Here is the description of the child written by Miss Miles' landlady, Mrs. Lovegrove: "I have a little girl, aged eleven, with brown hair tied with a ribbon; she wears a pinafore and, being ill, amuses herself by cutting out scraps. I had a long talk [about her?] with Miss Miles on October 31.—L. Lovegrove."

During the latter part of 1908, Miss Ramsden made numerous similar experiments on telepathy at a distance between herself, who now acted as "agent," and another lady who acted as "percipient." These experiments are described in the *Journal* of the S.P.R. for December 1910, and contain additional evidence of the telepathic transmission of ideas and mental impressions over considerable distances. We may, therefore, take it as experimentally proved, beyond reasonable doubt, that telepathy can bridge great distances of space. Shakespeare, in one of his sonnets, anticipated this—

> "If the dull substance of my flesh was thought,
> Injurious distance would not stop the way."

This is a delightful anticipation for parted friends if telepathy became more widespread.

Now let us pass from these direct experiments to spontaneous cases: that is to say, to the evidence afforded by numerous trustworthy witnesses of the occurrence of some event, painful or otherwise, to one person, and the simultaneous perception of it by another person some distance away. Here, for instance,

is a case of a trivial occurrence, but interesting as illustrating how a passive state in the percipient, especially the transition between sleeping and waking, favours the reception and emergence into consciousness of a telepathic impact, as this appears to be. Note also that the incident is well attested, that the coincidence in time was evidently very close, and the account itself was sent to the S.P.R. on the very day that the incident occurred, accompanied by a letter from Mr. Harrison stating that "Everything happened exactly as stated."

"*February* 7, 1891.

"I reside with my husband at 15 Lupton Street, N.W. This afternoon I was lying on the sofa, sound asleep, when I suddenly awoke, thinking I heard my husband sigh as if in pain. I arose immediately, expecting to find him in the room. He was not there, and, looking at my watch, I found it was half-past three. At six o'clock my husband came in. He called my attention to a bruise on his forehead, which was caused by his having knocked it against the stone steps in a Turkish bath. I said to him, 'I know when it happened—it was at half-past three, for I heard you sigh as if in pain at the time.' He replied, 'Yes, that was the exact time, for I remember noticing the clock directly after.'

"The gentleman who appends his name as

witness was present when this conversation took place.

"LOUISA E. HARRISON.

"*Witness:* Henry Hooton, 23 Bunhill Row, E.C."

A very similar case was sent to the S.P.R. by Mr. Ruskin. The percipient was Mrs. Arthur Severn, the wife of the well-known landscape painter, who, writing from Brantwood, Coniston, states that one morning she woke up with a start, feeling that she had had a hard blow on her mouth, and with a distinct sense that she had been cut and her upper lip bleeding. She held her pocket handkerchief to the place, and was surprised when she removed it not to see any blood. Then she realized that nothing could have struck her as she lay asleep in bed and that it must have been a dream. Looking at her watch, she found it was seven o'clock, and hence, as her husband was not in the room, concluded he must have gone for an early sail on the lake.

At breakfast-time, about 9.30, Mr. Severn came in, holding his handkerchief to his lip, and on being questioned told his wife that a sudden squall came on whilst he was in the boat, causing the tiller to swing round and hit him a severe blow on the upper lip, which was cut rather badly and would not stop bleeding. When asked when this occurred, he replied it must have been about seven o'clock. Mr. Severn corroborates this account, the fuller

details of which are given in *Phantasms of the Living*, vol. i., p. 188.

Many other similar cases resting on first-hand evidence might be quoted. Even more common than the telepathic transmission of pain are the numerous well-attested records where some auditory or visual impression has been transferred to great distances. Here is one such case, quoted not only for its brevity, but also because a written record of the incident was made and sent off by the percipient before anything was known of what had really occurred.

Miss King, at Exeter, one Sunday morning at four o'clock, was awakened by hearing the words, "Come to me, Trix; I'm so ill." She stated to the S.P.R. research officer, Miss Johnson, who investigated the case, that it was just like a real person speaking, and she recognized the voice as that of her friend Miss Ridd, who was the only person that called her "Trix," and she felt it could be no one else. She was so much impressed that the same day she wrote to Miss Ridd—who was then in London, two hundred miles away—and related the incident. Miss Ridd, by return of post, replied as follows, in a letter which had been kept and was shown: "I didn't mean to tell you about it, but the coincidence is so strange I must. Sunday morning about four o'clock I had an awfully bad pain, and thought I was going to die for a few minutes; when I could speak, I stretched out my arms to your photo and said, 'My Trix, come to me; I'm so ill,

come to me!' Wasn't it strange?" It should be added that there was no expectation of Miss Ridd's sudden illness (angina pectoris) at the time it occurred, as she had not had an attack for some time (*Proc. S.P.R.*, x. 290).

It would be tiresome, even if space allowed, to quote the large number of similar cases, supported by first-hand evidence, which are published in the records of the S.P.R. The body of evidence is like a faggot—a single stick may be broken, but the whole bundle has a strength which resists fracture. Year by year this bundle is gaining in volume and solidity, and the most captious critic, though he may find a weak case here and there, cannot break down the accumulated evidence afforded by the whole.

How telepathy is propagated we have not the remotest idea. Certainly it is not likely to be through any material medium or by any physical agency known to us. The existence of wireless telegraphy and the bridging of vast spaces by messages transmitted in this way naturally suggest that thought might likewise be transmitted by a similar system of ether waves, which some have called "brain waves." And there is no doubt the fact of wireless telegraphy has made telepathy more widely credible and popular. As remarked on a previous page, hostility to a new idea arises largely from its being unrelated to existing knowledge. As soon as we see, or think we see, some relation or resemblance to what we

already know, hostility of mind changes to hospitality, and we have no further doubt of the truth of the new idea. It is not so much *evidence* that convinces men of something entirely foreign to their habit of thought, as the discovery of a *link* between the new and the old.

