physical, family, and material points of view. There will be greater tranquillity than in the past, for your past has been disturbed by many preoccupations and shocks, and by a number of deaths, some of which have brought you much pain, especially those of your father, your mother, and of Alfred, your husband.

"I will not hide from you that there are still clouds on your horizon and anxieties which are even now causing you trouble. They relate more especially to the future of your children, and to a somewhat precarious pecuniary position, and failing resources.

"It might be compared to a pond of no great depth, whose surface is further reduced by dry weather and is now at its lowest. But in the future I see its level sensibly raised by little streams that flow into it. In other words, the situation will be maintained without disaster and will be

improved by your personal efforts, by certain advantageous transactions, and by using certain fortunate opportunities that will come to you.

"In this connection I see shaping itself a happy development by the moral and material help of some devoted friends, among whom women play no appreciable part, men only being in action and predominating. In this relation I see round you many links with the world by reason of the professional and social standing of your deceased husband. The feminine element shows duller and thinner, while the masculine is dotted with brighter spots, I mean with more characteristic figures. One among them is more accentuated and interesting to you. There is a gentleman, who is married, and whose pecuniary condition is impaired and causes him much disquiet. Fundamentally he is good, sensible, affectionate, and intelligent, but at times cold, variable, and almost insane: and you suffer sometimes from his changeable, wounding, and enigmatical attitude. Nevertheless there are profound affinities between you, and links that will cause him to play a part more and more decisive in your life. As to your family, your children are visibly your chief care. These children appear like a bouquet of three buds, among which are distinguishable two feminine and one masculine. Their establishment in life is still incomplete, and none of them has reached a settlement. But I see events in preparation, notably marriages which will be favourable from different points of view. It seems that the life of one of your daughters will contain two great emotions; two men will play preponderant parts in it; one might conclude that she will be married twice. In any case you will have several grandchildren.

"Without wishing to give you pain by speaking of doleful anticipations, I know that you will be affected by two deaths, directly or indirectly, but in this I do not allude to your children.

"Your name signifies 'duality,' and your first name is curious, it comes to my ear as 'Lena,' the last two syllables of Magdaleine, the Latin form of your name Madeleine. Your maiden name seems foreign and might come from Alsace, Germany, or Austria, as Müller is of German origin.

"I have said that your children showed like three buds, but there must have been a fourth, for another bud is fallen; you must have lost a child.

"As to your husband, I have said that he belonged to a liberal profession, he was a barrister and also in politics; sometimes he incurred much hostility, there have been dangers, threats, rancour, and excitement against him with reference to a lawsuit, which seems to have been a struggle in his professional life.

"He died some years ago, but relatively not very long since, towards the end of the war."

Censorship.

Analysis of the indications given classifies them as follows: Ten deal with the future and cannot be pronounced upon. Fifty-five are concerned with the moral temperament, the personal conditions or the surroundings of Mme Duplex. Out of these, fifty-four were recognized as exactly true, and she confided to me the realities to which they referred.¹

One only seemed to her doubtful: the monetary worries of her friend, who seemed a very rich man. I have, however, heard from her over the telephone that, contrary to what she thought, M. de Fleurière was right on this point also.

I draw the reader's attention to the correctness with which the subject

¹ I will here mention only one. Mr. D., a barrister and Member of Parliament, was on the Commission of the Panama enquiry, and became the target for threats and keen hostility from compromised persons.

has reproduced the names : Alfred (the husband's name), Magdalena, that of Mme D. herself, and the diminutive Lena, with which she was accustomed to sign her letters ; and I can add that her maiden name is of Austrian origin, as M. de Fleurière said.

Before leaving this excellent instance of metagnomy, I think it useful to record an observation M. de Fleurière allows me to make. In our conversations on supernormal faculty, he has several times confided to me that he is endowed with an impeccable memory of what he has read and of his metagnomic séances, the words returning to him under the form of large printed letters that he has the sensation of reading as one reads a book. This occasion seemed a suitable one to prove what he had stated. Said he, " You have written down my words one by one ; to-morrow I will bring you a copy of them from memory, and you can compare the two. He did as he said. The two corresponded exactly word for word.

Moreover, I had already observed that good metagnomic subjects whose faculty is exercised in the waking state have exceptional memories. It would seem that mental representation is stronger than with most men, enabling them to recall these more vigorous images.

Metagnomic delineation of the episodes in a life.

Ex. 2. *Delineation of the mental content.*

Circumstances and conditions of experiment.

On May 11th, 1921, M. Claude Lefébvre, at the end of a séance, presented to M. de Fleurière a small piece of cloth, and asked if he could speak of the person from whose clothing it was taken.

M. de Fleurière consented to try, without much hope of success. He took the piece of stuff, placed it to his forehead, shut his eyes for a few minutes, then opened them and said :

" The fluid is intense and wonderful, proceeding from a pious and saintly soul. This is not recent, it goes back far. This person seems to have lived under the First Empire and to have died between 1853 and 1863. The person who gave you this piece of stuff has lived for some time west or north-west of Paris, Brittany or Normandy, and has lived in Italy or travelled there. . . .

" The person from whom the stuff came has been much talked of and has even performed some sort of miracles. Rightly or wrongly, soldiers during the war have attributed their safety to him.

" This man had a physical resemblance to Voltaire, but it is not he, for his character is markedly saintly. Who can it be ? "

At this point M. de Fleurière meditated for a few seconds, and then getting up, staggered like a drunken man, turned round, and taking a medal hanging from the wall of his study, held it out, saying, " That is the man."

The medal represented the Abbé Vianney, the famous Curé d'Ars.

Censorship.

In April, 1921, M. Lefébvre had met Mlle J—— at the house of mutual friends. This lady had, at one time in her life, looked after an old priest in a nursing home in Normandy (Orne). There was there an old gardener

who had assisted at the exhumation of the body of the Curé d'Ars at the time of the Beatification proceedings, and had secretly taken from the body an undervest which he kept as a precious relic. He gave Mlle J—— half of this.

After the death of the old priest Mlle J—— left the nursing home. The war followed. She cut the relic into pieces and gave them to soldiers, who subsequently attributed their immunity to them.

From what remained in 1921 Mlle J—— gave half to M. Lefébvre, and from this was cut the little piece given to M. de Fleurière.

To make the story complete, it may be noted that Mlle J—— had lived in Italy, having been appointed as maid of honour in the Royal Family.

This metagnostic fact shows that the subject grasped and revealed the content of M. Lefébvre's mind, and added nothing to it. This fact seems to be the cognizance of conscious knowledge in another mind there present, and as such I cite it here.

Examples of delineation of episodes in a life, partly known and partly unknown not normally cognizable.

Ex. 3.

Circumstances and conditions of experiment.

In May, 1921, Mme S—— went to Versailles for the day to visit several friends. She went in the morning, wearing a diamond star of great value. On returning home to Paris she missed the jewel. She was distracted.

She told her husband of her loss. The Mayor of Versailles was informed, but the star had not been brought to the Town Hall.

Mme S—— was taken to see Mme Morel, a metagnostic subject when hypnotized, and sat in a corner of the room during the séance. One of her gloves was given to the percipient.

Details of the sitting.

On taking the glove, the percipient described Mme S—— as her custom was, and then asked, "What am I to see about this woman?"

"Look for what is troubling her at this moment."

"She is distracted over the loss of something . . . It is a large jewel. . . . How it shines . . . it is very valuable. . . . She may be at ease, it is not lost, it is hidden and will be restored. I see that she will wear it again."

"Look for what happened when this lady ceased to wear the ornament, and what has since become of it."

"Now I follow this lady as she leaves her house. I see her leaving in an automobile with another person and go to another town near to where we now are. I cannot tell its name; I see her go to three different houses, and then return here to this town where we are. The jewel has fallen near one of those houses. . . . I see it picked up by a woman, young, very stout, short, and blonde, with light eyes and hair.

"The ornament has been well hidden in a small piece of furniture and locked up. The finder thought of keeping it, but is afraid . . . she is uneasy and will restore it."

"What should be done to get it back?"

"Nothing at all, especially not the measures that are thought of. In a few days, four or five at most, they will write to ask her to come. It will be given back. At that time there will be some small disagreeables, but nothing to signify. I affirm that the jewel will be returned before a week. There is no fear. I see that the lady will wear it again."

Censorship.

Four days after this sitting Mr. S—— was requested to go to Versailles on a matter that concerned him. It was said that a workman had found a diamond brooch, seeming to correspond with the description furnished, but that it could not be given him because another person in that town claimed to have lost a similar ornament and enquiry must be made. There was some angry conversation between Mr. S—— and the workman, which was the disagreeable incident referred to by Mme Morel. Finally the star was surrendered.

Some days later Mr. S—— returned to Versailles to give the reward to the finder. The man thanked him, but said, "In fact, Sir, it was not I who found it but my sister, who picked it up as she came home from work." The man was big and very fair. Mr. S—— did not ascertain whether his sister resembled him, he took that for granted.

Ex. 4.

Conditions of experiment and the words of the percipient.

On September 30th, 1913, Count C. de B—— was in presence of Mme Morel who was hypnotized. She knew nothing of his life, and was not acquainted with him. After having detailed events about to happen in his life, she said: "To-day, after some unimportant visits, you will suddenly be called upon to take some action on a political matter. You will see a number of men in uniform. They seem to belong to something that will be. . . . I then see a great concourse . . . you are speaking to this crowd and others speak also. . . . It will be a success. I see many men in uniform in open country, many people, and there is water in the landscape."

Count B—— could not connect this event, said to be imminent, with anything likely to happen to him. The words did not awake in his mind any logical possibility.

In the evening of the same day while conversing with a friend, he was led to speak of an aerodrome with garages recently erected which he intended to present to Savoy, and spoke of his intention soon to make the presentation to the local authorities.

On the following day this friend, of his own accord (the conversation not having been intended to lead to anything), approached the Minister for War.

On October 2nd, Count C—— was called to the National Committee on Aviation, where the General Secretary proposed to him an official opening to take place as soon as possible. October 26th was fixed upon as the date. This opening of the aviation ground at Challes-les-Eaux, which he thought distant and, to use his own expression, nothing more than some congratulations round a bottle of champagne, became by this unexpected intervention a salient event in his life. It was only after recognizing this sudden transformation of his anticipations of the future that he connected it with Mme Morel's visions, astonished that an event brought about by so casual a circumstance should have been foreseen.

Curious to find out what details the percipient was capable of foreseeing, he went again to Mme Morel, asking her to say all she could on the nearest event in his life.

"You will shortly," she said, "take a journey for a gathering, a big ceremony. . . . I see a great concourse. . . . I hear much music. . . . I see many flowers and flags . . . many bright colours, very fine weather. It will give much joy. The public will be much pleased.

"I see several things in the air, like aeroplanes of different forms. One of

them will fall, but it will not be serious; no one will be hurt. There will be no trouble or hitches in the organization of the festivities . . . except for a defect in the construction of the buildings, the sheds, which should be put right beforehand."

Censorship.

Mme Morel's words were taken down as she spoke them by Count C——. She was working on matters absolutely unknown to her and unreachable by any ordinary play of thought.

In this séance of October 3rd, Count C——, whose mind was aware of the incidents of the previous day, foresaw the probable sequence of the ceremony; but there were three indications made by the percipient that his mental content could not have suggested—that the day would be fine; that one aeroplane would fall, but that no one would be hurt; and that there was a fault in the construction of the sheds.

The two former would, he thought, have to be verified by the event; as for the last, he judged it mistaken: the sheds were finished, and passed as being well built conformably to the plans.

Now it so happened that an aeroplane on passage had to descend at Challes for engine trouble. It was decided to place it in garage, but on trying to enter it was found that the doors of entry were too low and must be raised without delay.

The 26th of October—the day for opening the aerodrome—was a beautiful day. Count C—— made a speech which was replied to by other speeches. It was an imposing ceremony such as Count C—— had never thought of before October 3rd.

At the end of the proceedings Count C——returned home, everything having gone off as Mme Morel had foreseen except the accident.

Towards 5 p.m. Count C—— was informed that an aviator had taken a machine from one of the sheds for a flight with a passenger, and that on coming down the aeroplane had capsized, damaging the machine badly, but that he and his friend were uninjured except for some bruises.

Examples of supernormal delineation of episodes in a life totally unknown to the person interested, that could not be reached by reasoning.

Ex. 5. Premonition of an event common to several lives.

Circumstances, conditions of experiment and words uttered.

From 1916 to 1920 my friend, M. Louis M——, undertook by himself and through friends a long series of metagnomic enquiries with several subjects in order to obtain information that might be useful on his eldest son severely wounded and missing at the battle of Verdun. This series is of great psychological interest and will be given in detail in a later chapter. The premonition here following is given because it foretold an event in the family surroundings of the missing officer.

One of the persons who gave enlightened help to M. Louis M—— was Mme G——, a friend of the family, who had several séances with Mme Morel (hypnotized) in 1916-17-18, using letters, pieces of clothing, and other objects. In a séance of 1916, after having spoken of the wounded and missing officer, she said:

"I see in this family another young man, younger than he, a brother . . . he will contract a union, ardently desired, and will be very happy."

M. Louis M——'s second son, Pierre, was then seventeen and destined for the medical profession. His age, the length of the curriculum probably

still further lengthened by the war, caused Mme G—— to judge this prediction erroneous, and that if true it could only apply to some student's union of which it would be inadvisable to speak to the parents. She therefore suppressed this information in the copy of the proceedings at the séance that she gave to the parents, till October 6th, 1918, when the form of the forecast seemed more suitable. The percipient said on that day: "This young man is a student . . . there is, however, an approaching marriage. He will continue his studies after his marriage."

In October, 1917, M. Pierre M——, commissioned by his father to have a séance with M. de Fleurière, with whom he was unacquainted, in order to verify what might be said on the missing brother in connection with a delineation of Pierre's own life.

I detach the words concerning the particular event now under discussion from the context of which it formed but a very small part. With reference to that event, concerning which he had not been informed of the previous predictions, he was told :

"I see for you a speedy union with a young lady who is in your immediate surroundings. This marriage will change nothing in your mode of life or your occupations. You will continue to live as at present."

To M. Louis M——, the father of the young man, Mme Morel, in a long series of séances from March, 1916, to November, 1918, said nothing of the marriage of this son, though she mentioned it at nearly all the séances with Mme G——. On November 6th, 1918, she said to his father for the first time :

"Your youngest son will not remain long where he is at present (he was at Grenoble going through his military service), he will return to Paris to resume his interrupted studies . . . he will be deeply in love ; then there will be a marriage, and family life."

Censorship. Mental content of the persons relative to the premonition.

Madame G—— thought the anticipation false or implying some temporary student's union.

M. Louis M—— wrote down the prediction and told it me with the rest of his account of that séance, saying that he saw no reason for it.

M. Pierre M—— chiefly concerned, was aged nineteen in 1917, and saw nothing at that time supporting the anticipation made.

What came to pass.

Demobilized in 1919, M. Pierre M—— returned to Paris and resumed his studies. M. and Mme G——, friends of his father from childhood, kept an hotel. He lived there *en pension*.

M. and Mme G—— had two daughters. The elder was married the same year. Pierre was deeply in love with the younger, aged eighteen. His affection was returned, and the families consented to the marriage, which took place August 20th, 1921. The bridegroom was twenty-two and only in the second year of his medical studies.

Mme G—— never suspected five years before that the "union" she apprehended would be with her own daughter.

Thus all came to pass exactly as foretold by M. de Fleurière. Nothing in the young man's life was changed.

This fact of premonition had a curious epilogue.

After his son's marriage M. Louis M—— came to read over the notebooks in which he had written down the accounts of séances held by him with various percipients. Under the date May 4th, 1916, he found his first séance with Mlle de Berly. She gave him the physical, moral, and social descriptions of a score of the persons in his surroundings, among

whom were M. and Mme G—— and their daughters. As to these latter she said : “ Both children will marry early, first the elder (here followed a sketch of the bridegroom) and the younger not long afterwards. . . . I see the husband of the younger . . . he is there, very clear before me . . . blond, tall, rather stout, with a thick lower lip. . . . ”

In 1921 this description applied to M. Louis M——’s younger son.

Ex. 6. A premonition in which the percipient described an event common to two lives in brief and temporary contact.

On January 10th, 1922, Mrs. M—— visited Mlle de Berly, who said to her among other things, as follows :

“ You will very shortly get the flat that you have been vainly looking for and despair of finding. You will not even have to seek it, it will be offered to you. You will be pleased when you see it. It is a small flat, very white, very clean, very bright . . . very white ; that specially strikes me. . . . There is no house fronting it . . . one sees trees, there is plenty of light. . . . ”

“ The people who live there have a stroke of luck . . . a letter comes to them from a foreign country, far away . . . the envelope has five seals . . . they are offered a brilliant situation over there . . . that will decide them to go . . . they will have money to gain and business to do . . . much money will pass into their hands . . . they will become very rich . . . they will remain over there for some time . . . their mother is there, she is ill. . . . ”

“ You do not know these people, but this will come to pass through persons that you know, who will tell you, ‘ Take that flat ; it is just what you want. ’ And I see they will leave some little things in it. ”

Censorship.

Mrs. M——, an American teacher of singing, who had been in Paris for some months, had sought in vain for a flat, and despaired at finding one. Her mind necessarily contained nothing relative to the prediction.

Mlle de Berly knew that Mrs. M—— was seeking a flat, but necessarily could know nothing normally of the facts predicted.

What came to pass.

M. and Mme S——, living in the Rue Lafontaine (Paris), unknown to Mrs. M—— and to Mlle de Berly, received on February 25th, 1922, a letter from Mexico, in which their father-in-law, M. d’Y——, the owner of immense properties, proposed to his son-in-law the general direction of these properties under such favourable terms that no hesitation was possible.

Mme S—— announced their intended departure to her friend, M. Helene C——. This lady, to whom Mrs. M—— had been introduced, interested herself in the trials of a foreigner to gain remunerative work and thought at once that this flat would exactly suit Mrs. M——, and asked Mme S—— to reserve it for her. Mrs. M—— visited the flat found it exactly to her taste and took possession May 20th. M. and Mme S—— embarked for Mexico on the 30th. All Mlle de Berly’s premonitions were exactly verified.

Ex. 7.

Mme Helene C—— visited Mme Fraya on June 28th, who, among other things, said to her :

“ Your second child, the boy, has fallen ill ; but that is not all. Your

little girl will be ill in her turn. . . . I see her all red and her throat sore. You will be anxious about her, more so than for her brother; but you must not worry, the illness will be bad but will end favourably, and convalescence will be short.

"You will soon leave Paris, and pass the holiday months a long way off. A curious holiday! in two parts. . . . I see what looks like two removals. The first stay will be dull and depressing. You will be unable to settle, you seem to be always changing your room.

"The latter part will be much brighter . . . you will not be in the same place. I see you in a lovely place where you will find friends. You will be near water all the time. You go a good deal in an auto-car with charming people. You will be very happy. I see you for a moment in a splendid domain, where there are wide green lawns down to the water . . . to the sea. You will come back to Paris delighted with your holiday."

The mental content of Mme Hélène C——, and of Mme Fraya.

Mme H. C——'s little boy had scarlatina from June 4th, and had quickly recovered. On the 26th a very careful disinfection had been carried out in the flat. The sister of the patient, having been removed from the contagion at its beginning, was in excellent health, and the medical attendant, Dr. Bergeron, considered that the brother would be no danger to his sister.

Mme H. C—— had decided on June 28th to leave for Switzerland. Tickets were taken, and rooms were reserved in an hotel at Villars. She intended to remain there for the holidays and then to return to Paris.

Mme Fraya knew that Mme H. C——'s son had had scarlatina. She knew also that the doctor had pronounced him free from infection. Regarding the content of her premonition she could know nothing normally.

What came to pass.

On the 10th of July the family took up their quarters in the Hotel P——, at Villars. Mme H. C—— was entirely satisfied with the place, the rooms, and the pleasure of her children, and was delighted to find Mme Fraya wrong. Her satisfaction lasted ten days.

On the morning of July 20th, the governess came to her and said that the little girl was complaining of sore throat and was feverish. On the 21st, Dr. Testez of Bex, diagnosed scarlatina.

Thenceforward the family had to be isolated. Their rooms were changed for others in a distant wing of the building, and for twenty days Mme H. C—— did not leave the sick room, full of anxiety about the issue and lamenting that she was in a mountain resort, far from medical aid.

The origin of the infection was obscure. All that could be gathered was that a niece of the hotel-keeper had died of scarlatina in April, that the disinfection had been summary, and that two other cases of scarlatina had broken out in the house in May.

As soon as the child was well Mme H. C—— lost no time in leaving the place.

She was led by circumstances to go to Lausanne, about the 20th of August, to the hotel Beau-site, on the shore of the lake. She there met her friend Mme Ch——, owner of the chateau de Bossey, near Lausanne. Its beautiful lawns extend to Lake Lemán. This led to her residence with a charming family, and the days passed as pleasantly as Mme Fraya had foretold. The mass of water in Mme Fraya's vision was not the sea, but the lake.

I will now give some instances by which the reader can form an idea of the extreme minuteness with which some percipients can cognize coming events in individual lives.

Ex. 8.

During the autumn holidays of 1921, in the department of Cher, I was brought into relations with Mme Jean Peyroutet, a person endowed with the faculty of taking para-normal cognizance of individual lives, in (apparently) a waking state. A fanciful handling of cards or looking at the forms created by the white of an egg poured into a glass of water, are the methods she prefers for arousing her faculty. On September 8th, in the course of a sitting in which I was testing her powers, she told me that I should go to Paris and live there. I told her that this allowed of an easy and simple test, and asked her to describe my future apartments there.

I had already decided to establish myself in Paris. It matters little whether Mme Jeanne P—— knew this or not. What she could not know was that, after vain seeking for more than a year, I had, in June, 1921, the promise of a house in the Rue de Longchamp, occupied by an English lady, Mrs. W., whose lease had expired two years before, but which she was inhabiting till the end of the moratorium.

In September, therefore, I was awaiting her vacation of the premises in January, 1922, and, tired of useless search, I held to this expectation. In order to make the sequel fully intelligible, I should say that in July I had had an interview with Mrs. W. to discuss a temporary let of her house, furnished, while she went for six months to join her husband, who was an officer in the Indian Army.

With reference to the experiment, this was all that was in my thoughts on September 8th, 1921, taking "thought" in its accepted psychological meaning.

After having turned over a pack of cards, Mme J. P—— answered, ". . . you will not be leaving here at once, there is an obstacle. There will be a change of domicile soon, but not immediately, and this will be to your advantage, for there will be unexpected proposals.

"You will not get the house you are expecting. Some one must leave, and that will not take place at once. . . .

"When next in Paris you will see something suitable, but not the house you are expecting. . . . The lady there does not vacate it yet. . . . Is she ill? . . . She wants to leave . . . she has to cross the sea to reach her destination; she ought to go . . . she will go, but not at once. . . . But you will not get that house. . . . Change, but to another house."

"Then describe the unexpected house."

". . . (after efforts) I don't see it. We will try with white of egg on another day."

On September 13th we had another sitting. My mental content as on the 8th. Mme J. P—— threw the raw white of an egg into a glass of water and looked hard into it. Then, in short phrases, with long intervals of silence, she said:

"On your approaching visit to Paris you will be enlightened as to the house. . . . Some people will look out on your account. . . . You will get a letter asking you to go at once to see it. . . . A signature will be needed. . . . The house will be taken forthwith. . . . You will have a house with trees in front, like a small square or private garden. . . . I see a statue there. It is a detached house. . . .

"There are flowers round. . . . I see much ivy . . . there are two

entrance-doors, the door does not open on the street, there is an iron gate first, the house is approached by a covered way. . . . You will not be far from water . . . nor from the Bois de Boulogne. . . . I should like to give you the name of the street . . . (efforts to get this) . . . it won't come. I can see only one letter, B; the name of the street begins with B. Before living in this house you will go to the seaside with a lady. . . ."

What came to pass.

On the afternoon of September 15th, I returned home and found a young lady, Mlle Fl——, lately come on a holiday, visiting us. The conversation in progress caused her to greet me with the words:

"We were speaking of marriage, Doctor, and I was saying how difficult it is now to find a husband."

"Not so difficult," I said, "as to find a house in Paris."

Such was the little incident which steered events to the complete realization of Mme P——'s prediction.

A conversation ensued, which informed Mlle Suzanne Fl—— of my intention to take up my abode in Paris and the difficulty of finding a house.

She spoke of the matter that evening to her uncle, a distinguished Parisian genealogist, who at once placed at my disposal his influence with agents. He wrote to such of his relations as might be expected to help in the matter, but the answers received were all of the same kind—regrets, nothing now vacant, and none in prospect. M. Fl—— returned to Paris promising to keep in touch with the agents.

On October 8th, I received the following letter from him:

"DEAR DOCTOR,

"One of the agents I applied to indicates some premises in the Rue Boulainvillers, on the side of the Chaussee de la Muette, occupied by Mme D., living at Lorient.

"Mme D. was thinking of living altogether in Paris, but has decided to remain at Lorient. A few days ago she applied to the agent to find her a tenant. This is to let you know that the property is available. Apart from the question whether that part of Paris will suit you, I think that this is the *rara avis* you will do well to snatch at."

"On the 9th I was in Paris, and went to see the house. It suited me, and I thought it better to close with that than to wait for the other. I at once notified my willingness to take over the lease."

Censorship.

All the indications given me on September 13th by Mme Jeanne P—— were found correct. I put the predictions and their verification in parallel columns.

On your approaching visit to Paris you will be enlightened as to the house.

Some people will look out on your account.

You will get a letter asking you to go at once to see it.

!) A signature will be needed, and the house will be taken forthwith.

I used to go to Paris every month, and stayed there a while. It was on my next visit that I received the assurance of the lodging I had been vainly seeking.

I received this assistance.

Such a letter, given above, was sent me by M. Fl——.

So it was.

You will take a house with trees in front, like a small square or private garden.

I see a statue there.

It is a detached house.

There are flowers round it.

I see much ivy.

There are two entrance doors, the door does not open on the street; there is an iron gate first; the house is approached by a covered way.

You will not be far from water, nor from the Bois de Boulogne.

The name of the street begins with "B."

Before living in this house you will go to the seaside with a lady.

Ex. 9.

After the above facts had enlightened me on the quality and mode of the faculty possessed by Mme Jeanne P—, I continued to test this in a long series of experiments. Besides those instituted for several purposes I caused her to predict the sequences of my own life in séances held at such short intervals that no important event would be omitted if her faculty were really capable of passing nothing by unannounced. At the time of writing these lines the trials have covered ten months, and during this period all events, however small, have been predicted: and by "small events" I do not mean the acts and occurrences that are repeated daily, but those which diversify the uniformity of a life—a letter producing unusual pleasure or annoyance, the visit of a friend not seen for a long while, a little unexpected trip, a little plan given up or changed, etc. I here give some of these predictions and their realization.

November 26th, 1920. "I see the letter 'L.' There is someone in your family whose name begins with L, who at the present moment is on a journey.

I had asked M. Fl— for a house or a flat, preferably the latter. The house offered is embellished with a small garden planted with trees.

In front of the house on the garden side there is a statue.

The house touches no other.

It is surrounded with garden-beds that have been, and will be, planted with flowers.

The palings on the side of the street are garnished with ivy. The walls of the adjoining houses have ivy up to their third storey.

The house stands back from the street and is separated from it by an iron paling in which there is a gate. A glazed covered way extends from this gate to the house-door.

The house is about 500 yards from the Seine and about 900 from the Bois. The description would apply to only about one-thirtieth of the Paris area.

There are approximately 5,700, streets in Paris, 37 in this district, that begin with B.

On October 20th, for final signature and to settle about the contents of the house, I had to visit Mme — at Lorient. One of my sisters-in-law, who had arranged preliminaries, went with me.

On November 26th my brother-in-law, M. Lucien G., disembarked from Morocco, where he had been for five months, intending to stay three years. . . .

"He is on the sea. I see him at sea. He brings you something. . . . It is rather bright, it is curious, there are different sorts. He will say, 'I wished to bring you something else but could not find anything.' He will have thought about it. Oh, he has just reached France! the journey is past. You are going to change your house; L. also: both changes are nearly at the same time."

November 30th. "Your two sons who are at school will go for the Christmas holidays into the country, near you. One of them will have no luck, he will pass his vacation lying down. . . . It will not be serious."

December 2nd. "You will soon have a dog."

March 31st. "Have you not got the dog yet? You will soon have one."

During the days following his return he distributed in his family leather cushions of native work of several kinds, some of them covered with bright ornament. He said, "These are not what I thought to bring you. I intended to go to Marrakesh, but my hurried departure prevented my doing so."

On the 25th of January we moved from the country to Paris. M. Lucien G. changed from Paris to the country.

At that time I thought to be in Paris before Christmas, but circumstances prevented this.

My two sons came for their holidays to Cher, and arrived in good health.

December 24th. Both were strong boys and had never been ill. On the 26th the elder said that his leg hurt him. A boil developed, and was at once attended to. On the 27th it had become a large carbuncle. On the 28th it was surrounded by lymphangitis, and on the 29th a painful subcutaneous swelling made an incision under anæsthetic necessary. The boy passed his holidays lying down.

I had not had a dog for fifteen years. Nothing seemed more unlikely than that I should get a dog just when I was intending to live in Paris.

April 11th. During cold rain a passer by rang the bell, and said, "You should take in your little dog, which is shivering with cold in the garden. It is sad to see."

The parlourmaid went into the garden, and saw there a little black terrier, which had come into the garden through the palings. Her collar bore the words: "Burnel. Camp Boismont." We took in the little animal, meaning to inform its master, but no one could say where Boismont Camp might be. The children begged that the little creature should be adopted. I allowed this after a good deal of resistance.

April 14th. "There is something new in your house; have you a lodger? I should be surprised if it is not an animal—a dog. There is a secret about it . . . it has not been given, nor bought. One would say that it has been found. It is happy with you. I say 'a dog,' but it is a bitch! She is delicate and affectionate. Don't let her go out. You don't know her name. You should call her Finette."¹

April 24th. "Why! Your little dog is ill, very ill."

May 2nd. "The little dog is much better."

May 13th. "Surely the dog has not been stolen? I don't see her any more. I think the poor little thing has been stolen."

The little dog received her metaphysical baptism the same evening, and was called Finette. Not answering to any other of the names we tried, she responded to that one readily.

Was that her name?

Since the 22nd the little animal had lost appetite and showed symptoms of enteritis.

Finette seemed quite cured.

On May 11th Finette went out as usual through the backdoor set ajar for her. She was never seen again.

The reader should compare this perception of small circumstances of life by a percipient such as Mme. Peyrouet, with those described by such as Fleurière. He will then have a good idea of these two extreme types of metagnomic faculty both as to their extent and penetration. Using each simultaneously on the same personality is like using alternately the low and the high power of a microscope. The low-powered object-glass gives the biologist a large field, but only leading structures, as Mme. de Fleurière gives to the psychologist; while the high power gives a much more restricted field, but reveals the smallest details. This difference in cognitive capacity in the same faculty of hyper-cognition gives an acute observer much to think over.

The foregoing specimens show what may be expected from percipients when their faculties are directed to persons presented to them: and because each percipient's special faculty is always ready to come into action, metagnomy with a human personality as its objective is fruitful of experimental results.

The experimental conditions which obtain when some person is placed in relation with a metagnomic subject and supernormal indications result, is continually taking place in ordinary life. In presence of persons who approach them, the subjects remain merely receptive. They do not take analytic cognizance of them, but receive a notion synthesized in a feeling, and often some circumstantial information. They are conscious of what comes to

¹ Needless to say that with this percipient, as with any other that I have used, I have always written down the words said, without ever answering any question, and without furnishing any indication, whether before or after, which would have caused subsequent sittings to lose all value.

them in this way and retain it as if it came to them in the ordinary process of thought.

Occasionally this spontaneous metagnomic information deals with trivial events of very slight importance in the lives concerned; the percipient mentions these or suppresses them according to his own judgment of the persons and the nature of the event perceived. In other cases the information provoked by the approach of some very serious circumstance springs up with such vehemence that it takes the form of a hallucinatory impression and produces such strong emotions that it cannot be suppressed.

II. THE HUMAN PERSON COGNIZED IS DISTANT IN SPACE FROM THE PERCIPIENT

In our experiences of the strange fact of metagnomy, everything runs counter to our ordinary ideas of cognition. We are amazed by the power of foretelling things that cannot before seen by reason, and now we are faced with facts that show the same power of metagnomic penetration even when the human object of perception is distant in space from the percipient.

It matters little that this is inexplicable to us. It is a fact that can be verified experimentally and at will, just as in the case when the person delineated is present: and this fact is the prime consideration for every truth-seeking mind, and supersedes all other considerations. The general functional *processus* of metagnomic faculty and of its output is the same whether exercised on a present or an absent person, as will be seen by the examples given; but when applied to one at a distance some special conditions must be supplied, and I describe these without insisting on them further, because I shall analyse them in later chapters.

In order that a metagnomic subject should be able to delineate some distant person he must be given some knowledge possessed by the experimenter (mental link); or something belonging to or touched by the person (physical link). At present it is only necessary to mention this essential; we shall see later how these enable the subject to localize their faculty on a human being.

Ex. 1. Metagnomic delineation proceeding partly on a weak mental link, partly on a weak physical link.

Circumstances and conditions.

In May, 1922, M. Germain D. gave me a letter from his friend, M. Augustin F.-M., with the purpose of verifying what could be obtained by way of information on the life of the latter with which he was very fully acquainted.

On May 23rd I profited by this opportunity to discover whether the faculty possessed by Mme J. Peyroutet of perceiving minor approaching

events in a life would be competent to delineate the main outlines already past.

I knew that the letter was from M. Augustin F.-M., and was aware of his name, his profession, and place of abode.

Mme Peyroutet was ignorant of his existence. He had been living for a long while in a distant colony.

On the day of the experiment, M. Germain D. was in Paris, about three and a half miles from where we were, and M. Augustin F.-M. was in Indo-China.

At Mme Peyroutet's request, the letter was placed in the middle of the table. She did not touch it till towards the end of the sitting. At first she spoke while manipulating cards; subsequently she looked at some white of egg that she had poured into a glass of water at the beginning of the sitting. Finally she took the letter, turning it about in her hands.

She has found that she gets her notions of the moral state and general course of life by the fall of the cards, and the forms, aspects of places, things and people from the glass of water.

It is of psychological interest to note that her metagnomic perceptions arrive by fits and starts, in unconnected phrases, without any co-ordinating idea. In one she will speak of the character, in another of the illness of a child; another speaks of a voyage, etc. etc., reverting by complementary phrases till she has accumulated enlightening matter in the chaos of her words. In giving the example I shall rearrange these chaotic phrases according to the matters on which they bear. With this percipient it is necessary to do this.

The words of Mme Peyroutet.

"This is about a gentleman. I think he is very dark . . . or rather his hair is of two colours; it is getting grey, grey and dark. . . . He holds himself very upright . . . a good carriage.

"He is rather nervous, lively, whimsical, good-hearted, but changeable in mood. Not avaricious, but very orderly. Methodical. Rather dictatorial. Not always easy to get on with. Strong-willed. Not proud. He is a man who has made his own position.

"What an adventurous life. Many travels.

"His mother was widowed when he was quite young, and soon after there were several widows among his near relations.

"He had a mistress who affected his life deeply. She spent much of his money. . . . He seems to have speculated, and owed money. While still young he was threatened by the law, with imprisonment. He had money lent him. . . . He left the country when young, of his own accord. . . . He has passed through much trouble . . . has had to do much work before succeeding. He has striven, and not always been lucky. . . . What troubles, what surprises, changes and chances.

"A death of some one, a sudden death of a near relation, by apoplexy. He seems to be married now, and has recently lost a child.

"He has a kind of administrative post, travels, engaged in enterprises; he is associated with other men of business.

"It is very far from Paris; I should not like to have to walk there. He is living in a town, a little outside it . . . there is what looks like a river—water round it. An isolated house standing by itself.

"He often takes a boat; he seems to have a little boat of his own.

"He has to do with products from the ground.

"Now the whole surroundings change, I do not see many houses now; those that are there, are built on pillars.

"He is thinking of getting married, as if he were going to marry his mistress. A little child is playing there.

"He is thinking of returning to France. I think he means to buy a house near Paris.

"On his journey he will be ill, likely to die."

Censorship.

The record of this sitting was communicated to M. Germain D., who was surprised at the accuracy of the information as far as he knew the facts.

The history of his friend's life is as follows, in brief :

When about eighteen he was enamoured of a young woman, and the need of money led to malversation of funds that led to a threat of legal proceedings, from which he was saved by the help of a friend.

Resolved to expiate his misconduct, he enlisted in the colonial infantry, and when his time had expired he settled in the colony.

His place in a large carrying company was precarious, but his activity and intelligence in subordinate duties led in the end, after much hard work, to an assistant managership, and then to being manager.

He is a man of fifty-two, his hair is brown and getting grey. He has become a person of some importance in the colony. He travels much and has a steam launch.

Living in the maritime town where the principal offices of his Company are situated, he has often to go into the interior, to the rice-fields and plantations, where the native houses are built on piles.

He is, in fact, anxious to return to France, and rest after thirty years of hard work in a tropical climate.

The marriage with a mistress is a possibility. He has lived long with a woman of the country, by whom he has had two children. One died two years since.

As to the voyage to France and a serious illness on the way, that is a premonition still to be verified.

Ex. 2. Metagnomic delineation of a distant person, weak mental link.

Circumstances and conditions.

In May, 1922, I tried a number of experiments with Mme Peyroutet, with the intention of discovering how much and what kind of knowledge in the experimenter of the person to be described is necessary to start the metagnomic faculty into useful action.

M. and Mme Germain D. suggested to me their intimate friend Mme F., of whose strongly characterized past very few persons had any knowledge, and who, for this reason, would certainly authorize publication, provided her name were suppressed, a condition that I here comply with.

On May 12th, pen in hand, I put Mme Peyroutet the single question, "Please give me the outline of the life of the person of whom I am thinking."

I had met Mme F. for a few moments at the house of mutual friends. I knew vaguely that she had recently made an unexpected marriage and that her past life was characterized by events which if revealed by metagnomy would exclude any possibility of mere coincidence.

The words of the percipient (rearranged as before).

This is a woman with auburn hair, good-looking, decidedly good-looking. I think her frank and sincere, but she knows how to be otherwise on occasion. She is gay, amiable, sympathetic, rather depressed some-

times, and then exuberant . . . she is liable to these ups and downs, as if there were two natures in her.

She has a strong will . . . although nervous, she can control herself. She is conscious of the North.

She is fond of music, gaiety, but of work too. Her past has been cloudy, there are things in it that are not clear. . . . I think she was illegitimate, there was some secret about her birth . . . some personage is concerned . . . could he have been her father? Her father seems to have been a well-known personage, and important person.

There is a widow . . . her mother was a widow when her daughter was born. She was attended by a very few persons. It was a difficult birth; there was a doctor and a priest. Her mother had two other children. She was a light woman, had lovers . . . not worth much . . . is still coquettish and does not trouble herself to see her daughter.

The poor child lived away from her mother. What changes and travels. I see her with a wicked woman. She must have gone abroad when quite young. . . . There is a woman near her who has been in prison. Oh! Thefts and imprisonment—what surroundings? She has been beaten and roughly treated. No worse people could be found than those among whom she grew up; they were capable of anything, would have made her a lost woman. Happily the child had an honest nature. She has wept much. Many changes from one town to another.

Her mother came back to her. They wrote to each other and met about her marriage. Her mother will make a little revelation before she dies. The young woman is married now and very happy. Her husband is good and clever . . . he seems to be a chief over others . . . he wears a uniform and is much at sea—has travelled much and will travel more.

Censorship.

The foregoing was read to M. and Mme Germain D. on the evening of the 12th May. I subjoin a summary of the story they told me.

She was born in Paris, at the house of a midwife, where her mother, more than a year widowed, gave birth to her secretly. Whether the birth necessitated a doctor and a priest is still the mother's secret, as also the identity of the father. The mother is still living.

On her recovery, the mother resumed her life in good society in a country town, leaving her child with the midwife on annual payments. The child was four years old when the daughter of the midwife took her away to live with her in Turkey. A bad woman and bad surroundings.

Towards her tenth year, the girl passed into the hands of another person, who took her to England. This woman taught her to steal, got all she could out of her and used to beat her when the child resisted.

When in her thirteenth year she returned to France, the mother confided her to a woman comparatively better than the others, who merely got all she could from the mother under threats of revealing her secret.

Having grown into a beautiful girl, she became a nurse during the war; she attracted the notice of a naval officer in hospital, who married her, and was glad to make her forget the miseries of her past, which was told to him.

The mother saw her daughter on the occasion of her marriage. When I went to Mme Peyroutet I was entirely ignorant of all these facts. M. and Mme G. knew them, but had never been brought into contact with the percipient. It will be readily understood that these were secrets not often spoken of.

Ex. 3. Metagnomic delineation of an episode in the life of a distant person ; the percipient working on a mental link.

Circumstances and conditions.

Mlle Mathilde V. and M. Raoul B., aged twenty and twenty-five years, had been engaged two years and were to be married in July, 1922.

In March, 1922, the man wrote to the father of the girl, that it would be to his daughter's happiness that the marriage should not take place. The letter gave no reason. This abrupt and unexpected change, coming from a young man who was usually courteous, very polite, and rather timid, astonished them all. They were stupefied and could not understand it.

I learnt of this rupture almost at once from a member of the family and this seemed a favourable occasion to test the metagnomic faculty when only a mental link was available.

Conditions of the experiment.

My mental content was that just described ; and I may add that I knew the families interested very superficially.

At the time M. and Mme V. were in Paris with their daughter. They had read the letter from the young man, and another from his father (of which I was, of course, ignorant) answering vaguely a request to be enlightened.

M. and Mme B. were 180 miles distant from Paris, and knew the motives for breaking off the engagement, since they were concerned in them.

Mme Peyroutet was practising in Paris and did not know even of the existence of the six persons concerned. All that was said to her was—I am thinking of a young girl, speak of her present life.

Words of the percipient.

This is a fair girl—no, dark. She was engaged. There is a rupture, a breaking off . . . quite unexpected, like a lightning stroke.

There was a betrothal dinner. The ring was given. The marriage was close at hand.

It is her first disappointment.

Ah, now the young man appears ! He is of a fair complexion.

He has not done his military service.

