

JOURNAL

OF THE

SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

The issue of this number of the *Journal* has been unavoidably delayed, in consequence of the sudden death of the editor, Mr. Edmund Gurney, who has been Honorary Secretary of the Society since 1883. Few who read this will fail to appreciate to some extent the greatness of the loss which this calamity has inflicted on the work which the Society was formed to carry on; but it can only be fully felt by those who co-operated with Mr. Gurney in the difficult and laborious investigations of which he has for five years borne the chief burden. To them the loss of his sympathy and aid, and of the stimulus given by his bright, subtle and indefatigable intellect, cannot but be irreparable. An account of his work will form part of the next number of the *Journal*, which—according to an arrangement made last year—will not appear till October. The present number, which was left in an advanced state of preparation, is issued substantially (it is believed) as Mr. Gurney would have issued it if it had received his final revision.

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NEW MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES.

MEMBERS.

- LEES, GEORGE FREDERICK, Westbury-on-Trym, Gloucestershire.
 SOLTYKOFF, PRINCE ALEXIS, 14, Beaumont-street, Oxford.

ASSOCIATES.

- ALLEN, HENRY J., Ferndene, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.
 FARNCOMBE, GEORGE RICHARD, B.A., 30, Holyhead-road, Handsworth, Birmingham.
 MONEY, CHARLES L., Northbrook Cottage, Petersfield.
 WOOD, MRS. T., 4, The Avenue, Colchester.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

A Meeting of the Council was held on the 31st of May, the President in the chair, at which the following Members were also present:— Professor W. F. Barrett, Dr. A. T. Myers, Messrs. Edmund Gurney, F. W. H. Myers, Frank Podmore, and Hensleigh Wedgwood.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read and signed as correct.

Two new Members and four new Associates, whose names and addresses are given above, were elected.

Some presents to the Library were reported, and a vote of thanks was passed to the donors.

A cash account for the month of April was presented in the usual form.

The Council approved a circular letter addressed to the librarians of Free Public Libraries, offering to supply the four published volumes of *Proceedings* on specially advantageous terms.

A proposition was received from Mr. R. Hodgson, on behalf of the American S.P.R., that an arrangement should be made under which the American S.P.R. should be regularly supplied with the *Journal* for the use of its own Members. It was resolved to offer to send, free, a supply of the July number of the *Journal* as a specimen.

It was settled that, as last year, the *Journal* should not be issued in August and September.

The date of the next General Meeting was fixed for Monday, the 16th of July. The next Meeting of the Council will be on the afternoon of the same day, at 4.30.

GENERAL MEETING.

A General Meeting was held at the Westminster Town Hall on the 31st of May, the President of the Society in the chair.

Mrs. Sidgwick read the concluding part of a paper on "Premonitions," of which she supplies the following abstract.

Mrs. Sidgwick explained that by a premonition she meant a super-normal knowledge of a future event, not merely an extension of our natural knowledge in *space*, such as a perception of present though concealed danger, or existing though distant scenes would be, but an extension of our natural knowledge forward in time. She gave a general account of the kind of evidence on the subject which has come before the Society, and pointed out some of the difficulties in obtaining conclusive proofs which are peculiar to premonition over and above those which belong to telepathy and premonition alike. One of the most important of these is that a premonitory phantasm does not, like a telepathic one, necessarily imply the date of its fulfilment, and it

must, therefore, be more complex than a telepathic one, and hence depend more on an accurate recollection of detail, in order to have the same cogency. Mrs. Sidgwick read a number of the best cases in the Society's collection of premonitions conveyed by visual and auditory hallucinations, impressions, verbal prophecies, and dreams, and pointed out that, of the first-hand cases, about two-thirds belonged to the last class, which, from the nature of dreams, is necessarily a weak one. She said that the evidence at present collected did not seem to her to warrant a conclusion in favour of the reality of premonitions. Some of the cases were certainly very striking, but, on the whole, both in quantity and quality, the evidence fell far short of that for telepathy; and while less evidence was apparently forthcoming, decidedly more was, she thought, required, owing to the still greater remoteness from the analogy of our established sciences which the intuitive knowledge of detailed future events would involve. It appeared, however, that there was a possibility of obtaining quasi-experimental evidence on the subject of premonitions. For many persons believed themselves to have premonitions either of a symbolic kind, like banshees, or of a more literal kind, many times in the course of their lives. If such persons would write down before fulfilment, and with as much detail as possible, each dream or phantasm which appeared to them to have significance, it would soon be known whether the apparent fulfilments were more than could reasonably be attributed to chance or not.

At the conclusion of the paper the President emphasised the fact that the prime condition for obtaining anything like satisfactory evidence on the subject is for persons who believe themselves to have experienced a premonition, whether in dream or in some other form, to write down an exact account of their experience *at once*, before the event falls due.