Let us, therefore, for a moment examine this analogy of telepathy to wireless telegraphy. Even if we assume the so-called "brain waves" to be infinitely minute waves in the ether that fills all space, they would still obey what is called "the law of inverse squares," that is to say, spreading on every side in ever expanding waves, they would decay in proportion to the square of the distance from their source. Thus, at a thousand yards away from the source, the effect produced on any receiver would be a million times less than the effect upon the same receiver a yard away from the originating source. Hence, to transmit waves over great distances through free space requires tremendous energy in the originating source of these waves, otherwise the waves would be so enfeebled when they reached the receiver that it could not detect them. Now we have no evidence to show that any tremendous mental effort is required on the part of the agent when experiments on thought transference—such as between Miss Miles and Miss Ramsden—are conducted at great distances apart. And what, on the brain-wave theory, must be the mental energy emanating from a dying person to transmit a mental impression from himself

to a friend on the other side of the globe ? for such cases are on record.

There are several other reasons that could be urged against any physical mode of transmitting telepathy, thus the incidence of "brain waves," if such existed, would be felt by great numbers of people and not by one or two percipients, as is the case, and they would only create a faint, but exact, image of their source, which is not the case in telepathy.

The fact is, in my opinion, the supernormal phenomena we are discussing in this little book do not belong to the material plane, and therefore the laws of the physical universe are inapplicable to them. It is hopeless to attempt thus to explain telepathy and other phenomena which transcend knowledge derived from our sense perceptions,—though these latter are the foundation of physical science and the proper guide for our daily business here on earth.

It is highly probable that the conscious waking self of those concerned takes no part in the actual telepathic transmission. The idea or object thought of in some way impresses the subliminal self of the agent, and this impression is transferred, doubtless instantaneously across space, to the inner subconscious self of the percipient. Here, however, a favourable moment may have to be awaited before the outer or conscious self can be stimulated into activity; for delay in the emergence of the impression is often

noted. It is quite possible, therefore, that if we knew how to effect this transfer, unfailingly and accurately, from the outer to the inner self and *vice versa*, telepathy would become a universal and common method of communicating thought. This may be the case in the unseen world, when—

> "As star to star vibrates light, may soul to soul
> Strike thro' a finer element of her own."

In the next chapter we must examine the subject of apparitions, and shall find in many of these cases additional evidence of telepathy.

CHAPTER IX

VISUAL HALLUCINATIONS: PHANTASMS OF THE LIVING AND DEAD

To most people the word "hallucination" means some delusion, or error of the mind, and nothing more. There are, of course, hallucinations of the insane and in delirium, where there is no objective reality whatever underlying the phantasm conjured up by the diseased mind. There are also hallucinations experienced by sane and healthy minds; some person is seen, or something is felt, or words are heard, for which there is no material cause. The mind receives the hallucination as if it came through the channels of sense, and accordingly externalizes the impression, seeking its source in the world outside itself, whereas in all hallucinations the source is within the mind and is not derived from an impression received through the recognized organ of sense.

Many hallucinations are due to some slight morbid affection of the brain, and their origin is a pathological study; but some hallucinations correspond with an appropriate real event occurring to another person; some accident,

illness, emotion or death happening at that time to a distant friend. Such hallucinations are termed *veridical* or truth-telling; their study is a branch of psychology, and is an important part of psychical research. There may be no more substantiality about such visual hallucinations than there is about the reflection of oneself in a looking-glass. The image in the mirror is veridical and caused by a neighbouring objective reality; a "veridical hallucination," in like manner, is a mental image coinciding with some distant unseen real occurrence; but the mental image is *not* derived through the organs of sense, as is the reflection seen in a mirror. It is in fact due to some impression made, otherwise than through the channels of sense, on the higher tracts of the brain, which then projects the impression into the outer world. In this it differs from an illusion where a slight external cause, perceived by the senses, may start an imaginary phantom.

Now there is unquestionable evidence that visual hallucinations can be produced telepathically. Thus a friend, and member of the Council of the S.P.R., the late Rev. W. S. Moses —more widely known only as 'M. A. Oxon'— one night desired to appear to a friend some miles distant, who was not informed beforehand of the intended experiment. At the very time his friend saw Mr. Moses appear before him, and as he gazed in astonishment, the figure faded away. A second time the experiment was repeated, with equal success.

A year or two later, Mr. S. H. Beard (well known to myself and others then on the Council of the S.P.R.) made a series of similar experiments, with equal success. The facts were investigated by Mr. Gurney, and fresh experiments made with success under his direction; full details of the evidence will be found in vol. i. of *Phantasms of the Living*. On one occasion, the phantom of Mr. Beard was seen and recognized by two persons in the room, simultaneously, who were unaware of the fact that Mr. Beard, some miles away, was then trying, by an effort of will, to appear to them. These results seemed at first almost incredible, but complete confirmation of them has been obtained from independent experiments made by others. In such cases the "agent" whose phantasm is seen is usually about to sleep, or is asleep, at the time of the apparition, although the wish to appear may have been formed earlier in the waking state.

Unless we reject all testimony, or attribute the numerous cases investigated to some illusion, there can be no doubt that a distant person can, by his directed thought, or by dream, create a phantom of himself in the mind of a distant percipient. This suggests a general explanation of those visual hallucinations, or apparitions, at the moment of death, which are supported by abundant first-hand evidence.