He has broken it off. He has caused it. A letter has come from him not long since.

He seems distracted and nervous just now. He loved the girl. He is not bad at the bottom.

He does not live in Paris. I see him in the country sometimes.

Censorship.

Correct.

This took place in 1921. The marriage was fixed for July, 1922.

Aged twenty. First love and first disillusion.

He was blond ; his fiancée being dark like a creole. He was discharged for constitutional delicacy.

Correct. The letter had come less than ten days before the sitting.

Unverifiable, but likely. He seemed good and kind.

The family lives in the country ; the young man came to Paris to study.

He had an operation not long ago.

At this moment he is with his parents in the country. They live in the country.

There have been discussions between them.

They are false, and difficult people, of dark complexions, one especially. The mother is despotic.

There is water near the house.

The parents know everything.

They dictated the young man's letter.

The parents have been asked for an explanation. They have given reasons that do not exist. They have spoken of reasons of health.

There are many motives. The parents thought there was not enough money, though the young lady had some.

But there is a mistress and her child behind all this. This woman seems to have sworn to kill the young man or to do something serious. He is timid; on the one side, he is influenced by his parents, and on the other by his mistress, who is a bad woman. He is vexed, and will be sorry.

The young lady has nothing to regret. She will marry later on, and better.

The episode is closed.

She will soon leave Paris. They will take her away somewhere, a long way off.

Operated on for appendicitis, January, 1922, in a Paris clinic.

He had left Paris and was convalescing with his parents in the country.

Unverifiable.

Intentionally unanswered.

The mother is dark and unquestionably the head of the family.

A river flows at the end of the garden.

This is morally certain, the young man being very submissive.

Unverifiable, but likely.

Correct.

Unverifiable, but very probable.

The motives that the parents may have had are unverifiable. When I read the tenor of the message to M. V., three days after the sitting, he said: "That is really curious; up to the present we have found out nothing explanatory. This morning, my partner said: 'Do you know my wife's maid, who comes from the same part of the country as your son-in-law that was to be, received the news of the rupture?' She said: 'How glad I am, for the young lady's sake. I did not dare say anything before, but now I can tell you that M. Raoul B. has had Mlle X. as his mistress all the time he has been engaged. I know her, and she has had a child by him.'"

Mr. V. did not verify this, as he took no further interest in the affair.

"At the end of March her parents will take her on a trip in North Africa, for change of scene."

Ex. 4. Reconstitution of an episode in a life obtained by the percipient through the touch of an object belonging to the person concerned.

Circumstance and conditions of the séance.

On April 12th, 1916, my friend, M. Louis Mirault, happened to hear a refugee from the invaded provinces, whom he met at the house of M. G. Bd., of Strasburg, express his fear as to certain bonds that he had hidden in a wall, when the Germans were approaching. Being due for a séance with Mme Morel a few hours later, he asked the man to give him something of his, as he might be able to give him news of his papers. Quite astounded at such a proposition the refugee allowed him to take the little knot of ribbon from the interior of his hatband.

At the end of the séance (which concerned other things), M. Mirault placed the tiny piece of ribbon in the hands of Mme Morel in her hypnotic state, and to shorten the time and not to fatigue the subject, said: "The person to whom this thing belongs left his house some hours before the arrival of the Germans. See what has happened for him since."

The percipient gave his exact description (which I omit), and said:

"What big hands he has! enormous, like no one else. I see him much disturbed. . . . He goes down into a cellar by a stone stair . . . he goes down seventeen or eighteen steps. He is carrying a packet containing valuables, and a little pot containing gold. . . . He lights a candle, displaces some empty kegs and pieces of wood. . . . He digs at the foot of the wall in some yellowish sand, and then into the wall itself, and puts the packet and the little pot into the hole . . . closes up the masonry, levels the soil and replaces the barrels and the wood. . . . He hears a noise . . . blows out his candle. . . . The noise ceases . . . he relights his candle . . . leaves cellar and comes up the stair with staring eyes and an evil face, like some one who has done a bad action. . . ."

"What has become of the gold and the papers?"

"I see, some time later, but before this present time, wrinkled hands seeking and finding, displacing all that . . . but . . . surprising. . . . I see also, later . . . the man who hid the things quite happy, in possession of all . . . yes, all."

Censorship.

Some hours later, M. Mirault, in presence of his friend, M. G., read these lines to the refugee, who was stupefied and revealed what, except for these circumstances, he would have told to no one.

The scene described by Mme Morel was exact. The stair has seventeen steps, the sand at foot of the wall is yellowish, the bonds were in a packet, and he had put the gold, not in a pot, but in a little round iron saucepan. He had been frightened by a noise, had put out the candle and relighted it. As to the ferocious looks when he went up the stairs, this, he said, was probably true—the noise he had heard had irritated him, and he said, "If I had met anyone on the stairs I would have strangled him."

At this moment M. Mirault looked for the first time at the man's hands; they were extraordinarily big, with thick fingers such as he had never seen before.

M. Mirault heard from his friend that this man was violent and liable to terrible fits of anger.

After the armistice, a letter from the refugee told him that the cellar had certainly been searched, but, he thought, not the wall, for he found the packet and the money exactly as he had hidden them.

Ex. 5. Delineation of an episode in the life of two persons, one absent and the other present to the percipient.

In 1916 Count X. left for South America with a power-of-attorney from his wife authorizing him to sell her property.

For two years the Countess, who had remained in France, heard from her husband regularly. He said that he was unexpectedly detained by the difficulties in the transactions. But from January, 1918, the letters ceased, and the silence produced anxiety in the first place, and then apprehension. Dreading some great misfortune, Mme de X. desired to try what metagnomy would reveal. She was taken to Mme Morel, into whose hands, under hypnosis, she gave a letter from her husband asking what could be told of his health.

The percipient said, "I see this person, a rather tall gentleman, big, getting grey, hair nearly white. . . . He is married to you . . . you are uneasy about him . . . there is no need to be . . . he is quite well."

"Please tell me where he is now."

"Not far off, I see him in this town, in Paris. . . ."

Mme de X. wished to hear no more. She had the percipient awakened, saying she could get nothing from her.

Eight days later Mme de X. tried again, with another letter of more recent date, which she thought might improve conditions.

Mme Morel still said, "I tell you that this gentleman is in this town. He has been far away, beyond sea, but has returned some time ago. I repeat, he is here."

Mme de X., without experience of metagnomic subjects, thought this must be wrong and asked no more. She cabled to one of her family in South America, and received the reply that the Count had left for France some months before.

Much astonished, she made inquiries and learned that her husband was living in Paris at a certain address and under conditions exactly described. Very much hurt, she began proceedings for a separation, employing Mr. Ch. as her lawyer.

The suit remained unheard for two years for lack of written or tangible evidence.

During this time, Count X., quite at ease as to the lawsuit, enjoyed a luxurious life on the proceeds of the joint income, allotting to his wife, who refused to live with him, a relatively small sum.

Mr. Ch. advised his client to abandon a suit which could lead to nothing, and could not understand her obstinacy in keeping open pleas that could end in nothing.

The distinguished lawyer did not know that his client's motive was not only wounded pride. Having become over-confident in the accuracy of Mme Morel's visions, she took counsel from her metagnomic faculty every week, and always received the prediction:

"You will win your suit . . . it may take some time, but you will certainly regain your property when you are free, for judgment will be given in your favour. . . . At the last moment, when all seems lost, proofs of your husband's infidelity will be brought to you . . . a packet of letters, by a woman; like a servant. You will do nothing towards getting them, they will be brought to you."

Weeks followed without the prediction being realized. Mme de X. lost hope. Her husband was so sure that the suit must fail that he returned to South America on his own business. During this voyage things took an entirely different turn.

Besides the conjugal residence, Count X. had a second establishment, where, before and after his marriage, he had a mistress. This woman disappeared from his life, but he kept on the rooms and the servant who cleaned them. During her master's absence she ferreted in the furniture and found a bundle of letters written by the Count to his mistress fifteen years before. She thought to make a profit out of these, took them to the Countess, saying, "I know that you cannot succeed in your suit, and here are some letters that will be useful to you."

Mme de X. and her lawyer looked through the letters, which contained more than was needed to convince the judge of the husband's dereliction. The suit was pressed, and ended with a judicial separation. Count X. was amazed at the unexpected issue. He had no recollection of the old letters, which he thought had been destroyed long ago. He was, on that day at least, a chivalrous gamester. He went to Mme Morel and said, "Without intending it you have been my mortal enemy. You have ruined me; but all the same, I congratulate you."

To pile up instances would serve no psychological purpose. Those that I have quoted are sufficient to show that metagnomy can penetrate individual lives far or near, provided only that in the latter case contact with some personal belonging or some knowledge in the mind of the experimenter must be given to enable the percipient to localize para-normal the faculty upon the person.

From one point of view there may be legitimate uneasiness that private lives should be so easily unveiled. The number of ill-disposed men is so great that one fears to think of the evil that might result from general employment of metagnomic subjects.

But from the standpoint of science, the secret history of Mr. X. of Mrs. Z. are matters of no interest. The only important matter, and that which takes precedence of all others, is that certain individuals are endowed with means of cognition through psychic channels so different from those which we call normal, that we cannot, even in theory, find any common measure between the two modes.

I can imagine a time when the days of mysticism and absurd scepticism are past, good metagnomic subjects shall be taken out of the trade of fortune-telling, and selected, judiciously trained, and rationally prepared, will become, in the hands of men of science who understand their use, valuable psychic instruments for the exploration of the latent transcendental basis of human beings, and perhaps of all that lives.

III. THE HUMAN PERSON COGNIZED IS DISTANT FROM THE PERCIPIENT IN TIME.

Ex. I. *Delineation of a fragment of a deceased personality by means of a photograph taken some years before death.*

Circumstances and conditions.

In 1912, in the course of experiments to ascertain the function of the object placed in the hands of metagnomic subjects to connect them with distant persons, I received from Canon Berthucat, the Principal of the College of Lourdoueix-Saint-Michel (Indre), a letter containing a photograph in a separate envelope, without any particulars of the person represented, with a request to ascertain what it could convey to the metagnomic subject that I was then experimenting with.

On March 8th, Mme Morel being under hypnosis, I took the photograph from the envelope, and without looking at it, placed it face downwards in her hand.

My thought can therefore have conveyed nothing; but having looked at the photograph at the end of the séance, I am able to say that I learned nothing from it.

Detail of the sitting.

I said to the percipient, "Speak of the person represented on this photograph."

"A woman appears to me . . . she vanishes. . . . Ah! there is a man in her place, over there, very clear . . . a dark man appears before me, he is ill . . . his brain is troubled . . . his face is very sad . . . he is ill and in pain . . . his head is tired. . . . I see him often surrounded by many persons, quite boys. . . . I see hundreds of faces fluttering round him, all quite young, in uniforms."

I perceived that Mme Morel had directed her metagnomy on the Canon who had sent me the letter, living among the boys of his college and suffering from digestive troubles and neurasthenic depression.

I said to the subject, "It is not of the person who sent the photograph that I want you to speak, but of the one photographed."

"Then I go back to the time when the photograph was taken. . . . I see a young man with chestnut hair, very lively, a quick brain, much imagination, keen looking, full of curiosity, deep. . . . I see at a certain time much struggle . . . great crises. . . . I see a man profoundly discouraged and very tired, extremely tired."

"Later on I see him ill. I see his head affected and one limb. . . . Then, very strange, I do not see him like other people; his image becomes vague, undefined, fading away . . . now it is nearly invisible. . . . I see an inanimate body. . . ."

Then she cried out, "I see all the hands, all the heads of those who have touched this thing. Take it away, I am frightened."

I took the photograph and placed it in my pocket. The subject went on, "I see this man stretched out; he is pale; strangely pale; he passes before me as a body without thought or movement. He is dead; I now see him quite close."

"Look at the death scene. See what he died of."

"I cannot tell that exactly because I have nothing belonging to him . . . he has not touched the photograph."

"I have a strong nervous feeling in my limbs, and in my head. I look

into his body . . . I see no organ diseased . . . I feel fever in the brain, that is all . . . a sudden fever . . . the body is burning hot . . . then cold. It is a sudden illness, a quick transition from full life to death. I feel a nervous pain, something in the head."

On March 17th the Canon sent me the information given below after reading my account of the séance.

"Herewith the information I have to check Mme Morel's visions :

"The original of the photograph is dead, as she has seen and said. He was Mr. A——, and died aged thirty-eight.

"His character was briefly as described.

"As to the material struggles of which she speaks I know nothing. This gentleman had bought a stockbroker's business, then in very low water. He made it successful by dint of work and energy. It is possible that he had times of lassitude and discouragement. During that time he made great efforts for two years to save the life of his young wife. As to his illness, that began with violent headache. His brain was affected and for a while one limb was paralysed. He died of meningitis or some acute cerebral disease, the doctors could not quite say. Death came in fifteen days."

Ex. 2. Metagnomic delineation of the final episode in the life of a para-normal by contact with an object touched some months before death.

Circumstances and conditions.

On March 13th, 1915, M. Émile Boirac, Rector of the Academy of Dijon, asked me in course of conversation to give him an instance of Mme Morel's metagnomic output.

I said, "The best example would be an impromptu experiment. Have you anything belonging to a person known to you well enough to enable you to judge of what she may say?"

Boirac took some papers from his pocket, hesitated in his choice, and finally handed to me a little manual of Esperanto.

Detail of the séances.

In absolute ignorance of the person whose book this might be, I put it into the hands of Mme Morel, hypnotized, asking her to speak of the life of the person to whom it belonged.

She said, "A young man appears to me, tall and rather slight. There is nothing very characteristic in his appearance but his eyes, which are not like those of other people. There is nothing wrong with them, but their form is peculiar. . . .

"I see this young man for a long while in a place where there is no danger . . . he was there with many other men. . . . Then one day, one morning, he departs with others . . . a long march . . . he then goes in a train. I see him a little later with others in a kind of hole . . . he is standing up with shining eyes. . . . I hear much noise. . . . I see fury in his brain; he goes up. . . . What a noise I hear! He feels a blow and falls . . . gets up . . . receives another blow, and falls afresh with others on a road . . . on one side I see grass and cultivated land, on the other side grey mud. He is wounded in the throat and head by a piece of iron. . . . I see a hole on one side . . . he is in pain . . . he remains long on the ground. . . . I see him white and pale . . . then there is quiet . . . there are men there who take him up gently . . . he is tall and heavy . . . then they wrap him up . . . he moves a little . . . they take him

away in a kind of carriage with other wounded men . . . there is confusion . . . a man bends over him and takes some papers and something round and hard . . . they are keeping this wounded man as a prisoner . . . he still lives . . . then everything is blurred. . . . I no longer hear his breath. . . . I see no more. He is not far from the place where he fell. . . . His body will be found . . . it is near a church. . . . I see vaults near him . . . like a quarry. . . . To right and left there are woods. One can walk under these stones, they are as it were vaults. . . . To find him one must go towards the frontage of the church, going up the road nearly facing the church, and looking in the wood . . . there are many there . . . he is there. . . . There is no stream there; the earth is dry."

Censorship.

On March 15th I sent M. Boirac the account above. On the 24th he wrote to me :

"The little manual of Esperanto that I gave you was taken from the civilian clothing left at my house by the son of one of my friends. The young man was afterwards a second lieutenant in the 27th Regiment, killed or missing on December 12th in a trench attack at the Bois-Brulé.

"G. M. was aged twenty-five or twenty-six, tall, slight, face rather long, and his eyelids had a slight fold, like the Chinese, serious and quiet expression. . . . As far as is known he was wounded leading the attack, but continued at the head of his men, then fell at the edge of the German trench which is still in the hands of the enemy.

"The first wound seems to have been in the shoulder, the second in the head. The body is supposed to have been taken up by the Germans and buried by them, but there is no certainty. He was returned as 'missing.' The vision is therefore correct, with some particulars that cannot be ascertained. I can state that the little book was touched by G. M. some months before the scene to which it gave rise. It had remained with M. Boirac while this young man passed through the last stages of his life."

This simple fact (touch of the object), which recurs again and again in most cases of metagnomy of this kind, is to be borne in mind on account of its importance when we come to consider the function of the articles placed in the hands of percipients.

Ex. 3. Metagnomic delineations by two percipients under different experimental conditions of a deceased human personality.

Circumstances and conditions.

While proceeding with a series of experiments with different percipients on deceased human personalities, Captain C—— gave me on May 17th, 1922, a letter in a closed envelope only telling me that it contained a letter written by a man now dead. This with the intention that the sensitive should not bring her faculty to bear on anyone but the writer of the letter, as often happens when the experimenter operates with entirely unknown matter.

I never knew the actual contents of the letter either before or after the séance; and Captain C—— told me that it would not have shown me any connection between it and the revelations made by the percipient.

Detail of the séance.

On May 18th I placed the letter in the hands of Mme Viviana, hypnotized. She does not know Captain C—— nor the writer of the letter. I

took it from the envelope so that neither she nor I could see a word of the writing.

All that was said was, "Tell me all that you can of the writer of this letter."

After having crumpled the letter in her hands, she said :

"Instead of feeling moisture as when I touch your hand, I feel a certain impression of dryness, like a dry hand. It is curious what I feel. I must go back into the past. . . . If I were awake and wished to see this person I could not . . . it is not a living person . . . that person does not exist now. . . . It is annihilation. . . . I have a cold sweat, as in a fever. It is a dead man. Oh, this fever ! He was a soldier . . . yes, in the war. It is a man rather swarthy, sun-burnt. I do not say that was his usual appearance, but I see him bronzed. The eyes are notable ; I have the impression of a very direct gaze.

"He was combative, strong-willed, having some authority, a personality . . . unsentimental. . . . Intelligent and good . . . energetic, amiable, and correct in his manner. He was a believer, a Catholic, a man with some tendency to mysticism. When he was sad or troubled he used to pray. Oh, not bigoted. A high-minded man, not undistinguished. There is a basis of faith, he was brought up to that.

"I have the feeling of some one brought up in a religious family, with convictions and religious habits . . . and in a country where they give their boats the names of saints, as in Brittany.

"He had a brother rather older than himself in whom he placed great confidence.

"He had one cause of disquiet. . . . A woman whom he dearly loved. . . . She was his only anxiety . . . there was a little child too, but the child was not uppermost in his thoughts. . . . I have the feeling of swaying, rolling, humidity and water in the surroundings, as if he were on the water ; my lips are salt, as if I were on the sea.

"He would seem to have the chevrons of an officer, but few ; he was young. The war was not ended, but the end was near ; it was just at the end. Just when all was clearing up, death and night came for him.

"He did not die from a blow or a wound. . . . It is suffocation . . . sudden pain in the head. . . . He does not die in a bed. . . . Is anyone looking after him ? . . . In any case it is too late . . . it is finished ; it is night.

"Round him I see small houses being built . . . there are men, soldiers, doing that . . . what do you call the—engineers . . . pickaxes and tents ; yes, there are tents. . . ."

Censorship.

The letter that Captain C—— had given me had been written by his brother in May, 1918, a lieutenant in the Chasseurs d'Afrique on the transport *Saint-Anne*, in the Mediterranean, as he was rejoining his corps in Macedonia from leave.

The correspondences with reality are as under, in the order spoken of by the percipient :

Lieut. C—— was born in Brittany in a family of strong religious convictions, and from his training he had firm Christian beliefs.

He had a brother rather older than himself—the captain who gave me the letter—and also a wife and one child. He was very anxious about her by reason of the risks of the war.

His letter was written on the *Saint-Anne* in a rough sea, well described by the percipient.

He was taken ill, they think of influenza, when the Eastern Army was

advancing to the Danube, and died at Semendria (Serbia), November 28th, 1918, just when the armistice had been declared and military operations in the Balkans were about to cease.

The family knew indirectly that he had died from a febrile disease with pulmonary complications, under circumstances that left him practically without medical aid. Whether he died on a stretcher or in a tent is not ascertainable. Numerically, the analysis is as follows :

Characteristic details given by the percipient	. 29
Unverifiable 4
Verified as correct 25
Found erroneous 0

Ex 4.

Circumstances and conditions.

On May 22nd, that is four days after the séance above described, I put Mme C——, the sister-in-law of Lieut. C——, in presence of another metagnomic percipient in order to compare the number and quality of details that might be obtainable under such different conditions.

The percipient selected was Mme Payroutet, who was left in ignorance that I was bringing anyone to her till the time of the séance. All that she knew was that I should be with her at 3 p.m. on May 22nd.

Detail of the séance.

After the usual courtesies, I said, "You will tell me to-day about a relation of this lady." Mme C—— and the percipient did not know each other, and had never met.

According to her custom, Mme Peyroutet threw the raw white of an egg into a glass of water, and after a moment contemplated this little world of light and forms. She soon exclaimed :

"Why! I again see what I saw before your arrival. About an hour ago I was amusing myself by looking for the purpose of your experiment to-day, and I saw a dead soldier and a widow . . . you want me to speak for the widow."

The relation towards whom we wished to direct her faculty was certainly the officer's widow; our intention was to verify what the percipient would say relative to the dead man in connection with a living person. Mme Peyroutet continued her metagnomic perceptions partly by looking in the glass of water, partly by manipulating the cards. (The reader being aware of what is under discussion, I shall give such censorship as may be necessary along with the narrative.)

"This widow lady has troubles . . . many troubles . . . there was the death . . . of a military man. . . . I see by her a son, a boy, who has been ill. (A boy five years old just recovering from whooping-cough.) The dead soldier is sunburnt; chestnut hair . . . The lower part of the face is wilful . . . he had a beautiful smile which corrected the hardness of the chin. (Correct.)

"He was not born in Paris . . . there was water, the sea. (Coast of Brittany.) His family was pious. He was brought up by religious persons or by priests, then in a place from which he was not allowed out. (His family was very religious. He was brought up in a clerical school and then in a special kind of military college.)

"What changes he has had! Many travels; an active youth. (He went to Tunis in his eighteenth year.)

"He rode well. Oh, what gallops! (Much equestrian, military service in the cavalry.)

"Now I see the form of a ship. He must have gone overseas. I see hammocks round him. Then I see a country with plains and heights, water. I see an 'M'; did the name of the country he went to begin with 'M'? He went about much there, and developed there. (In the second phase of the war he went by sea to join the Eastern Army; a long stay in Macedonia.) Oh! he has been in battle, many battles! He has often escaped death. (He took part in the war on the French front, then in the East from the beginning to the end.)

"He managed his affairs well. Before leaving his wife and child he arranged everything in writing. (Correct.) When he died he had just come to another town; he came to a town where I see much water. (He fell ill and died on his arrival in Semendria on the Danube; the French Army had just passed through Serbia.)

"The notification of death took some time to arrive. He died abroad. It was almost a sudden death. His widow received the notification of death before hearing of his illness. (The notification reached the widow two months after the death, and she never heard of the illness.)

"Oh, what fever! . . . his head was affected . . . a congestion or something in the head. An operation was spoken of, but was not carried out. (The family had no details of the illness. The diagnosis was 'influenza with pulmonary congestion': the word 'influenza' covers many uncertainties.)

"He was buried far away, where he died. (Correct.)

"He was robbed after his death." (None of his possessions reached his family. It was said that the Serbs took all he had.)

The rest of the séance had reference to the widow, the brother, and the sister-in-law then present.

Summary of results:

Characteristic details given by the percipient	40
Unverifiable	3
Details verified as correct	37
Considered erroneous	0

Two percipients have therefore given information describing the personality of Lieut. C——, in certain episodes of his life, and more particularly of his death; the one by a letter written by him and without any possible mental suggestion by the experimenter, and the other by the presence of a relation of the deceased officer.

In the latter case, as in other similar ones, transmission of thought suggests itself as the explanation. But the second experiment shows clearly that the metagnostic perception is practically the same when the experimenter is in complete ignorance of the personality delineated.

Ex. 5. Delineation of the last episode in the life of a deceased person, the experimenter and any other living person being absolutely ignorant of it.

In the facts previously quoted, whether the experimenter knew or did not know the person concerned, there is always a disposition to think that the phenomenon may have consisted in an unconscious transmission of thought between the living, near or far, since the matter revealed was in the thoughts of some living person or other.

I shall now cite a fact which will prove :

(1) That metagnomy does not need the thoughts of the living to delineate the life of the deceased.

(2) That the function of the objects touched by the percipients to direct their faculties upon a person living or dead, is not, as some have naïvely imagined, that the object registers some scene like a photographic plate, nor by some obscure memory resident in matter. The object used in the instance subjoined was not at the scene which it, nevertheless, was the means of revealing.

On March 18th, 1914, M. Louis Mirault, manager of the estates of Baron Jaubert, living in the Chateau de Givry, near Cours-les-Barres (Cher), wrote to me to enquire whether it might be possible to trace an old man who had disappeared since March 2nd, and of whom no trace could be found, despite long and active search.

I accepted, and M. Mirault brought me a neck-wrapper belonging to the old man taken from a wardrobe. In order not to complicate the experiment I asked him to tell me nothing about the old man's disappearance, but only to give me an exact description of him, so that I might be able to recognize the details that the sensitive might give, and to distinguish these from perceptions relating to other people who had touched the neckerchief. He only told me that the man was eighty-two years of age and walked with a stoop. Nothing more.

I was up to that time ignorant of the old man's existence. Concerning the estate of Baron Jaubert, which covers about 2750 acres of woods, I knew no more than can be seen from the road to the chateau.

These were the conditions under which on Monday, March 23rd, I placed the neck-wrapper in the hands of Mme Morel, in deep hypnosis, in Paris. She had never been into the department of Cher.

"Look, I said, for the person whose neckerchief I place in your hand."

Mme Morel first described a person whom I recognized as myself, then that of another man who seemed to be M. Mirault, then that of a woman whom I thought might be the daughter-in-law of the old man, and, lastly, that of the old man himself. Here are her words, *verbatim*.

"I see a man lying at full length, his eyes are closed, as if sleeping, but he does not breathe . . . he is dead. . . . He is not in bed, but on the ground . . . the ground is damp, very damp . . . flat ground, uncultivated. . . . There is water not far off . . . a large tree . . . some very big thing quite near . . . something very bushy—a wood."

"Follow that man on the day he went there. Look for the way he went."

"I see a country house. . . . He leaves that . . . he walks. . . . He is ill, his breathing is difficult . . . and his brain is confused. . . . He leaves the path . . . goes into a thicket, a wood . . . he sees much water near by . . . he falls on the damp ground . . . then after a little time he breathes no more. It is not far from the house to the place where he is lying. . . . Follow the path from the house towards the water. There are two paths from the house, one goes up and the other down towards the water. The latter is the one to take : he went that way."

"Describe the place where he is lying and give a description so as to find the place."

"I see blocks of stone . . . very large trees . . . and water. . . . I see the body . . . it is lying on the wet ground. . . . He is bald, has a long nose . . . a little white hair above his ears and at the back of his head . . . wearing a long coat . . . soft shirt . . . hands closed. . . . I see one finger which has been hurt . . . very old and wrinkled . . . pendant lips. . . . Forehead much furrowed, very high and open . . . he is lying on his right side, one leg bent under him."

"Why did he fall there?"

"He threw himself down . . . confused ideas. . . . He fled from his house; a troubled brain . . . he had a notion of dying . . . he wished to die and lay down on the ground . . . it was then damp, but the rains have made it much wetter."

"Blocks of stone" in a chalky district where rocks are not common, "large trees," and "a piece of water": I thought that these data should enable M. Mirault to find the body if the description tallied with the facts. The percipient, moreover, had exhausted all she could give at a first trial. I gave her a rest, and directed her lucidity to other matters.

These details sent by letter caused great astonishment at the exact description of the man, but they did not help. No rocks were known. There were several ponds on the estate which had been dragged and whose borders had been minutely explored. Large trees were very numerous in these woods. But the assertion that the body was not far from the old man's house stimulated fresh search, which yielded no results. Not till then did M. Mirault tell me the circumstances attending the old man's disappearance and the sequel.

M. Étienne Lerasle, aged eighty-two, but still active though mentally enfeebled by age, had left his son's house on March 2nd for his daily walk. When he had not returned by nightfall, which had never happened before, the family and their neighbours searched and shouted, but to no purpose. During the following days the villagers searched the more willingly that they thought the old man lost or ill, but still living. This went on for several days. On Sunday, March 5th, at the request of the Mayor of Cours-les-Barres, eighty men searched the forest and the neighbouring district without success. Nothing was found to indicate the way M. Lerasle had gone.

M. Mirault, who had been absent from Givry before the old man's disappearance, caused fresh search to be made on his return March 13th. Ponds were dragged, but nothing found. On the 18th he asked for metagnostic help.

The results of the first sitting were interesting, but of no assistance. All parts of the forest are more or less alike; they are large quadrilaterals of thick undergrowth, divided by rides and paths all much alike. The visit that I then made to the place, already so thoroughly explored, made me despair of getting from the percipient anything that would distinguish one part of the woods from another. It was not my convictions that led to ultimate success, but that of M. Mirault, who thought that as the description of the man himself was so accurate the other data should be equally so. The difficulty was to find some landmarks, and this I thought insurmountable.

My interest in the matter was not very strong; it seemed to me less striking than others, and, being very busy, I entrusted M. Lucien Galloy, my brother-in-law, an engineer in Arts and Manufactures, with further enquiries through Mme Morel, with whose faculty he was well acquainted, and was also familiar with metagnostic psychology.

He received from M. Mirault the map of the district to a scale of 1/50,000 and a plan of the estate to a scale of 1/5000, on which to follow Mme Morel's indications. M. Galloy knew neither the old man nor his family, and as concerning the place, only, like myself, as much as can be seen from the principal road from Cours-les-Barres to the chateau—the mass of forest on the one side and the landscape of the valley of the Loire on the other. The second sitting took place on March 30th, and gave the following results:

"Look for the old man to whom this neckerchief belongs."

"I see an aged man . . . his face is much spoiled, decayed, blackish . . . he is lying down, stretched out on his right side, one leg bent . . . dead. He is lying in a thicket, in a thick wood. . . . By him I see a great stone, a small rock . . . a little further there are other stones. . . ."

"Look for the road he followed when he left his house for the last time."

"I see large buildings, several houses. . . . There is a wide avenue towards these houses. . . . The man comes from these houses . . . he takes a small path which goes downwards. . . . He walks along it and comes to a pond . . . goes straight on . . . passes in front of other buildings . . . turns slightly to the left. . . . In front he sees many trees and thickets . . . from the road he follows there is a wide landscape. . . . He passes near a small house. . . . There is a barrier and a place where three paths meet . . . he takes to the left, follows that left-hand road, and goes into the wood by a little path that is by the nearest of the small houses. . . ."

"On this left-hand road there is a hut containing tools . . . and beside it a pile of cut wood. . . . This hut was a woodman's house . . . between it and the house at the cross-roads there is a bare space. . . . The man took a small path that leaves the road. . . . He is an old man with an intelligent, furrowed face . . . tufts of white hair, hanging lips . . . he did not go far into the wood . . . he feels ill, lies down, sleeps and dies."

"The hut is not visible from where he is, it is hidden by the trees; to find the body one must follow that path . . . the corpse will soon be found."

This second séance confirmed the previous one and gave surprisingly minute details of the direction taken by the old man till he left the main road. As neither the plan nor the map gave the side-paths, M. Galloy did not ask for more, thinking the data given sufficient. This was to be regretted, for when the detail was followed out it was found that two paths started at the same point of the road, one to the right, the other to the left. The data of the stones was of no use, no one knew of any. The "water" was equally useless, for the heavy rains had made many pools which might correspond to the visions. On the other hand, the son of the deceased refused to accept the itinerary said to have been followed during all day on March 2nd; he had been working near the house at the cross-roads, and that his father, who walked very slowly, could not have passed by without being seen. All the people of the house confirmed this. In default of more exact description it was decided to do nothing; the old man was dead and there was no reason for haste. The particulars to be given at a third sitting were awaited. This took place April 6th, M. Galloy presiding.

"Look for the person to whom this belongs."

"I see a man of ordinary height . . . white hair . . . rather bald . . . long face . . . long nose . . . toothless . . . pendant lips . . . dead . . . lying on his right side . . . blackish face, one leg bent . . . very wet . . . water on his face. . . . He is not in the water, but there is much water there in round pools . . . many trees . . . a large stone near him . . . big trees. . . . He has a flannel shirt in two colours . . . open collar. . . . I see it quite well . . . he is surrounded with undergrowth."

"Look for the exact way he took when he left the house."

"He leaves the houses . . . passes by the side of them . . . goes towards the other houses . . . reaches the cross-ways where three roads meet, in front of which there is a house. . . . He passes a barrier . . . hesitates . . . he has an old stick in his hand . . . he taps the ground with it . . . his mind is confused . . . he goes to the right on a descending

road . . . hesitates . . . returns to the cross-ways leaning on his stick . . . takes the left-hand road . . . walks on its right side, holding his stick and a check handkerchief . . . passes near a fence and goes into the wood by a path which is barely visible on a level with the road . . . goes there with the intention of hiding. . . .

"From where the body is, the house and the hut are not visible; one must go back to the road to see them. . . . He did not go far into the wood . . . near the place where the ground slopes down somewhat. . . ."

This time the search was restricted to the square of undergrowth served by the path so exactly indicated, and if the visions were correct, the body should easily be found. A large brook goes through this thicket, swelled here and there into round pools after heavy rain. M. Mirault ordered five men to search this part of the wood, following the brook. Soon one of them, seeing a projecting rock, cried out, "There is the stone she saw . . . there is water close by; the body might be there."

A few yards further on he saw the body, quite in the open, though a whole number of villagers who knew the ground well, searching for a month, had failed to find it.

Informed by telephone, I reached the place an hour later; and in company with M. Mirault and other persons, made a minute investigation.

The details have been fully described in the *Annales des Sciences psychiques* for April, 1914, with a plan of the ground and nine photographs. I therefore here give it abbreviated.

Place where the body was found.

It was stretched out in the middle of the thicket. Ten yards away one can see what looks like a moss-covered rock, but is really a huge tree-stump quite out of the ground. The ground where the body is lying is flat. Four yards away it slopes to a pool in a brook, the only brook in this part of the forest. On the further bank there are other moss-grown masses, smaller than the other, but also resembling stones.

A few yards distant several large trees, and forty yards away a tree, said by M. Mirault to be the biggest in the whole forest.

The surroundings are exactly as described by Mme Morel.

The corpse.

The face is exactly as described. The old man wears a long coat, soft shirt, turn-down collar, in two colours, black stripes on white. Large check handkerchief.

The itinerary taken.

Easily verified it cannot have been any other than that described. From the house where the old man lived to the place where the body was found the distance is about 650 yards in a straight line, and about three-fifths of a mile by the road and path. "Not far," said the percipient.

I have chosen this instance rather than others more sensational, because it is simple, typical of the class of these perceptions, undeniable, and because I can quote names and places, and the facts were witnessed by a large number of persons.

The reader should particularly notice the power of percipients to seize on the detail regarding a dead man otherwise than through the thoughts of the living or an obscure memory contained by objects presented.

I emphasize that the neckerchief, *taken from a wardrobe and not from the corpse*, enabled Mme Morel to answer the questions put to her, concerning the last moments of M. Lerasle; but from this same link there could

have been gathered many other episodes in his life, known (or unknown) to living persons. I make this statement having verified it in analogous cases.

And I say further (having experienced the fact) that the mere presence of a member of his family would have aroused the same perceptions, without any material object being handed to the percipient. Such objects (as will be seen in the sequel), localize the metagnomic perception on a human subject and do not act as a register of events at which for the most part they were not present, as in the case above cited.

The foregoing facts, like others that are scattered through this book, have been chosen only as examples out of many which would make several volumes. They are not selected to convince people of the reality of the faculty of hypercognition which anyone can verify, but to give examples of the types of metagnomic output on human personalities.

From these few examples it will have been noted that percipients present very diverse aspects. Some exert their faculty under hypnosis ; others, and mostly, in (apparently) a waking state.

When working on an individual close at hand, some need to touch the person ; for others mere proximity suffices ; others find an object or a paper from that person more satisfactory.

When they work on a person distant in space or time, most percipients require an object coming from the individual to be cognized ; with some few it is enough that the experimenter should be thinking of the person. Among percipients working in what seems a waking state some only need their own mental impulse. Others excite the faculty by endless devices, of which a mere list gives but a slight notion. Some look at the hands, some the writing, others use playing-cards, a crystal ball, a glass of water, a candle-flame, coffee-grounds spilt on a plate, a heap of pins thrown on the carpet, etc. etc. I was told of an Arab who was one of the attractions of Biskra, whose proceeding gives the essence of all others. He spreads on the ground a layer of sand from the desert, which he keeps in a bag, asking the person of whom he is to speak to place a hand upon it. With his forefinger he then makes a number of little holes, rubs the whole out, begins afresh, and then makes precise and often stupefying revelations.

I merely mention in passing these strange aspects of metagnomy at work ; it will be seen later what they consist in, and I now pass to other considerations with which I close this chapter.

Among the manifestations of supernormal cognition, there is one from which we revolt, partly by reason of the specific function of our intelligence and partly from opinions and beliefs that have many sources. It is Precognition of the Future.

Yet nothing is easier to verify by exact experiment if anyone will give time and an open mind to the subject. It is worth the trouble.

In his *Traité de Métapsychique* Professor Charles Richet¹ closes his chapter on Premonition with these words: "A definite conclusion follows from these facts. . . . Premonition is a demonstrated verity. It is a strange, paradoxical, and seemingly absurd fact, but one that we are compelled to admit . . . the explanation will come (or will not come) later. The facts are none the less authentic and undeniable. There are premonitions."

Twelve years of personal experiment with many metagnomic percipients and a considerable number of persons have given me absolute certainty that there are human beings who can foretell the future of other persons. I say *the future of other persons*, I do not say *the future in general*, which I have not verified personally. I am certain of this just as I am certain of what we call the earth, the sun, the stars, minerals, vegetables, and animals. It is a fact verifiable by experiment against which our prejudgments will not avail now that men of science have the courage to investigate the fact.

In this connection I think it useful to show where intellectual systematisation of scientific dogmas may lead. The instance will serve as one covering all systematisations on all varieties of opinion.

Two men, eminent alike for their intelligence, their knowledge and their position in the University, had, towards the end of 1907, the good fortune (which they misused)—the opportunity of experimenting with Madame Fraya, a highly gifted metagnomic subject now well known. These two men were Alfred Binet, a professor in charge of the laboratory of Experimental Psychology at the Sorbonne, and N. Vaschide, director of the laboratory of Pathological Psychology in the School of Higher Studies. A. Binet thought that Madame Fraya drew her information from palmistry, and after the manner of the ancients, started off from a speculative opinion, and put on one side everything else, not even verifying the reality of the premonition. He said:

"If we are compelled to admit that events in the life of a person which we may conjecture to be the direct consequences of his character can be predicted or guessed, it is no longer the same for events which are not effects of the personality. We live in a physical and moral world in which we are both active and passive; we produce effects on others and are influenced by them. We act and are acted upon. Very often our lives

¹ *Traité de Métapsychique* (Alcan), 1922, pp. 509-510. Translation published by Messrs. Collins under the title *Thirty Years of Psychical Research*.

are disturbed by external events which are as unforeseen and as foreign to our moral character as the lightning that strikes a house. Therefore a person who knows our psychology would be incapable of foreseeing such an event. Palmists are therefore taking a wrong road. They ought to follow the reasoning given above. But nothing stops them; these imprudent persons predict the future of their clients, the whole of their future, without discrimination." (Binet, *L'Année psychologique*, 1908, p. 393.)

Having thought thus, it did not even occur to him to verify experimentally whether or not precognition of the events in a life—so pregnant with biological and philosophical consequences that there is no other to be compared with it—were *true*. The only use that he knew how to make of the conspicuously endowed percipient introduced to him by M. Jean Finot, was to ask her to say from the aspect of the hands of some children shown her through a curtain, which were intelligent and which were backward. His conclusion was that there is some truth in palmistry. To apply rules of Cheiromancy to a subject like Madame Fraya is to invite an endless series of errors. Vaschide, younger and less petrified in mind by scholastic prejudgments, saw that palmistry is not everything, and that behind the few indications suggested by the hands, there was something more, which he called "intuition." But he was much embarrassed when he had to formulate a considered judgment on precognition in his book, *Éssai de la Psychologie de la Main*. He says:

"Predictions of the future must be received with caution (p. 473). I have seen Mme Fraya and others reveal the past of persons she did not know and make wonderful prophecies as to their future . . . there are persons endowed with a special intuitive sensitiveness who can perhaps anticipate the capricious laws of chance . . . it may therefore be that nervous subjects endowed with the mysterious faculty of 'intuition' may seize upon unknown data, data coming from the unknown (p. 483). Formerly I used to smile when listening to the prophecies of fortune-tellers; but since I have studied these problems, I still smile at the conjectural predictions and the naïve affirmations of future events; nevertheless, I have verified the large amount of knowledge and psychological data that an organ so complex as the hand may furnish" (p. 487).

After reading the thirty-five pages that this excellent psychologist has devoted to precognition it is not possible to be sure whether he holds this phenomenon to be true or not. He says he has seen wonderful predictions, but he speaks as though he had not verified them. Vaschide feared the ill-natured remarks of his fellows at the University. What he dared not say has been unfortunately verified by his destiny: at the foot of one of the pages in which he has clothed his hesitation in a multitude of phrases, there is this note:

Mme Fraya predicted to the author of this work during the winter of 1904 that he would die of pneumonia in his thirty-third year. The

Countess de Noailles, who was present, Mme Fraya, and N. Vaschide himself confirmed this prediction, which, unhappily, came true October 13th, 1907. A year before his death, a gipsy from Roumania told him in 1906 that he would die in the following year. (Note by his widow.)

Precognition of the future of a human individual is an experimental fact. It is so contrary to our mutable opinions that I readily understand that it should not be accepted till after severe experimental test. But I own that I am astonished that on the grounds of our paltry "knowledge," men should refuse *à priori* to verify that human beings possess a transcendental plane of thought not bounded by cerebral functions, and therefore perhaps not extinguished by the death of the body.

We now know what kind of phenomena metagnomic subjects can produce when their faculty is directed upon a human objective. We shall next study :

- (1) The psychological process by which the phenomena are produced ;
- (2) From what source percipients draw their information ;
- (3) What are the psychological causes of error in the functioning of their faculty.