Mr. O. Elton read some notes on "The Beneficial Effects of Hypnotism," based on references to the *Revue de l'Hypnotisme*, to this effect:—

The view that only hysterical subjects can be helped by hypnotism is false, but such subjects are more susceptible than others, and hysterical as distinct from organic paralysis has been cured by hypnotism.

In patients not hysterical, those diseases which depend on the nerves, and functional derangements not involving organic injury, are largely curable by using hypnotism as an anæsthetic, or as a means of suggesting rest and relief from pain. Further, cases are quoted by Dr. Voisin where mania not involving hysteria was modified and sometimes cured by the same treatment, especially dipsomania. The great question to settle is, how far disease involving organic lesion can be

provably affected, *quâ* the lesion, by hypnotic treatment. The two best cases for the affirmative view are those quoted by Dr. Chiltoff in the *Revue*, December, 1886, of paralysis following apoplexy, and by Dr. Delbœuf (*Revue*, Vol. II., p. 13) of an alleged burn whose consequences were arrested by hypnotism, while in a similar burn in the same patient, no such suggestion being made, they were not. Lastly, the use of hypnotism in *pedagogy* and moral reform is growing; and the general view in France in that its employment for the reformation of abnormally vicious, yet not demented, subjects, involves no unjust encroachment upon the liberty of the individual.

CASES SUPPLIED TO THE LITERARY COMMITTEE.

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From MISS LISTER, whose address is suppressed only because its publication in the present connection might lead to difficulties, should she ever desire to let her house.

March 8th, 1888.

Some time ago a friend of mine had the misfortune to lose her husband.* They had only been married about five years, and she expressed great grief at his loss, and asked me to go and reside with her. . . . I went to her, and stayed six months. One evening, towards the end of that summer, I remarked that I would go upstairs and have a bath. "Do," she replied, "but first I wish you would fetch me that little book I left on the drawing-room table last night." I started without a light (having been naturally fearless all my life, I am accustomed to go about in the dark), opened the drawing-room door, and stood for a minute, thinking where she had placed it, when I saw, to my amazement, her husband, sitting by the table; his elbow was resting on the table close to the book. My first thought was to pretend forgetfulness, my second to tell her what I had seen and return without the book. However, having boasted that I did not know the meaning of fear, I determined to get it, and advanced to the table. He seemed to be smiling, as if he knew my thoughts. I picked up the book and took it to her without saying anything about it; then, going into the bathroom, I soon forgot it. But after being there about 20 minutes I heard my friend go up and open the drawing-room door. I laughed, and listened to hear if he was still there, and very soon heard her run out of the room, and downstairs about four at a time, and ring the dining-room bell furiously. One of the maids came running up. I dressed as quickly as possible and went down to her, and found her looking very white and trembling. "Whatever is the matter?" I said. "I have seen my husband," she replied. "What nonsense," I answered. "Oh, but I have," she continued,— "at least, I didn't actually see him, but he spoke twice to me; I ran out of the room, and he followed and put his cold hand on my shoulder."

* I have seen his memorial card. His age was 53, and he died April 17th, 1884.—E.D.

Now this seems to me a very strange thing, because I had only seen the gentleman about two or three times, therefore cannot understand his appearing to me, and I certainly was not thinking of him at the time.

The other apparition was of an old lady whom I had never seen, and I only discovered for whom it was intended by describing her to someone who knew her. She appeared to me on several occasions, and I happened to relate this to the gentleman alluded to, who informed me that it was my imagination, and added that if it had been a spirit I should have been too frightened to look long enough to describe its appearance. I told him in reply that I wished someone who had heard the tale would appear to me after their death and see if they could frighten me; and I thought of it when he appeared, and wondered if it had anything to do with my seeing him.

L. A. LISTER.

In reply to inquiries, the narrator says:—

March 13th, 1888.

My reasons for not mentioning the gentleman's name were two-fold. First, because I wrote without the sanction, or, indeed, knowledge, of his wife; secondly, because a family of the name of — now reside there,* and they are a *very nervous* family; if they heard about the apparition would probably remove. As the owner of the house is an old friend of my father's this would be unpleasant for all parties. He died in April, 1884. His appearance was not before the beginning of October. I took no notice of the date, but I had been with his wife to Lowestoft for six weeks. We went on the 19th of August, and returned after Michaelmas Day. This occurred soon after our return.

The old lady's appearance was here. My father purchased the house in June, 1883, from Mrs. —, whose aunt had died here—being found dead in bed one day, having died the night before, all alone. The lodger forced the door, fearing something was the matter; but I was not aware of this till a long time after. This appearance occurred on a special *fête* day at the "Fisheries"—the proceeds of which were, I believe, intended to build a church. Some friends of mine were going, and had tried to persuade me to accompany them, but the house would have been left with no one in it if I had gone. In the afternoon I had been sewing, and drawing my chair close to the window overlooking the garden at the back, I intended working as long as I could see. I sat for a few minutes looking out, and trying to imagine how the exhibition looked, and, upon turning, saw the old lady standing looking at me. "Who can that be?" I thought (and looked out again) "some one must have come here by mistake—possibly a neighbour." I looked at her again, long enough to take in all the details of her costume. Again I turned to the window, wondering whether I had left any of the doors open, and how it was I had not heard her come in.