Now if a sane and healthy person sees a phantom of his friend B. at the moment when

B., a hundred miles away, was unexpectedly dying, we should rightly conclude, if this case stood alone, that it was simply a chance coincidence. Many hallucinations occur, which do not coincide with any particular event, and one which does do so is more likely to be remembered and talked of than the others. But what if investigation shows that there are hundreds of cases, well substantiated, where an apparition of B. is seen (or hallucination of some kind suggesting B. is perceived), and that this closely coincides with the time when the distant friend B. was dying, or suffering from a mental shock. When, moreover, before the hallucination there was no knowledge of B.'s state, nor anything to suggest B. Now this is precisely what has been ascertained by the S.P.R. Over two hundred cases of apparitions at or about the time of death, resting upon first-hand and unimpeachable evidence, have been collected and published in the two large volumes entitled *Phantasms of the Living*, the chief author of which was that brilliant and able man, Edmund Gurney. What conclusion can we draw from this except that some connection exists between the phantasm and the distant person who is dying? And in many cases the simplest explanation of this connection is that afforded by telepathy, though other cases lead us to infer what Mr. Myers calls an *excursive action* of the spirit, which in some way renders its presence manifest to the percipient.

In physical science we also meet with the problem of coincidences. Thus in the spectrum

of the sun it was noticed long ago that there were hundreds of transverse fine black lines running across the spectrum from the red end to the violet. These were for many years a mystery. Then it was discovered that in the spectrum of terrestrial metals there were numerous fine bright lines. It was found that the two bright yellow lines of sodium exactly coincided with two black lines in the yellow of the solar spectrum. That may have been a chance coincidence. But it was soon discovered that the hundreds of fine bright lines in the spectrum of iron vapour exactly coincided in position with hundreds of fine black lines in the solar spectrum. This could not possibly be due to chance, as the "law of probability" demonstrates; so there must be some *causal*, not casual, connection between the two; this was confirmed when many other exact correspondences were discovered between terrestrial and solar spectra. These facts, coupled with the known reciprocity of radiation and absorption, established the existence of the vapour of numerous terrestrial elements in the atmosphere enveloping the sun and fixed stars.

Science, by a study of coincidences, has annihilated space and definitely arrived at the knowledge of the composition of heavenly bodies, millions upon millions of miles distant from the earth.

Can we do for psychical science what has been done for physical science? Are the coincidences in *time* of hallucinations with

some distant event suggested by them,—sufficiently numerous and exact to warrant a conclusion with a confidence such as the coincidences in *space*, in the lines of terrestrial and stellar spectra, has afforded to physical science ?

The problem which Edmund Gurney first attempted to solve was to obtain a numerical comparison of veridical hallucinations with those which were purely accidental. When the relative frequency of these two classes is ascertained, the probability of mere chance coincidence being the cause of the former can be calculated. By a "census of hallucinations," begun in 1884, Edmund Gurney obtained from nearly six thousand adults replies to the question "whether during the preceding ten years they had experienced, when in good health and wide awake, a vivid impression of seeing or being touched by a human being, or hearing a voice which suggested a human presence, when no one was there." After his death, a similar but more elaborate census was undertaken (with the approval of the International Congress of Experimental Psychology) by a committee of the S.P.R., over which Professor H. Sidgwick presided. This committee, in answer to a question similar to the above, except that no time limit was named, received written replies from seventeen thousand adults.

Careful and critical investigation of the affirmative replies led both Edmund Gurney and the committee to conclude that pure

chance could not account for the number of cases which showed a close coincidence between the time of death and the apparition of a dying person recognized by the distant percipient. The committee found that, making amplest allowance for various sources of error, the proportion of veridical (*i. e.* coincidental cases) to the meaningless (*i. e.* non-coincidental cases) is 440 times greater than pure chance would give; a result which they stated in the following cautious words: "Between deaths and apparitions of the dying person a connection exists which is not due to chance alone. This we hold as a proved fact. The discussion of its full implications cannot be attempted in this paper;—nor perhaps exhausted in this age." (Report in *S.P.R. Proceedings*, vol. x., p. 394; the reader should consult this volume, which is devoted to a critical discussion of this important census.)

Such a result disposes once for all of the common explanation: "It was just an odd chance that the apparition happened to coincide with the death of that particular person;" the hits being remembered, and the misses forgotten. In fact, before arriving at the calculation above given, the committee made an almost extravagant allowance for forgetfulness in the latter case, and exaggeration in the former.

The statistical evidence is not, however, the argument that appeals most to the general public. Any person who has seen for himself an apparition, which he recognized as that of

a distant friend, and who afterwards found the time of the appearance to have coincided with the unexpected death of his friend, would be far more impressed by that single fact than by any statistics. This is also true of those who merely hear of such a case from intimate friends. It is much to be desired that every percipient of any hallucination should, before he knows whether it has any significance, make and show to some other person a written memorandum; thus precluding the objection often raised by sceptics, that there is no documentary evidence of his previous ignorance of the crisis through which his friend was passing when he experienced the hallucination. Unfortunately, people do not as a rule write down these experiences and send them to friends; but as communications of the kind are now taken more seriously, we may hope that this will become more common. Even as it is, there are not wanting cases authenticated by evidence of this very kind. The committee, for instance, gives seventeen evidential cases which were noted at the time by the percipient.

In the following case a note of the apparition seen shortly before death was made at the time, and preserved by the percipient, when she had no knowledge of the brief, fatal illness of the deceased. The percipient, Miss Hervey, then staying in Tasmania with Lady H., had just come in from a ride in excellent health and spirits, and was leaving her room up-stairs to have tea with Lady H., when she saw

coming up the stairs the figure of her cousin, a nurse in Dublin, to whom she was much attached. She at once recognized the figure, which was dressed in grey, and without waiting to see it disappear, she hurried to Lady H., whom she told what she had seen. Lady H. laughed at her, but told her to note it down in her diary, which she did. Diary and note were seen by the critical Mr. Podmore, who investigated the case on behalf of the S.P.R. The note ran as follows: "Saturday, April 21, 1888, 6 p.m. Vision of (giving her cousin's nickname) on landing in grey dress." In June news of this cousin's unexpected death reached Miss Hervey in Tasmania. She died in a Dublin hospital from typhus fever on April 22, 1888. A letter, written the same day, giving an account of Miss Ethel B.'s death, was sent to Miss Hervey, preserved by her, and seen by Mr. Podmore. It states that the crisis of the illness began at 4 a.m. on the 22nd, but that Miss B. lingered on for twelve hours, dying at 4.30 p.m. As the difference of time between Tasmania and Dublin is about ten hours, the apparition preceded the actual death by some thirty-two hours. The kind of dress worn by the nurses in the hospital was unknown to Miss Hervey, and was found to be of a greyish tone when seen from a little distance. The phantom made so vivid an impression on Miss Hervey that, on the evening she saw it, she wrote a long letter to her cousin in Dublin telling her about it. This letter arrived some six weeks

after her death, and was returned to the writer. (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. x., p. 282.)