PART III

METAGNOMIC PERCIPIENTS IN THE EXERCISE OF THEIR FACULTY

CHAPTER I

THE DAWN OF THE FACULTY OF SUPERNORMAL COGNITION

THE faculty of supernormal cognition, in persons highly endowed and exercising it in what seems to be a waking state and without artificial aids, usually appears spontaneously. One day, in presence of some person, the percipient finds himself suddenly aware, whether by means of strongly representative mental images or by hallucinations (visions, words mentally heard, phrases impulsively spoken, or otherwise) of moral or material facts in the past, in course of development, or in the future, more or less closely concerning the person present, under conditions such that these facts could not be normally known.

The recurrence of such phenomena, especially in the presence of persons oppressed by anxieties, makes the sensitive aware of his exceptional aptitude, and if he cultivates it voluntarily, he becomes able to use it at will, provided that he places himself in conditions more or less similar to those under which it was first discovered.

Bert Reese, the celebrated German-American percipient, manifested his extraordinary gifts from the age of six years.

"His marvellous faculties so terrified the people of the little town where he was born that they deserted the shop where his father sold miscellaneous goods, and to avoid ruin he had to send his son away to Posen. The people of the country town were filled with horror; they considered the child a wizard and possessed by the devil" (Felix Hollaender, *Ann. Sci. psych.*, Sept., 1913).

Reese was precocious. Most of the metagnomic subjects that I have met with only show their faculty after adolescence, and sometimes much later.

Sometimes the appearance of the faculty of hypercognition is accidental and involuntary.

A person may be predisposed to hypnosis, and some day some-one, for amusement, curiosity, study, or for curative purposes, puts him into the hypnotic state. The usual tests of somnambulatory suggestion are made, and if by chance he is questioned about some individual there present, or if absent known to the subject or to the questioner, surprising information is received, which is not, as in most cases of such, mere guesswork, but the delineation of facts admitting of verification. Such persons, though devoid of exceptional psychic faculty in their waking state, show themselves possessed of real metanormal faculty when hypnotized.

Moreover (and this fact is worth noting), subjects who show strong metagnomic faculty when hypnotized are so prone to somnambulism that their faculty often comes to the surface during a spontaneous access of such sleep. Afterwards it can be used at will, by hypnosis producing artificial somnambulism.

Another noteworthy cause of the dawn of hypercognition is the practice of the so-called occult sciences for purposes of divination. Cartomancy, cheiromancy . . . all the "—mancies," place those who practise them in a condition to exercise their minds in penetrating individual human lives. It is readily understandable that this should bring latent metagnomic faculties into action, and also that those who so operate should think that they draw from the fall of the cards, from the lines of the hand, etc. etc., information that really comes from elsewhere, as we shall see in the sequel.

Other metagnomic subjects have intentionally superinduced the latent faculty by methods which they have seen others use. They use, and continue to use, the crystal ball, or the mirror to excite visual hallucination, automatic writing, and so forth.

But at the present day the capital cause which brings metagnomic faculty to light is the belief in spiritualism and endeavours at communication between the living and the dead.

By using the table and raps, the planchette whose point moves over an alphabet, by automatic writing, and so on, spiritualists think to put their subconscious mind at the disposal of discarnate spirits, when they are really placing it, in all cases of truly metanormal output, under the same influence which directs metagnomic faculty exercised on a human objective, without any spiritist cultivation.

The spiritualist practices give nothing that admits of positive checks, more than are given by phenomena obtained by metagnomy scientifically used: they are the means of revealing faculties which would otherwise remain latent.

According then as a person is capable of becoming a metagnomic subject while awake, under hypnosis or by the help of artifices, the first manifestations of the faculty may be

spontaneous, or the result of a happy conjunction of circumstances, or the end of endeavours to acquire it.

The greater number of metagnomic subjects leave their faculties unused. Some make a trade of them, and if highly endowed these are (for those who know how to use them) psychic instruments for verifying the existence and ascertaining the general functioning of supernormal cognition.

NEUROSIS AND METAGNOMIC SUBJECTS

Among men of science who have verified certain phenomena of supernormal cognition the opinion is widespread that this para-physiological power is a result of neuroses. This opinion has arisen among medical men whose profession has brought them unexpectedly in contact with patients who during their malady, and in consequence of that malady, have developed metagnomic manifestations. True for such cases and for analogous cases, it is not valid as a generalization. This point must be closely looked into.

Nearly all the facts of supernormal cognition directed to a human objective whose details I have read in the scientific or philosophic Reviews have been related by physicians, and have been produced by patients suffering from pathological disturbances of a neuropathic nature.

The cases of autoscopy cited by Drs. Sollier, Comar, Buvat and others, the case of delineation of the murder cited by Dr. Duffay, quoted in the first part of this book, were all observed with hysterical patients placed under hypnosis for remedial or other purposes. It seems undeniable that neuroses can generate metagnomy. But this must not be made into a generalisation that every person endowed with the faculty of hypercognition owes it to a pathological state of the brain.

Among the pathological states known by the name of "neuroses," there is one which sometimes, though seldom, originates hypercognition—it is that more or less profound and more or less extensive sleep of the cerebral functions, misnamed "hysteria"; this sleep sometimes goes so far as to produce local paralysis or even general lethargy, but sometimes takes the somnambulic form in which the central psychic control is eclipsed, leaving the cerebral mechanism to work unchecked.

When hysteria takes the somnambulic form it may produce metagnomic manifestations if the patient also receives a special extension of sensitiveness due to the morbid state.

The psycho-physiological conditions for metagnomy are very rarely found in hysterical somnambulism, since alienists, Bernheim

among others, have never met with it ; and on that account, and that only, deny its existence and even its possibility.

On the other hand, what is frequently met with in pathological somnambulism is fantastical creation and hysterical romance.

How many inconsistent judgments would be avoided if these two functional modes of thought were known and differentiated

Hysterical somnambulism, as many current works have established, is shown by the more or less complete eclipse of the psychic functions that are called "superior"—voluntary direction and conscious control in the exercise of thought. The psychism of the somnambulist left to the undisciplined genesis of ideas, works uncontrolled under the influences that come to it from within or from without.

In some very rare cases the patient has, either by reason of the malady, or as a native potentiality, an extension of sensitiveness beyond the ordinary scale of sensorial registration, connecting him more closely with the environment or with his own organism. In such cases the psychic activity, released from all control, is moved by sensations paranormally received, and elaborates them into cognitions that are translated into mental images, and then into spoken or written words. Manifestations of supernormal cognition are then observed.

But if the somnambulant patient possesses no more than the ordinary sensorial *differentia* of consciousness, the brain functions on its own resources. The excited imagination constructs fables round genuine or fanciful ideas, and generates the hysterical romance which occasionally looks like metagnomy if the central idea round which the whole crystallizes corresponds to some reality.

These two types of hysterical utterances should be well known : confusion between them has caused many negations and unfounded beliefs. Doctors have so often experienced cases of hysterical romance that they deny the metagnomic fact they have not come across ; and the public by an opposite impulse, takes for true all hysterical imaginings because neuropathic somnambulism has sometimes led to metagnomy.

It is true that hysterical neurosis sometimes, though very rarely, brings about the psycho-physiological conditions that determine metagnomic phenomena, but in such cases the faculty of hyper-cognition lasts as long as, and no longer than, the neuropathic state that produced it. It arises from a morbid condition and passes away with it.

Such is not the case with metagnomic subjects whose faculty is permanent. These are the usual type and those whom I have been able to study. I know some remarkable percipients who have never suffered from any neuropathic troubles and show no

signs of hysteria. Outside the exercise of their special faculty, whether under hypnosis or in the waking state, they show no special physical or moral characteristics. Some are more emotional and have quicker reactions than most persons, but their cerebral functions are well balanced.

If hysterical neurosis may produce metagnomy, it is only exceptionally that metagnomic subjects are neuropaths; they are not necessarily so.

CHAPTER II

THE GENERAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS FOR SUPERNORMAL COGNITION

WHATEVER the appearances that a metagnomic subject may present in the exercise of the faculty, he is not functioning according to the modes of normal thought. His mentation, when elaborating the supernormal cognition, is not the same as when he reflects, decides, and acts.

The magnetisers at the beginning of the nineteenth century called this functional transformation a "secondary state," signifying thereby that a new mental personality supervened, differing from that normal mental personality by peculiar properties.

M. de Fleurière, a metagnomic subject in the waking state, thus describes his psychic condition when using this special faculty :

"In what concerns myself, I am fully aware that my mental state has nothing in common with my usual psychic condition. I instantly enter a kind of second state. I am no longer the same man ; I neither see nor feel after the same manner. I experience a kind of duplication of personality ; or rather, it is as if a personality hidden in the deepest part of my being rose up and took the place of my normal personality. Nevertheless, it does not seem to me that my habitual psychism is completely evicted or abolished. Not so ; but under the conscious mind that directs my ordinary life, I feel the working of a subconscious intelligence quicker and better informed than the former, which has therefore a right to direct, to enlighten, and to complete it.

"If this state is prolonged, I feel myself literally intoxicated, as if by the rapture that is felt in musical or poetic composition, and to such a point that I often lose entirely the notion of the place where I am and of the objects that interest me. I enter and leave this state very quickly, almost as quickly as one opens or shuts one's eyes, so as to open or close contact with the external world.

"After long séances I am not in a condition less favourable to the exercise of this faculty, but quite contrariwise. I feel the rapture growing, and the more it grows, the greater is the mental exaltation which intensifies my faculty of supernormal vision." (Extract from a manuscript note by M. de Fleurière to Dr. Osty, May 22nd, 1922.)

In what does this second state consist, psycho-physiologically ? What happens in the nerve-centres of a metagnomic subject at the moment when the conscious mind ceases to work and the metanormal faculty comes into play ? Perhaps in the distant future this will be known.

All that can be said as yet is, that as soon as the second state comes into action, it manifests two paranormal psycho-physiological factors, (1) personal dissociation from psychic activity, and (2) a special sense—a differentiation of sensibilities other than those of the normal sensorial perceptions.

I. THE FUNCTIONAL DISSOCIATION OF PSYCHIC ACTIVITY

The normal genesis of ideas takes place under the impulse or the control of mental consciousness, which directs its activity, assigns its object, judges its products, and accepting or rejecting these, decides for or against an act. In the second state of metagnomic subjects the directing function of thought, attention, and will—in short, what modern psychologists call “the superior psychism,” no longer directs and controls the formation of ideas. Knowledge comes to the thought of the percipient by a functional system in which the conscious mind registers something already worked out, and then interprets and explains it. Sometimes its action is confined to taking cognizance of supernormal information unconsciously expressed.

There is not, as in the hypnotic state of ordinary persons, a diminution of consciousness which may extend to vanishing point, but only a rupture of the functional synergy between the conscious and subconscious planes of thought, transposing their activity.

A double psychic personality seems to be formed—the one which is connected by paranormal sensibility with the environment, and on data derived from it while in that condition, constructs knowledge inaccessible by ordinary sensorial channels; the other, the conscious psychic personality which knows nothing of the mental elaboration in progress and only intervenes to state and express its results.

This markedly differentiates the second state of metagnomic subjects, even those whose faculty is manifest only in a profound stage of artificial sleep, from the second state of normal persons brought to the same degree of hypnosis. These latter seem automata whose psychism is without volition and obeys every suggestion of the hypnotiser, whereas the mind of metagnomic subjects retains its full activity, its freedom of judgment, resists verbal suggestions, and keeps its spontaneity of expression.

This functional dissociation of psychic activities is a necessary condition for metagnomic faculty to come into action. Hysterical somnambulism occasionally brings this about, and for this reason it sometimes shows supernormal cognition. Similarly, natural sleep, somnolence, absorbing preoccupation, physical and mental fatigue, may bring about that dissociation, and occasionally

present accidental phenomena of hypercognition—presentiments, information called “telepathic,” and so on. The dissociation of psychic functions takes place according to modalities which vary with mental conditions.

Some percipients reach that state without effort or with very little effort: it suffices that they should voluntarily divert their attention for a moment, for them to become as it were spectators of hallucinations like those of a dream. By arresting for a moment their controlled thought they have waking dreams of past, present, and future actualities in the life of the human individual on whom their faculty is directed. Externally, nothing of this paranormal mental activity appears; they seem to think their supernormal thoughts just as anyone thinks, and they express them as one expresses ordinary thought.

For other subjects, also in the waking state, mental dissociation is less easy, and they reach it by artifices. Some concentrate their attention by looking at the lines of the hand, playing-cards, writing, a crystal ball, or some other object. Others start the psychic action of the subconscious by practising automatisms—table-rapping, planchette and alphabet, or automatic writing, etc.

There is another class of metagnomic subjects with whom functional liberation of the psychism appears only under hypnosis of different degrees of intensity.

With some the faculty appears in a slight degree of artificial sleep which they can themselves induce. As soon as they concentrate their thought on “going to sleep” motor reactions supervene, shown by agitation of the eyelids, slight starts, quickened breathing; then calmness succeeds, the eyelids close, and the voice says, “I am there; you can ask me questions.” From that moment except for the closed eyes, they act as do metagnomic subjects in the waking state, presenting like them, normal and paranormal functions of thought simultaneously. The experimenter can converse with them on anything in the intervals of metagnomic perception; the transposition of function takes place along with the change in the objective offered to their thought. The transition from normal to paranormal mentation is marked by a short pause and some spasmodic motor reactions.

Some few subjects, much more rarely met with, only show the faculty when in profound hypnosis. Madame Morel, from whom I have obtained several of the results quoted in this book, is of this type. She is hypnotized by the direct gaze, and suddenly falls into a sleep so profound that all mental life seems extinct in her brain; she seems a body without thought or spontaneity, keeping any attitude in which she may be placed. But as soon as her psychism is called into activity by questions, one is amazed

to find, in spite of the cataleptic state, the same intellectual activity as in the subjects whose faculty appears under light hypnosis or in the waking state.

As compared with the normal states of sleeping and waking common to all persons, these sensitives, according to each kind, appear to be sleeping or waking, whereas in reality there should be no reference to sleep, for the psychic functions are in full activity. Between the two extremes of seeming wakefulness and seeming sleep, the powers of other sensitives hold an intermediate place, sometimes approximating to sleep, sometimes very near to full wakefulness. A type often met with is as follows :

Pausing in the midst of a conversation, the subject wishes to use the faculty. He looks fixedly or closes his eyes, his eyelids flutter a little and his hands jerk slightly. Soon the informing mental images rise and he interprets them. This slight hypnoid trance¹ has brought a whole number of supernormal cognitions. But as soon as he has translated these into words, the subject is under the necessity of inducing a fresh trance, followed again by others if he desires to push his permetagnomic perceptions further ; so with such subjects the séance becomes an alternation of hypnoid and waking states. This is manifestly what takes place, though less obviously, with those who seem to exercise their special faculty under the normal conditions of mentation.

We may sum up the above considerations by saying that the metagnomic faculty appears and becomes active in a psychological condition in which the psychism works under other incitement than those of normal control and consciousness, and that this condition is reached by means, and in mental states, which vary with the subjects, giving multiple semblances to the same process.

2. THE PARANORMAL SENSE

The differentiations of sensibility in normal modes of sensorial perception do not exhaust the capacity of human nerve-substance to receive impressions, for observation shows, and experiment demonstrates, that there are individuals sensitive to modes of energy that do not affect the large majority of mankind.

Certain individuals manifest a sensibility beyond the normal sensorial scale by a kind of metanormal sense which, according to their psychological diversities, is subdiverted into secondary modes which allow of paranormal perception in different fields of activity.

It would be superfluous to enter here into long discussion on the metanormal forms of sensibility. The reader will have acquired the conviction of their actuality and some notion of

¹ Trance (Lat. *transire*), passage from normal to paranormal state.

the kind of information they convey, in having read the foregoing artificial gradation of the phenomena of supernormal cognition.

Limiting our consideration to the single and principal case when the metanormal sense receives impressions from the focus of energy represented by a human personality, that metanormal sense is seen to be governed by forces that produce different effects.

Adopting part of the experiments of the magnetizers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Émile Boirac has verified that certain persons are sensitive to dynamic emanations from human beings (more especially to some who radiate more freely), and that those persons react differently to that stimulus, by hypnotic sleep among other modes.

In M. de Fleurière I have met with a subject who, in addition to the more usual metagnomic activity, has the power of perceiving what he calls "the fluid" of persons whom he touches. These fluidic emanations enter his consciousness under the semblance of coloured visions and tactile sensations so precise and sharply characterised that they are to him complexes which delineate human individualities. The touch of no two persons gives him the same total sensation. A customary proceeding of his is to distinguish, by mere contact of hands, the personal "fluid" from those of others present, whom he recognizes if they have previously been presented to the test of his faculty, and whom he can even name if the names are known to him.

Another functional mode of the metanormal sense, well known to psychologists, is impressionability to the radiations of energy from human thought, ultimating in the reconstruction of ideas and feelings in words.

Receptivity to voluntarily suggested thought is very rare indeed. Rather less rare is sensibility to thought not voluntarily suggested, but under the dominance of conscious attention. Much more frequently met with is impressionability to thought not suggested, nor formulated, nor consciously remembered, especially when it lies, as if statically, in the reservoirs of memory.

This latter mode of metanormal receptive sensibility connects immediately with the special sensorial system of metagnomic percipients cognizing individual lives. Their metagnomic sense is so impressionable to subconscious thought (so-called) that in experiments directed to obtain information which that thought (as usually understood) could not supply, its transmission from the individual cognized to the cognizing subject is a stumbling-block very difficult to avoid, and, as will be seen further on, a chief cause of error.

In what does the special sense of metagnomic subjects consist? The answer to this question must be left to the future. We must

begin at the beginning and consider under what conditions it functions, how it is connected with the forces that impress it, and from what mysterious source it derives information that none of the normal senses can directly register.

3. HOW THE SPECIAL SENSE OF METAGNOMIC SUBJECTS IS CONNECTED WITH HUMAN BEINGS PRESENTED TO IT

Three experimental conditions enable one to gather a general notion how the metanormal sense can be placed in relations with the human individuality presented for cognizance.

1. The personality to be cognized is present.
2. This personality is distant in space.
3. When it is distant both in space and time.

The human personality on whom the supernormal faculty is directed is in presence of the percipient.

Under this condition different percipients will behave in different ways, or each may have his own according to his particular aptitudes. A visible link between the percipient and the person to be cognized is not always required, mere proximity is sufficient; the former desires to be informed concerning the life of the person near him, and the faculty comes into action more or less quickly and more or less effectively. Percipients who act in this way usually ask that only the one person besides the experimenter may be present. It is a fact full of meaning and of high psychophysiological significance that when a number of persons are present at an experiment the information that reaches the subject does not necessarily apply to the person assigned for cognition, but may apply, even occasionally by preference, to one of the others. The percipient as a psychic instrument seems to be connected with many sources of information, and must make an effort, not always successful, to concentrate on the personality assigned for cognition. This is specially the case with waking subjects; those who are hypnotized are more easily linked to the person they have been ordered to study.

But with whatever degree of facility the percipient concentrates on the one, the presence of others brings about a lessening of his perceptive powers and causes great fatigue, as if by keeping to the objective assigned him he were constrained to an exhausting mental effort.

Most subjects, too, are under a physiological compulsion to connect themselves directly with the person to be cognized, at least at the beginning of a séance and often during its whole course. Contact with the hand is the method generally used. Another

fact worthy of remark which completes the lesson above suggested is that the subject rarely strays from the one with whom contact is maintained, even though others be present ; and the séances are also less exhausting.

There are some subjects, when exercising metagnomy on persons close to them, who prefer indirect to direct contact. Mlle de Berly asks the person to be cognized to cover a piece of paper with writing, or any kind of drawing or signs. She looks at this or crushes it in her hands, and if the mental images are slow to form, she places it to her forehead, an action which seems the most effective mode of arousing the faculty. By proceeding in this manner she directs her faculty entirely upon the writer, whereas with nothing in her hands she would fall under the influence of one of the other persons present. The written paper links her to the person to be delineated.

Subjects of this kind could act by direct touch if they wished. When they have recourse to an intermediary object writing or any other, it is because experience has shown them that their metanormal sense is more effectively impressed in that way, direct contact disturbing their sensibility overmuch.

The human personality on whom the supernormal faculty is directed is distant in space.

Under this condition the sensibility of metagnomic subjects manifests in different ways according to circumstances or to special methods peculiar to the subject. These can be reduced to a few leading types. A percipient sometimes finds himself unexpectedly linked to some human being at a distance, known or unknown to him or to any other person present. In cases of this kind percipients are generally in a state of functional psychic dissociation ; that is, they are using their metanormal sense at the moment that this phenomenon supervenes.

The reader will remember that it was during a séance of supernormal cognition and while in hypnoid trance that Count Hugo Baschiéri was suddenly informed, and made the unexpected revelation of the assassination of Jaurés, near the Boulevard des Italiens. Count Baschiéri was in a reunion of psychists at a considerable distance from the scene of the crime (*vide* p. 37).

This fact, which I have quoted in my book, *Lucidité et Intuition*, comes out in its full significance here. I reproduce it because it is very representative of similar incidents in the lives of metagnomic sensitives.

" Having gone to bed late one night, Mme Fraya had, towards morning, a dream in which she seemed to be exercising her faculty.

" Opening the door between her private room and the drawing-room, she sees approaching her a lady with a face worn by suffering. She begs

her to sit down, takes her hands, and begins to delineate the sorrows of her present life: 'Great suffering dominates you; you are stricken in one who is most dear to you—your son. . . . Without any apparent cause he has latterly been mentally afflicted, and so seriously that internment has been considered necessary. He is now in an asylum.'"

At this stage in her dream Mme Fraya was awakened by her maid, who came to say that the postman required her signature. She got up, put on a dressing-gown, signed, and then went back to sleep. The dream was resumed at the point broken off. . . . "The doctors who advised the internment and those at the asylum think the case incurable . . . and the grief due to this has overwhelmed you with despair. I shall, however, give you some consolation by telling you that after a few months your son will be given back to you entirely cured. . . . You will be told of his cure, and you will yourself go to fetch him. . . ."

On waking, this professional dream remained so vividly in remembrance that Mme Fraya could have repeated the words almost textually. She wondered at the creative power of imagination to invent scenes so like reality. Some days passed, and her many engagements caused the dream to pass into the background of memory.

About a week later, during one of her busy afternoons, when she went to open the door of her room to admit one of her clients, the lady who came towards her was the lady of her dream. Mme Fraya then, without having recourse to her metagnomic faculty and without any intermediary hallucination, only had to repeat from memory the consultation made in dream. The sorrowing mother was absolutely stupefied with amaze.

Phenomena of this kind are so usual with M. de Fleurière that he always has a pencil and paper on his night-table to note down the knowledge that comes to him either in dreams or during insomnia, concerning persons whom he may or may not have seen, and are known or unknown to him. And it sometimes happens that this wonderful percipient meets in his reception room some one coming to him for the first time, and without preamble places before him a written answer to the preoccupations that have caused the visit.

For comparison, and to show that this kind of phenomena were known to antiquity, I will recall that, according to Philostratus, the biographer of Apollonius of Tyana, the latter when at Ephesus in Asia Minor revealed the assassination of the Emperor Domitian at Rome at the very moment of its occurrence.¹

Such facts lead us to compare metagnomic subjects to our receivers of electric vibrations without any perceptible links with the source of energy. Wireless telegraphy may be taken as an analogue to telepathy, in view of our ignorance of the physical mechanism of human thought.

There are, however, other conditions under which metagnomic faculty is exercised on distant individuals and without any visible link, but under aspects which make the phenomena appear so complex that there is no scientific instrument with which we can compare them.

¹ *Apollonius of Tyana*, by Chassang (Didier, 1862).

Experimenting with a human personality placed in presence of a metagnomic percipient we constantly observe that in addition to the particular life cognized, knowledge is shown of other lives connected with the first, and more especially we see the power of taking cognition of some one of these, however far distant, as if he were there present. Proximity to some one human being is, for some percipients, a sufficient link to enable their faculties to act upon distant persons.

One is then tempted to think the phenomenon an unconscious transmission of thought between percipient and the person there present, because the details given are usually known to that person or to the experimenter; but when the revelations made on the distant person are unknown and unknowable by them and investigation confirms them as veridical, some other explanation must be sought.

This mental cognition, whose sole link is the proximity to the thought of a person close by, is so easy to certain percipients that it occurs spontaneously in their ordinary lives, giving a curious effect.

Mlle de Berly, a metagnomic percipient in the waking state, has given me, especially on holidays passed in the same place, a standing instance of immediate and spontaneous insight into individual lives.

In the course of conversations when some person is alluded to whom I have known or met, or whom I am intending to see, Mlle de Berly, as soon as such a person is thought of, will break in:

"This gentleman is sympathetic . . . medium height, brown hair, dark eyes . . . in a conspicuous situation . . . and what a nice family circle . . . a grown-up girl who is about to be married . . . two young boys . . . his wife . . . I see his wife. Her health is very poor . . . poor health in the future . . ."

For hours her conversation is dotted with metagnomic perceptions of distant persons who often count for nothing in the life of the person she is speaking to, or even have never been and never will be in contact with it. A thought passing over the mental screen, or a few words that express it, are the slender basis from which the faculty seizes at once on a distant person. The mind of the percipient seems able to communicate on the instant with any human being provided that some slight hint be given.

And in this condition the cognizance which is possible for human individuals living and distant in space, is also possible for those who are dead and distant in time.

A spoken phrase, the sight of a photograph or a tomb, calls up a vision of the defunct and reflects his living form. Her faculty takes hold of a vanished life whose general course it

delineates, or seizes on various episodes at the fancy of the metagnomy.

Here is one instance of supernormal cognition of a deceased person which arose from a word or a thought.¹ I quote it only because the circumstances under which it came allowed me to take it down word for word.

On July 27th, 1920, towards 9 p.m. some members of my family were conversing with Mlle de Berly on spiritualism, and asked her if she had ever tried table-rapping—the ordinary means of spirit-communication. She said, "Yes, but very little; it tires me to very little purpose." This conversation took place in my study where I was writing some letters before a séance with this subject.

I said, "I have never seen you use the table; will you try this now?" This was done. All placed themselves round a small table, and placed their hands on it. I remained at my writing-table to take down the letters corresponding to the raps.

As soon as the table moved I said, "Call one of my relations who died a short time since."

This gave no clue to Mlle de Berly, who had never seen the person of whom I was thinking; and none of the members of my family guessed who this might be.

The table began to rap; but the first word was scarcely spelt out before Mlle de Berly took her hands off, saying, "This tires me, and it is very slow. What is the use of a table? I see this gentleman . . . rather stout, big eyes, round face, strongly marked eyebrows, thickish lips . . . ears rather large and flat . . . a heavy walk . . . he was about fifty-one, yellow complexion and bilious-looking eyes.

"An honest gentleman, good and kindly . . . a good husband . . . rather susceptible . . . good-natured, but his nerves were shaken towards the end of his life and he was liable to anger. Very particular about his clothes. He has been ill a long time—at least ten years; thought of nothing but his ailments.

"Heart weak, kidneys ill . . . legs swelled. Poor man, he suffered much; and how chilly he was; feet always cold. Giddy at times, and sore throat. He has a son, a tall young man: the upper part of his face resembles his father, but he takes his character from his mother. His wife is pleasant-mannered and kind, rather economical . . . likes order . . . rather weak in health. She is rather sad just now . . . she is giving up her house. . . .

"This gentleman had much confidence in you. He tells me to say that in a short time some one will replace him in his business; it will be sold to advantage. That person will be good-natured and rather lively . . . thirty-seven to thirty-eight years of age. He will be a married man, medium height; will be recommended by some one. . . ."

¹ The reader should understand from the first, that Mlle de Berly, having a visual hallucination of the persons evoked by her thoughts, whether living or not, is persuaded that in the case of the dead, their surviving personalities appear to her and inspire her. Hence her spiritualistic diction.

I note, *passim*, that in the case of hallucination of a living person she does not think that person to be before her.

I note also that the appearances under which she sees the deceased are those of corporeal life, and vary according to the periods in their lives of which her faculty is cognizant.

I said, "Ask that friend to give me some convincing proof that it is really this personality that communicates through you."

After a few moments of silence Mlle de B. said, "He tells me to tell you that you stopped his smoking." We could get no further proof of identity.

I had thought of a man with whom I was much in sympathy, a notary, who died in June, 1920, from an indisposition known medically for ten years past. Appearance, malady, and character all correctly described. His wife, Mme P——, left the house in which she had lived with her husband for twenty-five years on January 12th, 1921.

The business had just been made over to a substitute who in no way corresponded to the person described. But as I write these lines the present successor not having been officially accepted, the premonition cannot be verified.¹

I had certainly induced Mr. P—— to give up smoking. He was a great smoker, so much so that in spite of my constantly repeated embargo, that in the last years of his life when suffering from much depression he begged for one or two cigarettes. He found it very hard to give up tobacco.²

I have experienced under many forms this incomprehensible assistance given to metagnomic faculty by more or less formed and more or less accurate knowledge in some person present, enabling the percipient to delineate the state of a distant person.

So also, when one experiments in successive periodical séances with one percipient on the same distant person, it is easy, however little one may be aware of it beforehand, to verify that what one learns concerning the person between two séances allows the percipient, in the next séance, to correct, improve, and develop the previous revelations and to progress a little further into the unknown. In presence of the thought, hyper-cognition is further informed and stimulated. It is by reason of this mental aid that some subjects whose metagnomic perceptions are awakened by the artifice of laying cards, ask that one should concentrate thought on the absent person as to whom information is required through the cards. I have verified, by chance in the first place, and afterwards by deliberate intention, a change in the metagnomic perceptions from one person to another by changing my own mental representation from the one to the other when I had acquired the certainty that cartomancy conveys nothing to the percipient, but that the thoughts of the experimenter can place the sensibility in contact with the informing sources of supernormal cognition.

¹ In Jan., 1922, the first successor, not having been acceptable to the Chamber of Notaries, had to retire, and was replaced by a young lawyer of thirty-six, married, and agreeing with the description given.

² About a month before his death, Mr. P., in course of a conversation in which I endeavoured to raise his hopes of cure, said to me, "My dear doctor, I know that I am about to die. If there is an after-life I promise to do all I can to let you know."

If Mr. P., deceased, had really been the inspiring source of Mlle de Berly's information, as her manner of speaking suggests, there were so many characteristic revelations that he might have made that he would never have stopped at the one given, commonplace and proving nothing.

Besides the conditions described above, in which the percipient is connected with individual lives by the link of the corporeal presence or the thoughts of a given person, there is another means of cognition which seems more material—the contact with some object belonging to, or touched by, an absent person. The percipient then behaves as if that person were present.¹

Our knowledge of Physics is too imperfect to give a hint of the mechanism of this strange fact. We can as yet only have a surface knowledge of it—can only take cognizance of verifiable connections between the sensibility of percipient and the material objects which serve as links for the exercise of their metagnostic faculty in space and time.

The objects that stimulate the faculty vary with different percipients; they have preferences and incompatibilities. On an extended experience it would seem possible to grade the effectiveness of such objects: at any rate the link seems stronger or weaker according to the special sensibility of each subject.

The method most usually favourable for stimulation of hypercognition, is to put into the hands of the percipient some object possessed by (or, rather, habitually touched by) the distant person to be described. Any kind of object will serve, success turns on degrees of sensitiveness. The faculty is best excited in some subjects by contact with some actual organic part of the distant person—hair, nail-parings, a tooth, blood, or a fragment from an amputation; or again by a piece of underclothing, of a coat, a jewel, or any other object which has been habitually touched much by one person and little by any other. Others prefer a written paper, provided it has not been much handled since it was first written, etc.

But even with percipients who habitually proceed in this manner, it is not always necessary that the object should pertain intimately and exclusively to one person. The link may be so slight that I have sometimes been able to induce perception by a hypnotized subject on distant persons by giving a book from my shelves which has been read by the person in question months before, or even by touching the arm of a chair in which that person has sat.

The link seems still more tenuous when the object successfully used has never been actually touched by the person but only formed a part of their intimate surroundings.

¹ This experimental condition is known in metapsychic literature under the name of "psychometry," a name given, I think, by Buchanan, a professor of anthropology, about the middle of the nineteenth century.

This term should be abolished. Its etymology has nothing to do with the phenomenon described. It is rightly used in psychology to indicate the system of measurements for intellectual and moral qualities. Two meanings to the same word create a confusion which should be avoided.

We may think to go still further in inconsistency when dealing with a photograph. The image, which is but the result of light reflected from a human being on unstable chemical compounds, is occasionally a sufficient link with the distant person.

Yet more : metagnomic perception of a distant person unknown to the experimenter, has been obtained by putting into the hand of the percipient a card from which a photograph of that person had previously been unstuck. This has been stated to have come about by accident, and I have reproduced the effect.

Pushing investigation on this special sense of percipients still further, I have been able to release metagnomic faculty by the touch of a photograph of some object belonging to the distant person. The reader may refer back to the case in which Mme Morel gave a fragmentary and not improbable reconstruction of a person and scene very remote in time from the photograph of a glass ampulla taken from a tomb. Under these conditions she might well have been led to speak of many other things having no relation with the object.

I may add that manual touch, though usual, is not always necessary ; some percipients receive metagnomic information by merely looking at the object. Mlle de Berly gives supernormal cognitions by merely looking at a photograph.

Observed thus in its several manifestations, the faculty of receiving metanormal impressions seems fantastic. Experiments must be frequent, exact, and rigorously directed to a definite purpose, before one can be sure of being in contact with a reality and not in any way illusionised.

What is it that links the faculty of supernormal cognition with the intermediary object ? It is useless to look for this by observing most percipients.

All of them are not capable of working on distant persons. Those who are, can rarely be used for any effective study of the phenomenon itself. One, for instance, will look at or touch a bit of writing and will reveal the physical state of the writer ; another presses a lock of hair to the forehead and speaks of the person from whom it was taken ; and there the experiment ends and research is brought to a standstill. Nothing more can be learned.

By thinking over the many ways by which different percipients obtain cognition of a person distant in space, comparisons are drawn which shed no light on one another, and the experimenter can only avow his complete inability to understand the fact.

I might be myself in this state of discouragement if I had not met, in Mme Morel, a percipient with whom the study of the part played by the intermediary object is really fertile in results. This study is assisted both by the state of deep hypnosis in which her faculty acts, and by the fact that it is specially excited by that

modality of energy whereby each of us impregnates whatever he touches or things about him, which is the stimulus to metagnomic perception of distant persons. At this stage of our exploration of supernormal cognition I cannot delay to set out in detail the series of experiments instituted with the limited view of discovering exactly what sort of stimulus an object touched by a human being affords to metagnomic subjects.

I can only summarize the results, whose accuracy can be checked by repeating the experiments. They are true for that particular percipient, and are of value also as bearing on the intelligibility of the behaviour of metagnomic subjects in their differing use of intermediary objects.

I. Any object placed in the hands of Mme Morel almost immediately arouses the mental perception of one of the persons who have previously touched it, and allow of her receiving knowledge concerning that person's life.

II. Each human individual who has touched the object may be evoked and cognized. The experimenter cannot know in advance which of the personalities will first come up. To reach the personality on whom investigation is desired it is sometimes necessary to dismiss a varying number of those that are not required.

III. Human individuals connected with the lives of the persons who have touched the object may also, though more rarely, be cognized. This fact has caused some persons to take for errors revelations that were only misdirection of the faculty.

IV. Each of the persons thus evoked is perceived distinctly, without there ever being transpositions or confusion of the physical states of the different persons who have touched the object.

V. As soon as mental evocation of the personality has been obtained the object that called it up may be taken from the percipient and destroyed. The percipient, nevertheless, continues to describe the states of life in the distant person just as if he were present, or at any rate as if the object were still being held.

VI. Every one of the personalities which have been evoked by contact can be cognized with reference to the totality of his being, in its whole duration and extension; at whatever moment in the life contact may have been made. For instance, with an object touched twenty years before and never since, the percipient can cognize the life as it is at present and can recognize its course.

VII. The physical and chemical nature of the objects is not a perceptible factor in their usefulness. With Mme M., however, the objects that stimulate best are those with which contact has been frequent and prolonged, and which have not been touched by others.

VIII. Duration of contact between an object and a human being does not give to the former a proportional degree of stimulating power. The effectiveness of the object practically resides in its having been touched; but the preponderant factor in its effect would seem to lie in the quality of the person who has touched it, and also in some kind of physical sympathy between the sensibility of the subject and some emanation included in the object. The same object that has been touched by several persons does not arouse perception of any one preponderant individuality in various percipients.

IX. Lapse of time does not seem to lessen the stimulative power of an object, as far as can be judged by experiments that admit of real check.

X. Placing in contact diverse things intended to serve as objects for experiment on different persons at a distance does not in any way modify their respective values as means of evocation. Practically objects do not communicate to one another whatever it is that we communicate to them, that eventually puts us in relation with the metanormal faculty.

XI. Errors in a metagnomic experiment on a present person may recur in the same form in further experiments made with an intermediary object and by an experimenter who knows neither the personality described nor the revelations previously made.

Examination under parallel experimental conditions of what is given in presence or in absence of the person delineated soon shows the parity in the exercise of the faculty in either case. The percipient acts in the same manner, working along his own lines of sensibility, whether without any visible link, by direct contact or by indirect contact, nothing differing but the distance in space separating the cognizer from the cognized.

I will not labour the point. No comment on the conclusions given above would be complete at this stage. I will deduce in due time from experimental cases the nature of the support which intermediary objects give to the faculty of the percipients.

The human personality on whom the supernormal faculty is directed is distant in Time.

Under these conditions the metagnomic subject acts exactly as in the last case, and is connected with the lives of persons deceased, or living and distant by the same methods.

The presence and thought of some living person who has known the deceased or an object touched by him, a photograph, or what not, starts the metagnomic faculty into action on a personality deceased a long or a short time ago.

All that has been said as to supernormal perception of persons distant in space applies to those distant in time. The psychic *processus* is precisely the same. Experimental investigation does not show the difference that our minds obstinately persist in making between the case of the living and that of the dead. As far as the faculty of supernormal cognition is concerned, to be living or to have lived is the same.

When a percipient is put to work on a living person there present, he may perceive, from the same starting-point and in the same mental manner, different persons that have taken part in the life delineated.

He may speak of those still living, of dead acquaintances, and also of unknown progenitors. Living and dead, those distant in space or time are mentally evoked in connection with the one life delineated and by the same psychic process.

When the percipient is working on the life of a deceased person by means of an intermediary object, he receives the same knowledge as if that person were living and at a distance.

With a subject devoid of any notions as to the nature of his powers, the metagnomic phenomenon, under all conditions of research, presents itself unalloyed ; it remains the same under varied experimental conditions. The psychic instrument exempt from any mental deformations, functions correctly and produces unalloyed supernormal cognitions. With such subjects pure metagnomic activity can be studied.

But when using percipients who have ideas on the subject, spiritist notions for instance, the aspect of their metagnomy is changed ; the regular play of the faculty is masked by illusionary semblances which sterilise research.

If the spiritist percipient receives visual cognitions, is *clair-voyant* as it is called, he takes the mental hallucinatory image of the deceased for a real phantasmal manifestation. In describing the form, the character, the manner of speaking of the deceased, he thinks he is describing his present condition. Hence comes the persistence of individual defects in the spiritualist Beyond, round which so much vain discussion has centred. The percipient speaks to his apparition (which is an excellent way of getting information upon it), and he attributes the mental informing images that he gets in reply to conscious inspiration from the dead. Hence, too, come those dialogues between mediums and defunct entities which often result in supernormal cognitions, but more often in mediocre romances on the after-life.

When these spiritualist percipients receive their information from auditive, tactile and motor sources, the result of the doctrinal education is the same ; it is thought to be deceased personalities who consciously and voluntarily give information on their own past lives and even on those of other persons there present.

This mistake has given birth, especially of late years, to many facile books which have conveyed premature consolations to humanity. The enthusiastic reception that some of these have received are a sad and discouraging spectacle for those who give themselves up to the difficult pursuit of truth.

I will not insist further on these mystical deformations of metagnomic faculty. Born of ignorance and accepted by ignorance, they will disappear as exact research introduces light and order into the metapsychic chaos in which aspirations, frustrated elsewhere, are incautiously put forward.¹

¹ I do not deny the survival of human personality. I neither deny nor assert it. It remains to be demonstrated experimentally. I only say that the secrets of Nature are not to be penetrated by unconsciously falsifying Nature. A doctrine is only legitimate when it follows on research. The writers to whom I allude have not investigated scientifically. They have been misled by the spiritist tint in the mentality of the mediums with whom they have experimented.

IV. FLUCTUATIONS OF THE METAGNOMIC FACULTY DURING EXPERIMENT

When a metagnomic subject has entered the psychological state which hands over the subconscious play of his mind to informing influences and he has been placed in connection with a human personality, his metanormal faculty is in a condition to enter into action.

This action would certainly follow if the percipient were not a living psychic instrument, and therefore unstable, and if the personality to be delineated were not also living and unstable.

This inference from experiment explains the variations in the quality of metagnomic faculty. In the chapter devoted to errors I will complete my critical examination of these functional vicissitudes.

If metagnomy were the result of inspiration from an after-life, these two factors of variation—the psycho-physiological state of the percipient and the psycho-physiological state of the person perceived, would have no place. The function of the person on whom the metagnomy is directed would be to listen, to serve as an objective, and to register a phenomenon produced upon him but without his active participation. But the facts are not so. The remainder of this book will be an analytical study of the connected activities of the cognizing and cognized psychisms in working out the metagnomic result.

As with other functional modalities of the psychic constitution the faculty of hypercognition is liable to many inhibiting influences which diminish it more or less strongly, for a longer or shorter time, and may suppress it for considerable periods, or even entirely.

Everything that affects the brain unfavourably causes variations in metagnomic faculty—strong or persistent emotions, anxiety, moral disquiet, violent passions, and the like; or physical exhaustion—overwork, mental or bodily; illness in any form, more especially digestive affections, which sensitives are so liable, which are so disturbing to the higher functions of thought.¹

But besides persistent moral and organic causes which may bring about persistent weakening of metagnomic faculty, this faculty is found to vary from day to day and even from hour to hour under the influence of petty and undefinable causes both internal and external: the weather, insufficient sleep, some

¹ There are, however, some maladies, such as hysteria, which momentarily depress the higher functions of psychic control, and thus give rise to a transitory hypercognition.

unpleasant news, vexation, slight digestive difficulty—any of these little things may produce psychic trouble sufficient to vary the metagnomonic faculty from day to day quite disproportionately to the cause. An excellent percipient is sometimes very imperfect, or even destitute of power.