When thinking how stupid not to ask her, I got up to put the question—but she had gone, as noiselessly as she came. I looked all over the house—in cupboards, under bedsteads, &c., but not a trace of anyone or anything could be found.

* The name and address were given.—ED.

The servant I had at that time had been a servant at the house before, I knew ; so I resolved (of course without telling her why) to describe the old lady. I made several casual remarks about her, then I said, "I fancy I saw her one day, Phoebe, let me describe her. She was rather short, thin, had brown eyes, a long nose, and wore a black cap with a flower or red bow at the side, a black dress, black mittens, and a white neckerchief, edged with lace, folded cornerways and fastened with a brooch." Phoebe interrupted me several times by saying that was her, miss, and ended by saying she always wore one of those kerchiefs.

About three weeks after, I happened to be again alone, and was hurrying out of the breakfast-room into the room where I had seen her, when, glancing up the staircase, I beheld my old lady coming down. This time she was attired in a lavender dress. I stood at the foot of the stairs, thinking as she passed I would take hold of her. We seemed to be looking at one another for 10 minutes, when she went backwards up the stairs like a human being. I now felt certain someone was playing me a trick (though I had heard no sound) ; I ran up quickly, but at the turn in the stairs, she vanished. I searched the house as before, with the same result. When Phoebe returned, I said, 'Did Miss S— ever wear a lavender-coloured dress ?' "Yes, miss, she did ; she never wore the same twice running," said Phoebe. I have never seen the old lady since. I was enjoying perfect health at the time.

LAURA LISTER.

Miss Lister, with whom I have had a long interview, is, as far as I can judge, an accurate witness. She is certainly the very opposite of a nervous or superstitious person. She has had no other hallucinations. She felt some dread at the appearance of Mr. —, but this did not prevent her from advancing to the table where he seemed to be sitting. He was dressed in black. The light on this occasion was bright moonlight, and he was clearly seen. Miss Lister's conversation with him had been some months before his sudden death, at a time when he was quite well. Unfortunately, we have so far been unable to discover the present address of Mr. —'s widow, who has married again.

As regards the first appearance of the old lady, Miss Lister holds that it is quite impossible that it could have been a real person who got back into the street. The hall door makes a considerable noise in opening and shutting, which she must have heard ; and moreover it could not be opened from the outside. She was struck by the absence of footsteps. She went in search of the visitor immediately on looking up, and finding that the figure had disappeared.

Phoebe has married. If Miss Lister discovers her address, she will let me know it. The niece of Miss —, who was requested to supply a description of her aunt's personal appearance and dress, has not replied.

E. G.

CASES OF COLLECTIVE HALLUCINATIONS.

The following is an interesting case of joint hallucination, which we should describe as "collective percipience," supposing the experience to have been in any way directly due to the person whose appearance was seen. It is against that interpretation that that person was at the time in a completely normal state. According to request, the two accounts were given quite independently by the two witnesses.

From MRS. MILMAN.

17, Southwell-gardens, S.W.

March 20th, 1888.

About three years ago I was coming out of the dining-room one day, after lunch, with my sister. My mother had, as I supposed, preceded us upstairs, as usual. The library door, which faces the dining-room, stood wide open, and looking through it as I crossed the hall, I saw my mother in the library, seated at the writing-table, and apparently writing. Instead, therefore, of going upstairs, as I had intended, I went to the library door, wishing to speak to her, but when I looked in the room was empty.

At the same moment, my sister, who had also been going towards the stairs in the first instance, changed her direction, and, crossing the hall, came up to the library door behind me. She then exclaimed, "Why, I thought I saw mamma in the library, at the writing-table." On comparing notes, we found that we had both seen her seated at the writing-table, and bending over it as if writing. My mother was never in the habit of writing in the library.

I recollect her dress perfectly, as the impression was quite distinct and vivid. She had on a black cloak, and bonnet with a yellow bird in it, which she generally wore.

It is the only time anything of the kind has happened to me.

M. J. MILMAN.

From MISS CAMPBELL.

17, Southwell-gardens, S.W.

March 21st, 1888.