The next case is of high evidential value, the impression, which was unique in the percipient's experience, having been at once communicated to a third person, whose testimony to that point we have obtained; the coincidence in time was certainly close to within a very few minutes, and perhaps exact. Mr. S., the percipient, who was personally known to Mr. Gurney, and occupied a position of considerable responsibility, did not wish his name to be published, but permitted it to be given to inquirers, and offered to answer any questions personally. (See *Phantasms of the Living*, vol. i., p. 210.)

Mr. S. and Mr. F. L. had been colleagues in an office and intimate friends for about eight years, entertaining for one another a very great regard and esteem. On Monday, March 19, 1883, Mr. F. L., on coming to the office, complained of having suffered from indigestion. On Saturday he was absent, and, as Mr. S. afterwards learned, was seen by a medical man, who thought he wanted a day or two of rest, but expressed no opinion that anything was seriously amiss.

On Saturday evening, March 24, Mr. S., who had a headache, was at home, sitting on a couch at the shaded side of the room lit by a gas chandelier, under which, in the middle of the room, his wife sat reading. Having remarked to her that for the first time for months he felt rather too warm, he leaned

back on the couch, and the next minute saw Mr. F. L. standing before him, dressed as usual. Mr. S. noticed that he was wearing his black-banded hat, his overcoat unbuttoned, and carried a stick. He looked fixedly at Mr. S., and then passed away. At the moment Mr. S. felt an icy chill, and his hair bristled. He quoted to himself from Job : " And lo, a spirit passed before me, and the hair of my flesh stood up."

Turning then to his wife, who had been looking in another direction, and had seen nothing, he asked her the time. She said, " Twelve minutes to nine." He said, " I asked because F. L. is dead. I have just seen him." She tried to persuade him that it was fancy ; but he persisted that he had seen Mr. F. L., and was sure of his death. She noticed that he looked much agitated and very pale. He was afterwards struck by his own instant certainty, with nothing to suggest the idea, of his friend's death, and by his acceptance of the incident as a matter of course, without feeling surprise.

On Sunday afternoon, about three o'clock, Mr. F. L.'s brother, A., called with the news at Mr. S.'s house. It had occurred to him on the way that Mr. S. would probably have a presentiment of F. L.'s death owing to the strong sympathy between them. Seeing that this was the case, when Mr. S. met him at the door, he said : " I suppose you know what I have come to tell you ? " Mr. S. replied : " Yes, your brother is dead," and told of his vision on the previous evening.

Mr. A. L. on Saturday about 8 p.m. had visited his brother F., whom he found sitting up in his room. Leaving him about 8.40, apparently much better, Mr. A. L. went down to the dining-room, where he stayed with his sister for about half-an-hour, and then left, upon which his sister immediately went upstairs, and found her brother F. lying dead on his bed from rupture of the aorta. His death must therefore have occurred either a few minutes before or after 9 p.m.

There had never been any thought-transference between him and Mr. S., who had never seen an apparition before, nor believed in them. Mr. A. L. describes himself as "no believer in visions." Mr. Gurney calculates the odds against such an event being due to mere chance coincidence as 208,000,000 to 1.

Sometimes the phantom is not only seen but heard, and may be regarded as an auditory as well as visual hallucination. The following striking case, though remote in point of time, is so well attested as to be worth quoting. It is from Mrs. Richardson of Combe Down, Bath, who gave Mr. Gurney a *viva voce* account precisely as here recorded. (See *Phantasms of the Living*, vol. i., p. 443.) Mrs. Richardson described herself as a matter-of-fact person, and not given to frequent or vivid dreams.

"*August* 26, 1882.

"On September 9, 1848, at the siege of Mooltan, my husband, Major-General Richard-

son, C.B., then adjutant of his regiment, was most severely and dangerously wounded, and supposing himself dying, asked one of the officers with him to take the ring off his finger and send it to his wife, who, at that time, was fully 150 miles distant, at Ferozepore. On the night of September 9, 1848, I was lying on my bed, between sleeping and waking, when I distinctly saw my husband being carried off the field, seriously wounded, and heard his voice saying, 'Take this ring off my finger, and send it to my wife.' All the next day I could not get the sight or the voice out of my mind. In due time I heard of General Richardson having been severely wounded in the assault on Mooltan. He survived, however, and is still living. It was not for some time after the siege that I heard from Colonel L., the officer who helped to carry General Richardson off the field, that the request as to the ring was actually made to him, just as I had heard it at Ferozepore at that very time.

"M. A. RICHARDSON."

General Richardson, in answer to Mr. Gurney's inquiries, stated that he distinctly remembered the incident. He was wounded in the evening of September 9, and taking the ring off his finger, said to the late Major Lloyd, who was supporting him: "Send this to my wife," or words to that effect. He had not promised before leaving home to send her the ring, nor had he expressed any presentiment

of being hurt. As Mr. Myers remarks, "The detail about the ring seems fairly to raise the case out of the category of mere visions of absent persons who are known to be in danger, and with whom the percipient's thoughts have been anxiously engaged."