The experimenter using a subject on fixed days and times is soon convinced that in contrast with the physicist who finds his instruments always in the same state, he can never foresee in what state he will find his subject.

The best output is obtained when the percipient is morally quiet, in the best possible health, and if experiment is confined to those times when the subject feels most disposed to work.

To these causes of metagnomonic variation, inherent in psychophysiological condition of percipients, must be added other causes connected with the personalities assigned as objectives.

However little the attitude or the words of another person may express ill-will, if that ill-will exists, the hypersensitive mentality of percipients is disturbed, and the work of hypercognition proceeds imperfectly or is inhibited.

It is not even necessary that any antagonism should be manifested. The antipathy of a percipient for some other person is sometimes intuitive and reacts on the psychic faculty. A few more sésances generally allow of this repulsion being overcome.

Though secondary, these causes are none the less operative in many experiments which are more or less vitiated thereby.

But the principal cause of variations on the side of the cognized person is to be found in his psycho-physical qualities, unknown but inferable from results, which cause the same human personality to be differently sensed by percipients.

When a series of persons are presented to the supernormal perception of a single subject, or when the same person is presented to a series of percipients, it is always observable that some persons are easily delineated by all the percipients, but most are described well, moderately well, or badly according to the percipient used. Some very few personalities are found difficult by all the percipients.

This very important fact, to which we shall have to return, seems comparable with the correlation between transmitting, receiving, and transforming physical instruments, the receiver being only capable of working on dynamic modes corresponding to its functional construction.

This brief survey of some factors in the fluctuations of metagnomonic faculty is sufficient to show the delicacy required for experiment in a matter where both the instrument used and the object upon which it is directed are living and unstable psychic constitutions.

CHAPTER III

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SEQUENCES OF METAGNOMY IN ACTION

WHAT comes to pass in the psychism of a metagnomic subject in action may be represented diagrammatically as follows :

The first phase is the subconscious elaboration of the supernormal cognitions.

In a second phase, these elaborated cognitions are manifest under the form of mental images of different sensorial kinds, more or less accurately representative, and often extending to hallucinatory objectification.

Finally, the intellectual function called "conscious" comes into play, interprets the images that have arisen from the depths of thought, and translates them into words.

The first phase of the process generative of supernormal cognition is very obscure ; hidden from direct observation by the experimenter and even from the subject. It begins as soon as contact is established between the percipient and the person to be cognized, and ends when the informative mental images arouse the attention of the former. According to the acuity of the percipient and to some psycho-physical quality in the person cognized, the duration of this first phase varies from one to a few seconds.

While it is progress, percipients usually take a thoughtful attitude, which may or may not be accompanied by more or less strong motor reflexes—muscular jerks in the hand touching the person to be delineated, slight convulsive movements of the eyelids, shivers of the body, and the like. Their consciousness of this phase is confused and amounts to varied sensations which reveal nothing on the latent processes of thought, but indicate to the percipient that the metagnomic work is being done and that mental images will project it upon the psychic screen. Mme Morel (a hypnotic subject) has the sensation of light supervening on the darkness of her sleep as soon as her faculty begins to operate. M. de Fleurière (a waking subject) on contact with a person feels "a fluid" mounting to his brain like a mild electric current, there lighting up various colours whose associations

differ according to the persons. Some subjects only feel the visible motor action. Others feel a giddiness, a kind of intoxication. It is rare to find any for whom this obscure phase is only an awaiting, without any special sensation. Many subjects, especially those who work in the waking state, have a feeling of sadness, of suffering, or of joy, anticipating what the mental images will reveal in detail; a synthesis of the supernormal cognition in course of development.

During this obscure phase, externally imperceptible, and of which the percipients themselves can grasp nothing, which only lasts a few seconds at most, cognizer and cognized are placed in relations: during this phase the elaboration of supernormal cognitions takes place: and in it the mental images most fitted to transfer cognition from the unconscious to the conscious are sought, found, organized, and developed into representations. This complicated mental work is instantaneous—very different from the classical analysis of the functions of thought!

The metagnomic phenomenon becomes apparent at the moment when the mental representations arise. It then seems to begin, whereas it is really completed. The work of supernormal cognition is fully accomplished outside the consciousness of the percipient, in an area of thought of which he is unaware and would remain in ignorance of, but for the special revelations it brings.

This first phase, wherein resides the whole secret of supernormal cognition and also that of human personality, cannot as yet be studied directly. Only by working round it can we form some idea of what takes place within it. Long and difficult investigation will at some future day give the answer to this psychological enigma. I shall here only take up an analytic study from the moment that the process that generated metagnomy becomes apparent. A clear view of all that is actually open to observation defines the limits of obscurity, and prepares the way for further attempts at solution.

Before going further, it must be thoroughly understood that the sequence of mental work as above described does not represent the succession of events at an experimental séance. The emergence of a set of cognitions marks the completion of the cycle of psychologic action which generates the metagnomic phenomenon. A séance is made up of repetitions of these triple phases.

Some consideration of the functioning of thought are here required. It is admitted and taught that thought functions under two conditions: (1) accompanied by a feeling by which thought is directed on itself and is able to direct and control itself; and, (2) without this feeling.

Under the first condition mental work is said to be conscious, and under the second subconscious or subliminal.

Our intellectual tendency to make partitions in the continuous and to petrify life in diagrams, has distinguished two stages in the human mind—a superior psychism which directs and an inferior psychism which is directed; or is automatic, according to circumstances.

A few years ago the work of the subconscious mind began to be studied; and observation of the facts of so-called mental dissociation—physiological states (dreams and abstraction . . .), pathological states (neuroses, delirium, mental affection . . .), para-physiological states (hypnosis . . .) has revealed psychic activities in which conscious and voluntary direction is absent. There really appeared to be two functional systems of thought ordinarily in synergetic action, but able to function separately. As this concept of a gradation of function made intelligible pathological and physiological states till then obscure, the study of those states and the concept that arose from it, led men to think that they had probed thought to the bottom and taken the measure of its extent. It was spoken of as a mechanism, complex indeed, but relatively easy to take to pieces by analysis, and put together again by synthesis, thus explaining its regular functioning and its perturbations. It was not perceived that to study human thought in neurotics, insane, and hypnotized persons was indeed a means of knowing some modes of its function, but only the modes that are conditioned by those special states.

This early and very useful information derived from experimental method applied to the study of thought, fairly enslaved many minds. Most teachers of psychology are still imprisoned in this structure raised around one restricted aspect of mental activity, and do not seek to look further. As soon, however, as we begin to observe the output of thought apart from its ordinary exercise and from the special states which have given rise to the concept described above, modern psychological knowledge is assessable at its true value—precarious, teaching nothing, absolutely nothing, on the nature, the extent, and the capacities of thought.

The “superior psychism,” the “inferior psychism,” the Conscious, the Subconscious—what are these but words proclaiming our ignorance, mere didacticisms always found totally wanting in power, and inadequate to explain realities.

To read works on “the inferior psychism” is to be aware of a distressing effort to justify this false distinction. The attributes of the superior psychism are set aside by the definition, but in the course of analysis they are given back one by one, without any exception at all. The inferior psychism is allowed to have will,

spontaneity, consciousness of its work, memory of its output, direction in the genesis of ideas, a constructive power yielding marvellous creations, and so on. In short, if the psychologist were to be deprived of the verbal labels affixed to unreal things, he would, when confronted with certain cases of mental function, be unable to distinguish the conscious from the subconscious, or to perceive two psychisms at all.

We are in presence of illusions resulting from limited observation and naïve generalisations arising from mere verbalism. Let us not be misled by them.

Already our schematic gradations split all to pieces when we study the functions of thought in cases where eclipse of conscious attention *increases* creative power instead of lessening it.

Are not the creations of artists, literary men, and innovators in science elaborated in a region removed from all feeling of control and direction, deep below the surface of the mind? Do they not rise fully formed into the field of consciousness? The inspiration of the artist, the intuition of the man of science, the mysterious source of genius, . . . all these are the results of latent mental work by the pseudo-inferior psychism, so rich in its capacities that most leaders of thought try to stimulate it by artificial aids, of which fact the monographs on illustrious men furnish some curious instances.

When we approach the study of the supernormal manifestations of thought, our psychological certitudes are of no use whatsoever. Useful as explanations of a disordered mind or of a hypnoidal state, they are here empty of all meaning. The avowal of ignorance comes from the researcher half automatically, like a reflex action.

It is no longer possible to consider the human being as an aggregate of thought-producing mechanism. The evidence compels admission that we are in presence of a dynamo-psychic focus whence emanate manifestations of a power whose limits we cannot define. Beyond consciousness we discover the power to transform living matter, to deprive it of form, to exteriorise it from the body and make it into new and living (ectoplasmic) forms. Beyond the Conscious is found ability to perceive the (normally) imperceptible and to know the (normally) unknowable. Deep in the human being are found in miniature the attributes with which philosophies have adorned the God-concept—creative power and knowledge outside Space and Time. And none can presume to say how much more may yet be discovered by exact, methodical, and progressive investigation.

There are no *stages* in human thought, there are but different conditions and many purposes in its functioning.

Working on the ordinary sensorial data it usually arrives at

that comparison of appearances and notion of interrelations which are the only definitely useful ideas in practical life. That is its constant and usual function.

But under exceptional conditions and with exceptional persons, it is capable of far more, and this shows that in working on the reports of the senses it is only adapting itself to the more immediately useful and pressing demands of life. The facts of telepathy that appear now and again, reveal unexpected psychical faculties in persons who showed nothing exceptional. Moreover, the faculty in regular metagnomic subjects shows a permanent manifestation of transcendental thought : and we certainly cannot know, in the short time that this has been observed and considering the small number of percipients, how far supernormal manifestations may extend nor whether other forms of it may not be expected.

Therefore, when we speak of the functions of thought, we are speaking of a psychic power of unknown extent and capacity, and we ought not to shackle ourselves with the words, the doctrines, and the concepts of a passing day.

How does cognition represent itself to a psychism acting transcendently ? That is a question whose answer is beyond our present means of investigation, and we cannot even guess how to set about acquiring this knowledge.

In metagnomic subjects we only perceive the results of this latent mode of thought at the moment when they enter the field of attention by the interplay of mental images. The emergence of these images follows so close on the entry into action of the metagnomic faculty that it seems automatic, whereas in reality the choice of mental images is an act of will, made so that knowledge paranormal in its origin, may enter easily and fully into that play of thought which we call conscious.

It is by using the stock of mental imagery—concrete images, abstract images, symbols and allegories—and by utilizing the whole constructive power of imagination and all the resources of interior language, that the transcendental mode of thought conveys information to the mode that we call conscious.

This psychic process is of the highest interest. It shows the two modalities collaborating towards the realization of the same phenomenon. The transcendental modality seems fully conscious of the end to be attained and to have real genius in transposing its cognitions into clearly intelligible mental images ; and we can observe the so-called conscious intelligence interpreting the symbols, the allegories, and the successive hallucinatory appearances, with an ease and certainty which it could not have were it engaged in representing thoughts external to itself.

This observable phase in the psychological *processus* of metagnomy is diversely accessible to the psychologist according to the class of mental images used by the subject. If the mental representation is by motor images (see p. 156), the *processus* can be observed directly, and is as objective as can be expected in this kind of study. When representation is effected by other kinds of sensorial images, all that we can know is derived from introspective statements of the percipients, and especially in hypnotic subjects, by skilful interrogation.

Among the many ways of showing the metagnomic psychism in the act of producing its observable results, the most fruitful consists in analytical examination how the different kinds of sensorial mental images are used.

All varieties of sensorial images can serve the turn, but the gustatory and olfactory forms are merely accessory and complementary. I merely mention these here to avoid further reference to them: their field is so restricted that only passing notice is necessary.

Utilization of visual mental images.

There are some metagnomic subjects with whom supernormal cognition always comes in the form of visual images, other sensorial varieties being only complementary. This purely visual type occurs chiefly in those subjects whose faculty of hypercognition functions in the hypnotic state.

Most metagnomic subjects use all the various sensorial categories of mental images, only partly the visual ones.

The power of representation possessed by visual imagery varies according to mental temperament. The images evoked may be only simple subjective representations similar to those of normal thought. In the great majority of cases they have the force of actual sensations, they are objectified, hallucinatory, and the subjects think that they actually *see*.

Those who start their visions by looking into a crystal, a mirror, a lens, a glass of water, etc., see the phantoms of their imagination in the luminous field of these things, after the same manner which objects are seen in a spherical mirror; persons and things are seen in miniature.

Those whose hallucinations arise without any such artifice or any special stimulation of the sense of sight, see them at different distances. M. de Fleurière and Mlle de Berly, for instance, see them one or two yards away. Mme Morel sees them more or less near according to their meaning. When they refer to things distant in time, they are seen afar and of a size proportioned to spatial perspective, and this apparent distance makes them more difficult to interpret. When, on the contrary, the information

refers to things near at hand in time or very prominent in a life, they seem close before her eyes and within reach of her hand. "It is so near coming to pass that I touch them," she says.

M. de Fleurière tells me as follows : "In my second state my vision takes most diverse forms. Sometimes it seems to develop in a kind of cerebral vapour, sometimes under the top of the head, or behind the forehead, or behind the eyes. At other times it seems exteriorized and presents itself before me a yard or a yard and a half distant. Then I often have the strange sensation as if my cerebro-psychic interior were divided like the cranial cavity into two hemispheres with a narrow median line touching each but quite different from either. Things pertaining to the past, present, or seem to present, themselves in the left hemisphere, those that occur in the present on the median line, and in the right hemisphere those that relate to the future. When I describe metapsychic visions, internal or external, and make a gesture accompanying my words, this gesture instinctively is to the left when dealing with events which are, or seem to be, past ; it is straight before me if in the present, and to the right if in the future." (Extract from a MS. note, M. de Fleurière to Dr. Osty, May 20th, 1922.)

Variable, too, is the intensity of hallucinatory mental representation according to the disposition of the subject and his psycho-physical sympathy with the personality to be delineated. Sometimes the objectified images are as clear as to normal vision, and the conscious intelligence of the percipient interprets them easily and quickly : at other times they are more or less vague, fluctuating and inexpressive ; the percipients make efforts to grasp the image and its meaning ; they hesitate, their words are doubtful ; this is an inferior output, fertile in mistakes.

It is curious to see the transcendental modality of thought using all the resources of imagination to make itself understood by thought working from sensorial data.

The exposition of this activity in mental representation deserves a detailed analysis. I shall try to give some idea of it.

Every mental image remains objectified for a very short time. It develops in a second or two, attains its greatest intensity, and then vanishes as a hallucination, but remains as a memory. By this brevity in the time of representation and the rapidly succeeding images, the percipient translates the supernormal information into words, in the same manner as we express the results of ordinary thought—step by step as it comes to fruition.

The informative hallucinations take every form that can convey the knowledge intended. With some subjects, more especially those who only perceive visually, these hallucinatory forms are endowed with movement and colour, they follow one another so quickly and are so different that the subject readily compares

them to a cinematographic display. With others they are still, like flat pictures, each furnishing some element necessary to the information to be consciously conveyed, by orderly sequence and in regular succession.

It is of primary psychological import to establish precisely the correspondence between these mental representations by "visual" percipients and the reality. Misunderstanding of the relativity of mental representation in metagnomy has given rise to so many errors that sterilise research that it is necessary to be exact on this point. Facts of sporadic metagnomy have been cited, mostly from memory, and long afterwards, in which the "clairvoyant" has had so clear a vision or prevision of some scene, place, or event, that when he came to the actual place or took part in the event, he behaved as if he were seeing the thing for a second time, or living over again some incident of the past.

If we were to take the language of permanently metagnomic subjects literally, one might think that it is always so, and that they perceive realities as if by a paranormal optical sense outside time and space, or that they grasp from an ultramaterial plane, enduring or anticipatory reflects of phenomena pertaining to individual lives.

But on every occasion when I have endeavoured to discover the mental representations from which the subjects drew their information, I have been aware that the informative mental images, whether hallucinatory or not, were not exact reflects of realities, but representations building up a fanciful interior language intended to bring the supernormal cognition into consciousness by all kinds of imaginative means. In the course of my study of metagnomic subjects I have never yet come across *veridical hallucinations*, i.e. those which are identical with an external reality and give the same sensations as that reality. The visual images have always seemed to be reconstructions of ideas, of notions, and of cognitions. If I have no warrant for denying the possibility of veridical hallucinations (understood as exact representations of reality), I am at least entitled, in virtue of a long, active investigation, to say that in practical research it is very rare, or at any rate only occurs with exceptional subjects.

If there is an experimental condition in which the subject appears as an actual seer it is when the state of health of some person is given for delineation; and if the revelations made are subsequently found to be true, the superficial observer is convinced that the subject can scrutinize the interior of the body. The hallucinations give this illusion to the percipient, whose language conveys it. But in point of fact the percipient does not

see *the body*. Information comes to him which are represented to his thought by images which do not correspond with the reality of which they, nevertheless, give a certain degree of knowledge. For instance :

I said to Mme Morel, " Look into the state of health of the person who is holding your hand."

" . . . I go over her body . . . examine each organ . . . none seems to me ailing . . . but I feel a strange lassitude. . . . Ah ! now I see the cause, it is an early stage of pregnancy, etc."

The diagnosis was correct, pregnancy of one month (as ultimately proved the case) and seemed to be the result of an actual physical examination. To show those present that this was not the metagnomic process, I only had to make an objection to induce the subject to justify her words by description of her visions.

I said, " I think you are making a mistake."

" No, it is certainly a pregnancy that I saw . . . the whole body of this person appears to me afresh. . . . I see it there, quite close, and can see every organ quite well . . . none is out of condition. . . . I now come to the ovary, which is turgid ; I see it like a bunch of grapes, of which one is much larger than the rest ; so it is a case of pregnancy . . . but it is only at the beginning, for that ' grape ' is but little developed. . . ."

" Look at the state of health of the child."

" Oh, the child is in very poor health . . . lymphatic . . . one lung is affected. Take care of his chest."

" Are you sure ? "

" Yes, I see his blood without power or movement, whitish as if it contained some humour. . . . Now I see the lungs, one is small, dark, and sickly."

Not being equipped with technical knowledge the thought of the subject represents to her the ailment by modifications of form and colour in organs imagined quite otherwise than they really are. As description of a reality it is false, but suffices to reveal the true, which is what is required.

Here are some further instances which show the usual manner in which transcendental modalities of sensorial thought collaborate in bringing supernormal cognizance into the plane of consciousness :

" I see this person's bladder . . . its walls are covered with crystals. . . . I feel a sugary taste in my mouth . . . the person is diabetic. . . ."

" Why ! this lady has something abnormal in her head. She does not see like others. . . . I see a black hole in her right eye . . . her right eye does not see."

The person of whom this was said appeared to be normal and looked at things as all persons do ; there was no black hole in her right eye, but a year before its sight had been destroyed by a grain of shot penetrating it.

The greater the number of extracts I might make from my

notes, the more obvious would be this progression towards true knowledge by means of false mental images.¹

It is the same as regards cognition of places, scenes, and events. It is by successive mental representations ; not by vision of a whole, but by hallucinations which do not convey the sensations that would be given by the reality, that the metagnomic psychism reaches the revelation of a truth.

Although interpreting successive hallucinations, the subject expresses himself like one looking at a picture and telling another what he sees ; he can only do so by successive descriptions. The analogy of language in both cases leads to the supposition of analogous perception. That, however, is not the case.

Some " visual " subjects, especially those in hypnosis, because they are more strongly hallucinated, seem by their manner of speaking to be active, to be seeking, and to direct themselves in their research, suggesting a spirit freed from space and time. But if we set aside their language and turn to the mental process, we soon perceive that their apparent activity is nothing but the effort to interpret the meaning of their hallucinations. It is in course of translating the informative mental images into words that the subject says, " I see a road, I follow it. . . . I see a long, low house, etc.," or, " I leave that place and come into a large town. . . . I am following that man. . . . I go from the north to the south, etc." But his mind is no more exteriorised in such cases than that of other subjects revealing the same cognitions by the interpretation of tactile or auditory mental images. The use of visual mental images rather than any other sensorial form of mental representation does not in any way modify the psychological *processus* of metagnomy. There is no difference in the mental process, whether the subject uses visual or auditory means, automatic speaking or writing, or rapping ; all that varies is the sensorial category of the hallucinations.

As the psychism of seers receives its cognitions by visual images that do *not* correspond to realities, so they also represent intellectual and moral states of a human personality by visual hallucinations. For this reason they make use of symbolical

¹ The following is a specimen of what people deduce when neither the psychic agents used nor the psychological sequences of metagnomy are understood.

In 1911, at request of the Belgian Congress at Charleroi, desiring to verify the advantages that physicians might derive from diagnosis by mediums, Professor Heysmans, director of the pharmacological annexe to the University of Ghent, offered to make in his laboratory experiments on *direct vision* of the inner organs of living animals which would be dissected post-mortem to verify the diagnosis.

The International Bureau of Spiritism, located at Liège, sent him Mlle Jeanpierre, of Seraing, blind from birth but a clairvoyant medium (?). Professor Heysman examined her for three consecutive days, and then wrote to the Bureau that the results were entirely unfavourable. Without any further remarks !

and allegorical visions, which constitute a mental language having no relation to the aspect of things that they cognize.

Nothing exhibits better the aptitude of visual symbolism to represent all kinds of knowledge than the imaginative proceeding by which Mme Morel places events in time. In her metagnomic dream during profound hypnosis she has the sensation of occupying a point in the imaginary space where her hallucinations arise. According to the place where the hallucinations appear, she judges whether she is dealing with past, present, or future. Those of the past appear as if behind her, those of the future before her, and those of the present by her side. By this simple mental artifice this subject obtains so sure an idea of relative place in time that this is the only kind of error that I have never known her make. In her language these perceptions are translated in phrases such as: "This event will not come to pass soon; I see it far from me. . . ." "Yes, this will happen soon; it is close to me, I can touch it. . . ." "Some change is taking place in the life of this person; I see it round me; it surrounds me."

Other subjects obtain the same cognitions by other symbolical representations; and it is easy to understand that if on the interpretation of images so imprecise, they risk an approximation to actual dates, either spontaneously or because the experimenter insists, error is the rule.

It occasionally happens, however, that supernormal cognition takes the form of visual images of words or phrases. In such cases an exact date may be given.¹ This is exceptional, but in the course of numerous séances I have obtained the first names (often), the ages, names of persons, countries, and towns, a telephone number, etc.

But the imaginative working is usually less direct; it progresses from symbol to symbol and thus leads the conscious mind to precise knowledge. The following is a typical example:

"I see in the family circle of this gentleman a young girl . . . a crown appears . . . stephanos² . . . Stephanie . . . Fanny . . . she is called Fanny."

With some subjects similar precise informations are scattered through their séances, whether they are in the mind of any person present, or (not more frequently, however), if they are.

Every metagnomic subject uses visual symbolism and allegory after his own fashion; it depends on intellectual culture and

¹ Audition of words, automatic writing and speaking, are other representative modalities which give the same results.

² Stephanos in Greek is "a crown." M. de Fleurière, who gave this impression, is a highly educated man and knows Greek.

imaginative tendency. With Mme Morel, in whom the study of mental representation is particularly easy and fertile in results, the symbolism borders on the concrete. A character, an intelligence, a sentiment, for instance, will be revealed to her by hallucinatory human figure verging on a caricature. The head of a man with bright eyes, lively, mobile, with an exceptionally large skull radiating light—will be translated as “He is a man of great intelligence,” or, describing her vision directly, she may say, “I see that man; how intelligent he looks; what a large and luminous brain.”

A dull look, as if resigned to ignorance; a slow, hesitating image; then only a small, dark brain visible, will cause her to say, “He is unintelligent, ignorant, material, etc.”

To arrive at the same cognition, the psychism of this subject often uses visions devoid of movement, composed of principal and adventitious images, these latter containing the sense of the knowledge to be built up. The subject will say, “I see round this person people who are in pain. . . . I see blood . . . sick persons . . . he is interested in the sick and looks after them . . . he is a physician.”

A man of science appears to her surrounded with thousands of images, and in the midst of all these he is calm, satisfied, and there is a look of knowledge in his eyes . . . , whence results description of this kind: “He has a powerful brain. . . . I see much light in him . . . round him I see figures, designs, plans of every kind. . . . This man’s interests are scientific, but in constructive science, like an engineer or an architect.” Or again, “She is intellectual; a very intelligent woman . . . artistic. . . . I see round her many images of still life . . . they are pictures. . . . She is fond of painting.”

There are as many modes of using visual perceptions as there are sensitives. Here is another kind, by another percipient:

“Everything is black in this person’s life; fate is persistently against her. Near at hand, however, is a ray of light which pierces the darkness; then a greater and growing light . . . better days are near.”

“This person seems to me like a stream which divides and fills different reservoirs . . . his goodness upholds many human beings round him.”

“The whole life of this person appears to me in vision. I see him bound round by bonds which restrain and immobilize him. . . . He makes muscular efforts to break them, but in vain. Everything that he has hitherto tried has failed . . . but he is near the time when a greater effort will break his bonds . . . circumstances will assist his undertakings.”

Sometimes the allegory is by very simple symbolism. M. de Fleurière, for instance, takes cognizance of organic or psychic life or of external action by seeing mere lines whose directions, tints, size, and other characters give him synthetised indications to be

later on completed by more concrete visions. This percipient will sometimes express himself thus :

"The life of this man seems to me like a luminous ray which ascends continuously, broadening out . . . without check or depression . . . his life will expand without hindrances. . . ."

"This gentleman's life looks to me like a dark ray which has for some time been getting thinner. . . . It is still thinner in the future . . . hear it break . . . death will come before long."

There are uneducated "visual" metagnomic subjects whose imagination uses only allegorical images and who only describe their visions. They speak in parables after the manner of orientals. Those who do not know the psychological compulsion under which they act, are apt to disdain manifestations of faculty which can, however, produce some remarkable phenomena.

To reinforce an exposition, necessarily brief and imperfect, how mental visual images are used, it seems useful to quote here a fragment of auto-analysis given me in 1913 by M. de Fleurière. It is given in full in my book, *Lucidité et Intuition*, pages 437-456.

"My intuitive mental images occasionally correspond with the objective reality in the present or the future. Thus, the vision of a cradle in which is a smiling child, of a person extended on a death-bed, a vessel sinking at sea, a building in flames, are natural images thrown on the screen of the soul which describe facts past, present, or future, according to the plane of vision.

"At other times the visions are figurative, so to speak, they are of a symbolical type. Thus, in current language and by traditional meaning, an olive branch does not signify the branch of a tree, but peace ; a dove does not stand for the bird, but the idea of gentleness ; a lily is not a flower, but an image of candour and purity. These are, substantially, metaphors, and such artifices must, so it seems to me, be frequently used by lucidity.

"In my own case they continually recur when I take the trouble to analyse the visual, auditory, tactile, and olfactory images which constitute one form of direct vision or telepathic intuition. Symbolism always plays a very large part.

"Thus, the vision of a dead man, instead of presenting itself under the natural form of a corpse in a coffin, it may appear under twenty different forms. Sometimes I have the impression of a branch which cracks, breaks, and falls (especially in cases of sudden death), and then there is both the vision of the fact and the auditory supplement, all referring not to the material object, but the event signified.

"Occasionally I have this vision of death under the form of a black line cleaving a grey crystal or extending into a cloudy sky : or it may be a light which is slowly extinguished, or a meteor vanishing on the horizon : or again, it may appear under the form of a gaping chasm by the side of a person into which some one dear to him disappears.

"These few examples will show how much images which convey the same idea may differ.

"In another order of ideas when the life of an individual is very much disturbed, morally and materially, but better and more peaceful times are approaching, the situation is manifest to me in the lucid state by the

very expressive image of a rough sea or a wind-driven lake on which the tempest is succeeded by calm, the water becoming a mirror in which blue sky and sunshine are reflected. Or I may have before me the image of a tempestuous sky and heavy clouds with flashes of lightning succeeded by calm, silence, and serene light.

"Under a different symbolism, when the future is to be mild and sweet I see a verdant plain dotted with flowers, which stretches far beyond the person, beautiful and smiling, over which blow the breezes of springtime.

"If the matter concerns great material and pecuniary success, the result of personal effort and assisting circumstances, the interior sensation is that of swelling out, plenitude, marked relief, and the corresponding images are swelling billows, rounded hills that rise, or a fertile slope on which there are gilded heaps like masses of gold or ripe wheat. (The most curious of these symbols is that a swelling on my left arm above the metacarpal bones and on the forearm a little above the inner articulation of the wrist always corresponds to this kind of future—increased material advantages.)

"If unexpected good fortune, due to chance, happening suddenly—an inheritance, lottery prize, discovery of treasure, etc.—is to come to pass, I have the same sensation of plenitude, extension, and swelling, but the image is usually different—a golden rain or sparkling light falling on the person.

"We may now consider another kind of success—moral achievement, notoriety, social relief, celebrity, distinction, renown. In such cases I feel a sensation of light, and the image is that of an aureole more or less bright shining on and around the person. The colour will be according to the case, will be white, golden or rose, or harmonious blendings of these. (I note in passing that in these cases I have never seen blue or green.)

"If the renown is to come from literary success, intellectual effort, or brain-work, I have observed that the aureole tends to red, more or less tinged with violet. I have further observed that more or less red pertains to cerebral activity, as if the red colour were the result of its ebullition as of melted metal or a burning substance.

"I do not claim that this is so; I mean that by such a colour I have the vision or the sensation of cerebral activity and of the kind of luminous vapour that proceeds from it, just as white or green flames play over melted silver or copper.

"In my visions or sensations of colour this red becomes empurpled and changes into pure violet when the cerebral activity tends towards or is bent upon the transcendental, psychical problems, research into the Beyond, solution of philosophical problems and all that is called the domain of the marvellous.

"If it be permissible I could give you the names of very well-known persons who have given me this colour-sensation—notably, Mme de V——, M. Max——, Leon D——, Mme Ag——, Mme Dr. J-M——, and others. I have always observed it more or less characteristically with priests, doctors, men of science, highly cultured spiritualists, and some enlightened mystics.

"Now to speak of success of a sentimental kind. When a life holds, or will hold, joys of the heart and love, this state of things presents to my intuition the image of an azure nimbus, or a surrounding atmosphere of blue (or blue-green) above and around the person predestined to such joy. "(In the exercise of my humble powers, bright blue, bluish, or blue and green mixed have always appeared to me as the special colours relating to the heart and its influences.)

"On the other hand, if the life is to be overshadowed by a deep and unhappy love, torn by shocks and crises, I see the blue atmosphere intersected by grey, dark, fire-red, or dark-red rays and blots of strange shapes flung together. In such cases the vision gives me a sensation of something at once sweet, grand, and painful.

"If a person is in physical or moral danger I see quagmires and chasms opening under his steps or round about him. I could quote many such cases.

"If a person is menaced by perfidy, falsehood, and equivocal proceedings I could quote instances in which this intuition is given by the image of serpents that I see creeping and hissing about the person in danger, insidious and threatening.

"Here is an example of symbolical imagery drawn from physical and the moral sources, having to do with a passion such as anger :

"I have often found myself in intuitive contact with choleric persons violent by nature or actually angry. The image revealing this state is often very striking, for it shows the projection of black, or grey, effluvia, or steaming vapour from the brain or the chest, nearly always streaked with a bilious yellow; these came chiefly from the head and chest, like dark, concentric sheaves, like fireworks of ill-assorted colours.

"On the other hand, a gentle, calm, and good disposition is shown by the visual image of a rosy transparence, slightly warm (tactile image or sensation) with a sort of magnetic attraction which draws and retains. This is a physical and moral sensation which I can hardly describe, but appears to me fluidic.

"With respect to the magnetic attraction which I have just mentioned, I have observed that a few men and many women, especially in the realm of passion, have this undefinable quasi-magnetic property which at once attracts, captivates, and retains. In the intuitive perception of such women, charming and fatal, I have several times had a sensation as if I saw deep in their being an eye with the power of fascination, and also from the forehead and the heart a sort of magnetic radiation proceeding from their whole being attracting all that is near them, as a magnet attracts certain metals. By this magnetic sensation I feel that I am in presence of one of those heart-vampires who burn and devour all affection approaching them, an attraction from which none can escape.

"I could multiply these symbolical images for direct or telepathic intuition indefinitely."

It would be fundamental to the study of supernormal cognition, and full of deep implications, if it were well proved that metagnomic subjects who work by mental representations of the visual and other sensorial categories, receive and reconstitute informative ideas, and not direct perceptions of realities beyond space and time, when they are working on a human objective.

Utilization of tactile mental images.

The varieties of such images. The sense of touch, which evolutionists take to be the primordial sense in animal life, seems the most simple in its mechanism, but is really complex. It informs us of our own body and of the external world by diverse sensations which have long been distinguished in practice and

which pathological anatomy has begun to differentiate and refer to separate mechanisms of sensation.

Stimulus of the nerves of touch according to their kind, and also according to the particular nerves affected, produce four elementary tactile impressions represented by four varieties of tactile mental images.

(1) When we pass our fingers over an object to perceive its shape, its dimensions, its texture, etc., we have sensations of touch properly so called, and the sensations that so come to us are those of active and voluntary touch for which the hand is the peripheral organ specially adapted. We thus acquire tactile representations that reflect the forms, sizes, and texture of external things.

(2) If some object leans against any part of the body, the tactile impression so produced is one of pressure. This is the passive touch by which we receive tactile images of weight.

(3) Some nerve-filaments and the sensitive mechanism that connects them with the external world are impressed by the thermal mode of energy and give the impression of variations in temperature.

(4) Our internal impressions that proceed from all parts of the body, from all its organs and tissues, end in a general psychic sensation of health or uneasiness, or it may be in a sensation of pain or pleasure which permits of localization at some place in the body, at some organ of functional system. These are the origin of the images called *cœnesthetic*, recalling internal impressions; they are totally distinct from the preceding tactile images.

(5) From this last category of tactile images are derived another variety—the images that represent emotions; and in view of the extended use that metagnomic subjects make of these, it is necessary to define clearly in what this order of mental images consists.

Whatever the cause may be, emotion is a psychic state characterized by a *cœnesthetic* complex and the motor reactions that accompany it.

When the emotive stimulus is external it is emotion properly so called: when it is internal and springs from an idea, emotion takes the more durable form of sentiment, or if strongly predominant in the mental region it becomes "passion." But whatever its origin the emotion determines a psycho-physiological change differing according to the emotion and always the same for each kind.

The feeling of "sadness," for instance, is associated with cardiac pain, epigastric constriction, and intellectual, muscular, and moral depression. "Anger," on the other hand, causes a

state of muscular contraction, more or less discernible, as if the body were mobilizing its energies for strife; the vaso-motor reactions make the face pale or red, the heart quickens, the brain is confused, and clarity of thought vanishes in the chaos produced by the emotional shock.

Consideration of each variety of emotion would show that each differs from others in the reaction-complex produced. This can easily be analysed in the case of sudden or strong emotions, but is more difficult in the case of lasting and gentle sentiments; but a brain which has lived through all kinds of emotions would have no difficulty in recognizing the nature of a sentiment by the nature of the sensation it produces. Is it not a matter of unquestioned observation that attitudes reawaken the emotions that gave rise to them? For instance, it suffices to mimic anger to feel that emotion by reversal of its external phenomena.

The specific reactions of the organism to each variety of emotion create as many cœnesthetic images; and these are associated with motor images. These emotional images are those that metagnomic psychisms chiefly use, whether isolated and momentary or ancillary to other coincident representations.

According to the use that percipients make of them, the tactile mental images can be reduced to three groups:

1. *Images of touch properly so called*, of weight, thermal variation; representing the quality of things relatively to the sense of touch, form, texture, extension, weight, and heat.
2. *Cœnesthetic images*, representing organic impressions.
3. *Emotional images*.

Utilization of tactile hallucinations rightly so called.

The sum of cognitions on persons and things which can be given by hallucinations of touch is restricted, and this variety is mostly complementary to other kinds, chiefly visual.

Mme Morel reaches the notion of an oriental town in the following manner: "... I see a number of white houses ... vegetation which is not that of our country ... very bright sunshine ... oppressive heat ... etc." She perceives a commercial change thus: "This gentleman will change his factory ... he is now busy on an industry concerned with liquids. ... I see him soon in another manufactory where other things are made that I cannot name. ... They are hard, flat, and cold to the touch." (This was a brick factory.)

Percipients often locate events in time by help of thermal sensations giving the seasonal notions: "I feel that this event took place when it was cold; it was during the winter or in cold weather." More frequently employed than gustatory or olfactory hallucinations, being of a more intellectual type, nevertheless

tactile images can be only accessory, since by themselves they do not suffice to reconstruct perceptions in their entirety. They collaborate towards a mental representation.

Utilization of cœnesthetic hallucinations.

These are the mental images which more especially furnish cognitions of organic states, whether associated with visual images by seers, or projected singly on the mental screen.

In this latter case the subjects describe what they feel bit by bit, and thus approximate to the seat and nature of an ailment with very unequal results. They thus live through the momentary objectification of the notion of an illness presented to conscious understanding by the transcendental thought. This passing possession of the mind by the notion of illness becomes pictorial among those percipients who not only describe their sensations but mimic some of them.

On touching a written paper, Mlle de Berly will start yawning and will show signs of nausea: "How this poor man yawns! His stomach is affected," she will say. With another paper in her hands, she rises from her chair, takes a few slow steps, and sits down again heavily, saying, "Oh, how tired my back is; I am weary; my abdomen is painful. . . . Ah, how good it is to sit down. . . . Oh, what a relief! I advise you to examine this patient's abdomen; there is certainly something abnormal." The patient in question was in the fourth month of pregnancy, cheerfully endured. The cœnesthetic hallucination was excessive, but correct in its meaning.

In another séance, on putting her hand on an object, she had so violent an attack of sneezing and running at the nose that I feared she had a bad cold and urged her to put on a shawl. She said, "Do not be anxious, this will pass, but the lady will not recover as soon as I shall; she has a kind of chronic coryza . . . she makes me want to blow my nose."

I have met with percipients so completely under the objectification of cœnesthetic images that their mental representations become actualities—colic, vomiting, diarrhœa, cough, oppression in breathing, etc., just as hypnotized persons give full effect to suggestion.

In exceptional cases the cœnesthetic hallucination is so strong that the organic disturbance lasts for some time instead of ceasing suddenly as it usually does.

On touching the hand of a sick man, M. de Fleurière had one day the immediate sensation of a swollen liver and violent nausea. Other mental images being accordant, he warned this man of the grave nature of his illness, though softening the prognosis. The man died of cancer of the liver; but the

sensations induced in the percipient by the contact lasted for ten days ; his liver felt tender and he had to be treated.

All subjects who obtain cognitions of organic states, by coenesthetic impressions do not experience this strong objectification of their mental images. Most of them are aware of an ailment and its seat by the mere sensation of local pain, more or less intense—a kind of tactile diagrammatic representation. The relativity in these representations is here most strongly marked, for just as visions, inexact from the anatomical and pathological point of view, give to the percipients correct notions of the disease, so also coenesthetic images which do not correspond to the actual sensations of the patient, allow of cognition of real existent maladies.

The sensation of pain by which a subject is made aware of organic trouble is very often not felt by the patient, either not at all, or different in kind, acuteness, or even locality. Sometimes the person cognized is not aware of being ill. Sometimes the illness cognized is in the future. The mental representation is not intended to reproduce actuality, but only to give the notion—the cognition.

This psychological sequence in metagnomy has given the idea of transfer of disease from one person to another, the former ceasing to suffer and the latter taking on the ailment. When a patient ceases to feel pain and the percipient had prolonged coenesthetic symptoms there is a semblance of transfer.

Utilization of emotional hallucinations.

Among all mental images, those of an emotional nature are the most used. A little reflection will easily show the diversity of cognition which this kind of image can furnish, whether associated with other sensorial images or not.

Percipients obtain cognition of emotional and intellectual states by a duplicate hallucination, both visual and emotional. Some subjects, however, cognize these states under the form of imaginary emotions. They feel the sentiments, the intellectual and moral tendencies of others as if they were their own ; and they translate the interior life of the person cognized by analysing what they themselves feel and by their interior sensations. Emotional hallucination has as much power of representation as the sentiment itself at the moment of its appearance under its generating idea : sometimes even more. It is by these emotional representations that many subjects when in presence of another human being are immediately aware of his preoccupations, his leading passion, his personal worth, the quality of his life, and so on. At the first contact a feeling of discomfort or contentment

synthesises what will be explained in detail by the series of hallucinations in other sensorial modes.

This emotional sense at first contact is sometimes so violent that percipients sometimes experience acute psycho-physical shock which may be unbearable and insurmountable. In presence of one of those unhappy persons who are victims of unceasing misfortunes, some percipients seem to feel the accumulated weight of the sufferings that have taken place at intervals in a life—the heart contracts, their breathing quickens, and imperious need for the open air obliges them to close the séance. Such sensitives experience evenings when their peace of mind is gravely affected by having lived through the troubles of others whose bitterness remains with them. On the other hand, they are strengthened and feel themselves in pleasant conditions when they have cognized a life which is loyal and happy.

Utilization of auditive mental images.

Auditive mental images represent noises, sounds, or the conventional assemblages of sounds—spoken words.

Representations of noises and sounds, other than spoken words, are of slight use to metagnomic faculty, which only uses them as accessories as it uses gustatory, olfactory, and tactile images.

Mme Morel, for instance, reaches the notion of the sea by the vision of a great expanse of water accompanied by the noise of waves and a salt taste.

M. de Fleurière, hearing five detonations, is aware of the nature of a criminal attempt of which fuller cognition is given by a succession of concrete and allegorical visual hallucinations.

Verbal auditive hallucinations play a much more important part, since they can represent all knowledge, even the most abstract, by articulate language. The percipients *hear* a voice, and repeat what they believe they have heard. The sense of the informative images does not in this case need interpretation, which removes one source of error.

Subjects who receive multi-sensorial representations are often informed by verbal auditive images. According to their imaginative tendencies and the psychological needs of the moment, they hear single words, phrases, or a succession of phrases dictated by a voice, and reproduce these. The words seem sometimes to come from a coexistent phantasmal vision; in other cases they follow unexpectedly on other kinds of hallucinations and arrest attention.