My sister and mother and myself, after returning from our morning drive, came into the dining-room without removing our things, and had luncheon as usual, during which my sister and I laughed and cracked jokes in the gayest of spirits. After a time my mother rose and left the room, but we remained on for a few minutes. Finally we both got up and went into the passage, and I was about to go upstairs and take off my things when I saw my sister turn into my father's study (which was directly opposite the dining-room), with the evident intention, as I supposed, of speaking to my mother, whom I distinctly noticed seated at my father's desk in her cloak and bonnet, busily absorbed in writing. The door of the study was wide open at the time. I turned round and followed her to the door, when, to my surprise, my mother had completely disappeared, and I noticed my sister turned away too, and left the room as if puzzled. I asked her, with some curiosity, what she went into the room for? She replied that she fancied she saw my mother bending over the desk writing, and went in to speak to her. Feeling very much startled and alarmed, we went u stairs to

see after her, and found her in her bedroom, where she went immediately on leaving the dining-room, and had been all the time. E. J. CAMPBELL.

In the next case, there is certainly some ground for surmising that the appearance had some other than a purely subjective origin. But the type is so rare that it is difficult to know what value to attach to a single instance.

From MISS PEARSON.

15, Fitzroy-square, W.C.,

April, 1888.

The house, 19, St. James's-place, Green Park, had been taken on a very long lease by my grandfather, a solicitor, in large county practice, having his offices in Essex-street, Strand.

There my father was born and his two sisters, Ann and Harriet. Aunt Ann died in 1858, leaving all she possessed to Aunt Harriet, who remained in the house. They had been devotedly attached to each other. In November, 1864, I was summoned to Brighton. My Aunt Harriet was then very ill there. Mrs. Coppinger, the daughter of Mr. Thomas Pearson, my father's brother, was there, and her son, Mr. George James, by her first husband, came up and down. Eliza Quinton was nursing her. She only craved to go back to the old house where she was born, and I made arrangements with the railway company and took her home.

This was in the second week of December. She became worse and worse. Eliza continued to nurse her, and Mrs. Coppinger, Mrs. John Pearson, the wife of a nephew, and myself helped with the night work.

Miss Harriet Pearson slept in a large three windowed bedroom over the drawing-room. The room behind was occupied by Mrs. Coppinger and myself, though one of us was generally in the patient's room at night. On the night of December 22nd, 1864, Mrs. John Pearson was in the room, Mrs. Coppinger and myself in the back room; the house lighted up on the landings and staircases, our door wide open.

About 1 or 2 a.m. on the morning of December 23rd, both Mrs. Coppinger and myself started up in bed; we were neither of us sleeping as we were watching every sound from the next room.

We saw some one pass the door, short, wrapped up in an old shawl, a wig with three curls each side and an old black cap. Mrs. Coppinger called out, "Emma, get up, it is old Aunt Ann." I said, "So it is, then Aunt Harriet will die to-day." We jumped up, and Mrs. John Pearson came rushing out of the room and said, "That was old Aunt Ann. Where is she gone to?" I said to soothe her, "Perhaps it was Eliza come down to see how her mistress is." Mrs. Coppinger ran upstairs and found Eliza sleeping in the servants' room. She was very awestruck but calm, dressed and came down. Every room was searched, no one was there, and from that day to this no explanation has ever been given of this appearance, except that it was old Aunt Ann come to call her sister, and she died at 6 p.m. that day.

I may add that I mentioned this matter to the Rev. Edward Walford, late scholar of Balliol College, and now much connected with literature, at the house of Mr. Towers, late M.P. for Finsbury, in January, 1865.

EMMA M. PEARSON.

I was living with Miss Ann and Miss Harriet Pearson, in 19, St. James's-place. After the death of Miss Ann I remained with her sister, and when she became very ill and was ordered change of air, I went with her as nurse to Brighton. Mrs. Coppinger was there and Mr. George James now and then. Miss Emma Pearson was sent for and came down. She brought her aunt back to London. I continued to nurse her. I remember on the early morning of December 23rd being called up by Mrs. Coppinger, who said that she, Miss Emma and Mrs. John Pearson had seen some one come upstairs and pass into the patient's room. Was it I? I said no. Mrs. Coppinger said, "They said it was old Aunt Ann." We searched the house and could find no one. Miss Harriet died in the evening of that day, but before that told all of us that she had seen her sister and knew it was her, and she had come to call her.

ELIZA QUINTON.

April 3rd, 1888.

P.S.—In a separate letter of the same date Miss Pearson adds:—

"I now remember my aunt saying 'her sister had come for her, for she had seen her.'"

CASE OF THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE.

From MISS J. M. SMITH.

56, Longridge-road, S.W.

May, 1888.

During Lent, 1873, I stayed in Scarborough with my aunt, and there my cousins and I used "planchette" every day for some weeks. The instrument (though professing a great hatred of me) answered at last my mental questions, when two persons, either Julia and Agnes G., or John G. and one of his sisters, had their hands upon it.