In the following case the percipient appeared to be transported to the actual scene of the event, and observed some minute details (afterwards verified) of inanimate objects around, somewhat as in a crystal vision. Such cases suggest the phenomena of clairvoyance, when the percipient's powers of vision extend far beyond the range of their organs of sight, the information so obtained being independent of the thought passing in the minds of others. Here, however, it seems possible that the phenomena may have been due to an "excursive action" on the part of the decedent's spirit.

"On October 24, 1889, Edmund Dunn, brother of Mrs. Agnes Paquet, was serving as fireman on the tug *Wolf*, a small steamer engaged in towing vessels in Chicago Harbour. At about 3 o'clock a.m. the tug fastened to a vessel, inside the piers, to tow her up the river. While adjusting the tow-line, Mr. Dunn fell or was thrown overboard by the tow-line, and drowned."

Mrs. Paquet's Statement

"I arose about the usual hour on the morning of the accident, probably about six o'clock.

I had slept well throughout the night, had no dreams or sudden awakenings. I awoke feeling gloomy and depressed, which feeling I could not shake off. After breakfast my husband went to his work, and, at the proper time, the children were gotten ready and sent to school, leaving me alone in the house. Soon after this I decided to steep and drink some tea, hoping it would relieve me of the gloomy feelings afore-mentioned. I went into the pantry, took down the tea-canister, and as I turned around my brother Edmund—or his exact image—stood before me and only a few feet away. The apparition stood with back towards me, or, rather, partially so, and was in the act of falling forward—away from me—seemingly impelled by two ropes or a loop of rope drawing against his legs. The vision lasted but a moment, disappearing over a low railing or bulwark, but was very distinct. I dropped the tea, clasped my hands to my face and exclaimed, 'My God! Ed. is drowned!'

"At about 10.30 a.m. my husband received a telegram from Chicago, announcing the drowning of my brother. When he arrived home he said to me, 'Ed. is sick in hospital at Chicago; I have just received a telegram,' to which I replied, 'Ed. is drowned; I saw him go overboard.' I then gave him a minute description of what I had seen. I stated that my brother, as I saw him, was bareheaded, had on a heavy blue sailor's shirt, no coat, and that he went over the rail or bulwark. I noticed that his

pants' legs were rolled up enough to show the white lining inside. I also described the appearance of the boat at the point where my brother went overboard.

"I am not nervous, and neither before nor since have I had any experience in the least degree similar to that above related.

"My brother was not subject to fainting or vertigo.

"AGNES PAQUET."

Mr. Paquet corroborates his wife's statement on all points. He went at once to Chicago, where he found that the appearance of the vessel, which his wife had never seen, was exactly as she had described it; while the crew confirmed her accounts of her brother's dress, "except that they thought he had had his hat on at the time of the accident. They said that he had purchased a pair of pants a few days before, and as they were a trifle long, wrinkling at the knees, had worn them rolled up, showing the white lining, as seen by my wife."

Upon this case (see *Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. vii., p. 34) Mrs. Sidgwick remarks—

"Here Mrs. Paquet not only had a vivid impression of her brother within a few hours of his death—not only knew that he was dead—but saw a more or less accurate representation of the scene of his death.

"It will have been noticed that her impression was not contemporaneous with the event to which it related, but occurred some six hours

afterwards. It was preceded by a feeling of depression with which she had awoken in the morning, and one is at first tempted to suppose that she had dreamed of the event and forgotten it, and that her subsequent vision was the result of a sudden revivification of the dream in her memory. But we do not know enough to justify us in assuming this, and against such a hypothesis may be urged the experience of Mrs. Storie, related in *Phantasms of the Living* (vol. i., p. 370), which somewhat resembles Mrs. Paquet's. Mrs. Storie tells us that all the evening she felt unusually nervous, and then, when she went to bed, she had a remarkable dream, in which she saw a series of scenes which afterwards turned out to have a clear relation to the death of her brother, who had been killed by a passing train four hours earlier. In her case the nervousness cannot be regarded as telepathic, as it is stated to have begun before the accident, but it seems quite possible that the nervousness and depression may have had to do with some condition in the percipient which rendered the vision possible."

A curious case, also involving the production of a kind of picture, which, having been seen by several people simultaneously, comes under the head of a "collective hallucination," is related by Mr. C. A. W. Lett (*Phantasms of the Living*, vol. ii., p. 213) :—

"On the 5th April, 1873, my wife's father, Captain Towns, died at his residence, Cranbrook, Rose Bay, near Sydney, N.S. Wales.

About six weeks after his death my wife had occasion, one evening about nine o'clock, to go to one of the bedrooms in the [above] house. She was accompanied by a young lady, Miss Berthon, and as they entered the room—the gas was burning all the time—they were amazed to see, reflected as it were on the polished surface of the wardrobe, the image of Captain Towns. It was barely half-figure, the head, shoulders, and part of the arms only showing—in fact, it was like an ordinary medallion portrait, but life-size. The face appeared wan and pale, as it did before his death, and he wore a kind of grey flannel jacket, in which he had been accustomed to sleep. Surprised and half alarmed at what they saw, their first idea was that a portrait had been hung in the room, and that what they saw was its reflection; but there was no picture of the kind. . . .

"C. A. W. LETT."

The phantom portrait was immediately afterwards seen and recognized by Captain Towns' unmarried daughter, by his old body-servant, by the butler, by the nurse, by a housemaid, and finally by his widow, who passed her hand over the panel of the wardrobe, whereupon the figure gradually faded away, and never reappeared. The recognition of the appearance on the part of each was independent, and not due to any suggestion from the others. The case is attested by Mrs. Lett and Miss Towns, and much resembles

the vivid and sometimes collective hallucination seen in crystal-vision (p. 141).