When the mind of a percipient is directed to the cognition of an individual life, that which is called his consciousness does not know what type of images will arise nor which of his senses will be

hallucinated. Transcendental thought seems skilful in using the psychic resources. According to mental proclivities and the nature of the cognition to be aroused transcendental thought selects some one or other of existing images, creates another at need, reinforces one by others, or accentuates meaning by a sequence of representations expressing the same significance under diverse forms. All methods seem good which serve the end—to be understood by normal thought.

Percipients who name a town, a locality, or a person, or who indicate a date, often do this by simply repeating a verbal audition.

Utilization of motor mental images.

Theoretically all mental motor representations suitable to express a thought can be used by the metagnomic psychism ; but practically the co-ordinated movements which can bring ideas into consciousness have been specialized by custom. The images representative of such movements may be placed in two groups :

1. Motor images by expressive gestures (mimicry).
2. Verbal motor images.

Motor images by expressive gestures.

Gestures are so rarely used that up to the present I have met only one subject, Mlle de Berly, whose psychism uses these as complementary to other kinds of images. She is a subject who receives many sensorial impressions : she sees, she hears, and she feels the metagnomic information, but her diverse hallucinations are from time to time associated with gestures pointing to the same meaning. So at the same time that she states what she sees, hears, or feels, she will mimic the action, living through the supernormal perceptions as an actor on the stage lives through the drama. There are but few of her good séances in which mimicry does not, to a variable extent, supplement her mental sources of information.

She may, for instance, rise from her chair and sketch some movements of a foreign dance, while she is speaking to a friend of her mother, who belonged to an oriental court and was during her lifetime a brilliant dancer.

At another time she will get up and scrape the carpet with her foot, saying : " We shall find this jewel in the sand where it is buried." Whether the human personality on whom her faculty is working be present or distant, or dead, once her imagination is stimulated to use this procedure, she may mimic approximately the sound and rhythm of his voice ; she may say what

he might say or might have said ; she may take his customary attitudes, reproducing them after the fashion of caricaturists who express a physiognomy by exaggerating its principal feature.

In the special case when the person cognized is defunct, ignorance of the mental procedure that determines this motor form of representation gives rise to the notion of a real temporary incarnation of a spirit in a medium—a spirit-possession. The possession is really by cognitions and ideas.

Verbal motor images.

These are of many kinds, and metagnomic subjects use one or another, according to their imaginative proclivities. Some use images representing articulate language ; others use the co-ordinated movements representing written words ; others again, and not a few, have recourse to images representing co-ordinated movements producing words by prior conventions—verbal motor images with hand-movements other than writing.

These different kinds have in common that they are not felt directly ; they elude subjective observation and are the mental representations that are named “subconscious,” which have, moreover, only been revealed and well verified since the use of new experimental psychological methods, and the searching studies of aphasias that have been made.

Objectified in metagnomic output, like all other kinds of mental images, they make real the movements of which they are representations ; their latency gives them the semblance of automatism, the transcendental thought translating its knowledge directly into spoken or written thought without invoking the help of the thought that we call “conscious.”

Verbal motor hallucinations producing articulation.

The verbal motor representations of articulation determine, by their objectification, involuntary, impulsive speech. The subjects speak as if moved by an internal, uncontrollable power, and are only aware of supernormal cognition after they have expressed it in words.

In the psychic process conscious thought has only to remain passive, the tendency of motor representations to objectify themselves is so strong that the subjects speak without having previously willed to do so.

It is in this manner that Dr. N. Vaschide received the point-blank prediction of his death. Vaschide, who was much interested in the psychological correspondences between palmistry and intuition, often made experiments with Mme Fraya, and sometimes jestingly asked her, “Tell me when I shall die.”

To this question Mme Fraya, feeling the answer to be painful, replied by a forced smile and a promise of many years of life. But one day, in the winter of 1904, the imprudent question released the motor mechanism, and drew the answer, "You will die of pneumonia when thirty-three years old." Frightened at the words that she had not intended to utter, she excused herself as well as she could, and tried to minimize their effect; but as has been mentioned in a previous chapter, Vaschide died October 13th, 1907, of pneumonia, aged thirty-three.

I give below another fragment of auto-analysis in which M. de Fleurière described to me the part played by impulsive speech in his own metagnomic work.

Involuntary speech is not usual with me, but still it often occurs. Then I do not know at the moment what impels me to speak and to make some prediction: I am astonished and sometimes frightened of what I have said, especially if the prediction is painful. But I have the feeling that my whole psychism—my whole interior being—is in a supernormal or paranormal state, and, hearing the sound of my own voice, there are times when there is another person in me, hidden in the depths of my being, that then reveals himself, speaking by my lips, feeling, seeing, and saying things that my normal consciousness does not immediately grasp.

To take two examples out of a thousand:

One day a gentleman unknown to me came to see me. He was living in the Rue Demours, Paris. In the course of my investigation of his future, I was as much surprised as he to hear myself saying to him, "My God! what a sorrow for you: the sad death of such a charming child, and so young." I stopped there, brought up sharply, my consciousness being aware of the import of these words resulting from an instantaneous subconscious impression. I tried to explain away and minimize, but in vain, the blow had been struck. Whether he believed the prophecy or not, he went away much disturbed. . . . Fifteen days later he sent a friend to me with the news that his boy of fourteen had just died.

Recently, on receiving a lady, I said to her impulsively: "Your aspect is very calm, but there is a drama in your past! One, two, three revolver shots at another woman—your enemy! Fortunately not much damage done, only a scandal and imprisonment. . . ."

In the exceptional cases when words outrun the conscious image (or if you like, the actual normal consciousness), I think that fundamentally nothing is really spontaneous nor absolutely involuntary. Below the normal consciousness, which does not realize, or only realizes later, there is certainly a more rapid subconsciousness which has a vision or a sensation, seizes on the relation between things and circumstances, and determines speech before direct cognition has been able to discern the reason. For there can be no effect without its cause, and this cause, to my thinking, must be in the quick perception by this mysterious subconsciousness which perceives immediately certain things that normal consciousness only perceives later on hearing the words that have been pronounced.

It is, apparently, by an analogous psychological mechanism that in certain neuropathic states patients speak without previous consciousness of what they say. Their intellectuality is in a state of effervescence, uncontrolled and undirected, and

expresses at once what it has elaborated. This phenomenon of psycho-pathology is called "automatic speaking"; but this term is not suitable to metagnomy arising from a motor representation, for despite appearances it is not automatic.

The verbal motor image that produces articulation is one of the forms of mental representation employed by transcendental thought, in the same way as in all other uses of sensorial forms, i.e. in full consciousness of what it desires to convey and the means of conveying it.

Although I do not know subjects whose psychisms thus express all the information that reaches them, there may be such, and probably they will be met with when metapsychic studies are more prevalent and experimenters are accustomed to study thoroughly their human psychic instruments before putting them into action.

In most metagnomic subjects who work in a waking state and by means of multi-sensorial imaginations, the verbal motor hallucination leading to articulation takes an important place in the sequences of other sensorial hallucinations. A third or a fourth part of the revelations made by certain sensitives takes this form. It is almost entirely by this mental process, for instance, that Mme Fraya translates the intellectual and moral side of a human personality. She makes analyses of character that are masterpieces of penetration and psychological detail by means of the flexible and exact symbolism of words, and the perfect images they convey.

Verbal motor hallucinations expressed by writing.

Graphic verbal representations are objectified by *impulsive writing*. The metagnomic information is written on paper as a receiving instrument writes a telegraphic message.

Impulsive speech and impulsive writing are two psychical processes that differ only by the kind of motor verbal image used: but from this diversity in kind, there result dissimilar aspects, according as the percipients use one or other of these subclasses of images.

Those who speak by impulse nearly always receive their impressions through many sensorial forms—seeing, hearing, feeling—and utter their paranormal cognitions. Externally they resemble any ordinary person expressing normal thought; but those who have the impulse to write mostly confine themselves to that sole mode of mental representation which takes on the appearance of automatism.

Experimentally, this kind of metagnomic subjects generally act in the following manner: As soon as metagnomic perception on a given personality is at work, the hand of the percipient

begins to write words expressing the supernormal cognition. Some write in pencil (a pen being too easily broken), and only become aware of what they have written on reading it over. Others are impelled to trace words with a finger on a smooth surface, for neither pen nor pencil would stand the abrupt movements that they make. These become aware of the words they thus trace out, and translate into speech as each graphic movement is made. The kind of movement made by the hand varies according to the strength of the mental representations. Sometimes the words are written slowly and hesitatingly, and some phrases are left unfinished. Sometimes, on the contrary, the hand is moved so very fast that the percipient, if he is aware of the words as he writes them, speaks as quickly as if he were expressing his thought directly in speech. The more rapid the writing, the more precise are the words, and, as a rule, the better the construction of the phrases.

While the hand is writing the subject usually has no other mental representation of the metagnomic cognition; and if it should happen that he mentally completes sentences nearly finished, the words that his hand traces will not be those consciously thought of, but rather some synonym. This phenomenon is explained by the fact that in the special state of metagnomic function the hand is not obeying the mental representation that is called conscious, but is moved by the transcendental thought. There is another mode of graphic motor images akin to those described: it is the motor image representing co-ordinated movements of drawing. I have not observed any subject thus expressing his revelations, but I mention the possibility. The drawing so produced might be either an approximation to reality, or symbolical forms.

Motor hallucinations of other movements for the conventional expression by words. By their particular preferences, but more especially by the conditions under which they are called upon to act, some metagnomic psychisms are capable of using motor images representative of words other than the spoken or written. For instance, if it be agreed that raps by the foot of a table shall stand for letters of the alphabet by a numerical code, or that a pointer pivoted so as to indicate the letters of the alphabet on a board shall point to the letters to make words—in such cases the transcendental thought can, with some subjects, use these motor representations to objectify by the conventional movements, the informing words that reach the supernormal perceptions.

These modes of expression, now known throughout the world by the practice of spiritualism, have caused some latent metagnomic faculties to emerge, but also many more manifestations of true psychological automatism that are devoid of value.

The study of metagnomic faculty in action leads to certain psychological conclusions which are fundamental in the sense that further researches must necessarily be founded on them. They may be summed up as under :

1. The known sensorial mechanisms are not the channel for supernormal cognition, nor is it originated by that function of thought which is known as "conscious."

2. Despite appearances to the contrary in certain cases, metagnomic subjects are not *passive* psychic instruments, receiving supernormal knowledge and automatically transposing it into written or spoken language.

It is undeniable that their cerebral mechanisms are moved by latent thought differing from known intellectual modalities. This latent thought can, by an effort akin to genius, use the resources of mental representation and the aptitudes of the mind for comprehension of the latent thought, to make its cognitions known.

3. This latent thought which transmits its cognitions so ingeniously, is of a kind whose exact nature is unknown ; and may therefore be called transcendental, because it cognizes without sensorial data and in advance of all experience, being freed from the intellectual constraints of time and space.

If I have succeeded in condensing into this book all the results of long and patient experiment, no objections against these conclusions will arise in the mind of the reader. They should appear as the outcome of exact demonstration, with the reservation that their soundness should be verified by repetition of the experimental investigations from which they are derived.

These psychological points of departure being laid down, it is now desirable to seek for the sources whence *the transcendental thought* of metagnomic subjects draws its knowledge.

PART IV

THE INFORMATIVE SOURCES OF
SUPERNORMAL COGNITION IN METAGNOMY
DIRECTED UPON A HUMAN PERSONALITY

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM OF THE INFORMATIVE SOURCES IN
METAGNOMY

I. THE GENERAL PROBLEM

IF the diverse kinds of supernormal cognition were attributes of one single mind, their possessor would excite the stupefied amazement of other men.

His body would be permeated by his consciousness in the smallest action of its tissues and all the vicissitudes of its future development. At any moment the succession of events that weave the web of his personal life both in the past and in the future, would be accessible to representation in his consciousness as memories are in ordinary thought.

Neither his birth nor his death, nor the field of direct and indirect sensorial perception, would limit his environment in time and space. He would know a part of the contents of the soil on which he treads—its subterranean waters, its coal strata, its veins of ore, and its caves. The human beings that he might meet would reveal to him by their mere presence, their thoughts of the moment, the secrets of their intellectual moral and organic personalities, of their relations with others and the knowledge of their whole surroundings, both of persons and things.

According to circumstances and the movements of his own thought or that of others, he would be connected in space with persons known and unknown to him and would to some extent take cognizance of their characters and lives. He would know, and could tell, the details of events happening at great distances from himself.

Extending his strange psychic power in what we call Time, he could ascend the stream of human history, stopping at any epoch,

any personality or any scene of the past. He would know the actualities to be realized in the future.

Such a being, superhuman to our ideas, is so far removed from any religious, philosophical, or scientific concept that the most romantic fancy has not, so far as I know, dared to imagine such a man. Nevertheless, such an one is a logical possibility, since he would be no more than the possessor of all the latent psychic powers whose different phenomenal forms are found isolated and scattered.

If it were given to us to behold such a man he would be so enigmatical that we have not a glimmer how it might be possible to penetrate to the sources of his knowledge.

Considered as a whole, the problem of the informative sources of metagnomy is scientifically unattainable. Knowledge is only gained by comparison, and our actual acquisitions have nothing with which to compare transcendental human thought. What is offered to experimental methods of research is novel to mankind.

Nevertheless, though metagnomic faculty in all the complexities of its known and unknown possibilities, produces a mental vertigo, and is a discouraging object for study, we know that it is parcelled out into specialized manifestations and that the metagnomic subjects available are each capable of only partial metanormal psychic power; and thus the general problem splits up into secondary problems whose solution is within our reach.

In the actual state of our knowledge, having no hope of enlightenment from a general view, I have limited the present investigation on the origin of supernormal cognition to the solitary case of a metagnomic subject operating on a human personality.

II. THE PROBLEM RESTRICTED TO THE INFORMATIVE SOURCES OF METAGNOMY ON A HUMAN OBJECTIVE

Even when thus restricted to a single one of its conditions, this problem is of capital import: to resolve it would be to pass from the initial stage of accumulation of facts by mere observation, and to enter on that of experiment which begins as soon as we become acquainted with the determinism of a given phenomenon, and results in more extended knowledge that can be usefully applied.

Does the present stage of psychological science furnish us with the means of reaching this end?

Three of its latest acquirements are the only ones that can even pretend to suggest the semblance of a partial solution. It is necessary here to define them.

1. Experimental investigation adapted to abnormal or morbid psychological states (suggestion, hypnosis, or hysteria) has caused the discovery of a latent life of thought hitherto unsuspected. It has been recognized that mental life is double, and that behind the "sensations, perceptions, ideas, judgments, and reasonings of which we are conscious, there exist, or may exist, other sensations, perceptions, ideas, judgments, and reasonings of which we are not conscious, and even that these latter can co-ordinate themselves and organize themselves in a manner sufficiently systematic to constitute what looks like a secondary personality more or less distinct from and independent of the principal personality." (E. Boirac, *La Psychologie Inconnue*, p. 117.)

Behind the exercise of thought that claims our attention there is another mental action, elaborating by its special sensations, knowledge that conscious thought is not aware of.

1. To this mental work, outside what we call consciousness, the name "subconsciousness" has been given, covering at once the psychic phenomena which gave rise to the word, and also all the non-conscious possibilities of a phenomenal kind that cannot be reduced to the psychological concept of subconsciousness. Boirac has proposed the term "cryptopsychy" to designate the hidden work of thought taken as a whole.

2. The same researches which revealed the hidden activities of thought discovered behind the ordinary manifestations of memory, a latent memory in which are registered, exactly and indelibly, all the sensations and all the psychic elaborations, both conscious and unconscious.

This integral remembrance of all that has acted on sensibility in all its various sensorial forms, and of all the mental operations that directly or indirectly have resulted therefrom, has received the name of Cryptomnesia.

Thence has arisen the notion that the human personality conceals an immutable storehouse of knowledge built up by the exercise of conscious and subconscious thought.

3. The two acquirements above named may now be called fully admitted and "classical." The practice of hypnosis and the clinical study of mental affections in which the functions of conscious thought are eclipsed, or momentarily detached (as in febrile or insane delirium, hysterical states, etc.) have furnished verifications so abundant that these two conclusions have now become uncontrovertible.

This is not yet the case with the third of the psychological acquirements whose content is pertinent to the aim before us. The Universities have not as yet consecrated its validity; that

is still to be awaited. I am referring to the phenomenon designated by disparate and quasi-explanatory terms—communication of thought, transmission of thought, thought-reading, mental suggestion, and the like. These phenomena are more rationally expressed by E. Boirac's term *diapsychy*—the passage from one psychism to another, and is in effect the direct passage of the content of one mind into another mind without the intermediary of language or any expressive gestures.

It may be said that this phenomenon is universally known, although not yet definitely accepted. Those who have desired to study it experimentally and have known how to do this, know it for a psychological fact just as accurately and much more easily demonstrable than the two preceding ones.

It is important that it should be thoroughly known, for it takes on diverse aspects according to the conscious or subconscious quality of the thought that so passes.

Sometimes an experimenter, near by or at a distance, voluntarily transmits his mental representations of acts and ideas to a percipient who translates them into reactions, acts, or words. In such a case, the experimenter seems an active agent and the subject a passive recipient, and the thought communicated is of the quality called conscious. This aspect of *diapsychy* is that which best answers to the label "mental suggestion." It is the most difficult kind to reproduce, subjects capable of being impressed by conscious thought voluntarily suggested, being very rarely met with.

At other times it is observed that percipients reveal what is in the mind of a person who neither wills nor even knows what is transmitted. In this case the psychism cognized appears to be passive and the percipient active; the phenomenon seems to answer to a penetration of thought.

Under this latter condition the passage of conscious thought is still rare, though less so than when mental suggestion is voluntary, as if attention fixed on the radiation of thought diminished its power.

On the other hand, the passage of subconscious thought is found to take place so frequently that intermental communication (which is so difficult to verify) becomes a phenomenon constantly met with in the experimental practice of metanormal psychology. When we are using subjects sensitive to the subconscious modality of thought, rigorously scientific demonstration of *diapsychy* becomes mere play.

Such are the resources that psychological science places at our disposal for exploring the sources of supernormal cognition when a metagnomic subject works on a human objective. What explanatory aids do these give us?

Given that the subconsciousness can perceive the intimate relations of organic life (as cases of internal autoscopy have proved), and also that there are persons who translate these modalities of thought into words, one is led to suppose that each of us knows subconsciously the state of his own organism, and that it is this cryptic knowledge that passes and represents itself in different mental images in the psychism of metagnomic subjects.

And this notion of the *processus* would explain in the same way that there passes to the metagnomic subject the whole content of our latent thought—character and emotional life, tendencies and intellectual life, the events which have made our past and make our present—in a word all that the sensorium has registered and all that the mind has consciously and unconsciously elaborated out of sensations.

We might well think to possess in this a most logical hypothesis, and confidently await its confirmation by experiment, if metagnomic information consisted only in the revelation of knowledge organized by sensorial exercise of thought, whether conscious or unconscious ; but this is not the experimental fact as we know it, and our hypothesis, as soon as built up, crumbles down under the impact of facts too great for its capacity.

It is certainly not in latent and integral memories, records of sensorial activity in conscious and subconscious thought, that metagnomic subjects find cognizance of what could never have been in that thought. Such are the cases in which percipients reveal episodes tangential to some moment of our past lives, of which our senses have certainly perceived nothing at all. Such also are the cases when percipients draw up the balance-sheet of a whole life from one part of it on data necessarily unknown.

And, above all, it is not in our thought, at least as hitherto conceived and delimited by science, that percipients find anticipatory cognition of the future course of a particular life. The phenomenon of precognition is a psychic product that has no common measure with the products of the sensorial exercise of thought ; it arises from other means of information and other processes of cognition.

At the outset of metapsychic science it would be a false start to strive to explain the genesis of supernormal cognition, even when restricted to the delineation of a human personality. As in all other branches of science, we must begin at the beginning ; and before useless enquiry how supernormal knowledge is built up, we must determine *what is the source whence that cognition is drawn*.

It is to this question that I shall devote the following chapters, taking care not to lose touch with facts, and accepting on

suggestions but those of strict observation and of experiment directed to this end.

Three experimental conditions, dissimilar in appearance, will be successively examined from this point of view :

1. A metagnomic subject delineates the states of being of a living person there present ;
2. A metagnomic subject delineates the states of being of a living person distant in space ;
3. A metagnomic subject delineates the states of being of one who is dead or yet to be born.

CHAPTER II

WHEN A METAGNOMIC SUBJECT TAKES COGNIZANCE OF THE STATES OF LIFE OF A HUMAN BEING IN PRESENCE, WHENCE DOES HE DRAW HIS INFORMATION ?

AS soon as we place in juxtaposition and co-ordinate the facts verified in the course of analytical study of metagnomy working on a human objective, the answer to this question seems to present itself at once.

A lesson of primordial importance is given us by the act of bodily contact between cognizer and cognized. This lesson is so full of meaning that it is in itself sufficient to localize the source of information.

In this is to be found the full significance of the diverse results of experiment described in some of the preceding chapters. The reader has there learned that most metagnomic subjects, in order to set their paranormal faculty to work, are accustomed to touch the hand of the personality to be delineated ; i.e. to put the two organisms—the two nervous systems as it would seem—into contact.

This procedure is an absolute psycho-physiological necessity for some subjects. As soon as contact is established, their faculty enters on its task : without contact it remains potential and inoperative.

Some, however, who can exert metagnomy without corporeal contact, would seem by this manner of proceeding to annul the significance of the contact that others find necessary, if it were not easily to be seen that they also link themselves physically, though by imperceptible bonds, with the persons whose states of being they reveal. This is at once obvious if they are set to work in presence of several persons. An exception must be made in the case of some who work in profound hypnosis, and are kept to a given personality by an imperative order ; but other subjects under such conditions of experiment behave as if they were psychic instruments receiving and acted on by the influences of many informative sources. The information that reaches them does not necessarily come from the selected personality, they refer sometimes to any one of the persons present at random, or

sometimes by some kind of elective preference, to one of them. Not infrequently it is observed that the subjects do not connect their revelations to the person to whom they pertain. Experimental conditions when several persons are present are unfavourable to good working of the faculty, and the subject is constrained to make considerable efforts to resist the tendency to deviate from the personality prescribed. Much fatigue results from this, and the percipient seeks to avoid it, and then by instinct or by experience, will often go to the person whose delineation was required, take his hand or seize upon some object belonging to him and hold it or press it to the forehead.

Moreover, percipients who can exert their metagnomy without contact have found that information comes to them so much more easily and more fully when such contact is made, that they often have recourse to it even when only one person is present with them.

It is also often observable that some percipient whose custom is to touch the person to be delineated only at the beginning of a séance and then to continue in proximity, have recourse to momentary contacts when they feel the mental images which bring paranormal cognition weaken or slow down.

Further, it is also frequently observed that subjects who can cognize certain persons without contact, find such contact necessary with others, failing which they get no information.

This first group of facts, easily verifiable by a few days' experiment, forcibly suggests the notion: That percipients receive some influence useful to the functioning of their powers from contact with the human personality that they wish to delineate.

It should be remembered that metagnomic subjects "feel" this modality of informative energy that passes to them from all persons, and that from it they take variable knowledge according to the sensorial effects that it produces.

Nearly all percipients, not to say all, react at first to this force by motor response that can be measured by recording instruments, and are usually quite visible—jerks of the body, fibrillary muscular contractions of the arm or the hand by which contact is made, blinking of the eyelids, movements of the eyeballs, etc., whilst they feel themselves permeated by a dynamic influence which some liken to a slight electric current proceeding from the hand to the brain.

This sensation of fluidic emanation (to use their own term) varies from one percipient to another for contact with the same person; it also varies for each percipient according to the person touched. In some cases it only amounts to a vague and hardly noticeable feeling, while in others it is so strong as to cause

unendurable discomfort, and there is every degree between these two extremes. To this sensation of fluidic intensity there is added that of quality, this latter expressing the physiological adequacy of the paranormal sense of the percipient to the stimulus received.

All percipients agree in perceiving a relation between the sensation produced by the fluidic emanation and the clarity of the metagnomic information that immediately arises. Their sensations aroused on first contact with, or by proximity to another person, give them a general idea of the value of the séance to follow.

There are some "fluids" too strong for the sensitiveness of some percipients and these at first inhibit their faculties, to which the faculties must be adapted gradually. There are fluids of different intensities but inharmonious with the percipient's register of sensitiveness. There are fluids so weak as to be perceived only by certain percipients, other subjects being unaffected by them. Subjects express this state of things by saying: "Nothing comes to me from this person, I cannot feel his fluid"; or again, "This goes easily; this person is very fluidic," and so on. By this we can appreciate the elective metagnomic sensations when the subject is working in presence of several persons.

M. de Fleurière thus analyses his sensations and reactions to fluidic emanations:

When I am in proximity to an unknown person, and especially when a light touch places us in contact, I feel as though I were permeated by an indefinable fluid that radiates from his whole person. This physical and psychic fluid seems to me to be composed of several elements in which there is light and heat, vibration, electric or magnetic currents, and sometimes even odoriferous effluvia.

But these elements never present themselves equally, so to say; their proportions vary enormously with different persons: usually one or two, or rarely three, predominate, the others being faint or barely perceptible.

The impression of light is localized in the eyes, the forehead, and the brain; the impression of warmth in the breast, the heart, and the larger arteries; the impression of vibratory movement in the arms, the nervous system; and finally the sensation of a kind of electric or magnetic current in the cerebellum, the solar plexus, and especially in the *papillæ* of the finger-tips.

Just as one cannot find two faces absolutely alike, I think that I have never found two fluids that have given me exactly the same impressions; there are those that seem to me gentle, agreeable, sympathetic, and even pleasant like spring breezes, light and transparent like the blue of the sky; they seem endowed with calming and beneficent power. On the other hand, there are some that are keen, sharp, violent, and repellent, pricking like needle-points, hard and piercing like winter winds; these carry what feels like an antipathetic and discomforting principle. When I desire to fathom the intimate personality of one who projects a fluid into me, there are cases in which the psychic interior of that person appears to me illumined like a large room flooded with light, in which all the contents are to be discerned in order and in strong relief. On the other hand, there are cases

in which the fluid is quite different in essence, and when I seek to penetrate interiorly the person to whom it pertains, I have the impression of looking into darkness, as into a dark cellar where at first nothing can be distinguished and things appear but slowly as the eye becomes used to the dimness. This explains, too, why the sequence of intuitive or telepathic visions is so variable; why some are easy and some difficult, quicker or slower, clear or vague, complete or incomplete. I do not remember any fluid, however, that has been to me purely negative: the most disturbing always clears up a little by harmonizing with and reacting on my own more or less, and in the end with time and patience gives some interesting indications. (Extract from a MS. note, M. de Fleurière to Dr. Osty, May 20th, 1922.)

The future will doubtless reveal in what this emanation of energy consists that releases the spring of metagnomic function, and how and on what it acts; but henceforward the surface-study of this phenomenon leads to the following general conclusions:

A modality of energy of an unknown kind emanates from every human being revealed by its power to set in motion the special faculty of metagnomic subjects.

This force passes to certain percipients by mere proximity, not necessarily by corporeal contact, either at the first trial, or by progressive impulses on the sensitiveness of the subject, or by repetition of séances on the same personality.

But the passage of this force only takes place with certain percipients if intercorporeal communication is established. This physiological necessity has a precise meaning, for the gesture made by the percipient implies, "The source whence I draw the information that I transmit is there, in the person that I touch."

It is in fact there, under the experimental condition of propinquity; it is there for the most part. But the ensuing chapters will show that it is also elsewhere, in time and space, in other persons than the one touched, in other thoughts. The metagnomic phenomenon is of extreme, even terrifying, complexity.

This is the place to recall the other conclusions, corollaries to those above stated, which even a short and superficial experimental study brings out.

1. When a metagnomic subject is put to act on a series of human individuals, all the séances being under the same conditions, it is noticeable that the faculty varies in output according to the personality submitted to it, from excellent to *nil*.

2. When the same person is submitted to a series of percipients of approximately equal power, we equally observe that the metagnomic output with reference to that person also varies from excellent to *nil*.

3. When a series of persons are submitted to a series of percipients one of those persons being given for cognition to each percipient, it is observable that some persons are well delineated by all the percipients, others are well or ill delineated according to the percipient, and that there are found some nearly unanalysable by all.

This variation in metagnomic output considered as a function of the metagnomic subject and the personal object, demonstrates clearly, in the simplest experimental case, that both these two beings have a part, apparent in the one and unapparent in the other, but both necessary to the genesis of the metagnomic phenomenon.

Under whatever aspect we consider experimental practice, the same inference results and the same conclusion appears.

In confirmation of the preceding paragraphs, I will mention only two others (for the sake of brevity), resulting from direct observation.

They may be formulated as under :

1. Increased normal knowledge in the person cognized augments the supernormal cognition both in quality and quantity.

2. Some kinds of error originate in the passage of erroneous notions from the psychism of the cognized to that of the cognizer.

This needs some commentary.

In the first place there is one fact that emerges from the very beginning of experiments in metagnomy with a human objective :

When a metagnomic subject works on a given person, his revelations deal partly with what that person knows and partly with what he does not know ; and the metagnomic faculty deals with each part in a different manner.

It is from the known past that there proceeds the most detailed and circumstantial knowledge, which extends to the most precise descriptions of persons, houses, rooms and their furnishing ; sometimes giving a personal or family name, a telephone number, an age, a date, etc.

It is not thus for what is unknown to the person cognized. None of the percipients I have yet met with have given me descriptions equal in quality to those that one gives of an occurrence actually seen or of a conversation actually heard. While they give indications often very clear and admitting (after censorship) of sure identification, most of their information deals with the situations described in a general way, with outstanding characteristics, giving the idea of a specific event, a place, an

illness, a character, of intellectual pursuits, etc. ; and if in that single séance we press the percipient to more detailed cognition and he yields to the request, he is led to intersperse with partial errors information that is quite correct as a whole.

That which a person placed in presence of a sensitive knows *conformably to an actuality*, increases the precision and the amount of metagnomic information.

There is no manner of discovering the influence of knowledge sensorially acquired by the cognized person in building up super-normal knowledge in the percipient, that is equal to a series of experiments at intervals in time, bearing on precognition of the course of an individual life.

Since 1910 I have followed out an experiment which has already become a bulky record. This experiment consists in giving the course of my own life for anticipatory cognition to an increasing number of metagnomic subjects, and more particularly to some who have proved the best endowed with precognition in relation to myself.

To those researchers who desire to assure themselves that the truly distressing phenomenon of precognition of the future is a reality, I recommend this means of conviction. It will satisfy them more effectively than reading about facts necessarily associated with the uncertainties of human testimony, and will be much more profitable than the philosophical speculations long since canalised in opinions, doctrines, and words.

Nothing escapes observation from this standpoint, everything is instructive ; and experiment delivers its whole content.

Each subject at each séance is placed in a position to draw up the balance-sheet up to that date and to follow out the ulterior development of the life cognized. His words are fixed on paper. With reference to the revelations of the percipient, the experimenter notes the contents of his own thought, what he knows, and what (strictly speaking) he might subconsciously know. His ensuing life gives impartial judgment, discriminates the shades of exactitude, what approximates to fact, what is omitted, and what is erroneous ; also the diverse aspects of the errors and their origins. Thus one may advance through Time comparing the transformations in the content of thought with the consecutive evolution of metagnomic information. The view of a psychic life so given, its marvellous complexity and unexpected significance, inspires one with energy to persevere in an enterprise full of difficulties, fertile in mistakes, and in emotions that are sometimes painful.

I intend to carry on this experimental research on precognition of the course of an individual life to the twentieth year and then to use it for a monograph.

At present I shall draw from it only some reflections regarding the influence of the personality cognized on the elaboration of paranormal information concerning him.

Those who have collected facts of prediction on a human life without having themselves called it forth for purposes of study ; those who from mere curiosity have once or several times enquired concerning their own future from metagnostic percipients ; those who have approached the problem by reading only ; all these *believe* precognition to be unalterable, like an unchangeable memory. They attribute fixity to the events that diversify individual lives, and confer on metagnostic subjects the power of perceiving ideal images which the future will bring into reality.

Now this belief in the fixity of precognition is born of speculative dreams on premonitions of fact for which only authentication by testimony has been sought, and this belief—built up in complete absence of methodical investigation—is false.

When an experimenter places himself as an impartial and attentive observer, taking a share by incessant experimentation in the metagnostic output, he speedily perceives that foreknowledge is variable knowledge, constantly and progressively elaborated ; that like life, it is evolutionary and *living* ; as if the transcendental mode of thought of each man, aware of the general direction and outstanding events of existence, were progressively informed of the events circumstantial to its foreknowledge as the human personality takes its way through the current of surrounding lives.

A first group of experiments enables us to observe that that precognition of the evolutionary states of a life is variable according to the moment in that life when a metagnostic percipient is invoked.

The records of séances for premonitory metagnomancy on a human objective, though varying as to their narrative content, resemble one another in the perspective taken by the quality of supernormal cognition, for according as it refers to states of life more or less distant in the future, that cognition differs in penetration and extent.

Dealing with emotional modifications, new directions, new intellectual activity, organic perturbations, and events, it shows itself best able to produce circumstantial and co-ordinated information when touching on states of life then in actual course of realization, that is, already become partly actual and known, although often unforeseeable as to their issue.

That which is known, however slightly, is of powerful assistance to fuller precognition of the future, quite independently of any rational suppositions by the person affected.

The precognition becomes less full and abundant in detail, less

able to co-ordinate conditions in a life when those conditions are near but quite unexpected, or are slightly more distant in time and unconnected with any causes as yet in operation.

And in proportion as precognition endeavours to disclose more distant aspects in a life, its imperfection becomes more marked. Starting from a few years ahead, only the general trend of a life is revealed and only a few salient episodes are given.

Here follows a simple and brief instance of precognition of the same event given at two different periods. Two years before its occurrence the percipient expressed it thus :

" Oh ! Peril of death after a while . . . perhaps an accident . . . but you will be saved, your life continues. . . ."

Four months before :

" Take care, you will soon have a serious accident. . . . I hear a violent shock . . . a loud noise . . . you will be very near death . . . what luck ! you will take no hurt ! I see a man bleeding on the ground ; he is moaning, and all round him some things are strewn, I can't say what."¹

It will be seen therefore that supernormal cognition proceeds from general notions to increasing knowledge, of detail, conversely to normal knowledge which proceeds from analysis to synthesis.

Study of the records of experiments shows clearly this gradual evolution of prevision, but it takes full significance by experiment at regular intervals of time with the same percipients and the same object of cognition.

I can find no better way of describing the position of an experimenter who is making these experiments on premonition as his course of life proceeds than to compare him to a traveller passing through new country. Looking to the far horizon he sees colours and forms in blurred masses which give a vague general idea. Somewhat less far the distances take clearer colour and shape, principal objects appear—a hill, a wood, or a town. Nearer he sees a village, a tower, a mansion, and scattered houses appear clearly on an undefined background. Still nearer the eye can perceive many things and the connections between them.

This perspective reveals its component parts as the traveller

¹ The second of these previsions was given me in March, 1911, by Mlle de Berly. It was fulfilled Aug. 15th of the same year. I was going at an easy pace in my car when a drunken baker, driving furiously, pulled the wrong rein and collided. The shock was such that the shafts, which struck the frame of the front glass, were shattered to pieces, and one wheel mounted the bonnet and crushed it in.

My friend, Th. Stenuit, who was with me, and I also, were stricken with amaze at the suddenness of the accident and our good fortune in being unhurt. Turning round we saw the horse galloping off, the cart in the ditch, wheels uppermost, and the baker stretched moaning and bleeding in the middle of the road with a number of loaves scattered round him.

advances. All comes nearer to his eye ; optical illusions disappear, mistaken impressions are corrected, the knowledge of things increases in extent and precision, which is, however, never quite so complete as the places he has passed and has therefore fully perceived.

In the same manner the experimenter goes through life preceded by the hypercognition. The metagnomic subject is the eye whereby he sees his future, a human instrument of vision with all its marvellous possibilities and its imperfections.

If he is content with an easy explanation, his advance into the foreknown will lead him to think that the events constituting the course of his life are pre-existent in an ideal world in which the percipient can distinguish them by some paranormal faculty, and that they are more easily perceived at the moment when they are passing from the world of potentialities into that of phenomena. By doing this he has certainly obtained a simple explanation, but one that is inapplicable to the progressive nature of precognition.

But if he does not hold by this suggestion of premonitory revelations, preferring to regard the variation of metagnomic information as a function of the percipient and of the person cognized, he then comes to perceive that in this experiment, restricted to two human beings, the percipient is, so to speak, the unvarying factor, furnishing at every séance the same faculty, while the personality delineated is continually varying.

To explain more fully :

If the experiments are properly conducted, the percipient, from séance to séance, remains equally ignorant of the life presented for cognition ; he is the same psychic instrument put to work in the same way and only affected by his own relative conditions.

It is otherwise with the personality cognized, who has lived between séances for weeks or months, changing according to the pressure of outside circumstances and under his own mental evolution. Many modifications, sometimes very important, have taken place in himself and his environment ; the future has become the past and many anticipations have been realized or have been found illusory : in short, though the same individuality is presented to the percipient, the personality has been modified by all that the senses have registered, by all the knowledge that conscious and subconscious thought has brought into knowledge, modified also by new desires, new projects, judgments, tendencies and new modes of reaction.

It cannot be said that these variations in the person cognized at each séance determine the new tenor of the premonitory information, they certainly do not, since precognition deals with

things not yet registered, with that which is imperceptible by the senses, with things unknowable by reason and often opposed to anticipations.

But what we can say, and what experiment constantly shows, is that each new section of life that has been lived through gives a new starting-point for metagnomy from which it can better discern the next events in the stream of existence and that what is known collaborates in organizing the premonition of what is unknowable by reason.

It is not without astonishment that at each séance we observe that the percipient, envisaging the future only, does not speak of the phases of life recently passed through that he perceived as future in the previous séance ; or, that if he happens to speak of them, he places them unerringly in the past. He seizes also the diverse preoccupations and organic disturbances, the projects recently formed and never before announced by him, and follows their outcome, linking to them and by them episodes near at hand in the chronicle of a life.

The source of the inspiration is revealed when the desires of the moment—projects and anticipations reached later, which are but passing states of mind and will never become concrete realities in the future—introduce error in the metagnomic output. This error, obviously transmitted from the one psychism to the other, is corrected and disappears from subsequent séances, but only after these corrections have been made in the personality under observation.

If we desire to emphasize the notion that metagnomic subjects when working on a human personality are not, as it might appear, direct percipients of actualities outside human individuals, but are receiving a varying influence from one individual to another and giving diverse premonitory information ; that can very easily be done. In place of presenting to the percipient at intervals in time the future of one person only, it is only necessary to cause the sensitive to work on the development of several persons affected by events common to all their lives : e.g. members of the same family, it being understood that the subject is kept in ignorance of the family links. Under such circumstances it is rare (I have not myself observed a case) in which the percipient recognizes in one the event also perceived in the case of another. It is always observed (that is at any rate my experience) that the event common to all is only precognized in its relation to each several person.

It is because the metagnomic subjects ordinarily met with are delineators of individual lives, and not percipients of virtual representations of future realities, that they show themselves able to precognize the development of human personalities and

are unable to predict the future in a general sense, that is, the events apart from the points where they touch the individual.¹

What abundant documentation might have been given in the years preceding 1914 if the study of metagnomy had been more extensively known and experimentally applied. If there were one event common to many human lives and having widely different reaction, it was this bestial madness for mutual slaughter. What prophet proclaimed its coming, its circumstances, and its results? One only, as far as I know, and as far as one may rely on human testimony—M. Léon Sonrel, who, on July 21st, 1869, in a kind of spontaneous ecstatic state, seized upon the whole future development of the life of his friend, Dr. Amedée Tardieu, and announced to him the second great war in its relation to an episode of Dr. Tardieu's life. It was in relation to an individual life that Sonrel took cognizance of the war still far distant in time. It would seem that if Dr. Tardieu had not had to live through the war, Sonrel would have had no knowledge of its coming. (See p. 38 *ante*, for the summary of this prediction.)

But no metagnomic subject seems to have foreseen the war as a collective fact, none predicted its development, and when it had begun none were found to give information on its successive phases. Those who esteemed themselves prophets and tried to do this, contradicted each other, and all were wrong. The detractors of psychic science were triumphant, psychists were confounded and did not understand.

Very briefly summarized, the following is the aspect taken by the event—the war of 1914—in the documents at my personal disposal.

From 1910 to July, 1914, none of the metagnomic subjects

¹ Ignorance of the psychological determining factors in metagnomy and of the diversity in paranormal capacity in percipients, has given rise to and maintained an error which will only cease when men cease to think of and discuss narratives of premonitory facts without the basis on which they were founded.

Anyone who, by reading only, desires to form an opinion on precognition, will find in metapsychic literature many quotations of fact authenticated by testimony. In these reviews, and in some books, he will find statements of this kind: "It seems to me that if prediction were possible, we should have manifest and undeniable proof of it. Let a medium tell us what the weather will be like in eight days, and which horse will win in the next race-meeting. Or, still more simply: here is a roulette, let him tell us, while it spins, at which number it will stop. No medium can do this" (P. Heuzé, "Enquiry on the present state of psychic science." *L'Opinion*). On the one hand, narratives of facts devoid of complete certainty; on the other, a challenge not taken up: much interchange of polemic—words, words without any possible conclusion. When psychists will condescend to admit that the experimental ground favourable for a demonstration of foreknowledge is that of metagnomic work on individual human lives, and will give up the spiritist and theosophical hypotheses by which they believe in possibilities that exist very rarely or not at all, they will speedily gain many undeniable proofs of premonition, and they will be able to acquire the best of proofs—premonitory facts on themselves, independent of all testimony.

whom I put to work on definite experiences or in the free exercise of their faculty, and none of those who were used by other persons who reported to me the tenor of the séances, signified explicitly the coming of the war. But if this impending catastrophe did not inspire the percipients it was otherwise with regard to its effects on individuals. Some instances, selected for brevity, will show the manner of these.

On December 30th, 1913, in the course of a metagnomic séance Mme Fraya said to Mme D. :

"I see near you a young man whom you love and who is a near relation . . . a fine nature, intelligent, gentle, and gracious . . . he is not so strong as he seems. . . . I see him ill presently, just at the time of his examination. . . . I cannot see him entering the school for which he is preparing . . . he will lead a very active life, but will die young, as if on a battle-field."