One day, seated at a window some distance from the table at which the operators sat, I asked it questions mentally, not even moving my lips, and after one answer, "No," my cousins asked it to write the question just put. I went behind, not believing it possible, but to my horror it formed the first two or three words of my question, and I had to knock away my cousins' hands, and carry it away in order to stop the disclosure.

One evening I went upstairs, two stories, to my bedroom, telling my cousins to put the question, Who were spending the evening at my home in Cheshire? On my return they read out, "Mrs. B. and Ellen P.," those names being the visitors mentioned in my letter that day. My cousins had heard of the former lady's existence, but never of the latter to the best of my knowledge, and had not heard my letter read.

That same day, when I was again upstairs, "planchette" wrote out the pet name of one of my sisters (no relation to my cousins, being a step-sister), and on my entrance into the room I found them puzzling over some letters which they read out to me, "Em D'Em," written as I always write it. Again, they did not know the name, and we had no sympathy one with another.

In answer to inquiries, Miss Smith adds:—

"As regards my planchette experiences the mental question I asked was not a common one, though it is *impossible* for me to give it you, even the first words. I should not have hindered the instrument from writing unless I had

seen it was going to give my own question. My cousin remembers me carrying it off in a fright, but cannot recollect the words written, nor does she think it wrote anything. My testimony, as the alarmed questioner, will have alone to content you. The pet name for my sister was 'Em. D'Em,' and my cousin observed to-day that it was very unlikely she or her sister had ever heard it as they did not know my sister."

AUTOMATIC MESSAGES.

MRS. KIRBY'S CASE.

The case which follows was read to the Society for Psychical Research at the General Meeting, January 28th, 1888.

Its publication has been delayed in the hope, thus far disappointed, of discovering some one resident in Santa Cruz in or about 1852 who might be able to corroborate or correct Mrs. Kirby's narrative. But since a number of copies of the *Journal* for July are to be sent to the United States, it seems desirable to print the case here as it stands, appealing to anyone who may know anything of the persons concerned to write to F. W. H. Myers, Leckhampton House, Cambridge, England. I may add that I am very anxious to collect first-hand cases of the reception, by automatic writing, tilts, raps, &c., of messages containing facts not known to the persons present; and that I shall be grateful for any communication on this subject. F. W. H. M.

Mrs. Kirby writes to me from Santa Cruz, Cal., August 13th, 1886, as follows:—

In 1850 I left New York for San Francisco. Spiritualism, in the sense in which that word is now used, had no existence. The facts and philosophy it covers were unknown, except partially to the very few readers of Swedenborg's cumbrous and involved theology. Attention had been called to some rappings which had made themselves heard in a house in Rochester, N. Y., and there had been some violent demonstrations (breaking of windows, moving of furniture, and unlocking of locked drawers and doors) in the house of an orthodox clergyman somewhere in Connecticut.

In 1853 I was living on a rancho three miles from what is now the city of Santa Cruz. (It was but a village then, though they called it a town.) My family consisted of my husband, myself, and, in a certain sense, of a young English sailor, a healthy, kind-hearted, and very decent, though very ignorant, fellow, whom my husband had employed to work on the rancho during the previous year. His name was Thomas Travers, and he had just made his mark (X) to a written agreement for another year's service. As it will be seen, I had no servant, but Tom stood ready to help me in any way he could. For instance, when, at intervals of weeks, visitors would make their appearance, he would immediately kill and clean some chickens for me. (If you wanted beef-steak in those days you could only have it by killing an ox. The nearest neighbours sometimes combined and took a quarter each.)

On one occasion the two most intelligent men in town came out, a Dr. McLean and the Rev. — Dryden, and they presently asked me if I had a

small table I could let them have (while I was busy, and my husband a mile off at his tannery), with which they could continue some strange experiments that had lately been made among our mutual friends in town. Spirits tipped the table, and they said sentences were spelled by the use of the alphabet. The A's and B's had in this way heard of their long since departed children, &c., &c.

I listened eagerly. I had left a large circle of friends at the East, and here was not one of the old kind: Lucretia Mott, Lucy Stone, Garrison, Purvis. A view of the entire bay of Monterey from my sitting-room window did not prevent me from longing continually for a little of the old sympathy. One of my most devoted friends had a few years since passed to the other shore; my young brother was there too. If I could establish communication with them what a relief, what a pleasure it would be to me!

My smallest table was in size 3½ft. by 1½ft. My husband was willing to test the matter, and as we were given to understand that three or four persons together would be more likely to succeed than two (since magnetism or electricity was drawn from them by the invisibles to help in accomplishing their object), Mr. K. went out to Tom's shanty and asked him to come and sit at the table with us.

We had not held our hands one moment on the table before it tipped very decidedly, and I forthwith proceeded to repeat the alphabet. The doing so, however, struck me as worse than ridiculous; it was very unpleasant, too, and I observed that if spirits were present they could hear me say the letters in my mind as well as if they were uttered from my tongue.