In the foregoing cases, no purpose on the part of the agent can be inferred, beyond that of self-manifestation or announcement of death. There are, however, a considerable group of cases where the apparition communicates some definite information, hitherto unknown to the percipient. Only a brief message seems possible, and it is one probably felt by the deceased person to be of urgent importance. The evidence upon which such cases rest of course needs to be sifted with the utmost care, and this has been done in the following well-attested instance, of which we can only give a bare outline; the case is corroborated by different witnesses, and is fully reported and discussed in the *S.P.R. Proceedings*, vol. viii., p. 200 *et seq.*

In February 1891, Michael Conley, a farmer living in Iowa, U.S.A., died suddenly at Dubuque, about 100 miles from his home. After the inquest at Dubuque the old clothes which he had been wearing were thrown away, and his son brought home the body. On hearing of her father's death, his daughter Lizzie fell into a swoon, in which she remained for several hours. When she recovered consciousness she said: "Where are father's old clothes? He has just appeared to me dressed in a white shirt, black clothes, and satin slippers, and told me that after leaving home he sewed a large roll of bills inside his grey shirt with a piece of my red dress, and the money

is still there." This description of her father's burial clothes, which she had not seen, was quite correct; but neither she, nor anybody else, had known anything of the pocket and money in the shirt. To pacify her, her brother went back the 100 miles to Dubuque, where he found the old clothes were lying in a shed. In the shirt was found a large roll of bills, amounting to thirty-five dollars, sewed with a piece of red cloth, exactly like Lizzie's dress, the stitches being large and irregular, as if made by a man. Telepathy from living minds might account for her accurate knowledge about the unseen burial garments, but not for her statement about the secreted money, of which all the family were ignorant.

It is a curious fact that children are not infrequently impressed with some veridical hallucination. In the following case a little girl seems to have been utilized as an automatic machine, so to speak, and caused to utter words which for her can hardly have had any meaning :—

"*King's Ferry, New York.*

"On the afternoon of January 2nd, 1867, my little daughter, Augusta, aged three years, was playing with her dolly, sitting near her aunt, who was spending the day at my house in New York. Her little cousins, Darius and David Adams, aged eleven and nine years, to the younger of whom she was tenderly attached, were living in Penn Yan, New York,

25 miles away. The cousins had not met since the preceding summer or early autumn.

"While busy with her play, the child suddenly spoke, and said, 'Auntie, Davie is drowned.' Her father, who was present, and I, heard her distinctly. I answered, 'Gussie, what did you say?' She repeated the words, 'Davie is drowned.' Her aunt, who was not familiar with the childish accent, said, 'Gussie, I do not understand you'; when the child repeated for the third time, 'Auntie, Davie is drowned.' I chanced to look at the clock, and saw it was just four. I immediately turned the conversation, as I did not wish such a painful thought fastened on the child's mind.

"I cannot recall that any allusion had been made to the boys that day; neither was I aware that my daughter even knew the meaning of the word drowned. She simply uttered the words without apparent knowledge of their import.

"That evening a telegram came from my brother, saying, 'My little boys, Darius and Davie, were drowned at four o'clock to-day while skating on Kenks Lake.'

"E. M. Ogden."

The foregoing statement is corroborated by Mr. Curtis, brother-in-law to Mrs. Ogden. This case is interesting because a very young child is not likely to have nervous apprehensions or forebodings of disaster concerning young playmates, of whose whereabouts and

occupation at the time she had not the remotest notion. (*Journal S.P.R.*, vol. i., p. 435.)

If we could discover some underlying reason for these sporadic occurrences few would doubt the evidence. But nearly all the cases seem so meaningless and often trivial that we are disposed to reject the evidence on that account. This, however, is an unscientific and irrational attitude, and if adopted would be fatal to all scientific inquiry: how trivial and meaningless once seemed the attraction of light bodies to rubbed amber, and yet the science and very name of electricity arose therefrom. Here, as elsewhere, we must exercise patience and scrupulous care in collecting all available evidence, and leave the solution to the future.

CHAPTER X

DREAMS AND CRYSTAL-VISIONS

FROM the earliest times, the mystery attaching to the world of dream has been a fruitful subject of speculation. The swift and dramatic portrayal of scenes, the recovery of lapsed memories, the occasional glimpses of things beyond the range of vision during sleep; the illusions "hypnagogiques," or vivid images which sometimes arise between sleep and waking, all these and other points have often been discussed. Only a brief account can first be given of a few cases wherein the discovery of lost articles has been effected by a dream. In the consideration of such cases, we must, however, bear in mind not only the possibility of the emergence of a lapsed memory during sleep, but also that the dreamer may have unconsciously perceived the lost article and in sleep this fact may have floated into consciousness. There are, however, cases where the evidence appears to go beyond the border line between normal and supernormal percipience. During hypnotic trance—which may be regarded as a deeper form of sleep—there sometimes also

occurs clairvoyance, or *telæsthesia*, "perception at a distance."

The following case, sent by Mrs. Bickford-Smith immediately after its occurrence, may be taken as an illustration of the revival of memory during sleep—

"On reaching Morley's Hotel at 5 o'clock on Tuesday, 29th January, 1889, I missed a gold brooch, which I supposed I had left in a fitting-room at Swan & Edgar's. I sent there at once, but was very disappointed to hear that after a diligent search they could not find the brooch. I was very vexed, and worried about the brooch, and that night dreamed that I should find it shut up in a number of the *Queen* newspaper that had been on the table, and in my dream I saw the very page where it would be, and noticed one of the plates on that page. Directly after breakfast I went to Swan & Edgar's and asked to see the papers, at the same time telling the young ladies about the dream, and where I had seen the brooch. The papers had been moved from that room, but were found, and to the astonishment of the young ladies, I said, 'This is the one that contains my brooch;' and there at the very page I expected I found it.

"A. M. BICKFORD-SMITH."

We received a substantially similar account from Mrs. Bickford-Smith's brother-in-law, Mr. H. A. Smith, the Hon. Treasurer of the S.P.R., who was a witness of the trouble taken to find the brooch.