A few days latter Mme D. told me this premonition relating to her only nephew, Paul M., aged eighteen, a brilliant student preparing for competition to the Polytechnic, a most agreeable young man, for whom I had much regard. In February, 1914, he had an acute attack of angina when called upon to pass the test for physical fitness, but nerved himself to pass the test.

In July, 1914, he entered for competition for the Polytechnic, which was interrupted by the war.

He then made himself as useful as possible and was certainly very active, being in turn an interpreter, a chemical assistant and motor driver. He soon expressed an intention to enlist. His parents opposed this as much as they could. His aunt, haunted by the prediction, and saw how her nephew, despite his remarkable intellectual gifts, might indeed never enter the Polytechnic, said to him, "Believe me, Paul, you are too young; don't enlist, I have a foreboding you would not come back to us."

His resolution, however, was taken, and on December 1st he was appointed to the 13th Regiment of Artillery. December 13th he fell ill and died, not on the field, but of cerebro-spinal meningitis brought on by the war.

In May, 1914, Count R. de P., aged thirty-one, had this prediction during a séance with Mlle de Berly.

" . . . I am uneasy about you: take care, I see you in peril of death . . . you are being fired at . . . but have nothing to fear."

In June, 1914, the same percipient said to him regarding a project of marriage much favoured by his family, " . . . You will not marry this lady. . . . I see you turning your back . . . a certain event will take you away. . . . I see you wearing a costume . . . sometimes on horse-back . . . giving orders to men to dig galleries, long galleries! What a lot of digging! How foul the earth is and what a lot of it!

"Only after having worn this costume and carried out these works will you be married . . . but not till you have passed your thirty-fifth year. . . . You will marry elsewhere a dark young lady, with dark hair done low down, with foreign blood in her veins."

The May prediction gave M. de P. the idea of a night attack on Paris; that, made in June, made him think of a possible colonial enterprise. He said so to the percipient, who could only reply, "Perhaps. I see nothing more."

M. de P., who was due to pass the month of August in the family of

his fiancée, a fair girl of French birth, was mobilized on the declaration of war.

As lieutenant, he certainly had to get many trenches dug, and was certainly much fired upon ; three succeeding wounds in the arm in September, 1915, brought him his captaincy and the cross of the Legion of Honour, and at Douaumont, seven months later, a bullet broke his nose and blinded one eye, which did not prevent this brave officer from carrying on his command till exhausted, and brought him promotion to officer's grade in the Legion of Honour.

After the war, when he was thirty-six, he married a dark young lady, as described, of Italian birth.

In January, 1914, Mlle de Berly, speaking to M. de P. of his younger brother, said : " His life will be short . . . he will die a violent death . . . let him be cautious in the shooting-field. . . . He will die by gunshot."

In December, 1914, M. Charles de P. was killed by a bullet in the forehead.

In face of facts of this kind, I could, did space allow, give a series of facts that might be called negative, suggesting the conclusions I have stated above. For in my experimental practice the persons to whom no revelation of their part in the war was made, were more numerous than the others. As to them, precognition worked out as if the war were only a general incident without importance for that particular life ; and indeed this was so without exception, for each took up again their previous course of life as if it had been only interrupted. Serious invalidation and especially the death of a single one of these would have left the predictions made as questionable. This did not take place. As some of these persons held very dangerous military posts (officers in the infantry, artillery, and aviation ; one was three and a half years an aviator) I am inclined to see in this something more than a coincidence, and to claim that it shows that the field of cognition only covers what a human being will become, rather than any perception of an impersonal future, a fact which I have not yet been able to observe, though I do not on that account deny its possibility.

For my own part, no metagomic subject from 1910 to July, 1914, announced the war to me, nor took account of that event in my life, though I was an assiduous investigator. One only, Mme Loni-Feigneze, foresaw one of the aspects in the earlier stages of the war. In May, 1912, she, thinking to describe my then occupations, said :—

" You are living in a little town in central France. I see your house facing a small open space . . . but your work is not there . . . you go for your work to a large house where you have an office . . . there you handle a mass of papers . . . what a number of sheets you touch . . . they bring them to you from another office alongside of yours, where many men are writing . . . they are continually passing from their office to yours . . . you look at the papers they bring and return them

... other people, too, bring you papers from outside; you look and write and give them back ... what a number of pieces of paper!"

All this had no relation whatever to my then mode of life; but from August, 1914, this became one of the aspects of my daily life as chief medical officer of the hospital and the circle. I lived in a snowstorm of administrative papers.

The isolated nature of these previsions makes it clear that the sensitive does not perceive a part of the life by direct perception as if he had a paranormal sense functioning outside Time; for in that case the chief characteristics of the situation would have been cognized—the uniform, care of the wounded, and so on.

As soon as the war had begun, when the event was in my mind and I was taking a part in it, then the sensitives consulted at irregular intervals, foreknew the general course of my existence during the war (it was as they said) and some of them were preinformed of episodes that came to pass. The following is an example of such prevision.

On July 29th, 1916, my turn having come to replace one of the doctors with the army, I received an order from the Minister directing me to join, without delay, the reserve of the medical staff at Gray.

This centre, like others distributed behind the front, had the duty of placing medical officers according to their several aptitudes and the vacancies that might occur.

Passing through Paris on August 1st, I sought to profit by the unknown future by making an experiment on exact prevision. Here is an extract from the séance that I had with Mme Loni-Feigneze, who was unaware of what my military duties might be, and more especially that I was in transit between one appointment and another, whose duties could not be foreseen by reasoning.

As soon as she was in the hypnoid state, she asked, "What must I see?"

"Look," I said, "for the next events in my life."

"... at the present moment you are doing something of the nature of a change, as if you were moving to interchange with some one. ...

"You are changing your place ... you are going to a town through which there is a largish river ... water is passing at the side. ... It seems that you are being questioned, as if you were submitting various matters ... and decision will be given according to your answers ... a group of gentlemen will give a decision that will please you; you will be satisfied with it. ...

"In the town to which they will send you I see two parts, one high and one low ... you will be in the lower part, you will work and live there ... you will have nothing to do with the upper town ... a small town, old and dirty ... with small ill-paved streets; a little manufacturing town, of some importance, perhaps, by the number of inhabitants, but small. ...

"Facing the house in which you will practise, there is an open space ... you will work on the first floor ... a large staircase ... one would think it an old convent ... very wide staircase ... heavy wooden handrail ... a large landing ... two large rooms on the same floor with a door between them ... ceilings very high ... it is an old house. ... When you leave it to go to your lodging you will cross the

place and go to a house not old like the other . . . there are trees before the door and a wide road . . . you do not go upstairs, you lodge on the ground-floor; you will be not far from the river, which can be seen from your rooms although it is not before the door. . . .

"You will not stay there long . . . perhaps a couple of months. . . . Just when you think yourself fixed, you will change."

What came to pass.

On August 3rd I was at Gray, on the Saone. The assistant medical staff officer asked me my preferences.

On the 8th I was attached to the 7/76th Ambulance at Moyon (Meurthe et Moselle), where I was to replace Dr. R., called elsewhere.

During the 9th I reached Moyon, a town of about one thousand inhabitants; an upper town on the slope of the hill, with dirty, worn, and narrow streets, always full of soldiers on passage, and a lower town, much better built and clean, where they told me I should find the ambulance.

A soldier took me to a large house, old, and of the type of the monastery schools that are to be found more or less everywhere in the country, some forty yards back from the road, the open space being flanked by houses on both sides.

The administrative office was on the first floor, approached by a wide staircase with a heavy wooden balustrade. On the wide landing one door was lettered "Ambulance 7/76." I entered a large room, very high, where carboys, folded stretchers, medical canteens, dressings, etc., were scattered. The principal medical officer was in the adjoining room, and I was introduced.

"Where is the ambulance?" I soon inquired.

"It is all here," he answered with a laugh, "in these two rooms that you see: this one is the office that I share with the management, and the other you have just passed through. We have been here at Moyon for a month, on return from Verdun, in reserve, but we have to supervise the construction of huts near the station as an evacuation hospital, which we shall have to work in two or three months."

Really, this ambulance, by its peculiar situation, would seem to have been the only one in the whole French army which would tally with Mme L. F——'s prediction. Usually an ambulance in working order in 1916 would have from 100 to 300 beds and a large establishment.

I was much astonished, and thought that if the lodgings corresponded as thoroughly with the prediction, the premonitory fact would be of the first quality.

Being desirous of beginning my work I asked to be shown my room.

"To-morrow," I was told, "you will have the room occupied by Dr. R., who you are replacing. For to-night you will lodge far from us." My first night was passed in a house of the upper town. On the next day Dr. R. took me to the house where he lodged, a good and newly-built citizen's house; he did not stop on the ground-floor but went to the first landing. Curious as to what I should see, I went to the window. Two lines of trees divided the house from the road and about a hundred yards away I could see the river Mortagne.

Weeks passed, the construction of the evacuation hospital went on briskly. My comrades and I were planning the organization, when an army inspector learned that the wife of the chief medical officer was living at Moyon. Reports to the Staff of the Army of Lorraine, sanctions, etc., whence resulted some changes in the medical staff, and I was posted to another ambulance about forty-six days after my arrival.

Only two small errors "a small, open place," which turned out to be a large courtyard, and the first floor instead of the ground-floor.

From these facts and from many others with which I do not wish to overload this book, it is clear to me that if precognition of general events is a rarity for which there are very few unquestionable cases cited, foreknowledge of individual conditions come about by external causes is as frequent as one may like to make the experiment.

The frequency of precognition of condition of a human personality, contrasted with the extreme rarity of foreknowledge of general events, is a fact that I desire to emphasize as suggesting the origin of metagnomic information when it has a human objective.

Error is to metagnomy what pathologic psychology is to normal psychology—the indirect and illuminating condition for understanding normal mental working by the study of its perturbations. It follows that the study of errors in the functioning of metagnomy is another valuable factor in research for the source whence subjects draw their information.

Although the study of the determinants of error would find its logical place here by reason of the lessons that it brings, its development is of sufficient importance to demand a chapter to itself, and is therefore deferred to a later place. When this has been perused the reader will kindly apply to this present chapter the notions that he will there find on the inter-mental collaboration between cognizer and cognized.

I will, however, so far anticipate as to say that among the many causes of errors one of the most frequent is the involuntary and unconscious transmission of beliefs and mistaken suppositions from the persons delineated to the percipients, and that the later spontaneous rectifications of these errors follow the conscious rectifications made by the former.

And, further, I note here that the frequency of error in metagnomic output is very different according as the revelations deal with what is known or unknown to the person cognized. With good subjects dealing with what is known, there are omissions, but little positive error, whereas dealing with the unknown, especially the future, approximations, partial error, and distinct mistakes frequently occur. So that the two psychisms of observer and observed are here found in communication and inter-mental collaboration.

Practical experiment, undertaken without any *a priori* theories which deform results by systematization, brings out clearly, under whatever aspect it may be regarded, that *when a metagnomic subject reveals the states of life in a person placed in his presence, his paranormal knowledge comes from that person.*

This is the psychological fact whose reality is shown by the whole evidence, and with which nothing, unless it be our prejudices, conflicts.

This conclusion, imperatively suggested by investigation, meets, however, with almost invincible resistance from most minds trained under the influence of a psychology which is still in its infancy. The opposition, based entirely on the subjective operations of the mind, usually finds expression as follows :

"A human being cannot, by mental intercommunication, supply a metagnomic subject with anything that is not and cannot be in his mind ; such as a past that he does not know and, more especially, a future governed by fortuitous, accidental, and external reactions."

If one would understand and discover anything in this department of metapsychics this prejudgment must be set aside along with all others.

In the exploration of the paranormal we must expect to find paranormal and seemingly absurd things, not comparable with our knowledge and the sensorial exercise of our intelligence. To wish to conform Nature to our own mental content is to condemn ourselves to illusion and to sterilize research, whereas progress towards truth is never anything but a laborious and progressive modification of the human mind in face of immutable realities.

Here, in the restricted experimental field selected, we must heed Nature speaking by the language of facts. Now impartial experiment from whatever direction it attacks the problem whence the metagnomic information is derived, heaps proof upon proof that it is resident in the human personality delineated. All speculative opinions whatsoever will not make *that which* is not to be.

Accepting this fundamental psychological conclusion which could be invalidated only by experiment compelling a different inference, there follows the corollary—that given, on the one hand, that metagnomic subjects draw from the delineated person the information that concerns him ; and, on the other hand, that a great part of this information outranges his apparent mental content, and all known possibilities of his perception and knowledge, it must be admitted, subject to later experimental verification, that human personality possesses a latent modality of thought endowed with faculties adequate to the working-up of supernormal knowledge ; that is to say, informed by other channels than those of the normal senses, understanding by other processes than reasoning, and, moreover, freed from the intellectual limitations of Time and Space.

This experimental truth, hard of acceptance because nothing in our modern knowledge has prepared us for it, simplifies greatly the determinism of the metagnomic phenomenon in the case of paranormal cognition of man by man. We are no longer confronted by the incomprehensible spectacle of a sensitive who knows the lives of other men. Every human being knows his own entire life according to laws that are still to be discovered, and metagnomic subjects are psychic instruments of variable quality that reveal what each human being knows concerning himself without being aware consciously, or even subconsciously, that he has this knowledge.

Henceforward this is the aspect under which the problem of supernormal knowledge of man by man presents itself.

Aspect from the side of the cognized personality.

Besides the modality of thought called conscious, known from all time; besides the modality called subconscious, recently discovered, the human being possesses a "transcendental modality" whose means of information, processes of cognition and extent of knowledge, remain yet to be explored, but which through the intermediary of the metagnomic subjects that it inspires, shows that it is aware of the general course of the individual life and is capable of foreknowing its circumstantial development.

Exceptionally and accidentally, knowledge passes from the transcendental modality of thought into subconscious modalities (dreams, hysterical states, etc.) and even into the conscious, determining one of the phenomena (vague or precise presentiments, unexpected information of some event strongly affecting a life, etc.) many of which have been observed and authenticated by testimony.

Ordinarily, the transcendental modality of thought remains latent, nothing passes from it into the sensorial exercise of intelligence, and nothing reveals its existence, human beings act as if they had it not. Between the transcendental and the conscious there would seem to be an almost insurmountable physiological barrier.

Aspect from the side of the metagnomic subject.

The sensitives called "metagnomic" are endowed with the permanent faculty of being impressed by the transcendental modality of thought latent in every human being, and are able to bring the suggestions of that modality on to the conscious plane.

What does that faculty consist in? That is yet to be discovered. As yet we only know it in its obvious functional manifestations and by its output.

The output that comes most easily and instinctively in presence of the person cognized, is the revelation of the content of an individual life in its past and its future.

Is this all that metagnomic subjects are able to receive from the transcendental modality of individual psychisms? That also is matter for investigation. Subjects who can be influenced by transcendental modalities of thought are very highly endowed.

Most of them, however, show themselves to be equally sensitive to the conscious and the subconscious content of these psychisms also, and this sensitiveness determines the suggestion of information conformable to the mental states of the cognized without necessarily being in accord with external realities.

Endowed with the faculty of taking cognizance of the transcendental knowledge in others, metagnomic subjects are not therefore capable of knowing their own. They are, for the most part, as ignorant of their own future as any one of us. Such as have moderately accurate and frequent presentiments are rare.¹

Metagnomy with a human objective, thus understood, for all its seemingly fanciful and chaotic content, becomes intelligible and falls into order in the mind.

It is easy to understand why the subjects in order to exercise their faculty get into a psychological state that releases mental activity from conscious and voluntary control, a state which gives the best condition for suggestibility.

It is comprehensible why they find bodily contact favour the transmission of psychic energy that is the vehicle of the inspiring thought.

It is understandable that the presence of several persons, making a plurality of influencing foci, should vitiate metagnomic output by total or partial inhibition, by transpositions and interpositions in the information received.

Comprehensible also is that which is inexplicable on any other hypothesis, that metagnomic output should vary according to the quality of the dynamo-psychism influencing the receptive sensitiveness of the percipient.

Such would seem to be the determining factors of metagnomic perception of a human personality in its simplest case—the delineation of a human being there present.

But in practice, the phenomenon is rarely as simple as I have

¹ If these subjects drew their paranormal knowledge direct from latent actualities outside time and space, or if they received it from extra-human inspiration, their faculty would as readily inform them of their own future as of others.

made it for convenience of analytic statement. In delineating the states of life of a person in presence, the subject is always led to speak of other persons who have touched, or will touch, the individual life in one way or another; and the metagnomic output is then complicated by the interposition of other possible foci of information and by the entry into action of an extension of receptivity in time and space, as the next chapters will show.

CHAPTER III

WHEN A METAGNOMIC SUBJECT TAKES COGNIZANCE OF THE STATES OF LIFE OF A LIVING HUMAN BEING DISTANT IN SPACE, WHENCE DOES HE DRAW HIS INFORMATIONS ?

IN this case the metagnomic process becomes so complex that if we consider the phenomena only in their narrative aspect and under the conditions of their production, one is impelled towards extravagant explanatory hypotheses unless prudence lead us to avow ignorance and to leave to future generations the task of clearing up that which can, nevertheless, be partially elucidated in the present.

Let us recall that metagnomic subjects are sometimes capable of receiving spontaneous and accidental information of states of existence concerning distant persons, and that, independently of the influence of those then present. Let us also remember that when they delineate the states of life of a present individuality they are always led, in connection with that person, to reveal the states of life of other persons at a distance ; and that though these informations are, for the most part, conformable to what is known to the person present, they are also in part unknown to him.

Let us remember, too, that the utterance of a first name, or even a mental representation of an absent person, often suffices for some specially endowed percipients to become informed of his bodily aspect, his character, the state of his health, his social standing, and his future development. Confronted with such manifestations we are unable to perceive whence metagnomic subjects draw their paranormal knowledge. We reckon that the person present cannot unconsciously suggest the revelations made, because he does not know their substance : and as nothing in our scientific attainments has prepared us for that, we hold it highly improbable that a subject should be able to place himself immediately and at any distance, in interpsychic relation with another human being, and still more with human beings in other widely separated places.

But if phenomena of this kind go too far beyond our concepts

of man as thinker and the capacities of our instruments of registration to lead to scientific explanation in the near future, the subjects unconsciously lead even the inexperienced investigator to a proceeding eminently favourable to discovery of the informative source at a distance, for as soon as they are asked for more abundant and precise details on a living absent person, they say: Nothing more comes to me; "I want something belonging to the person to enable me to say more."

It is, in fact, in this *thing belonging to the person* that the field of instructive investigation is to be sought. The experimenter is no longer in presence of a subject who draws information from an unreachable source; he has before him one who is influenced by an object that some one has touched or possessed: and from that point of departure, he leaves pure subjectivity on one side to study the relations with a relatively fixed factor. He has the metagnomic subject and the objective factor, which latter he can vary at pleasure as to its nature and the different uses to which he puts it. The experimental method works as it did in the case of personal presence. We are no longer passive spectators of a paranormal phenomenon without any common measure between our knowledge and our means of perception, we are active observers of experimental vicissitudes that can be varied till the obscurity clears. We are not concerned to imagine theories according to preconceived opinions and intellectual tendencies, *but to make Nature speak.*

In the case of metagnomy on a human subject distant in space the research on the informative source then becomes:—What is the function of the object placed in the hands of the percipient?

Obviously our present knowledge in physics and physiology does not permit of direct research on the part played by this object; but indirectly, under clear inferences from certain experimental facts, it is possible to arrive at the *nature* of their function, and this is what is of import in the statement of the general problem of the informative sources of metagnomy.

Here, as in the preceding chapter, it will suffice to collect and compare some verifications scattered through this book which will show the explanation that flows from the facts and is adapted to them all.

By the narrative, and under the conditions of production of the metagnomic facts that have been quoted, and by the analysis of the psychological *processus* of the faculty, the reader will have learned how an object placed in the hand or on the forehead of certain sensitives sets in motion their special faculty with reference to the person to whom that object pertains.

This at least is how the phenomenon appears, taking the totality of cases into account. It happens sometimes, however, that a subject instead of receiving and revealing knowledge concerning the individual desired, reveals states of life of another person, usually belonging to the same surroundings, or whom enquiry enables us easily to identify. Psychists who have observed this saw in this apparent diversion from the assigned end, an *error of direction*.

Now it is not an error of direction, but ignorance on the part of the observer of the general determinism of metagnomy when an intermediate object is used. I should myself doubtless have fallen into the same mistake had I not met with a metagnomic subject working in deep hypnosis, Mme Morel, who is specially endowed with faculty adapted to this type of experiment, and thereby favours a study nearly impossible with most subjects ; at any rate with such as I have observed.

The many diverse experiments that I have made with Mme Morel have taught me that the object placed in her hands avails to set her faculty in action not by the fact of having belonged to such and such a person, but by having been touched by that person.

This appears so clearly from the output of this sensitive that one is impelled to think her capable of placing her faculty at the service of each human being who has touched the object given to her.

Each of my experiments by contact with some article pertaining to persons unknown to me, has nearly always proceeded on the following lines :

" Look for the person to whom this object belongs."

To which the sensitive replied by the physical or moral description of some one in whom I had no difficulty in recognizing myself or the person who had brought the article to me.

I then said, " I don't want you to speak of me or of the person who brought this ; look (e.g. in the case of a written paper) for the person who wrote this paper, carry back to the time when it was written."

Sometimes the subject thus directed, would fix at once upon the individual desired ; at other times some other person who had touched the thing would be called to her mind, and on censoring, the matter (negative as regards the personality given as objective) would be exact for some other in that person's surroundings. Occasionally no conclusion could be reached, the experimenter being unable to make sufficiently extensive enquiries.

If the sensitiveness of Mme Morel, so delicate that the mere contact of an object places it at the service of one or other of the persons who have touched it, has furnished me with séances

rich in material on persons at a distance, I soon avoided the heavy and irksome work that such experiments involve by taking the precaution to ask from occasional collaborators some datum such as not to vitiate results by bringing my own mental content into the matter and yet sufficient to eliminate useless deviations as soon as the sensitive expressed such.¹

My work with Mme Morel soon satisfied me that a metagnomic subject specially sensitive to the modalities of energy with which we impregnate the things that we touch, is able to cognize each of those who have touched an object as if that person were there present. And in the sequel it was not difficult to ascertain that Mme Morel never confused the respective states of life brought to her mind by manual contact with the same object. Every feeling, act, scene, and event were ascribed to the individual to whom they pertained ; it was even the same as regards errors.

As soon as these two fundamental conclusions were fixed in my mind by simple, or I might say passive, observation, I completed the lesson they carried by active observations directed to a particular end. I thus verified to satiety, by repetition of experiments, that in metagnomy on a distant person, the function of the article used is *transitory*, and for some percipients is *not even necessary*.

Transitory, because though indispensable at the beginning of the first séance, the thing can be taken from the hand of Mme Morel and destroyed without interfering with her faculty : and also because it becomes useless in later séances on the same person.

Not necessary, because some sensitives behave towards the distant person as if he were near, and that without the need for touching a thing coming from that person, but always under the condition that there should be in the mind of the experimenter some notion, however slight, of the given personality.

This is sufficient to enable us to say that in metagnomy on a distant person the function of the object put in the hand of the sensitive is not that of conveying the mysterious substance of their informations. It seems to be a means, provisionally necessary to some but not to others, to connect them with the real source of their cognition.

If this conclusion should not seem justified by the data given by experience, here is another verified fact which should remove all doubt :

With an article possessed or touched by a person taken as

¹ Thus, before proceeding on the task of discovering a missing man (see p. 123), I obtained from M. Mirault only two data—the man was old and walked with a stoop.

objective for paranormal cognition, that article having never again been touched by the person, an experimenter can (personally or through others) have as many metagnomic séances as he may choose. The article retains its informative potentiality.

Thus a thing invariable from the first to the n^{th} séance in its power to generate phenomena, sets in motion paranormal knowledge which increases from one séance to another, as I have described in the preceding chapter, since at each new séance new states of life are revealed, errors are rectified or not repeated, and the events previously spoken of as being in the future are relegated to the past by the percipients.

This is known to every psychist who has made even a slight experimental study of metagnomy on an absent person by means of an intermediary object. Everyone can easily verify this, it is a fact which soon commands attention.

Its *significance* is no doubt less obvious, for I have not yet heard or read that the inference involved, as to the informative sources, has been deduced from it. But if submitted to close attention and reason, is it not strictly logical that an object when it is the *invariable factor* in a metagnomy that is *in constant variation*, cannot be the focus that contains and supplies percipients with the matter of their revelations?

Having reached this conclusion, rooted in experimental practice, an induction at once follows. Since metagnomy on an absent person in séances at intervals of time always varies progressively, the informative source should logically be placed in that which is also progressively varying and not in that which is unvarying.

Experimental production of the metagnomic phenomenon of the kind here under discussion is governed by three factors :

The object that stimulates, invariable from one séance to another in its function and its mysterious content.

The metagnomic subject, a psychic instrument, invariable as regards his psycho-physiological position with reference to the object and to the person to be cognized.

The personality assigned as objective, progressively varying by the activity of moral and intellectual tendencies and in the organic and social current of his life.

If the source whence the sensitive draws his revelations is in the place where there is a progressive evolution agreeing with the progressive metagnomic information, it can only be in the human being, more or less distant in space, whose states of life the sensitive delineates.

Experiment therefore leads us to consider the case of

metagnomy on a distant person as analogous to that when that person is in presence. The two cases differ only by distance in space. The intermediary object appears as one mode of linking two psychisms, a psycho-physiological means of enabling the subject to distinguish one human being in the crowd of other human beings, and to exercise his paranormal faculty upon that one.

This notion is confirmed on thinking over certain modes of metagnomic function on a person present. Some sensitives prefer to touch an object coming from the person to be delineated rather than to have bodily contact, having remarked that their faculty works better so. The fluids, they say, are more favourable in this way. This obviously means that their sensitiveness to whatever it is that emanates from human beings is such that it is sufficiently and more effectively moved at a slight distance than by continuous bodily conduction.

This notion is further confirmed by the fact that a sensitive working in the midst of several persons, remains at the service of one if he holds in his hand something belonging to that one, but easily deviates to another person if this material link is taken away.

Such experimental cases may be looked upon as examples at slight distance of what metagnomy is at all distances. The psycho-physiological *processus* is the same, only the amount of space between the sensitive and the person delineated differs.

Under what authority do we demur to this? Certainly not that of science which is equally unable to explain paranormal cognition whether near or far.

It is nevertheless to be desired that this localization of the informative source, based partly on experimental conclusions and partly on logic, should be supported by direct experimental demonstration by which it would indubitably appear that the metagnomic subject and the distant human being whose states of life are delineated, produce the metagnomic phenomenon by mental collaboration. This wish arises from a legitimate respect for the experimental method, but it is based on a complete misreading of the phenomenon. It must be remembered that the two collaborating factors, the cognizer and the cognized, are from the metagnomic point of view both unconscious. The person at a distance is ignorant of his own thought-content and of what takes place when metagnomy is exercised upon him. Similarly the sensitive knows neither how nor whence the knowledge that he expresses comes to him. Confronted with this interpsychic latent work, the experimenter stands without any recording instrument, without any means of direct control, and

even without any subjective indications. His only means of investigation are indirect. Study of the function of the intermediary object is one of them. Another is the analysis (in metagnomy at a distance) of the transmission of mistaken beliefs, of projects that have no sequel, and the like, from the person to the sensitive and the transformations of these in successive séances. This belongs to another chapter.

Among all the hypotheses which we can conceive and accept, that of interpsychic communication at a distance is the only one suggested by practical experiment, and the only one which when applied to the genesis of the phenomena, makes them generally intelligible.

And if it should be admitted as probable or possible that metagnomic sensitives have the faculty (on the slightest psychophysical link) to connect themselves instantaneously with human individualities distant in space, the case of metagnomy in propinquity, which seemed at first the simplest, becomes strangely complex, for it would seem to be made up of unanalysable contributions from the latent thought of the person present, of the experimenter, of the sensitive himself, and of the absent persons to whom references crop up.

Beyond the human individualities that our senses detach from the continuity of Nature, we glimpse an immense mental world subjacent to appearances in which particular identities seem to be linked in an inconceivable collective psychic life. It is from this vast latent life of thoughts, of thought, that sensitives unconsciously draw the substance of their revelations, being endowed with a sense that enables them to distinguish the evolving schemes of individual lives. Metagnomy on persons *distant in time* will appear to us still more strange and complex.

CHAPTER IV

WHEN A METAGNOMIC SUBJECT TAKES COGNIZANCE
OF THE STATES OF LIFE OF A HUMAN BEING
DISTANT IN TIME, WHENCE DOES HE DRAW
HIS INFORMATION ?

DESPITE their apparently fundamental similarity, metagnomy on a person *distant in space* and that on a person *distant in time* present a difference from the experimental point of view which it is important to understand thoroughly. This difference lies entirely in the position of the experimenter in the last phase of experiment—the censorship. For if it is nearly always possible, if not easy, to censor metagnomy in Space, its difficulty is nearly always insurmountable in Time, as a brief statement of the useful types of experiment will show.

I. *Experiments in which the human objective is entirely in the future.*

Two experimental types are to be distinguished here.

The first includes the cases in which the subject takes cognizance of a future human individuality with reference to the future of a living person and the ulterior connection of the two lives. Take as an instance, when a sensitive announces to a mother the approaching birth of her child, delineating its physical, moral and mental characters, and describing its development more or less completely. It is obvious that this is not (indubitably at any rate), a case of direct cognition ; the unborn child being cognized in the life-sequence of an existing personality. Cases of this kind belong to the types described in preceding chapters.

A second experimental type—the only one which finds its proper place here—would answer to cases in which the sensitive would seem to perceive directly a human being as yet unborn ; if, for instance, a sensitive were to describe the physical aspect, character, mode, and sequence of the life of a man not yet born at the time of the forecast, but foreknown because he would inhabit such and such a house or lodging.

A considerable number of trials of this kind would be the way to prepare (for our successors) a well-founded judgment on the

capacity or incapacity of the faculty (at least so far as possessed by the sensitives employed) to show foreknowledge of human lives entirely in the future as it seems they can of those entirely in the past. But while the claims of investigations whose results are verifiable at once or at short date are so pressing, who would accept the task of undertaking a series of experiments whose conclusion must be left to a future generation, and might, moreover, be entirely useless?

II. *Experiments in which the human objective has lived in a relatively distant past.*

In this category of facts metagnomic output is as easy to obtain as for persons distant in space. Contact with an object sets the faculty to work on the whole individuality as it was in the past. But it is scarcely ever possible to censor completely the result.

I have not yet had one case in which it was possible to do this.

For a valid experiment it is not sufficient that the percipient should be ignorant what the object placed in his hand represents, and then to judge of the value of his indications by their agreement with what is known, or by their verisimilitude. However interesting this may be, this result allows of the supposition that it is constructed by the imagination of the percipient from the mental content of the experimenter—a phenomenon that I have sometimes verified.

Only an experiment in which percipient and experimenter were alike entirely ignorant of the historical meaning of the object given as stimulus, and in which the metagnomic information could be checked in part or in whole against the objective evidence of vestiges, of documents unknown to every living person till the moment of verification, would be really valid. Only thus one might believe, with some chance of being correct, that one is in presence of direct cognition of an individual human life entirely completed in the past. I have long searched in vain for such a proof. It came to me spontaneously, as detailed in Chapter III, Part I.

Mme Morel on handling the photograph of an ampulla of opaque glass told me that it contained blood from a man in the ancient East whose mode of life, violent death, and funeral ceremonies she briefly described.

As this sealed vessel (according to its possessor) contains a liquid whose nature no one can know till the vessel is opened, I rejoiced at this conjunction of circumstances in which conformity of the vision by the sensitive with the antique reality would have undeniable support. The reader knows why the verification remains in suspense.

For want of any certainty that a metagnomic subject can take cognizance of individual human lives in a relatively distant past, apart from what is represented by living psychisms, I can only state the problem as to what the informative sources may be in these as in the type of cases last mentioned.

III. *Experiments in which the human objective is in a recent past.*

The field of useful experiment is in fact confined to the quite recent past on account of the possibility of censoring results exactly. Even then it is necessary to know what experimental conditions make an experiment really conclusive. It is not enough that a sensitive should reveal the states of life of a deceased person for us to believe that we are in presence of a direct metagnomic fact concerning a human being of the past: everything depends on the circumstances under which the perception occurred.

When a sensitive delineates the states of life of a person present, and describes, for instance, the bodily aspect, character, and episodes in the life of a father or grandfather deceased, whom that person has known or heard much about, one can never be certain that these personalities themselves are cognized, beyond what the living person may reveal, even perhaps when the matter revealed seems necessarily unknown to him.

When Myers in January, 1891, sent to Sir Oliver Lodge a sealed envelope whose contents, written by himself, he alone knew, asking that it should only be opened after his death when a medium should have revealed its tenor, he thought he had given a means of revealing the informative source and of proving survival after death. The result is well known. Myers died in 1901. The letter was opened in 1904, after Mrs. Verrall, a spiritualist medium of repute, was sure that she had obtained the content under the inspiration of its author. But there was no agreement between the two texts, either in wording or ideas. The experiment was, moreover, radically vitiated for the purpose intended. Even if it had been fully successful it would not have justified the conclusion that Myers wished, since in order to be able to affirm inspiration by the deceased it would be necessary to be certain that knowledge of the content of a sealed letter is impossible to a living person, even to those who are sensitive to written matter by means outside the normal senses. There are, however, in metapsychic literature facts which deprive experiments such as Myers devised of all value as to the source of information.¹

¹ E. Boirac led his subject Ludovic to read in the dark, a text unknown to both, by passing a finger over the paper (*La Psychologie Inconnue*, p. 245).

Hereward Carrington, Edison, J. Maxwell, and Schrenck-Notzing all verified

Even cases analogous to that cited, page 162 *ante*, when experimenter and percipient were both ignorant of the matter in hand, are not indicative of the sources of the information given, for the percipient revealed a life known in great part to two living persons, and no one at the present time can know the limits to mental intercommunication in metagnomic working.

Without further examples the reader will easily perceive how difficult it is when metagnomy is being exercised on completed human lives to devise an experiment in which no explanatory hypothesis other than direct perception from the individuality concerned can be advanced.

In my personal researches I have met with information on missing persons found in the sequel to be dead, as the only data on metagnomy dealing with past human lives without any probable action of living psychisms.

It is rarely that such facts do not carry some impediments to that to which they might be related. I have published one on which silence was not demanded.¹ It is simple, unsensational, but quite typical, and will serve to state the problem of the informative source in the case of metagnomy on a person distant in time.

From the standpoint taken in this book (the only one now in question), the case resolves itself into this complex of circumstances :

On March 2nd, 1914, a man who lived in the outbuildings of a country-house in the department of Cher, left his house and was seen no more. He was sought for during twenty days. There was no slightest clue to what had become of him. No one knew anything of his life since he left his home. I did not know even that the man existed, and I used a metagnomic subject under hypnosis, to whom the man and his place of habitation were totally unknown. Under these conditions, where no influence from any living person could be alleged, the percipient reconstituted the last episodes in the life of the missing man, indicating step by step the path he had taken, the things he saw, his gestures (some of which were said by members of his family to be characteristic), his thoughts and the place where he awaited death, and his body was found ; this place being accurately described in detail. In this case, and in others of the same kind (which would

in turn that Bert Reese easily revealed what they had written on folded papers, mixed together, hidden, and some burned before the percipient spoke of them (*Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, March and Nov., 1913). Dr. Geley in Sept., 1921, and Professor Richet proved by conclusive experiments that the Polish engineer Stephan Ossowiecki could read the sense, and sometimes the phrases, of letters in sealed envelopes (*Revue Metapsychique*, 1921, No. 8, and 1922, Nos. 3 and 4).

¹ In this book, p. 105, and the *Annales des Sci. Pys.*, in *extenso*, April, 1914.

be common were they sought for among percipients of the same type), one is confronted with a metagnomic phenomenon that proves that episodes known only to a dead man are revealed by a sensitive as if by direct knowledge.

In such cases, whence do sensitives draw their information?

Shall we find the answer from what practical experiment can teach us?

It should be noted that the enquirer loses nearly all his means of investigation.

In metagnomy on living persons study is concentrated on two constantly varying factors—the sensitive, varying from séance to séance in the quality and extent of perception; and from the person cognized, varying from one séance to another by the objectification of his states of life and in his mental content. Observation, taking account of the changing relativity of these two factors, has many data that can be diversified at will to trace the paranormal knowledge to its source.

But in metagnomy on a deceased person the second factor has become invariable; it is a completed life, unchangeable, which would appear to be only a representation permanently immobilised in a vast and inconceivable memory. Experiment loses nearly all power of investigation and is reduced to the registration of indications and subsequent censorship of their agreement with fact, a process that can throw no light on the genesis of the metagnomic phenomenon under these conditions.

Although the field of research is thus restricted, there still remain some facts that may direct us in the darkness and show a way from the metagnomic fact towards the source of the knowledge it brings.

Accumulated experiment shows that sensitives deal with a dead personality in the same way as with a living one. The elective action of their faculty takes place in the same manner. The information they receive and express are of the same kind and refer to the same matters.

Their faculty is stimulated into action just as in distant cases, whether by a physical link (using some intermediary object) or by a mental link—the presence of some person belonging to, or more or less representing the person to be cognized. It was by the touch of a neckerchief belonging to M. Lerasle that Mme Morel reconstituted the last stages of his life. And this piece of stuff (I emphasize this fact) was taken from a wardrobe for transmission to me, and therefore had only been in contact with the missing man long before the paranormal knowledge that it instigated. The mere presence of a member of M. Lerasle's family would have served the same purpose as I have verified in

other cases of the kind. The presence of a living person from the environment of the deceased play the same part in producing the phenomenon, with this difference that the living person may be the involuntary and unconscious agent of error by transmission of his mental content.

Moreover, metagnomy on the dead human personality furnishes the same kind of knowledge as of the living. What the sensitive reveals in both cases is the objectification of the human personality by the successive constituent states of life. The percipient takes cognizance of a particular existence under the same informative aspects, whether it be entirely completed or in course of completion: time does not enter qualitatively as a factor modifying the faculty.

Since the same experimental conditions allow of the same cognitions on the human individuality, whether living or dead, we are not led to think—I do not say to conclude, since the experimental data are too few to warrant definite conclusion—but to suppose that the determining factors of the metagnomic phenomenon are similar whether the personality cognized be near at hand, distant in space or distant in time?

Confronted with the supposition that a human personality buried in the past should be the reality directly influencing the faculty of metagnomic subjects, we stand stupefied, unable to understand, and disposed to reject this inference from observation and logic as a paradox. When, in the previous chapter, the only hypothesis resulting from experimental facts was offered to us—that the informative influence was that of the person distant in space whose life is delineated by the percipient, we found it hard to accommodate our minds to that idea. This psychic phenomenon, however, seemed in some degree intelligible by comparison with some recent acquisitions of physical science such as wireless telephony and telegraphy: but we have nothing to compare with metagnomy on dead personality. That which seemed theoretically possible *in space* seems to us absurd *in time*. We oppose the possibility of direct perception of a past reality with all the power of our mental constitution adapted to function analytically by the succession of sensations.

Nevertheless, the facts bear witness that metagnomy on human individuality in time is a verifiable fact; and experimental observation suggests that the informative source is the same whether the personality in question be living or deceased. If that is opposed to our modes of thinking, that is because our modes of thinking have to adapt themselves to an order of phenomena *manifested* indeed on the material plane of our ordinary sensations, but *originating* on another plane of which our physics can give us no idea. Metagnomy deals with knowledge reached by

other channels than those of the known senses, and elaborated by other processes than reason. And further, this paranormal knowledge, incomprehensible in its nature, has as its object "the human personality," which also is an enigma.

What is human personality? It is important that we should fully realize that we do not know. To be aware that we do not know is the best preparation for research.

Very numerous and diverse are the definitions of human personality; some are in essential contradiction with others: they depend on the standpoint from which a human being is looked at and on the opinions with which we approach the question. I think, however, that they all may be reconciled in this: A human personality is an individuality distinct from other beings of the species by a sum of physical, moral, social and other characteristics, and by a peculiar manner of feeling, acting and reacting; by a memory connecting successive states of consciousness, giving the sensation of the Self, i.e. of unity in the midst of the moving multiplicities of the environment.

The human personality then appears to us as a system of converging functions determining bodily individuality and mental individuality, in whatever manner the latter may be understood.

But as soon as a mind disciplined by positive experimental method begins to explore human personality, it does not fail to discover behind the seeming individual fixity, a constant movement of variation with episodic accelerations more or less strong and with more or less durable perturbations that determine correlated modifications of the whole.

As soon as men had developed some acuity of judgment, mere observation of the course of particular lives had already taught them that the human being objectifies an evolution with many diverse vicissitudes, which render him sometimes, and in whatsoever way, so changed in the course of ten or twenty years that he would not be recognized by his contemporaries if the conformation of his body did not maintain his identity; and he would not even recognize himself if his memory did not bring both aspects of his existence into mental continuity.

As soon as psychology ceased to be an introspective analysis generalized on the species, and became experimental, psychologists were obliged to admit, coexistent in human personality, two psychic individualities interacting functionally, but spontaneously and experimentally separable. They thought to describe them by calling the one *conscious* and the other *subconscious* or *unconscious*; and, in the sequel were obliged to discern the same attributes in each—memory, spontaneity, constructive power, will consciousness, etc. A great many

psycho-pathological states showing disequilibrium of thought, were referred to rupture of the functional synergy of these two psychisms. That gave the idea of using hypnosis to analyse the respective functioning of each.

By this method of cleaving the personality, it appeared that the function called conscious was in some sort the creator and guardian of personality, and that its momentary passivity under hypnosis allowed of an impromptu and temporary assumption of any other suggested personality with consequent modification of the whole moral being, including the hand-writing.¹

The facility with which the instantaneous formation of new personalities could be brought about by hypnotic suggestion was the experimental explanation of the abrupt and spontaneous transformations observed in certain neuroses, such as the cases called *ambulatory somnambulism* in which a person suddenly becomes someone else with other tendencies, another character and another memory, for days, weeks, or months. (See Pierre Janet, *Névroses et idées fixes*, Vol. II.)