"All right. Go ahead!" my husband replied, "we will sit and wait for results."

I did so, and the table tipped promptly to the letters, spelling out—

"Mary Howells."

As I knew no such person I asked if she was a friend of Mr. K.'s? Answer: "No." Of Tom's? Answer: "Yes." A relation of his? Answer: "Sister." Are you married? I questioned. Answer: "No."

"Oh, don't let us waste any more time!" I exclaimed. It's all falsehood and nonsense. Here is someone professing to be Tom's sister who says her name is Mary Howells, and that she is unmarried. If this were true of course her name would be Travers.

Tom nodded aside to me and said in a low tone—

"Yes, mum. That's her name. Mary Howells."

He looked extremely confused and astonished.

"Why, what do you mean?" Mr. K. broke in; "your name is Travers, how can hers be Howells?"

"No, sir," Tom replied, looking down, "my name is Howells."

But Mr. K. insisted that it could not be. Had he not made his mark after the Travers only the other day? Five minutes were taken up in the attempt to convince Tom that he did not know his own name.

"You see, sir," he at length explained, "I ran away from a whale ship in San Francisco, and sailors is so scarce there I was afraid they would hunt me up and take me back, so I just took another name."

Hardly convinced now, Mr. K. advised him to drop the alias at once, assuring him that no one would molest him. This he did, and the second

year following married, and he is now the father of 12 girls and three boys who bear the strangely discovered name.

But to return. Finding that the communication had been so far correct I proposed that we should compose ourselves while I repeated the alphabet as before, still hoping to receive the name of my dear friend. But Tom's sister had not accomplished her purpose, and she proceeded to spell the following words :—

“I—have—a—child—a—girl. — She—is—seven—years—old—and—now —is—in—a—house—of — ill—fame — in—Cat— street. — I—want — my — brother—to—bring—her—away—from—there.”

This was a difficult and painful message to convey, and I told Tom that I did not like to tell him what was spelled.

“She says that she has a little girl seven years old,” I began.

Here he removed his hands quickly from the table, and counting on the fingers of one hand by those of the other, looked up and observed:—

“Yes, mum, that's so. She's seven now.”

When I gave him the rest of the message he became much excited, and begged me to assure his sister that he would send home 50dol. the next month, and have the child removed to a better place, and that as soon as the crops were in he would go home and get the child.

I assured him she could hear all he was saying.

“But is it true that there is a street called Cat-street?” I asked.

“Yes, mum ; and it is the worst in the city,” he returned.

The following day he acknowledged to me that his sister was a woman of the town.

I now asked my husband to procure me a smaller and lighter table so that I might sit at it by myself and in that way be more likely to attract my own friends. This he did, but to my great annoyance, Mary Howells immediately presented herself. This time, however, she came to say that her child was ill. When she left the movements of the table were weak and uncertain.

The following evening, she came to say that the child was much worse, and she thought it would die. A day or two later she reported it dead. I asked if the child were now with her, and she replied by very decided movements, that she *was not*.

After this, Mary Howells never put in an appearance, and every day I prayed that some one I loved might speak a word to me. They did not. I know now that they could not, for want of the honest sailor's electrical help, which I rejected in my ignorance. Seafaring persons are apt to possess great mediumistic power.

After hearing that the child was dead I wrote a guarded letter to Tom's parents, for him, asking how they all were, including the little girl. In due time I received a reply, or, I should say, Tom did, though he could not read writing. They said they were all well except Mary's little girl, who had died. (They did not say exactly when, but as Tom had not been absent from England much over a year, it must have been within that time, and we had every reason to believe the mother's statement a true one.) The old people further said that *Mary had married a soldier*.

I understood from this that the child's mother was not wholly depraved,

that she was concerned about the welfare of her little one, and looking about for help in her destitute circumstances her thoughts had turned to her brother, most likely persistently turned to him, and this resulted in her leaving her body temporarily during sleep in search of him. We had *assumed* that she was, as we say, "dead." She had not asserted the fact.

I submit this one experience and will write out another as soon as I can.
—Very truly yours,
GEORGIANA B. KIRBY.

A second letter from Mrs. Kirby, dated Santa Cruz, Cal., October 12th, 1886, gave further particulars, as follows:—

DEAR SIR,—Yours of September 9th arrived in due season. My reply has been delayed by my ineffectual efforts to ascertain the *month* when our two friends, McLean and Dryden, visited us on the ranche, because it was within a month after this that Mary Howells told me her child was ill, and later that she was dead, and I thought it might not be so difficult to search the death record of *one* month for the child under the head of "Howells." As it is the gentlemen have proved to me that their visit occurred in 1852, and not in 1853 as I had supposed, but they could not remember if it were the spring or fall of that year. This, our ignorance of the date of the death and of the child's Christian name is the most unsatisfactory part of my record. Neither were mentioned in the grandfather's letter, and from Tom never mentioning the name I fancied he did not know it. I saw him recently, but I could not venture to speak to him of his sister's illegitimate child. He has 12 living daughters of his own, and he would be justly offended if I should remind him of how we had gained a knowledge of his sister's life. He told us that his father was still alive and living where they always had, at Saltash, which he thought by this time must be a part of Plymouth.