A somewhat similar experience was communicated to us by Mrs. Crellin, known to Mr. Gurney—

"When a school-girl I one day foolishly removed from my French teacher's hand a ring, which I, in fun, transferred to my own. On removing it from my finger just before going to bed, I found that a stone had fallen out of the ring, and I was much troubled about it, especially as the ring had been given to my teacher. We had four class-rooms, and as I had been moving from one to another in the course of the evening, I could not hope to find the lost stone. However, in my dreams that night I saw the stone lying on a certain plank on the floor of our 'drilling-room,' and on awaking I dressed hastily and went direct to the spot marked in my dream, and recovered the lost stone. This narrative has nothing thrilling in it, but its simplicity and exactness may commend it to your notice."

Mr. Gurney adds: "In conversation with me, Mrs. Crellin described the four class-rooms as good-sized rooms, which it would have taken a long time to search over. She is positive that she went quite straight to the spot. She is an excellent witness."

Another similar dream was contributed by Mrs. Stuart, of Foley House, Rothesay, N.B., a lady well known to Mr. Myers. Here a friend lost, out of doors, an opal stone from his ring which he valued as it belonged to his father. All set to work to search for it on the

lawn and under the surrounding trees, but without success. The following night Mrs. Stuart dreamt she saw the lost opal, glistening with dew, lying by a leaf beneath a certain tree which she recognized as at the edge of the lawn. She was so much impressed with the vividness of the dream, that in the early morning she dressed and went out straight to the tree she had seen in her dream; there, sure enough, she found the stone exactly in the position she had seen it in her dream.

A corresponding case, which has the advantage of having been written down at the time by the witness and corroborated by the dreamer, is given by Miss Hunt, of Yeovil, who states that at 6 p.m., having paid her gardener his wages wrapped in a piece of paper, she gave him some letters to post on his way home. An hour later the gardener returned saying he had lost the paper containing his wages. He was told to retrace his steps and make a careful search; this he did, but to no avail. During the night he dreamt that upon crossing the road his foot struck a mud heap, and there was the lost paper containing his wages. He told his wife the dream, and falling asleep again dreamt the same dream. He got up early, went to the spot he had seen in his dream, and there found his wages and all exactly as he had dreamt. The gardener, who is described as a most intelligent, truthful man, corroborates the facts. Here, again, is another useful dream which, like the last, appears to lie on the border line between lapsed memory

and some supernormal percipience during sleep.

From Mr. Herbert J. Lewis, 19, Park Place, Cardiff—

"In September 1880, I lost the landing order of a large steamer containing a cargo of iron ore, which had arrived in the port of Cardiff. She had to commence discharging at six o'clock the next morning. I received the landing order at four o'clock in the afternoon, and when I arrived at the office at six I found that I had lost it. During all the evening I was doing my utmost to find the officials at the Custom House to get a permit, as the loss was of the greatest importance, preventing the ship from discharging. I came home in a great degree of trouble about the matter, as I feared that I should lose my situation in consequence.

"That night I dreamed that I saw the lost landing order lying in a crack in the wall under a desk in the Long Room of the Custom House. At five the next morning I went down to the Custom House and got the keeper to get up and open it. I went to the spot of which I had dreamed, and found the paper in the very place. The ship was not ready to discharge at her proper time, and I went on board at seven and delivered the landing order, saving her from all delay.

"HERBERT J. LEWIS."

The truth of the foregoing is certified by

two witnesses, and further inquiry on the spot also corroborated Mr. Lewis' statement.

It is, of course, possible that in all these cases the lost object might originally have come within the range of vision of the owner but only subconsciously noted; in sleep the faint impression may have emerged in a dream sufficiently vivid to be remembered upon awaking. There are, however, other cases wherein this explanation does not apply, showing that a higher perceptive faculty than ordinary vision appears sometimes to emerge in dream.

Several cases of this kind are cited in detail by Mr. Myers in *Human Personality*, vol. i., chap. iv., and in the appendix to that chapter. The narrow limits of our space will only allow a very brief reference to some of these cases.

A well-known instance is that of Canon Warburton, who states that when waiting up one night for his brother, who had gone to a dance, he fell asleep and dreamt he saw his brother "coming out of a drawing-room with a brightly illuminated landing, catching his foot in the edge of the top stair and falling headlong, just saving himself by his elbows and hands."

Soon after his brother returned and exclaimed—

"I have just had a narrow escape of breaking my neck. Coming out of the ball-room, I caught my foot and tumbled full length down the stairs."

Canon Warburton states he had never seen the house where the accident occurred, but the vivid impression he had of the details of the scene was corroborated by questions he put to his brother.

A case singularly like the foregoing occurred with the late Bishop of Iowa (Dr. Lee) and his son, between whom there was a tender and sympathetic affection. One night the son—living in a city three hundred miles distant from where his father was in Iowa—had a vivid dream of his father falling down-stairs; he jumped to catch the Bishop and awoke both himself and his wife, to whom he related his dream: looking at the time he found it to be 2.15. Unable to sleep further, he rose early and telegraphed to his father to know if all was well. The letter in reply informed him that on the night and almost to the minute of his dream, the Bishop *had* fallen down a flight of stairs and was very seriously injured. An independent confirmation of the incident was sent to Dr. Hodgson by the Bishop of Algowa. (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. vii., p. 38.)

Another instance, which had the advantage of being noted in a diary before the verification of the dream was known, is given by Mr. (now Sir Edward) Hamilton, who states: "On March 20th, 1888, I woke up with the impression of a very vivid dream. I had dreamt that my brother, who had long been in Australia and of whom I had heard nothing for several months, had come home, and that something had gone wrong with one of his

arms—it looked horribly red near the wrist, his hand being bent back." The dream vision recurred so persistently on getting up that, notwithstanding his prejudice against attaching any importance to dreams, he noted it down that day in his diary, the only time he had ever done such a thing; this entry Mr. Gurney saw. A week later a letter was received from the brother saying he was on his way home, and that he was suffering from a bad arm. On his arrival in London on March 29th, it turned out that his arm was suffering from blood-poisoning and that he had a bad abscess over the wrist-joint. On inquiry it was found that the letter received by Sir Edward Hamilton was written by his brother and posted at Naples on the morning of the dream in London.