Such also is the celebrated case of Felida, who lived for thirty years in two alternating personalities distinct from one another.² In another field of observation the momentary transformation of personality, and even the creation of personalities additional to and coexistent with the first, have been abundantly observed in the production of paranormal phenomena called *mediumship*. "It is remarkable," says Charles Richet, "that in nearly every experiment, mediums, even when very slightly acquainted with spiritualist literature (sometimes none at all when at the beginning of their mediumship), attribute to another personality than themselves the origin of the thoughts transmitted by the table or planchette in writing. In nearly all spiritist experiments there is personification. The personalities are often multiple, but there is usually one that takes precedence and excludes others. In spiritualist parlance this is called a *Guide*. The remarkable objective phenomena presented by Eusapia Paladino were referred by her to John King. Similarly Mrs. Piper's subjective phenomena were attributed by her to Phinuit." (Charles Richet, *Traité de Métapsychique*.)

Everything happens in fact, as if the subconsciousness of the

¹ Ferrari, Hericourt, Charles Richet. "La personnalité de l'écriture." (*Revue philosophique*, 1886.)

Charles Richet. *L'homme et l'intelligence*.

Le Dantec. "L'individualité et l'erreur individualiste." (*Biblio. philos. contemporaine*.)

Binet. "Les altérations de la personnalité." (*Bibl. Scient. Internationale*.)

Taine. *L'Intelligence*.

Grasset. *Hypnotisme et Suggestion*.

² *Hypnotisme. Double Conscience et altérations de la personnalité*. (Azam, 1887.)

medium fabricates a fixed or variable personality, invested with an historical name, or with an imaginary one, or with none at all.

This additional personality is often seen to be variable in its actions, in its character, its language, and its knowledge, with different sitters. This has been observed and reported in the writings of most persons who have assisted at mediumistic sittings where there have been several sitters.¹

All the vicissitudes of personality, whether artificial or spontaneous, mentioned above, are modifications or provisional eclipses of the first or conscious personality, which reappears as soon as the mental synergy is reconstituted.

And these are only the least of the disasters that may happen to that personality when it is altered beyond those modifications which may be called its normal evolution; for lesions of the central nervous system may lead to worse things—for instance, to coexistence with a new and delirious personality, temporary or permanent, as in lunacy; or to its definite replacement by a secondary personality. We should also remember that personality proper is not even formed at all in the case of some constitutional degenerates, despite the normal morphological development of their bodies they remain in mental childhood. And, to say no more, it is also to be borne in mind that dementia may submerge a normally evolved personality in similar childishness.

This human personality, so unstable that it is incessantly modified, so little homogeneous that strong emotion, intoxication or suggestion can dissociate it, so little constructed to endure that it may even die before the death of the body, so precarious and so obviously perishable, is not, as we have seen in the preceding pages, the informing centre whence metagnomic subjects draw their knowledge when they work on a life in progress. *A fortiori* it cannot be the informing centre when death has extinguished it.

It appears really, as its etymology designates it (Lat. *persona* = a mask worn by actors—a part played), or, after death, the story of a particular life in the universal life.

This story, however, subsists somewhere, since metagnomic subjects are able to reconstruct it; and how can it be imagined to subsist if it is not in a thought or a memory?

¹ J. Maxwell. *Les Phénomènes psychiques* (Alcan). "I have remarked that the part played by the personification varies with the composition of the circle. With spiritualists it will always be the spirit of a deceased or of a living person. There is more variety in the intellectual phenomena when the circle is composed of persons who are not spiritualists. In this case it happens sometimes that the communications allege that they emanate from the sitters themselves. I am inclined to think that this generally is so, and that some sort of collective consciousness is formed.

In what thought ? In what memory ? This is to be sought for : not by sterile flights of imagination ; but by facts, by experiment, by study of the living, in biology pure and simple in its paranormal section. Is there behind individual seeming a collective consciousness, a thought outside time and space, where every reality is represented, of which all phenomena known to us are reflected by our senses ; a mysterious well-spring whose knowledge flows through the particular psychisms within the limits that pertain to each ?

Is there behind the apparent human personality a real personality, a transcendental individuality clothed in matter playing a part in the life of the world, whose persistence would be the memory containing a life-story, from whom the metagnomic subject draws after death that which he drew before death ?

Or is the source of supernormal knowledge so unreachable by the very constitution of our intelligence that our actual concepts must necessarily be foreign to it ?

Some definite facts impress me with a notion that it would be premature to enlarge upon, that this problem can be solved. What metaphysical speculation has only debated, may possibly be established by persevering, practical experiment.

CHAPTER V

SKETCH OF A STUDY ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DETERMINISM OF ERRORS IN METAGNOMY IN OPERATION ON HUMAN PERSONALITY

I. ON ERRORS IN THE EXERCISE OF SUPERNORMAL COGNITION

SO far this book has been a study of metagnomy in its correct operation; that is, as producing knowledge of reality under conditions when normal intelligence could reveal nothing. But if, instead of having set forth a statement at once analytical and synthetical, of the *processus* of this faculty in its active phases, I had restricted myself to interminable details of experimental séances, the reader would at once have perceived that unalloyed metagnomy is rare and that it presents itself more or less infected by error.

Error and supernormal knowledge should be studied together, they are two products of mental working on several planes and of connected functions. The arbitrary separation is therefore necessary for clarity of statement.

This department of human biology is like others in which the observer approaches complex phenomena—life is understood by studying its perturbations. Just as the state which we call health is understood differently as we progress in our knowledge of disease; just the function of an organ is best known when we know all the troubles that cause it to vary; just as psychopathology has enabled us to penetrate into the complexities of mental life; so, in the same way, an analysis of errors instructs us on metagnomy by tracing the outline of this phenomenon whose fundamental nature is beyond our present knowledge, by separating that *which is* from that *which is not*.

Errors pervade metagnomic séances in variable proportions according to the psycho-physiological factors that condition them. Some séances contain scarcely any, others contain a few, others many. But to work out a percentage of the true and the false and to judge of the value of a séance from that, as I have sometimes read, is to satisfy oneself with an illogical and summary judgment, sterile also, because the psychological complexity

of the matter in hand has no numerical equivalents. Instead of merely comparing two totals it is more useful to find out the causes of errors.

Even if the observer should be so short-sighted as to be incapable of seeing anything beyond the crude fact of error, he ought to consider that errors differ greatly in what one might call their mass-value. When a percipient, for instance, calls a dark-haired person fair, he is not committing an error of the same degree as if he were attributing humility to a proud nature, genius to a degenerate whose evolution is arrested, good health to one dying of chronic disease, etc. He should also reflect that errors differ in their relation to reality. Some are total, having no correspondence with fact ; others are approximations more or less distant from truth ; others are total or partial omissions ; others are exaggerations with an optimist or pessimist bias, and so on. In short, errors are not intercomparable unities, they are ideas of different content and almost infinitely diverse. To turn them into figures is useless, and, moreover, teaches nothing.

The only useful procedure is to trace the error to its cause ; and this I shall endeavour to do by classing errors in their relation to the psychological factors that determine them.

2. ERRORS ORIGINATING IN DEFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF THE PSYCHISM OF METAGNOMIC PERCIPIENTS

As we have seen, in metagnomic work on a human personality everything happens as if the percipient drew information by latent intelligence of a transcendental kind, from the similar plane of another psychism, and exerted himself to transmit the knowledge so acquired to conscious thought by an ingenious use of the processes of mental representation.

As soon as the metagnomic sensitive ceases to think in the ordinary way and his special faculty comes into operation, his psychic activity is transformed. A latent intelligence comes into action, and the apparent functions of conscious and subconscious thought reverse their parts. The subconscious modality of the psychism is liberated from the conscious modality, and seems to become sensitive to influence from the transcendental plane of other psychisms ; and the conscious, abandoning the directive function, becomes a spectator, whether it merely registers supernormal information already completely expressed in spoken words or by automatic writing, or whether it has to interpret the artifices of mental representation.

The general *processus* of correct metagnomy on a human personality may be thus described when the factors that govern it are under favourable conditions.

But for many reasons, inherent in or exterior to the percipients, these favourable conditions are not always realized by a long way. Hence come errors.

The same psychological method will show us their many diverse aspects and their causes.

The psychism of the metagnomic subject may be insensitive to the transcendental thought of the object-personality.

When the psychism of the subject is not influenced by the transcendental modality of the person given for delineation, by reason of unfavourable conditions at the time or on account of some inter-mental relations, different results come to pass, according to circumstances.

Sometimes the psychism of the subject remains inert, no informative mental image arises. "Nothing comes to me," the percipient says. This is a failed séance. And it may be said that when perception is perturbed this is a fortunate aspect: the experiment with the same percipient and the same personality must be renewed or abandoned if one or two further trials should show this mental couple refractory to the production of super-normal knowledge.

But sometimes it happens that the subconscious functional plane of the subject, liberated from conscious direction and receiving no stimulus from outside, begins to work on its own account, and constructs a romance unrelated to the personality to be delineated, round some other perception. This error of *complete fabulation*, rare with good subjects, but frequent in those of middling and uncertain quality, may nevertheless occur with subjects capable at another time of excellent metagnomic output. Here is an instance of this kind of error produced August 2nd, 1916, by Mme L.-F——, the same percipient who had the previous day given me a very correct prevision of an episode in my military life (p. 291 *ante*).

On August 2nd, 1916, Captain Lucien G., an aviator, squadron-leader in the army of the East (Macedonia), was preparing to rejoin at the end of his leave. He was ignorant what the military contingencies might have in store as to his duties. I took him to Mme L.-F——, who did not know him and could normally know nothing but that he was in the Air Service, by reason of his uniform.

She said, "You are returning to the place you left . . . you will be sent elsewhere, but not towards France. . . . You will like the place you are now going to better than that to which you will be sent.

"In the country to which you will be sent I see nothing but water . . . like an island which is difficult of access, and that only by boat. . . . There is something like a thick grey cloud, and when one has passed through this it is clearer on the other side.

"You will see a great fire . . . you will be surprised and much moved by seeing great flames on the earth. Part of a building that shelters you

will be partially destroyed by the flames . . . many will die there . . . something falls . . . an explosion . . . fire . . . buildings destroyed.

"At the moment of the explosion I see you standing, dressed in white and wearing a helmet, looking at something on the ground; that will save you, because it will have made you go out of the building, perhaps bombed by an aeroplane? You will say, 'I must go and look into this!' You go out and something explodes in the place you have left. . . .

"You will, in the sequel, be taken prisoner, not in battle, but by mistaken direction . . . you will make a mistake in direction. You will be interned in a sort of fort . . . four columns . . . a terrace on which you will walk . . . vaults underneath for shelter. . . .

"Four of you will escape in a boat, by water, and without being detected, but on coming to land in a country where they will have to detain you. You will not be long a prisoner and will be well treated. . . .

"After the war you will do something connected with a large administration of the State perhaps . . . something very important. . . . In the place where you will be I see a long corridor representing offices . . . everything goes by organized direction . . . a settled career for life, free from all anxieties.

"You will make acquaintances or have preliminary interviews which will point the way before the end of the war. You will be the chief over these offices . . . men will come to you for orders. . . . After one or two years, perhaps longer, you make some sort of discovery . . . you will get no money for it, but some share in the profits of the thing made under your direction. . . . Once there, you will not change, and will become a personage in this affair. The gentleman who will bring you into this will be tall, fresh complexion, very white hair, not stout but thick-set; he will be the manager when you enter, you will take his place later on."

What came to pass.

Captain Lucien G. returned to his squadron in Macedonia, and had several changes; but there was no fire in which he might have perished.

Recalled to France in May, 1917, he commanded a squadron in several places on the French front. The only time in which he was in peril of fire was in the summer of 1918, during the German offensive towards the Marne. When piloting an observer at 2000 metres the oil-tank took fire. Death was certain if bold decision and clever manoeuvring had not brought the machine to earth immediately. The landing, necessarily somewhat violent, threw the two aviators on to the ground, where they remained some minutes half stunned by the shock, while the machine burnt out near them. That was the only episode in the war in which M. G. was in danger by fire, and it in no way resembles the prediction. He was in active employ from the beginning of the war to its end and was never made prisoner.

Returning to civil life, nothing in his professional career during the last four years at all resembles the visions told him.

This instance is therefore pure fabulation arising from conscious perception that an aviator was concerned.

So circumstantial a fabulation, constructed without any basis in reality or in thought, is rare among subjects capable of metagnomy. When their subconscious mind works on nothing it generally produces vague and ill-co-ordinated indications, expressed by hesitating phrases, while the face of the sensitive

shows effort, nervousness, and disquiet. An experimenter with practical experience then stops the sitting, knowing that no supernormal results are to be looked for.

Fabulation based on some informative influence from the personality to be delineated or derived thence, is relatively more common than total fabulation. The subconscious mind of the subject, sensitized to the external mental influence, remains uninfluenced by the transcendental mode, but grasps (on the plane of sensorial thought in the individual to be delineated) some project, belief, or desire on which it builds a romance. Until scrutinized by comparison with fact this kind of fabulation takes on an aspect of verisimilitude and supernormality by reason of its mental basis.

My records abound in errors of this kind to which some subjects, especially those in hypnosis, are specially prone. I will give one instance :

In December, 1915, when I was chief medical officer in the hospital of Vierzan, it was agreed between myself and Dr. C., the surgeon at a military hospital of the same town, that we would apply to be posted together to one of the automobile surgical ambulances which the Medical Department was starting at that time. Having sent in our applications, we each busied ourselves in pressing our request on the notice of persons who could prevent the application being lost in the mass of official papers.

During the first fortnight of February, 1916, it seemed that our efforts would shortly be successful. It was in this state of mind that on May 13th I said to Mme M., "Look for the next events in my life, starting from to-day."

"I see," she said, "a very important event for you at the present moment. . . . I see a transfer, followed by another. . . . I see danger . . . it is an order . . . you must go. . . . This order comes and changes the order of your work and your habits at present.

"I see three persons affected by the same order. . . . I see them in a painful situation, among men who are suffering. . . . I hear much noise. . . . I see you surrounded by accidents. It is very soon, very soon, hurried."

"Look for the circumstances preparing this departure."

"The circumstances are foreseen . . . the thing is prepared . . . it is done. . . . There is an order, you have to go . . . the matter is finished long since, the order comes . . . then the moment has come. All is prepared, only the destination has to be settled.

"For this departure I see a group of three persons ; a tallish man, strong, dark, and well-known to you (this applied to my friend Dr. G.) ; another, older, not known to you, who comes from a larger town. . . . You will meet at a place to be named . . . you two will leave together from where you now are."

"Look for the department in which I shall work."

"It is not in a house, it seems to be a kind of carriage . . . it is made like a carriage . . . a long grey carriage without horses. . . . In it I see men lying down, stained with blood, resting. . . . The carriage often goes from place to place, but stays many hours in one place. . . . I see also long wooden buildings, very long.

"I see this carriage mostly. . . . I see also a wrecked wood . . . the soil is dry and white . . . it is not snow, it is like chalk. . . .

"There are many carriages of the same kind, all alike, about four yards long and two yards wide.

"I see numbers of carriages . . . in groups of three. There are five doctors. The chief is an elderly man who passes and repasses, he does not stay in the carriages."

What came to pass.

Weeks went by. At the end of April we learned that the last surgical automobiles had been equipped and had left.

At the end of July in the same year I left Vierzon alone for service with the armies, and at no time was I in surroundings as described by Mme M.

Dr. G. also left for army service some months later, and was never attached to the automobile service. We did not meet again.

Mme M. had taken from my thoughts the idea of a posting to the automobile service, and had dressed it up in her own way.

It was a case of fabulation on my mental content.

It may also happen that the psychism of the subject, liberated from the usual conscious direction, unheeding its proper function and only occupied with the result, works under the sole and complete influence of the sensorial plane (conscious and sub-conscious) of thought in the person concerned, as if the mental content of the latter were transferred to that of the former, and were there reconstituted by the dramatic representation of mental images. In such cases we hear revelations of fragments of past and present life such as they are in our minds, and states of life in the future as we imagine them on present data. As in such cases there is much that can easily be verified, and the indications as to the future seem probable (since they are our own suppositions), these séances are impressive and seemingly excellent: but the sequel ultimately shows that the subject has not grasped the reality but has only translated what was represented more or less consciously and clearly in our thoughts—our knowledge of past facts, our fears, our projects, our desires and hopes.

There are many such cases in my notes. I extract from them a single case, short, and very typical, which I specially commend to those who enter on metagnomy with selfish motives by curiosity to learn their own future.

In December, 1910, M. Louis D., manager of some factories in Northern France, was in desperate straits by the failure of some speculations on the Stock Exchange. All that he possessed was swallowed up in paying differences between the price of his purchases and sales. Other purchases falling due after some months gave him hopes of minimizing his losses, but the brokers demanded a deposit against the securities in their hands. In this state of mind M. Louis D. went to visit Mme M. on December 20th, 1910.

"Look," he said, "for my present situation and what will be the outcome."

She said, "I see a terrible situation; a fortune swallowed up, and great anxiety at inability to pay debts . . . a fear of utter ruin."

"But I see that all this will be wiped out . . . things will turn out better . . . the lost fortune will be regained."

"How is this to occur?"

" . . . by assistance, money lent . . . operations now in suspense which will be more lucky. . . . I see also unforeseen inheritances."

"Look to see where the money lent will come from."

" . . . I see you writing to a widow, tall and getting grey, gentle and pious . . . she seems to belong to your family by marriage, for I do not see links of blood relationship. . . . I see her living near Nancy. . . . You will ask her to help you . . . she will come to you and lend you the needful money: so you will be able to deposit the sums required."

"There will be more difficulties in January and February, but you will make fresh arrangements. . . . You will not give up your business, and by summer you will have made good."

"Now see the legacies of which you spoke."

" . . . There will be an important legacy following on the death of a man who is still young, clean-shaven and fair-haired, very tall. He is living with an older woman, who appears to be his mother . . . she will die almost immediately after. Both deaths will occur this year."

"I see a little later another legacy by the death of another relation . . . a man who, however, is not old, hair hardly grey yet, tall, living abroad alone . . . also a relation by marriage . . . seems in good health . . . but is not really so. His life will not be long, only one or two years at most."

What came to pass.

In the descriptions given him by Mme M., M. Louis D. easily recognized the relations by marriage indicated—an aunt of his wife, living near Nancy, two more relations of hers (mother and son) living at Eprenay, and a bachelor cousin living abroad, alone.

He had already thought of writing to the aunt, but had put the idea aside for fear of letting the family know a state of things that he had every reason to conceal. But encouraged by the surprising promises of the percipient, he wrote to this lady, showing the great service that a loan would be to him. Some days later he received a sympathetic and very kind reply, but no offer of assistance.

Nevertheless, M. D., despite the urgent advice I gave him to count on nothing and to undertake nothing on the faith of predictions that could not be verified at the time, borrowed the money elsewhere, and thus made sure that his later purchases should stand till they fell due.

The losses increased, and not only had the fortune disappeared, but debts mounted up. This was the end of the race for money.

Twelve years have passed since then.

The young man and his mother are still in good health and do not know of their death-sentence.

The tall bachelor living abroad went ahead of the part assigned to him: he died in 1914, but left his money to a friend.

Such was the sequel to the séance which filled M. D. with astonishment on December 20th, 1910.

The sensitive had only taken in M. D.'s thought that which she found there represented, whether consciously or subconsciously: the notion

of his terrible situation and the means by which he might logically expect to get clear.

And consider, in this connection, the morality of our subconscious thought. M. D. is honest, generous, devoted, and possessed of qualities such that I esteem him greatly: nevertheless, his subconscious thought did not hesitate to imagine the death of those relations by which he might profit.

When he reads these lines he will be astonished that his thought had these homicidal desires.

These are the psychological dramas which are constantly taking place in us when from the depths of thought there rise up judgments, desires, and formulated suggestions which our consciousness rejects with shame at their baseness.

Our psychism does not react in the same manner on all its functional planes to stimuli from outside. Its conscious exercise tends to adapt thought to realities and to control itself, whereas its chief latent work is imaginative. The subconscious is a wonderful builder of fables. Collaborating in the total psychic working, it ceaselessly brings forward schemes few of which are worth retaining, and most should be put aside because of their fancifulness or their inopportune nature. Abandoned to its proper action, as in reverie, it builds romances. Turned towards a literary end it constructs situations, combinations of form and colour without end; and these are only manifestations which rise into consciousness. No limits can be assigned to its latent working. As soon as methodical study (as in psycho-pathological cases) has explored it, an amazing intensity of creative power has been revealed. The imaginative power of the subconscious is such that it extends to creating a new personality coexisting or alternating with the normal personality.

What the subconscious mind is capable of constructing on sensorial data which conscious intelligence uses differently, how manifold the creations that its memory contains, is known to none of us in matters that concern ourselves. Nevertheless all this latent mental life accompanies us when we present ourselves for metagnostic cognition.

When then a metagnostic subject tells us of states of life known to us and of other states, such as the future, unknown to us, we should not (as we are almost unavoidably led to do) say, "This is in my thought, that is not." As we do not know all that is in our thought it is impossible for us to be certain what is and what is not in our mental content.

If we are not fully persuaded of this psychological truth we shall not understand metagnostomy nor its errors.

How much naïve astonishment I have seen in men of scientific acquirements who were curious as to metapsychic phenomena! How many feminine confidences have I listened to on various themes, but always coming to the same point common to them

all! "A consultation, doctor? Well, ten years ago I consulted Mme X., the lucid percipient. Among other things she described my inner feelings and a man that I loved and still love passionately, etc. This astonished me to some extent, but as it was in myself I knew it. But what I of course could not know, and was an unexpected revelation, was that my husband would shortly die, and I should marry my lover. But my husband lives, and is in good health; and as for my lover, everything goes to show that I shall lose him; I hear that he is about to marry. What is to be thought of that? Why was everything true except the end?"

The answer to that question is that the subconscious mind of the lady imagined the death of her husband as the most favourable means of realizing her sentimental attachment, just as Mr. D. imagined the death of the people from whom he might inherit.¹

It is therefore impossible to judge of the origin and the quality of metagnomic information at the time of a séance. Unless they carry in themselves the proofs of origin or are obviously inapplicable to the person delineated, there is one only mode of estimating their value—to write down the tenor of the words spoken and compare them with facts.

This being thoroughly understood and admitted, it is important to know that the passage of latent mental content into the psychism of a sensitive engenders an error which is not always without results. The object-personality is modified by it and is in some degree vitiated as a factor for metagnomic output. I will explain:

If, at the time of a séance that has produced errors, the person had been brought into contact with genuine metagnomy, the subconscious fabulation would have remained latent and knowledge conformable to reality would have appeared instead of it; the person cognized would only have differed from what he was before the séance by having registered new information conformable to reality.

Whereas by having received through the sensitive a fabulation derived from his own subconsciousness, he carries henceforward on the conscious plane of thought an inner erroneous belief whose suggestive power has been reinforced thereby; and this may, in later séances, pass to the psychisms of other percipients who might have been insensitive to it in its first and weaker state. Hence it may often be observed that an error originating in

¹ I commend to my fellow-practitioners in psychiatry the utilization of metagnomic subjects even in erroneous exercise of their faculty as more reliable and speedy methods of psycho-analysis than the tedious procedure recommended by Freud.

defective mental working of one sensitive, is reproduced by others with better powers.¹

I do not here insist further on this fact, which is of primary importance, because I shall shortly bring out its full meaning by a most illustrative example (p. 215).

From the preceding analysis of the principal cause of error, the true nature of metagnomy will appear and take its proper place. It is not what modern psychology calls "thought-reading," mental suggestion, or transmission of thought. It is not even that and something more, as I have so often heard said. It is not that at all, since the passage of what we conceive as "thought" is only a semblance, and is in reality an uncertain product of other mental energy. Knowledge of the normally unknowable comes to the sensitives from a plane of personality other than that which is apparent; it is endowed with channels of information and methods of cognition which are at present quite impossible to explain.

The transcendental modality of knowledge passes into the psychism of metagnomic subjects, but polluted by errors from various sources.

The peculiar state of the subconscious mentality of a metagnomic subject in the exercise of his function consists in its *liberation from conscious direction* and in a *special sense* by which it becomes sensitive to external psychic influences; and thus it happens that in one and the same séance all possibilities involved in the two factors, cognizer and cognized, may come into realization. From the cognized there may pass to the sensitive both thought of a sensorial kind (the conscious and the subconscious of classical psychology) known and unknown, and also knowledge from the transcendental plane of thought; and the subconscious mind of the sensitive may at certain moments fabulate on the basis of information coming from one or other of the mental modalities of the person to be delineated.

This interpsychic collaboration on different planes is very frequent. In experimental practice there occur sometimes whole séances of pure metagnomy; in other cases the supernormal is small in amount and mixed with many errors. There are all

¹ All that has been said above shows that metagnomic subjects in the defective exercise of their faculty, when they do not receive the influence that produces supernormal knowledge, yet abundantly demonstrate the psychological faculty—widely admitted but still questioned in some quarters—direct communication of thought.

I bring to the notice of psychologists desirous of studying this phenomenon that they will find excellent instruments for their purposes of demonstration and research in pseudo-metagnomic subjects who have only the faculty of translating what a human personality knows by sensorial exercise of his thought, and also in metagnomic subjects of poor quality, among whom error due to transmission of thought abounds.

degrees between these two extremes. The output of metagnomic faculty being a function of the two factors—subject and object—the ideal percipient would be one only sensitive to the transcendental plane of all personalities.

Though I have had ideally good séances, I have not met with any impeccable percipient. The best are those who give much supernormal information on the greatest number of individuals, but even these are liable to error according to their state at the moment, and the person in contact with them. To give a very clear idea of this I shall quote an example pregnant with useful teaching. All the kinds of error analysed above will be found in it conjoined with real metagnomy. As it extended over more than eighty séances, from March 14th, 1916, to April 13th, 1922, held by ten persons with eleven percipients, and as the complete record would make a large book, I shall abbreviate by taking extracts from the record of each séance, taking care not to diminish its evidential value more than can be helped. I was a witness of the whole of this long experiment, being fully informed after each séance; and also took an active part when circumstances permitted. I thank my excellent friend M. Louis M. for the permission to make public an episode which was the most painful in his whole life, for the sake of the instruction contained.

March 8th, 1916.

My friend, M. Louis M., received from the Abbé Pavillard, chaplain to the 15th Infantry Division of the 8th Corps, a letter nearly as follows:

"I have the painful duty of informing you that you son, Jean, lieutenant in the 56th Regiment of Infantry, was wounded in the head by a bullet on February 24th, in the battle of Verdun. The Germans having occupied the ground, we could not bury his body, but death is, unhappily, certain."

In this state of mind M. Louis M. went on March 14th, 1916, to M. de Fl., a remarkable metagnomic subject in the waking state, whom he only knew by name, and to whom he was quite unknown. In the course of a delineation of his life, the subject said to him, no question having been asked:

"... I see one of your two sons seriously wounded in the war, in the forehead, on the right and across... perhaps also in the left shoulder. ... I do not see death, perhaps he may be a prisoner?"

Amazed at this, as he had come in full conviction of the death of his son, M. M. could not shut out a ray of hope, especially as on thinking over the chaplain's letter he perceived that it only inferred death from the head-wound, and that his son had seemed dead.

Wishing to compare what M. de Fl. had said with what another subject might say, he went, in the afternoon of the same day, to Mme M., who worked under hypnotism, put into her hands the last letter received from his son and asked her to speak of the actual life of the writer.¹

¹ It is scarcely necessary to state that all séances were taken with scrupulous care that the subjects should be in absolute ignorance of what they had to speak on. Their words were always taken down on the spot. M. M., instructed by me for several years on how to use these sensitives, always took all precautions to secure reliable results.

She said, "I see a young man of moderate height, dark hair, small moustache, a cicatrice behind his left ear. . . . He has been wounded in the head. . . . I see his head bandaged, his brain injured. . . . He will recover completely and will come back next summer."

April 2nd, 1916.

M. Louis M. received official notice of his son's death; and at the same time he learned that his comrades had seen him fall in the action, struck by a bullet in the forehead, that the Germans had occupied the ground during the night, and that in the morning a French counter-attack retook the ground. All the dead belonging to the M. Jean's battalion were found, including the colonel, only the body of Jean M. being missing.

It is easy to understand that M. M.'s hope became stronger.

April 14th, 1916.

M. M. asked one of his friends to have a séance with Mme M——, putting into her hands an article belonging to his son. She said:

"I see a young man (described) . . . he has been wounded in the head quite recently, his brain is injured . . . he is in a cold place . . . he will recover and will write."

May 4th, 1916.

M. M. went to Mlle de B——, an excellent subject in the waking state. They had never before met, and did not know each other. Without any question being put, she said:

"One of your sons has recently been wounded by a bullet in the forehead, about 4 p.m., above the left eye . . . he had no other wound . . . he has not been trodden upon . . . he fell on his back at once in coma, without suffering pain. . . . He must have been taken up four hours later, towards 8 p.m. His name was taken from his papers by a big, surly German, not ill-natured . . . he has been in high fever. . . . Snow fell on him, covering his body and staunching the blood from his wound. Others who are thought to be dead are round him, but are not dead. . . . He is now in the invaded region, in a flying ambulance, his head bandaged. He must have got the goodwill of some one in the ambulance, he is not unhappy. He will soon be removed, perhaps towards Germany. Evacuation lists are being prepared, and official news will come from Germany, perhaps in June, in July at latest. He will recover completely, there will be no brain-trouble. No Frenchman touched him after he fell . . . the witnesses who thought him dead have hardly seen him. . . ."

May 5th, 1916.

M. M. had a séance with Mme M—— at 11 a.m. She said:

"I see a young man in a comatose state, one would say that he breathes no more. . . . His hearts beats, however, and he moves his hand a little. . . . I see him in a well-lit room, stretched on something soft, his head covered with bandages. . . . He is surrounded by strangers . . . you will soon have indirect news of him. . . . He will write later. . . . I see him walking . . . he will surely come back. The wound is crosswise above the left eye, going into his hair . . . the wound will leave a scar. His brain will recover."

On the same day, at 2 p.m., M. M. went for the first time to Mme Fr., a very good subject in the waking state.

On the preceding day I had put into Mme Fr.'s hands a letter from Lieut. Jean M., asking her to state the future of the writer. Her answer was:

"There is no future for this person, he is dead."

I could not be so cruel as to repeat this to M. M. I let him think that I had been unable to meet Mme. Fr., and advised him to let her use her powers for himself. This is what she said to him :

"Your son has been wounded in the head a short time since, above the left eye, on the forehead. There is also some injury to the right shoulder, a wound or a blow.

"He is now in a well-lit room, and facing his window there is a large black wall which depresses him. He was moved far at first, in a flying ambulance . . . he is now in quiet, not having been moved for fifteen days.

"His recovery will be slow, despite an appearance of rapid recovery after his return. His understanding will be clear, but he will long remain irritable, nervous and unequal.

"Just now he is very thin. You will get official news in the middle of the summer. A little later he will write a card. The official news from Germany will be incomplete and will only say that your son was picked up and cared for from the first, without saying what has happened to him since. They will leave this unsaid. Proceedings will be taken to restore him before the end of the war, and will probably come to fruition at the close of summer or at the end of the year. You will go to meet him."

As it is impossible to give in this book *séance* by *séance*, all that was said on this painful matter, I shall only mark the principal stages, taking extracts from those *séances* which gave most information.

August 4th, 1916.

The sister of a friend of M. M. (who knew nothing of the affair), put a letter-card from Lieut. Jean M. into the hands of Mme B., a sensitive, who lived at Carcassone. This lady had been expressly warned to take no initiative other than writing down the words of the percipient. On touching the paper Mme B. said :

"A young man has written this . . . a young man with chestnut hair, middle height, fresh complexion, upstanding—a fine lad, very gentle, loyal, and kind . . . full of courage and good spirits. . . . There seems to be in his family a boy of whom he is very fond" (correct). "He has been wounded by a shell-splinter during a battle . . . he was taken up, put down, and taken up again . . . severely wounded . . . has been looked after in several places. . . . I hear the word *Cologne* . . . make inquiries there. . . . He seems to have been trepanned. . . . I do not see him dead. . . . I hear 'Jean.' You must hope. His brain is confused. He is living, he will come back. . . ."

December 18th, 1916.

M. M. put a photograph of his son into the hands of Mme A., of Bourges, till then unknown to him. After feeling the thing for a few moments, she said :

"There has been a wound in the forehead, not mortal, and some injury to the shoulder and right arm; he would seem to have been trodden on. He has been taken up and treated. He is far away in a country to which you cannot write . . . it is not in Germany. . . . His brain is affected . . . you will have no news for four months. Towards the end of April or the beginning of May they will come by a letter from him, which will get through almost by a miracle. . . ."

February 26th, 1917.

M. M. placed in the hands of Mme M., at Paris, an object belonging to Jean.

"He had had an operation. . . . When he opened his eyes afterwards his memory failed for past things, but only exists for present ones. Only his habits remain, which are instinctive. They are busy with his re-education. He replies when spoken to: if in French, he answers in French; if in German, in German. He has not newly learned the latter language, he knew it already and it has come back to his ear like the instinct to eat. He begins to remember in fugitive gleams. He does not remember his parents and, therefore, does not suffer. . . . He is to others as they are to him; if he is spoken to merrily, he smiles; if sadly, he is sad; he submits to the influences of those who speak to him. He is still in that state; the cure will be complete but lengthy . . . with his parents first, then elsewhere, in pleasant travel. The cure will be completed by a medical friend of the family" (here a description of myself). "This doctor will take great care of him, etc. . . ."

June 22nd, 1917.

Madame G., a friend of M. M., puts into the hands of Mme M—— a thing belonging to Jean. The sensitive sees progressive amelioration in the young man's mental state, describes correctly the room in which he should sleep when he returns to his family, and describes the objects that were on the table in that room in December, 1914, and those that were there at the time of the séance. (This was quite unknown to Mme G., and quite correct.)

In the same séance, Mme G. placed in the hands of Mme M. a letter from an officer who fell a minute before Lieut. Jean M., quite near him. She said: "He is dead, his wife is suffering from a blow from which she will not recover; he was mortally wounded."

July 27th, 1917.

Séance of M. M. with Mlle de B——, at Paris.

"I see your wounded son in Germany, in a northern town. It is not known who he is. . . . Papers, identification badge, and money have been stolen. . . . I see him sitting in a garden, inert, looking vaguely about him. . . . Memory will return by degrees. . . . It is a house for convalescents . . . there are good doctors about him . . . they say that his memory will return sooner or later. He has some returns of lucidity, slight and recently. . . . He often repeats what is said round him . . . his own thought does not often lead to speech. . . . Sometimes they say to him, 'Do you remember?' and he replies 'The sky is blue.' He had several operations at first, washings out, a wound reopened several times. . . . He will write . . . he will return . . . before very long."

On the same day M. M. had a séance with Mme Fr.

"You eldest son is not dead . . . nervous exhaustion that will take long to get well. He will return much enfeebled, but will recover."

September 18th, 1917.

Mme G. placed an object belonging to Jean in the hands of Mme M——. The sensitive gave a long series of visions going over all that had happened to the young man since the beginning of the war (correct in all that could be verified) and ended by saying, "He has written . . . his return is near. His memory is improving . . . he thinks of his younger brother, who is not now a child, but he thinks of him as he was when a child . . ."

he thinks of a fall and an illness of this brother when he was quite a child, that he thought much of at the time." (Mme G. did not know this; it is correct.)

November 3rd, 1917.

A friend of a sister-in-law of a friend of M. M.'s, who knew nothing of the circumstances and was not acquainted with M. M.'s family, was asked to interview Mlle A. B., a metagomic subject at Charentes, with an article belonging to Jean.

"This young man is very weak . . . he is called Jean. . . . He is in a large house. . . . I see many sick persons there. The doctors give him much attention . . . a little less, however, than at his first arrival . . . his comrades are kind to him . . . he has lost his memory. . . . They say, 'What is your name?' He has forgotten it; he who was so intelligent cannot count five . . . but his memory will return when he sees his parents."

November 15th, 1917.

M. Pierre M., younger brother of Lieut. Jean, aged nineteen, went for the first time to M. de Fl., and put no question. M. de Fl. has seen his father twice, but had had no confidences from him. Pierre M. does not resemble his father at all. In the course of a delineation of Pierre's life, the percipient said:

"Your brother is in grave danger. . . . I see a great circle with red flashes; this indicates something very serious, but it is not fatal. . . . I have no impression of deathlike cold. This man must have been a long while comatose . . . there will be no news for a long while. . . . I do not see a final separation between you and him. It seems to me that you should see him again."

June 24th, 1918.

Mme G., séance with Mme M.; she gave her an object belonging to the lieutenant. (The same object has never been used twice, during the long series of trials and with any of the sensitives.)

"This man is lying down, he is not ill . . . they will see him again soon, very soon. His memory is returning. I see him soon to be happy. Oh, yes, quite happy. He will return. I see a series of moves, long and trying, stoppages; then he comes into a hilly country . . . there is rest and great joy to find his own people again . . . then, after some days, he returns home."

Mme G. then put into her hands a letter from Pierre (Pierre M., the lieutenant's brother, was a medical student recently mobilized, and at the time of the séance was in garrison at Grenoble).

The sensitive described Pierre and the military life he was leading. Then she said, "The most salient fact about this young man is that he is in relation with the one I have just seen. . . . I have a clear vision of the person I have just before spoken of . . . he seems to be a relation, a brother. But he will not see that brother in the town where he now is . . . he will go to meet him. He cannot pass the frontier. . . ."

November 25th, 1918.

Mme G. places in the hands of Mme M.—an object belonging to the lieutenant.

"This young man is now in a mountainous country, he has arrived there quite recently. . . . He returns very soon . . . he will write. . . . I see his early return, then his meeting with a man, like his father . . ."

then there comes a very young man, like his brother. Then he finds all his own people."

Mme G. places in her hands a letter from Pierre.

The sensitive gives perfectly correct details of Pierre's present life, and continues to see great joy over the return of a brother and mentions also another happiness, a project of marriage.

This latter much disquieted Mme G., who dared not speak of it to M. M., fearing some student's escapade. But the fact was that Pierre was deeply in love with Mme G.'s own daughter, unknown to the whole family, and married her in 1921. This struck a happy note in the family tragedy.

March 20th, 1919.

I had a small piece of leather from the lining of a hat belonging to Jean put in the hands of Mlle L., who knew nothing of the family of M. Louis M. As soon as she had this, she described the missing man and said :

"He is ill in a frontier town, suffering from loss of memory ; his brain is affected . . . amnesia . . . he does a daily exercise to restore memory . . . as soon as he remembers he will speak."

August, 1919.

M. Louis M. puts an object belonging to Jean in the hands of Mme M—.

"This man is living, but suffering from amnesia . . . round him there is a small group of three or four similar cases. He speaks strangely from time to time. He speaks several languages. The brain is sick but living, a drowsy brain now waking up.

"The house where he is being cared for is a large building, not ancient, but like a large family hotel or convent . . . very large, not a private house. In front there is a large courtyard. I go in. . . . I see many small, narrow windows ; I go out and see all round it a smiling countryside, ponds, much water here and there, like lakes, a valley on one side, and on the other white mountain tops, lit up by the sunshine. . . . The house where he is living is in the east, close to the frontier. . . . He has come to himself. There will be much indirect statement, but he will give his name and nationality.

"He will not stay there long ; his time there seems to me nearly ended ; there is no more time.

"I see him travelling later, not with strangers, but with the person now here present . . . a sojourn in a large town where there is water . . . several persons join him there. . . . Later, I see him in his family . . . they take much pains to restore his mental health. He is looked after by a man, who feels as a friend towards him, and dominates him . . . this man seems to tear away the veils of the brain and restores him to complete life ; then family life is resumed as it formerly was."

October, 1919.

M. Louis M. had one séance with Mme M—, one with Mlle de B—, and one with a Mme G., a metagnomic subject under hypnosis, never before tried by him. All the information given may be summed up as—your wounded son still suffers from loss of memory, but will soon rejoin you.

Epilogue.

Lieutenant Jean M. has not returned. He has never written. The most strenuous researches have revealed nothing. There is no trace of him in the hospitals of Germany, Switzerland, and France. No grave on

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the battlefields shows his burial-place. All tends to show that the bullet that struck his forehead in the battle of Verdun killed him. His body was probably buried by earth thrown up by the shells.

February, 20th, 1922.

M. Louis M., passing through Paris, was curious to have his life delineated by Mme P., a metagnomic subject (waking), with whom I had experimented for some months with very good results. Among other things relating to him she said this :

" You fear that your dark-haired son is dead . . . a sudden death . . . he was wounded in the head . . . he was far away . . . he might have been saved. He had recently seen you, and had written just before he was killed. You would like to think that he is not dead . . . your wife sometimes thinks him dead and sometimes that he may be living . . . he might have been saved."

March 25th, 1922.

M. Pierre M. visited the same sensitive for the first time, and in the course of the delineation of his life she only said these few words relating to his brother :

" . . . There has been a death in your family, in a foreign country . . . or in battle. . . ."

On finding quite recently a page from a notebook by Lieut. Jean, written when he was a law-student, I wished to know what Mme M—— would say now that all hope is extinct ; and I asked Mlle Fanny G. to put this paper into the hands of the sensitive and write down exactly what she might say.

April 15th, 1922.

Mlle F. G. gave, in the first place, a letter from M. Louis M., the father.

Mme M—— said, " I see a man, light hair, grey-blue eyes, clear complexion . . . he has been in great trouble . . . a break in his life, much sorrow . . . a sudden blow . . . the death of some one near him, a tragic death, as if accidental . . . a terrible shock.

" I see a road, a great extent of landscape, and soldiers ; yes, uniforms round that man . . . it is not really a death . . . he fell."

(At this moment the sensitive stopped speaking and made fruitless efforts. Mlle F. G. took away M. M.'s letter and replaced it by the page from Jean's notebook.)

" . . . I see him quite clearly, they carry him away ; he is living. His eyes are empty of thought, there seems to be a wound on the side of his head, his face is reddened with blood . . . they carry him slowly . . . strangers are carrying him . . . he is with these people a long time . . . he does not see them, his brain is vacant . . . it is now long since. I see snow . . . it is far in the past . . . but there is a present, a return . . . his life returns to full daylight."