I should explain that neither Dr. McLean nor the Rev. — Dryden were personally cognisant of our doings, so that they could not act as witnesses in the case.

You ask if I can point you to any contemporary record. Thirty-four years ago no Spiritualistic paper was published in the United States, and such a narration given as *true* in any ordinary journal would have laid us open to the charge of lunacy. And had this been otherwise, we could not have proclaimed the fact that the sister of the honest fellow who was working for us was a disreputable woman.

As to fraud on Tom's part, he could hardly understand why we wanted him to sit with his hands on the table. I repeated the letters *in my mind*. How could he tip the table at the right instant so as to spell words which disclosed his sister's disgrace? Then he was in no want of money. He had been earning 60dol. a month (and had spent it all, mostly at Spanish fandangos), and the agreement with my husband, to which he had lately placed his X, bound him to work for Mr. K. for one year for the sum of 60dol. a month and his board and lodging. You, sir, must have read something about the high price of labour in California in those early years of its settlement.

The sittings were held after supper (or dinner, you would call it) between seven and nine o'clock.

Cat-street was in Plymouth, England. If it has given place to another the fact of its former existence could be verified. GEORGIANA B. KIRBY.

The actual existence of the "Cat-street" of the narrative is shown by the following letter :—

Post Office, Plymouth, *January 23rd*, 1888.

SIR,—In reply to yours of the 21st instant I beg to inform you that a few years ago there was a street named Catte-street, but it is now called Stillman-street.—I am, sir, yours obediently,

R. A. LEVERTON (for POSTMASTER).

The regretted death of Mrs. Kirby soon after the date of her last letter put an end to this correspondence.

It will be observed that the communications from the woman at Plymouth were received at an hour which, in England, fell in the middle of the night.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

SIR,—No one can be more disposed than I am to receive with respect anything that a man of Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace's scientific eminence has to say about Spiritualism. At the same time, I cannot but think that the "Account of a Spiritualistic Test," contributed by him to the June *Journal*, is somewhat disheartening to any one hoping to obtain through Spiritualism evidence that the dead can communicate with the living. We must suppose that the case that Mr. Wallace has brought forward fairly represents, in his view, the best attainable evidence; and, if so, the best attainable evidence would seem to be quite inadequate to sustain the conclusion which he draws from it.

The whole proof of the intervention of extra-human intelligence is briefly this. At a séance attended by General Lippitt a veiled figure appears, calling herself Nellie Morris. She is uncalled for, unconnected with any one present, and unknown to them all. But it is ascertained that the particulars which she gives about herself are true of a real Nellie Morris who had died at a hotel at Philadelphia a few years before. Subsequently, at other séances with other mediums, Nellie Morris again presents herself to General Lippitt. That, I think, is substantially the whole case—for I do not understand General Lippitt to lay stress on any precautions to prevent personation by the medium or accomplices.

Mr. Wallace and General Lippitt, as I understand them, consider that the evidence of extra-human intelligence rests (1), on the improbability that the first medium, Mrs. Beste, would know the particulars given about Nellie Morris, and (2) the improbability that, having once interested General Lippitt in Nellie Morris, she would make this fact known to other mediums. I am unable, however, to see on what grounds either of these things is regarded as improbable. The details given about Nellie Morris were no secrets, they might have been known to anyone and therefore to the medium; and her choice being unrestricted, she was free to select anyone about whom she happened to know particulars which could be easily verified. As to the second

point, it appears to me that concerting together to deceive Spiritualists or investigators of General Lippitt's importances, would be among the rudiments of the art of fraudulent mediumship. For such concert as would be required would be easy and safe, and would, if successful, add to the reputation of both mediums and detract from neither; while there would be good reason to hope that, with so great a frequenter of séances as General Lippitt, the little trouble involved would not be thrown away; since a man in a prominent social position, and especially one who also has held public office and is an author, can hardly conceal his identity by merely omitting to give his name.

But Mr. Wallace thinks that even this little trouble would not be worth taking, because "no advertisement of the mediums concerned was to be expected" from General Lippitt. No doubt the mediums concerned would like to be advertised, but published accounts of séances are not the only form of advertisement. General Lippitt does not hide his faith; and more inquirers and converts are likely to result from keeping alive the interest in the subject of a man of his known position and integrity, than from letters to Spiritualistic journals by unknown men.

The whole "test," then, crumbles away. The improbability that General Lippitt was deceived is only the improbability that the mediums would wish to deceive him, and surely we cannot reasonably reckon this great, even apart from the evidence of imposture, which we have as regards several of them.