" Where is this person, describe the place and his surroundings ? "

" It is cold, he is with several others suffering like himself. I affirm this. . . . I see gleams of clearer thought in his brain, then great joy in the brain of the other person, a near relation, like a father. . . . The whole family is overjoyed. . . . I see a young man who is like him, and a whole group. This snow country is connected with what is happening just now." (The Genoa Conference had then been announced.) "What is happening will decide much for these sufferers . . . it seems to be a sad page from the story of the war . . . his father suffers, but he has a slight hope . . . he doubts, and sometimes thinks there is no hope. But

he should keep that hope, otherwise I should say, 'you must mourn for him.' There are strangers round him, but not strangers only. . . . I see him well, darker complexion and darker hair than his father. . . . There are Sisters of Mercy, or seem such, blue and white dresses . . . he speaks, he remembers the past . . . his return will be not by his own act. . . . There is a group of young Frenchmen like him . . . he was 22 or 24 years old when he fell . . . he remembers that it was cold when he was wounded. . . ."

"I remember to have seen this man . . . but I never had this vision of him . . . it is the last place before his return. . . ."

Conclusion.

This abbreviated summary gives only a slight idea of the psychological importance of this long series of experiments, with its abundant psychic output from many sources.

It contains a very large amount of supernormal knowledge. The sensitives gave many descriptions of the scene of Lieut. Jean's wound that were unknown at the time, and afterwards verified. They announced beforehand misleading news, which came; and other things. They predicted to M. Louis M. different secondary matters in his life, which came to pass. They predicted the changes in the military career of his second son, Pierre, and revealed the dawning love that he alone knew, and also his approaching marriage. (He was married at twenty-two, almost at the beginning of his medical courses.)

But all referring to the time after the wound of Lieut. Jean M. was a fabrication marvellously co-ordinated and adapted to the circumstances. I very willingly explain the genesis of this romance which started from a hope and went on for six years :

When M. Louis M. presented himself before M. de Fl., he was not quite certain of his son's death. No official notice had reached him. A bullet in the head is not always fatal, even though there may be the appearance of death for some time. This frail ray of hope in his subconscious thought must have passed to the sensitive and have influenced his mental representation. It will have been observed that the first metagnomic answer affirmed very little.

But as soon as the hope became conscious, after this first revelation, M. Louis M. was in a state of mind apt to give stronger suggestion, and he presented himself the same afternoon to Mme M., a hypnotic subject particularly open to mental suggestion. And from that time forth, his subconscious mental creations were reflected in the minds of all the sensitives employed. All the information given was concordant and followed the same sequence. His subconsciousness imagined all possibilities regarding his son's return. Though he did not in person undertake the séances with the eleven sensitives employed, it was always he who furnished the intermediary objects, and he touched these. And on that account the sensitives behaved as they do when working on a person distant in space ; that is, they acted as if M. M. were there present with the whole content of his thought.

This supposition is supported by the fact that in all this long series of séances all the indications given by the sensitives were true except those which were contrary to the death of his son.

Whatever the explanation may be, there was an amazing fabrication on this last point.

From which we must conclude :

That the revelations made by metagnomic subjects are as concordant in the case of error as in the case of truth.

That these subjects are psychic instruments particularly fitted to give to psychologists who study transmission of thought abundant demonstration of its verity.

Errors arising from defective functioning of the psychism of metagnomic subjects.

Setting aside the cases in which supernormal cognition expresses itself directly by automatic speaking or writing, or by other modes of direct action—table-rapping, planchettes indicating an alphabet, etc.—the conscious mind of the sensitive may, by fulfilling its task badly, introduce error, even though the subconscious imaginative work has been correct. In this class of errors, the most frequent arises from a misinterpretation of the informative mental images.

The reader is aware that during the metagnomic working of the sensitive the function of the conscious mind is to attend to the wanderings of mental representation and to reconstitute their meaning. It knows, too, how diverse this representation may be. Sometimes a picture arises, disappears, and the mind has instantaneously to perceive and understand the meaning of the picture. Sometimes it is a long series of still or moving images whose indications must be co-ordinated. Sometimes it is in words and phrases, more or less distinctly heard, that must be repeated. Sometimes it is by feelings that must be defined, and related to their purpose. Sometimes it is by cœnesthetic sensations (pains, uneasiness, etc.) from which the nature and locality of an ailment has to be deduced. Sometimes symbols or allegories appear, for which meanings are to be found.

In short, given the want of precision and the multiplicity of the artifices by which the metagnomic subconsciousness informs the conscious mind, it is easy to see why this latter may not always play its part correctly and what kind of errors it may introduce.

If metagnomic sensitives received an exact representation of realities as we call them up by an effort of memory, they would only have to describe what they "see," but the informative mental images, whether hallucinatory or not, are intended to suggest notions only; to give an idea of things, and the words that express this are not always an exact translation of reality. Hence result *errors of approximation*, the sensitives getting more or less near to actuality; and *errors of application*, the sensitive giving correct indications but referred to the wrong person or event; and *errors of modality and time*.

The following is a very distinct error of application, confided to me by M. Maurice R—:

In 1913, Mlle de B—, a metagnomic subject in the waking state, said to him, in course of a séance, that he would die towards the age of fifty,

and described the scene of his death—the painful breathing of the dying man, whose respiration she imitated, his son bending over him, a woman at his side speaking English, all in a room on the ground floor, with a certain arrangement of furniture. Four years later, in 1918, M. Maurice R—— went through the whole of this painful drama on the occasion of his father's death, who died of pneumonia, aged about fifty.

The conscious mind of the sensitive, perceiving a scene conformable to a future event and having had no indication fixing its relation to another person, thought it must refer to Maurice R——.

If errors of application are somewhat rare, errors of time are much more common; for except in the few cases in which mental representation or automatic expression of a date and a number of days or years arises spontaneously, the sensitive has to estimate time, both as to its mode and extent, by interpreting the artifices of the imagination, variable in different sensitives and always of doubtful import.

M. de Fleurière, for instance, derives his ideas of time by vision on a semicircular screen on which the events of a life are symbolically projected. The events pertaining to the present are in the middle, straight before the eye, those of the past to the left, and those of the future to the right; and the distances from the centre indicate their approximate position in the life.

Mme Morel, as we have seen *ante*, knows that an event is in the past when her informative hallucinations are, as it were, behind her; a present event is at her side and a future one in front, all in a perspective corresponding to some sort of spacing in time. This symbolism, however, suffices so well to her conscious interpretation that during twelve years I have never known her place an event in the wrong mode of time.

But the imaginative processes of other sensitives are less reliable. Not infrequently they state past or future events as present. I have mentioned (p. 180) how Mme L.-F——, in May, 1912, thinking to give the nature of my professional employment at the moment, described what took place in the war between August, 1914, and July, 1916.

In the bulk of cases, however, errors in the modality of time are exceptional; but errors as to its duration are the rule. In twelve years I have had from percipients a good number of events placed in the past with reference to the ages of a person, but only twice, precognition of events giving an exact date turned out to be correct.

On the other hand, I have just experienced, during the winter of 1921-22, an event concerning myself which Mme Morel announced in December, 1910, as "so near that it ought not to be more than a month distant."

The conscious mind is also responsible for another kind of error—*intentional omission*—partial or complete. Except when

expressing themselves automatically, sensitives are in the same kind of relation with supernormal knowledge that we all are with regard to our inward thoughts; they can modify the meaning or they can suppress it. This is allowable when it is done to spare pain which would result from over-grievous announcements.

When Mme Fraya predicted the time and manner of his death to Dr. Vaschide this was involuntary, and after having been repeatedly asked the question that she at first left unanswered, feeling that the reply would be painful.

There is yet one more kind of error by the conscious mind of the sensitive. It consists in demanding more from the metagnomonic faculty than it can produce.

A typical case of the kind is when the subject, aware of the power to foretell the future of a person, thinks himself also able to foretell future events and life in general—the future. When he endeavours to do this, either by request or on his own initiative, either nothing answers to the effort or the subconscious mind begins to work and builds up a romance on data supplied by the conscious mind. This may chance to agree with the event, but more often proves mistaken.

Errors that have their origin in the general functioning process of metagnomonic faculty.

Though metagnomonic faculty is permanent with certain persons in the sense that it is always ready to come into play on demand, nevertheless the supernormal knowledge that it reflects is accidental in respect of the information given.

Certain subjects possessed of rare gifts are able, at a first séance with a given person, to delineate his general course of life both past and future. But when in subsequent séances they are summoned to enter into the details of which go to make up that life, especially in the unknown and in the future, the output of metagnomonic information seems to proceed from a whimsical mental working; and this fact, which is soon apparent with first-rate sensitives, is much more obvious with those of but middling quality.

To verify how much there is that is fortuitous in the metagnomonic output, it is sufficient to place the same person before several percipients on the same day; it will be found that even if none of the revelations are contradictory and some are concordant, one subject will tell things that another does not mention. Also one and the same person in séance at intervals with the same sensitive, will elicit information that varies in its purpose and has not always any apparent connection from one occasion to another. Each subject at each séance seems to grasp one portion

of the life to the exclusion of all others. Repetition of séances with different percipients accumulates a total which indicates the course of life and co-ordinates its events.

This parcelled knowledge of human lives may be explained by the complexity of each life and the large number of evolutionary factors that go to its completion. There is therefore for each sensitive, and in each séance, an unavoidable limitation to the metagnomic delineation, so that *involuntary omissions* are readily taken for errors when we find one percipient, for instance, describing the circumstances of some event in the distant future and silent on one that is near at hand and of much greater import.

From this point of view experimental practice leads us to remark that sensitives make omissions more frequently with regard to certain aspects of human personality, which for some reason or other are less easily grasped according to their personal idiosyncrasies. For the most part they act as specialists—some readily perceiving changes in organic life; others emotional or intellectual states; and others, again, the course of social relations, etc., as if these notions had different dynamic qualities influencing percipients differently according to their shades of sensitiveness.

I will cite one instance, error of involuntary omission (if one must call that "error" which is a functional necessity of the faculty), very typical in that it shows a metagnomic subject describing circumstantially an event five years before it took place, and not mentioning intermediate events on the eve of realization, known, moreover, to the person concerned.

When the war of 1914 broke out, M. Antoine W. was manager of a factory in Central France. As an officer of artillery, then as an aviator, and also squadron leader, he had occasion, when passing through Paris, to use the special faculty of Mme M—— (in hypnosis), who on each occasion told him (in substance) that despite the constant risks to which he was exposed, he would have no serious wound, and that he would resume his life under other conditions, that a situation would be offered him by a tall, thin, grey-headed man, well known to him, living in a country house in the centre of France, who would need his talent for organization, etc. . . .

M. A. W. recognized M. Henri D. in the description given.

In July, 1919, M. W. was demobilized. Circumstances fell out so that he did not resume his pre-war employment. He remained in Paris.

August 16th, 1920.

He asked Mme M—— to foretell his professional future, which could not be normally foreseen.

At that moment he was in negotiation with his brother and the brother's partner with respect to the restoration of a group of factories in Northern France that belonged to them. His mental content was that he would accept the direction of this restoration, it being understood that he would retain the right to resign if he had a better offer.

Mme M. said to him :

" Your actual situation is vague, it does not exist. Many negotiations will lead to a result, but you will give up everything for a special business, a new situation. . . . "

" Look for the circumstances leading to this new situation. "

" You will receive a call from a man who is interested in you. You will first take a journey of a few hours to a family, and then another displacement near by, with this man . . . a tall man, thin, getting grey, known to you. I see you mounting a hill, coming to a large house, going upstairs, and entering a large room . . . and there I hear a long conversation with that man. . . . A man belonging to your family takes part in the conversation a little later. . . . During this conversation the lady of the house comes in—a little woman. . . . A man also comes in ; he belongs to the house, and interrupts the talk. He is of no consequence, goes out quickly, and the conversation is resumed.

" All the surroundings are well known to you. "

November 3rd, 1920.

M. W. is in séance with Mme M——. He was then occupied in the reconstruction of the northern factories belonging to his brother and partner. Difficulties of one kind and another delayed the work, and different projects were put forward. M. W. found no advantage in the work and intended to give it up.

Replying to the question, " Look for my present professional prospects, " she said, " Your present position is undefined, but I see a speedy change . . . it is even now in progress . . . the man who will bring it about lives in the country, he is tall, etc. He will act in his own interest, and will offer a situation . . . you will receive a letter and a telegram calling you, coming into your family circle . . . there will be a lady, your wife, and a dark young girl belonging to the family. "

November 27th, 1920.

M. W. had given up the work in the North. Five offers were made to him, which he was thinking over.

Mme M——, asked to state his professional situation, said to him :

" I see an immediate change of place . . . a certain man wants somebody . . . he thinks much of you, he offers a situation with an interesting future . . . you will receive a telegram and a letter . . . calling you into the country where the man is living . . . it is in the country . . . you go up a hill, you come to a large open space . . . into a large house . . . you get an offer of an interesting post which you accept on the spot. . . . This change is already in progress . . . the letter is written. . . . I see a new situation very near . . . all is arranged. "

During this séance M. W. placed a letter from one of his sisters in the hands of Mme M—— and asked certain questions concerning her. Among other things, Mme M—— said :

" At the time that the events I have just seen come to pass this person will be in your family circle. . . . I see her connected with all this. "

December 24th, 1920.

M. and Mme W. hold a séance with Mme M——. At that time he was in negotiation with a financial group who were proposing to him a mission to Syria to make a study of conditions for investment of capital. M. W. was much interested in this and was preparing for an immediate start.

" Look for my present professional prospects. "

" . . . I see many projects at the present moment . . . projects that

you will abandon for a new offer . . . you will receive a letter and a telegram in a few hours, containing the offer of a post.

"A letter arrives in your family circle . . . that lady who is there will be present . . . there is also another member of the family, a young girl . . . you are absent . . . the affair is proposed by a tall, thin man, greyish, with a small face . . . who wants a man to look after his interests . . . an interesting post that promises a future. The present post is to be given up at once for the new offer."

January 17th, 1921.

I was with M. W. at the house of Mme M——. He was to leave Paris for Syria the next day. He had in his pocket his rail and steamer tickets and his passport. Only some serious event could prevent his departure. No proposition of a new post could now stop him. I directed the séance.

"Look for the professional situation of the gentleman holding your hand."

" . . . I see this gentleman's habits change very shortly by reason of the receipt of a letter. . . . He must go, but not very far. . . . I see a decisive moment for his living with a grey-haired man. . . . I hear long conversations in a large room . . . then I see coming and going, that solution is the only one."

"Look for the situation of this gentleman during to-morrow."

"I see nothing unusual . . . a little later I see a call to him . . . almost immediately. . . . I see again what I saw before. . . ."

"What will he do after to-morrow?"

"I see a departure, a road, a hill, a large house . . . the interview is very near . . . at a few hours from Paris."

"Look carefully for the next events in his life."

"I see a thousand things offered him . . . one rather more precise than the others. . . . I see a project for a distant journey, which will not come about . . . this journey seems to be settled to take place in a few hours. . . . Nevertheless, I see the same man as before; it will be on his account that the new situation will not continue . . . there is an immediate departure and return . . . it is short, very short . . . there is this project, but the intervention stops it. The journey is a long one, to a country different from this where we are. I do not see that man. . . . It is to a place where the language is different . . . there is much water, it is very warm. It is only a project . . . it will not come to pass. . . ."

M. W. left Paris next day, and embarked at Marseilles, two days later for Alexandretta.

February 5th, 1921.

M. W. is in Syria. His sister Mlle Fanny W. puts a letter from him into the hand of Mme M—— (hypnosis) and asks, "Look for the writer of this letter."

"I see him in the country . . . in a small town . . . seems far off . . . he has made several changes to reach that place . . . railway and boat . . . he came to a port."

"I see him quite well. . . . He has brown hair, height about 5ft. 6in. . . . he has gone on business. . . . I see a success, but he gives it up; he is recalled . . . everything ends abruptly, he will come back. . . . He will not stay with these people . . . he leaves by his own desire . . . a grey-haired man calls him back to take charge of his interests. . . . He knows him. . . ."

Mme Fanny W. thought the percipient possessed by a fixed idea; she left this matter and passed to other questions.

March 5th, 1921.

M. W. had returned from Syria since March 2nd. The financial group was considering what could be done on various projects. M. W. said to Mme M——, "Look for my present situation and what will come of it."

"I see many events . . . meetings . . . the beginnings of a solution . . . details that come to nothing . . . negotiations stop because another post is offered . . . there is a project that seems to end satisfactorily . . . that is all. A new post will come from a tall, thin man, greyish. . . . He will write to you about it . . . he has many projects in his head, etc. . . ."

After sketching out several plans, the financial group found it necessary to abandon the Syrian enterprise on account of the course of exchange with Egypt.

May 9th, 1921.

The financial group decided to hold over all the Syrian projects, but offered M. W. a post as engineer in enterprises in Morocco, asking of him a three years' agreement. M. W. asked for time to consider the matter before answering.

On May 9th his sister put an object belonging to him in the hands of Mme M——, in hypnosis, and asked her concerning her brother's professional future.

"I see a change for him . . . someone wants this change. This gentleman has plans to travel; he will not go . . . there will be a change before that. . . . I see an exchange of papers with a man that he knows . . . it takes place at once; it is the first event. . . ."

In May M. W. accepted the Moroccan appointment. In the course of of June he had a séance with Mme M—— (I have no records of this), in which she said that he intended to go far away, but would not leave because another post would be offered him by a gentleman who is tall, thin, etc. . . .

He, nevertheless, left at the end of June, intending to return to fetch his family after the hot season. He thought to stay for three years at least, and this idea was shared by his family.

July 27th, 1921.

Mlle Fanny W. put a letter from her brother into the hands of Mme M——. "Look for the person who has written this letter, and speak to me of his life."

"I see a man . . . far off . . . very far . . . I see him in beautiful surroundings, bright sunshine . . . I see a kind of vapour round him . . . water . . . the sea. It is only an incident in his life . . . his return is near. . . . He has had great hopes and disappointments; it is hollow, empty . . . his destiny is not over there . . . return is near. . . ."

"He will be recalled because he is wanted. A man taller than most, thin, deep-set eyes, hair partly white. . . . I do not see his family over there . . . he will return. . . ."

Mlle Fanny stopped the sensitive, being convinced that a false mental image was inevitably reproduced by the continuous hypnotic memory.

October 18th, 1921.

M. W. was still in Morocco; his family at Paris waiting to join him. In the course of a séance with Mme M——, Mlle Fanny asked her to see the present life of her brother.

Mme M—— showed signs of annoyance and fatigue. ". . . He is far

away, there will be a change soon . . . but not over there, that goes for nothing. Here, by the will of another man a post will be offered him . . . a grey-headed man who can at last do something. He comes back, recalled by that gentleman . . . it will be soon."

Mlle Fanny closed the séance, resolving to ask no more on this point, and more convinced than ever that the percipient was under the domination of a fixed idea.

Summary of the foregoing séances.

From all these séances, obtained by correct use of a percipient with whom M. W. and his sister have had much experience, it appears that Mme M—— behaved as if one only event were of importance in the professional life of M. W. She never predicted any of the intervening events in the two years, but she always took notice of them as soon as they were come to pass. Grouping all the indications given, the general outlines of the prediction may be taken as follows:

A certain man was unexpectedly to offer a post. That man was specified exactly by his appearance, his place of residence, and by the declaration that he was well known to M. W. These indications applied exactly to M. Henri D. The proposal was to be made by letter and telegram. It was to arrive in M. W.'s family circle during his absence; would be received by his wife and sister, the latter being in Paris only at irregular intervals. Following the receipt of the written proposition, M. W. would travel for a few hours with certain of his family, and there would be another change of place near to M. Henri D.

During the interview in the house of the latter, the conversation would be in two parts; one between M. D. and M. W. and another part in which a man of M. W.'s family would intervene; that during the interview a man belonging to the house, but of no import to the matter in hand, would interrupt the conversation and quickly depart; and then there would come in a small woman, the mistress of the house.

The motive of the proposition would be that M. D. would require someone to look after his business interests.

What came to pass.

On October 16th, 1921, M. Henri D., living in Château L——, in the department of the Cher, asked by telephone for the address of M. W. from one of his sisters living in the same department. This lady did not give the Morocco address, but the Paris address.

On October 20th Mme W. received at Paris a letter from M. D., intended for her husband, proposing that he should take the direction of a factory in which M. D. had invested money, and should develop the business.

Mlle Fanny W., who had been absent from Paris since June, had returned there on the 16th to return home on the 25th. She was present when the letter came.

On the same day a telegram was sent to M. W., and also the letter from M. Henri D. (Telegram and letter.)

Whilst these unexpected events were happening in France, M. W., ignorant of what was taking place, asked the representative of the financial group, then visiting Morocco, to accept his resignation with a friendly cancellation of his engagement, the crisis in public affairs suspending all operations for a time whose end could not be foreseen. He was therefore free when, on October 22nd, he received the telegram summarizing the situation, and, a few days later, the letter.

On November 28th he was in Paris. M. D. asked for an interview before the meeting of the directors.

M. W. left Paris in company with his brother-in-law, and by force of circumstances passed two days with the latter.

On December 5th his brother-in-law went with him to visit Mr. D., reaching his house towards 5 p.m.

During half an hour M. D. and M. W. talked over the factory and how it might be improved. The conversation deviated into other matters in which M. W.'s brother-in-law took part.

A little later a footman came into the room (the man of the house, of no importance) to close the shutters and see to the lamps, etc., and delayed conversation, so that M. D. told him to hasten and leave the room.

At half-past five Mme D. returned from visits she had been paying at a distance. At six, M. W. and his brother-in-law left M. D. The whole scene was neither more nor less than had been foreseen by Mme M—— sixteen months before.

To these facts, of whose whole course I was continuously aware, I will only add one remark: that the journeys to Syria and Morocco which Mme M—— did not perceive, would certainly have been cognized by other percipients had M. W. consulted several instead of one alone.

3. ERRORS ORIGINATING IN THE PERSONALITY ASSIGNED FOR METAGNOMIC COGNITION

Considering now errors in production referable to the other co-generative source of paranormal knowledge—the person cognized—there are found the same kinds of error as those analysed above, but these are no longer attributable only to the metagnomic subjects. What has been already said with reference to errors will allow of brief treatment here, and I need consider only those that are inherent in the personalities given for cognition.

As has several times been observed in the course of this book, there are persons who do not influence the psychism of percipients to whom they are presented. Are there really some on whom no percipient can say anything at all? Not having conducted any experiments specially devised to answer this question I cannot give a categorical reply, but I am, nevertheless, inclined to think that there are no persons so refractory to delineation that a sensitive could not be met with in harmony with the given psychism, if the latter were presented to a sufficient number of good percipients, the séances being repeated often enough to allow of inter-mental adaptation.

But from psycho-physiological disharmonies there certainly result either paralysis of the metagnomic faculty or activity in the subconsciousness of the sensitive, giving rise to fabulation.

If those persons who do not influence sensitives were to found their opinions of metagnomy on personal experiences referring to their own lives, they would necessarily be led to deny the existence of the real faculty, and to consider percipients as making

up romances ; thus making a wide generalization on their own rare and casual particular experiences.

There are, however, other persons, often met with, whose conscious thought has a sort of radiating power that imposes its content by suggestion to the sensitive. They transmit knowledge conformable to actualities, and also latent fabulations relative to their own fears, hopes, desires, and projects. Such persons seem to bring to percipients nothing but error, especially as regards the future. The inter-mental collaboration is on the superficial plane of thought.

There are also those who radiate superficial thought in a less degree, transmitting knowledge normally acquired and that which comes from the transcendental plane in variable proportions.

There are also those who transmit occasional suggestions, radiating some belief, some hope, desire, or project, which may or may not be dressed up as a fable, because some passing intensity of psychical elective action has given to these subconscious mental representations an exceptional power. It is thus that M. Louis M—— (p. 215) projected into the psychism of Mme M—— the hope that his son might have survived a wound, thought but not absolutely proved, to have been fatal. It is thus that M. Louis D—— (p. 210) transmitted to the same percipient all the lucky chances by which his ruin might be averted.

When a metagnomic percipient seems to be in error it is often because he reflects the errors in the mentality of the person under delineation.

4. ERRORS ORIGINATING WITH THE EXPERIMENTER

Whether the experimenter himself be the person cognized, or whether he be supplementary to the mental couple who generate the metagnomic output, he may intervene as a disturbing factor in many ways ; all, however, due to imperfect knowledge of the faculty he is using and consequent inability to use the percipients in the right manner. Ignorance of the general determining sequences of metagnomic phenomena will lead to error and he will not know how to protect percipients from it. The experimenter incites to error if he does not thoroughly know the sensitives he is employing.

Metagnomic subjects are persons adapted to live the ordinary life. They have brains fitted to normal thought ; their paranormal mental work, though exercisable at will, is nevertheless an accident in their daily life even though often repeated. This simultaneous normal and supernormal life renders such subjects much more difficult to use satisfactorily than one would think.

In order to secure good output it is necessary to know both the mental processes common to all of them, the causes of the information received, and the psychological peculiarities of each sensitive employed. There are no two alike. The experimenter must know and adapt himself to the mental habits, the defects, and the possibilities of each.

Metagnomy is vitiated by asking from subjects what they are not able to give. Because a percipient has shown ability to perceive the future of a human being there are those who will ask for the future of a nation, the chances and the issue of a war, the future price of stocks and so on. Because a sensitive shows knowledge that does not come through the normal senses there are those who will ask for information beyond this life. Such demands give rise to romances elaborated in the subconscious mind of the sensitive or reflected in it.

The metagnomic faculty of a sensitive may also be vitiated by asking under unfavourable conditions for what it can produce when conditions are good. Error is produced in this way when a subject is made to hold public séances, or even private séances at which several persons are present. Very few percipients can accommodate themselves to this condition. Similarly error is produced by asking a sensitive whose faculty only extends to delineating a person there present, for details on those distant in space or time, contact with some intermediary object not being a stimulus to him. Error will result if a subject with spiritualist proclivities is opposed in his appeals to the inspiring personification—the guide; or by opposition to any of the modes habitually selected to induce the trance condition—laying the cards, contact and inspection of the hands, touch, and appearance of writing, etc.

Metagnomy is also vitiated when its working is interrupted by questions or exclamations whose tenor leads to mental representations of hallucinatory images caused by verbal suggestions, which he may mistake for metagnomic information. For instance, to say to a percipient, "I am thinking of taking a journey to Africa; shall I go?" is to arouse images of the sea-voyage, African landscape, and so on; and the subject is likely to think that what he sees is the representation of things to be.

A simple instance of error arising from the interference of an experimenter in metagnomic sequence is as follows:

In June, 1917, during one of the séances with reference to the disappearance of his son, M. Louis M. had from Mlle de Berly the prediction:

"... very shortly you will be asked to undertake the sale of a large forest area... the matter will be spun out at first, but will afterwards be conducted with two men whom I clearly see coming to you; one a big fair man, and the other dark and thin.... The matter will be decided quickly and settled at once to the satisfaction of the vendor.

"M. M., who had never before been asked to conduct a negotiation

of this kind, was surprised, and then as soon as two buyers were mentioned, he thought at once of the brothers C—— of Nevers, one of whom was a big man and the other slight in person, but both were dark. His mind being busy writing down the words of the sensitive he paid no attention to the colour of the hair named, and murmured—' the brothers C——, no doubt.' "

Immediately Mlle de Berly resumed : " I see the two men you spoke of ; they live in a little town, at the water's edge . . . the thin one became a widower very soon, etc. . . ." (All details given were correct.)

The premonition then took the form to the mind of M. M. ; he would unexpectedly be asked to undertake the sale of forest land, and that the buyers would be the brothers C—— of Nevers.

The years 1917 and 1918 passed without any such proposal being made, but in 1919 M. Louis M. received from M. de D. a letter asking him to find a buyer for some woodlands in his neighbourhood, woods that he knew very well. M. M. advertised the matter.

The brothers C—— of Nevers did not visit him, but asked to see the woods. They made an offer which was not accepted. Nothing more followed, and M. M. told me of the prediction true as to the beginning and false in sequel. But in April, 1920, two representatives of the firm G—— of Paris came in an automobile, one big and fair, and the other dark and small. They visited the forest and bought it very soon after.

Finally, the metagnomic output may be falsified by unconscious alteration of the words of the sensitive whether by trusting to memory before writing them down or by attributing to them some particular meaning and paraphrasing them by words judged equivalent and clearer. If one does not take down the exact words of the subject, error will certainly be introduced in these phenomena which are already liable to so many forms of error.

To the errors which the experimenter may induce must be added those that he does not know how to guard against, but from which he might protect the sensitive if he were well-informed on the determinism of metagnomic production. To enter into this at length would be to repeat in brief what has already been analysed in previous chapters. I will here therefore mention that among the errors that can easily be avoided is error of *direction* : that is, when the subject perceives details concerning another person than that given for delineation. Knowledge of the function of an intermediary object will lead the experimenter to provide himself with some simple and unsuggestive datum by which to eliminate references to any person other than the proper objective. In seeking for traces of Mr. Lerasle (p. 104) I was able to eliminate the image of Louis M——, from whom I had received the neckerchief, and of the daughter-in-law of the missing man from whom he had received it, by knowledge that the person to be cognized was a very old man. Many errors of fabulation can be avoided in the same way.

The following is a curious instance how very easily error may

arise and how a little knowledge of the event to be delineated may transform the mental working of the sensitive.

Passing through Bourges in the morning of January 10th, 1919, and on visiting my sister-in-law, Mlle F. G., a member of the American organization for help to refugees, I found great excitement in the Central Hotel where the offices of administration were installed on the ground floor. Between midnight and 8 a.m. the cupboard in the office had been opened by use of a tool whose traces were visible, and a metal box, containing 5000 francs in money and 2000 francs in cheques, had been stolen.

The French police suspected some employee of the hotel, thinking that the theft could only have been committed by someone in the house, and because on searching the servants' quarters they had found some packets of cigarettes of an uncommon American brand (these having come from the same cupboard a few days before, without its having been broken into), a ring, and a note for 1000 francs.

As I was leaving for Paris next day I thought this might be a good example for testing metagnomy. I cut about fifteen inches of a thin string stretched between two nails inside the cupboard. It was in these circumstances that I put the string into the hands of Mme Morel on January 12th, asking her: "See what was witnessed by this object on the night between the 9th and 10th of January."

"... I see a man, not very young, very grieved, anxious, and vexed . . . not very tall, his hair is light and thin, rather fresh complexion. . . . I see something shining over his eye. . . ."

I then perceived that Mme Morel was referring to M. Louis M., for whose son she had held so many séances. I said: "No, that is not the person. I want to know what happened on the night of the 9-10th January in the room where I took this thing."

"... Ah! I see a terrible drama . . . a death passes before me . . . someone asphyxiated and stifled . . . I see a person whose eyes are closed; he does not breathe . . . he is dead . . . it is not a voluntary death, sudden, not natural. . . ."

The thin string suggested a vision of strangulation. If I had not known the matter in hand I should have let this fabulation develop, although I should have been much astonished that so thin a string could have served such a purpose. But acting on what I knew and to put the subject on the right track without giving any suggestive matter, and to avoid any further objectless mental working, I said: "I took this string from a cupboard where there has been a theft. See the scene of the theft."

"... Yes, I see a cupboard. . . . It has been forced . . . I see two persons like two shadows . . . they are not strangers to the room, they know it. . . . They do not go back into the house by the door . . . I do not see them go in . . . they are in the house. . . ."

"They go out by an opening, close by the cupboard . . . it is a large opening, a window. It is in the morning, it is not yet daylight . . . the cupboard was forced in order to steal. . . . Papers and money have been taken. . . . He who did the active part is a man with light chestnut hair, dark eyes, irregular features, a square and rather flat face; his clothing is like unbleached serge . . . he seems to have a long cloak of the same colour. . . . The other does not move, so to speak . . . he is quite young, or seems quite young, a mere youth, looks cunning. He has a subordinate part; he touches nothing. . . ."

On January 15th the American police, warned about the theft, took up the affair. They arrested a young American chauffeur, J—, aged

seventeen, who had disappeared with his car a few days before. Some days later they issued a warrant against an American, Captain S., the suspected thief. He was arrested at Brest at the end of January.

In June, 1919, an American court-martial tried both men at Nevers. Captain S. was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for the theft at Bourges. According to the evidence he had passed most of the night enjoying himself in the hotel, and must have gone into the office about 3 a.m., forced the cupboard, and left by the window, which was found partly open by the night porter, at daybreak.

The chauffeur, J—, was acquitted of the theft, but had to avow that on the morning of the 11th he had taken Captain S. to Paris and had received 1000 francs for so doing.

The physical characteristics of these two men were as given by Mm. Morel.

It was stated in evidence that Captain S. was assiduous in attendance at the American Red Cross. No one would have thought of suspecting him. When Mlle G. received the account of the séance on January 14th she held the visions of the sensitive to be an error.

Here, then, is a séance which began with imaginary matter and ended with exact cognizance of an event, because I was able to give a slight indication enabling the subject to perceive the facts by a clue leading to the source of transcendental cognition.

If an experimenter does not wish to give passive encouragement to error he should avoid working on the *entirely* unknown and acquire some datum which, without leading him to any knowledge of the end to be reached, will give him a clue whether the sensitive is making a good or a bad start.

To let a sensitive go on with verified error, or not to place oneself in a position to guard against it, is to show ignorance of the psychology of percipients and will always result in inferior output.

It is unnecessary to do more than allude *passim* to fraud. This can take but two forms—conscious fabulation, or previous collection of information.

Nothing is easier than to keep the sensitive in absolute ignorance of the objects given for their cognizance. As to romances that they might consciously invent, such are for practical purposes, the same as error and could not deceive.

Among all the phenomena of Metapsychics, these, subjective in their origin, furnish the best evidence and the most convincing proof of the reality of metapsychic faculty. The words of the sensitive are objectified in writing and verified by comparison with the realities to which they refer. There is no room for that doubt with which ectoplasmic phenomena and those of movement without contact are received by different minds despite all the means of registration devised to convince of their reality.

Will it now be understood, after this review of causes of error, under what difficult conditions professional metagomic subjects

work, given over to their own mentalities and worked upon by all kinds of ignorant curiosity.

It is among professionals, however, that I have found the best subjects. Apparently, persistent use gives their faculty all the development of which it is capable, and renders it adaptable to a growing number of personalities.

By reason of the defective conditions under which they work, they are of necessity liable to many errors, yet their faculty becomes more acute by use, and they can furnish abundant supernormal knowledge of a quality such as to compel conviction in anyone who will submit his own personality to delineation by three or four good sensitives.

All the various kinds of error considered one by one above, and correlated with their causes, are mingled and combined in practice. One subject may fabulate because he is working on a personality that does not much influence him, and because the experimenter insists on pressing him.

So numerous are the causes of error in the practice of metagnomy in which several functional planes of two or more psychisms are in simultaneous activity, that it would be marvelous that any impeccable metagnomic subject should be found. Metagnomy is a human faculty and therefore always imperfect, sometimes much more so, sometimes less.

With some excellent percipients available to-day, error is generally restricted to details of a life, and to the circumstances representing the episodes of its course. It is rare that they do not give correctly the general course of a life in a first séance, unless there should be some irreducible psycho-physical disharmony with the personality to be cognized.

Moreover, with well-endowed subjects, errors usually last a very short time. The human personality that serves as objective presents itself at each successive séance slightly changed by its senses and by other unknown means as the stream of its life flows on. That which has been learned by the means called "normal" and by those that are hidden, brings it about that earlier errors are rectified and are replaced by knowledge conformable to facts, even when that knowledge deals with a future just as inaccessible to conscious thought in the second as in the first case.

The reader will now understand how essential the study of errors is to a comprehension of metagnomy. It confirms what experimental practice suggests as to the means of producing uncontaminated metagnomic output. Seen as a whole, metagnomic cognition is an occult collaboration between two or more

human beings which is stimulated when one is presented to the other for delineation.

The nature of the collaboration and how it is effected is still to be discovered. But the first step to that end is to verify the existence and the various modes of the faculty. This is the purpose of the present work.

CHAPTER VI

"EXPERIMENTAL REASONING" AND A WORKING HYPOTHESIS

IHAVE sometimes read that as regards an infant science such as metapsychics, the proper course is to amass facts, many facts and always more facts, and leave their explanation to future generations. This is wilful acceptance of sterility. Those who adopt this course undertake an easy task, but one of small utility, which, moreover, becomes entirely superfluous from the moment when the fresh facts are mere repetitions of the kind already recorded.

I think, on the contrary, in studying the latent powers of man that in this, as in other branches of experimental science, it is desirable to direct investigation as soon as possible towards a provisional explanation, and to marshal facts in such a manner as to suggest what Claude Bernard called "experimental reasoning" or "a working hypothesis." For the really fruitful work is that which tests provisional hypothesis by experiment and uses all that is true and useful that it may contain.

This is the stage of experimental investigation, guided by a directing idea towards definite conclusions, that I have desired to reach in this study of metagnomic phenomena exercised upon a human personality.

I present the results of my personal experiences as a working hypothesis and a provisional explanation hoping that it may suggest fresh experiments and open up new paths of exploration.

Experimental study of quasi-intuitive cognition of man, by man, has led me to consider subjects endowed with this paranormal power as intermediaries transposing into conscious thought knowledge which they have drawn partly from the plane of cerebral exercise of thought in the living personalities whose states of life they delineate, but more especially from a transcendental plane of thought which knows the nature of the parts played by individuals in the general life and acquires knowledge of the details of coming events as these gradually come into realization.

As I have detailed in the chapter on informative sources, it is

this explanation (and no other) that is imperatively suggested by all practical experiment under the conditions most feasible for the interrogation of Nature ; that is, in the simplest case when the metagnomic subject exercises the faculty on a person there present.

There remain the more obscure cases in which the faculty is exercised on those who are distant in space and, more especially, who are distant in time. Here the hypothesis put forward does not proceed directly from the facts, but from the complete analogy in the conditions and the nature of their production. Analogy, however, is not identity, and if it were not for the inference resulting from the study of metagnomy on persons near by, this question would be entirely open. I nevertheless propose that the same hypothesis should be accepted for the more obscure cases as for the less obscure. It is the only one rooted in many facts and, by reason of the definite purpose offered to experiment, it may transform the provisional explanation into a definite solution and an acquired truth.

In the unexplored region of human thought we advance with hesitating steps. Feeling in the dark for contact with things, the searching hand meets a thread which seems to connect the things already experienced, and it may possibly prove the guiding clue by which our advance may become quicker and more sure. Is it not better to hold this and see whither it leads, than to risk straying under the influence of fancies ?

"There are two kinds of hypotheses," Emile Boirac used to say, "one kind inert and idle, in the sense that whatever satisfaction they may afford to the mind by their simplicity, their coherence, and their verisimilitude, they open no way towards action, suggest no experiment and no research to discover other facts beyond those whose explanation they claim to furnish. The other kind, on the contrary, are active and laborious, in the sense that tending to immediate realization by effective experiment, they are less directed to the explanation of known facts than to the discovery of new facts, and of others following on these in an unending progression" (E. Boirac, *L'Avenir des Sciences Psychiques*).

Hypotheses which would make metagnomic sensitives the sole factor for supernormal cognition of man by man, are scientifically inert.

The theosophical hypothesis—that the sensitive has the property of duplicating his personality and thus of communicating on his spiritual plane with the spiritual plane of the universe, and is able to draw from thence representative knowledge of phenomenal realities of which our senses can give us only

successive perceptions—is not this to limit ourselves to the continual repetition of this plunge into the universal consciousness, to restrict ourselves to seeking better means of reaching that consciousness, and, in short, to place ourselves in the position of never verifying the truth of the hypothesis itself?

Or, otherwise, to suppose that the metagnomic sensitive has the faculty of abandoning the cerebral mechanism of thought to the influence of dematerialized entities, or, more generally of spirits, who from their plane of higher knowledge, voluntarily inform the living—is not this to imprison oneself in an interpretation that asks nothing of experiment but to identify the inspiring spirit, to judge of its nature by the quality of the revelation made, and to demonstrate the survival of the human personality?

I do not pretend to weigh the explanatory value of these two variants of a single hypothesis. But from the experimental point of view, I can say that the *theosophical variant* is so wide that it suggests no experiment relating to the supernormal cognition of man by man; and that the *spiritualist variant* omits enquiry into the possibilities of cognition latent in the human being, and restricts its enquiry to a problem which is perhaps insoluble and is certainly more difficult; thus beginning, so to speak, at the end.

The hypothesis which considers the phenomenon of metagnomy on a human personality as the product of an unconscious psychic collaboration on various planes between cognizer and cognized, without prejudging the nature of a deceased or an unborn personality—this hypothesis, on the contrary, is intensely active.

In the first place (and this is not its least merit) it obliges us to begin at the beginning—to enter on the unknown by the more easily discoverable—experiment on the living.

Not considering the metagnomic subject as supernaturally inspired (by which nothing but the matter actually revealed would be knowable), this hypothesis insists that this psychic intermediary should be closely scrutinized in the working of his peculiar faculty before making use of it in experimentation.

It presents for research an experimental programme whose wide extent will be apparent from the mere enumeration of its principal elements.

It suggests study of the plane of the sensorial action of thought—the “conscious” and “subconscious”—under psycho-physiological conditions in which its capacities for acquiring information, its power of transmitting its content and of associating itself in collaboration with other similar planes, can be stated and analysed.

It suggests exploration of the latent transcendental psychic plane by stimulating its manifestations by all possible methods.

It suggests experimental enquiry on the psycho-physics of

mutually interacting psychic influences in Space, and perhaps in Time.

It hints at experiments, following on those above mentioned, to determine the relations between brain and thought, and ultimately, the possibility of the survival of human personality, whether as a persisting individuality or as a memory-representation in the cosmic consciousness.

In short, this hypothesis seeks for a solution of the problem of real human personality by experimental exploration of the living being. It transfers what has hitherto been a speculation of the mind to the domain of experimental science.

I put it forward for the sake of the fruitful work that it suggests, and also because emanating from active and intentional observation, it is a guide to research, to be verified and developed.

At the conclusion of this study, I offer my excuses that it can give only partial satisfaction to scientific minds.

A series of special experiments would be necessary before the question as to the *identity* of the informative source in the cases (1) when the personality is close to the percipient, and (2) when it is distant in space or in time, could be answered with precision.

More especially I have not had opportunity to discover whether the unborn personality can be cognized by metagnomy, as it can when deceased.

The answer to that question possibly involves a complete transformation of all our opinions on the human being and on life.

I might have filled in these serious gaps by continuing my solitary work; but the matter of this study is so extensive and of such high interest, that I have thought it better to publish at once the verifications hitherto made, and thus to indicate to other experimenters a main line and various branches of research, by which they may, without waste of time and effort, proceed to the exploration of the latent and transcendental zones of human thought.

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