A few words on another "test" related by General Lippitt. The supposed spirit of his daughter Carrie brought a message at a séance in 1884 that she was "happy with mother Elizabeth, and we here celebrate her birthday (February 25th) much after the manner we did on earth." Here knowledge is shown of two facts—the name and the birthday of General Lippitt's first wife,—the second of which was, he feels sure, unknown to all except himself and his mother-in-law at the time of the séance. But Miss Carrie Lippitt had been dead less than two years. In her lifetime, unless the message was a lying one, she kept her mother's birthday. How, then, can General Lippitt be justified in feeling sure that no one knew it? One can imagine many ways in which it may have come to the medium's knowledge. She may, for instance, have known a servant who was in the house when the birthday was being kept.

There are few facts about any of us so secret that we can feel sure no one knows them, and we may be—probably are—frequently astonished by some out-of-the-way bit of knowledge displayed about us. It is obviously the interest of fraudulent mediums to collect such information in order to astonish their sitters, and therefore, I think that, under ordinary circumstances, but little importance ought to be attached to extraordinary knowledge shown by mediums *when it is selected by themselves*. General Lippitt would have been rightly impressed if, without any leading up or prompting on the part of the medium, he had asked what was the date of his wife's birthday, and been answered correctly—and still more so if he had asked for the birthday of some one entirely unconnected with him, which he happened accidentally to know. But this is very different from what actually happened, when the information was selected and offered by the medium (or spirit) herself. General Lippitt relies on his having been unknown to the medium, but in this, as I implied before, I cannot but think that he shows too much modesty.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

ELEANOR MILDRED SIDGWICK

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

DEAR SIR,—The last number of the *Journal* containing the experiences of General Lippitt I have read, and must express my regret that they should

have been published, as I fear the Society is likely to be brought into ridicule by gravely putting such things forth, unless it be avowedly done to show the boundless credulity of believers in Spiritualism.

Apart from all preconceptions on the question, and from the fact that most of the mediums concerned are detected impostors, the internal evidence afforded by the narrative itself is amply sufficient to satisfy any cool-headed person of the impostures practised, and of the hopelessness of expecting persons like General Lippitt, who have surrendered their reason to their imagination, to be influenced in their conclusions by any facts whatever.

I have not time to go through the numerous points in the story to which I refer, and, besides, nearly every one who reads it will be able to see them for themselves; but there is just one matter I cannot help alluding to. When the deceased wife or daughter of Mr. Lippitt appeared to him they received him with "an affectionate embrace"! Why, in the name of wonder, did he not *hold on*? If he had, and the manifestation were genuine, one of two things must have happened: either the materialised form would have melted away in his arms, or else he would have had what we may trust would have been the satisfaction of drawing his wife home again to the family circle. In either case the truth of Spiritualism would have been demonstrated once for all to the confusion of all scoffers. There is, of course, the possibility of the other alternative—that the materialisation might have proved to be that of the medium or an accomplice. In that case I suppose the General would have considered it to be a case of "transfiguration"!—Yours truly,

THOMAS BARKWORTH.

West Hatch, Chigwell, Essex.

June 16th, 1888.

SUPPLEMENTARY LIBRARY CATALOGUE.

The following additions have been made since the last list (Journal for December):—

- *HUBBELL (Walter) *The Haunted House: A True Ghost Story*
Saint John, N.B., 1879
- †OLIPHANT (Laurence) *Scientific Religion**Edinburgh, 1888*
- ‡PROCEEDINGS of the American Society for Psychical Research, No. 3
Boston, 1887
- §SPIRITUALIST (Index to the) Including Vols. I. to XX., and its
Monthly Continuation PSYCHE (Vol. XXI.)*London, 1888*
-
- ||CHAZARAIN (Dr.) *Les Courants de la Polarité dans l'aimant et dans le*
corps humain*Paris, 1887*
- DE FONVIELLE (W.) *Les Endormeurs, la Vérité sur les Hypnotisants,*
les Suggestionnistes, les Magnétiseurs, les Donatistes, etc. ...Paris, 1887
- DE LAGRAVE (Dr. Costa) *Hypnotisme: Etats intermédiaires entre le*
Sommeil et la Veille*Paris, 1888*
- FONTAN (Dr. J.) et SEGARD (Dr. Ch.) *Eléments de Médecine*
Suggestive*Paris, 1887*
- ||RICHE (Prof. Charles) *La Physiologie et la Médecine**Paris, 1888*
-
- ||DESSOIR (Max) *Bibliographie des Modernen Hypnotismus**Berlin, 1888*

*Presented by Mr. H. Wedgwood. †Presented by Mr. C. C. Massey.

‡Presented by the American S.P.R. §Presented by Mr. Charles Blackburn.

||Presented by the Author.