These cases and several others we might cite may be attributed to telepathy, of the conditions and range of which we know so little. In fact, "telepathic clairvoyance" is considered by some investigators an adequate explanation of nearly all the phenomena which appear to indicate supernormal percipience, or "independent clairvoyance." Certainly it may account for much of the mystery of the visions seen in "crystal-gazing," which we must now consider. But it cannot, in my opinion, account for all the phenomena described in the next chapter, nor for the success of the "dowser" described in Chapter XII. Here, however, we must take into account the possibility of mis-

description and of chance-coincidence, of this the reader must judge for himself.

Crystal-gazing

We now come to a class of phenomena resembling day-dreams; vivid images of scenes and persons induced by abstracting the mind from the normal sensory impressions, through intently gazing upon some lucent object, such as a glass sphere or polished crystal. Hallucinations are thus evoked resembling those in dream pictures or in hypnotic trance. The percipient, or "scryer," is no doubt in a state of incipient hypnosis; detached from the surrounding impressions of the external world and awake to the impressions arising from his hidden or subliminal self. The crystal is a form of *autoscope*, not mechanical like the pendule or dowsing-rod, but sensory. As with other autoscopes, the subconscious contents of the percipient's mind come into play. Forgotten memories of events or scenes are sometimes revived; a latent mental impression is developed into consciousness; very like the emergence of a picture on some photographic plate exposed years ago, then put aside and forgotten, until accidentally developed to-day. Yet mingled with these latent memories there sometimes come scenes of distant events then occurring, and afterwards verified, which the seer could not have known through any normal means. Thus the crystal-gazer, if evidence be worth

anything, is not infrequently clairvoyant without being entranced.

"In one point nearly all observers concur. These visions imply a visualizing power, greater than the seer can exercise by voluntary effort. The distinctness, artistic quality and illumination of these crystal pictures of the figures, often cause great surprise." This observation by Mr. Myers is very true. In fact, the vision is described with the vividness and sense of reality of an eye-witness of the actual scene, and resembles similar descriptions given by the clairvoyant in the hypnotic trance; as if the soul in both cases temporarily transcended its corporeal limitations.

Historically, crystal-gazing is one of the most ancient and interesting means of inducing hallucinations for the purpose of seeking information that could not be gained by the observer through any normal means. After all there was something to be said for the oracles in ancient Greece and Rome, where various forms of crystal-gazing were employed, known as crystallomancy or hydromancy, according as the seer gazed at polished crystals or a mirror, or at a still pool of water.

In India we find similar methods have been employed from a remote period, and also in Arabia, where visions are seen in a mirror by certain men. Mr. A. Lang tells us that an Arabian writer of the thirteenth century, one Ibn Khaldoun, gives practically the same account of how visions appear in the crystal

as is given to-day. Certain men, Khaldoun says, "look into mirrors, or vessels filled with water . . . intently, until they perceive what they announce. The object gazed at disappears, and a sort of curtain, like a fog, interposes between the observer and the mirror. Upon this the things they wish to perceive are depicted and they recount what they see. When in this state the diviner sees things not with his ordinary eyesight, but with his soul. A new mode of perception has taken place. And yet the perceptions of the soul are so like those given by the senses as to deceive the observer, a fact which is well known."

One can hardly believe this was written seven centuries ago, so admirably does it describe the facts and probably the true explanation of crystal vision, a transcendental, or spiritual perception rather than the normal sense perception.

No wonder that in the Middle Ages the Christian Church regarded the whole thing as very uncanny and the work of evil spirits, and those who had the gift of "scrying"—the *specularii* they were termed—were looked on as heretics and treated accordingly. They survived, however, till the sixteenth century, when the famous Dr. Dee (1527–1608) gave a new impetus to crystal-gazing: no doubt the seer he employed had some clairvoyant faculty; the "shew-stone" Dr. Dee used is still preserved in the British Museum. Aubrey in his *Miscellanies* (1696), p. 165, tells us of

"Visions in a Beryl or crystal," and remarks that learned divines connect the "Urim and Thummim" with crystal-vision. In modern times Dean Plumptre in *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible* takes a not unlike view; the High Priest by gazing at the bright point in the Urim passed into a state of abstraction and saw visions. The antiquity and universality of some form of crystal-gazing is, as we have said, unquestionable. We find it in ancient as well as in modern Egypt, in Assyria, Persia and India, in Siberia, China and Japan, among the North American Indians, the Maoris of New Zealand, and various African tribes. It was practised by the Incas of Peru, and is still used among the natives of Australia, Polynesia and Madagascar. The practice was largely in use both in England and on the Continent in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and its exponents were neither fools nor charlatans, but often learned men of note.

Now let us turn to some of the modern evidence on behalf of crystal-gazing. Students will find ample details in the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R., vols. v. and viii., or in Mr. A. Lang's *The Making of Religion*, from which we will quote the following. Mr. Lang has a friend, Miss Angus, who is a remarkable "scryer." Miss Angus states—

"A lady one day asked me to 'scry' out a friend of whom she would think. Almost immediately I exclaimed, 'Here is an old, old lady looking at me with a triumphant smile on her face. She has a prominent nose and

nut-cracker chin. Her face is very much wrinkled, especially at the sides of her eyes, as if she were always smiling. She is wearing a little white shawl with a black edge. But . . . she can't be old, as her hair is quite brown, although her face looks so very, very old.' The picture then vanished, and the lady said that I had accurately described her friend's mother instead of himself; that it was a family joke that the mother must dye her hair, it was so brown, and she was eighty-two years old. The lady asked me if the vision were distinct enough for me to recognize a likeness in the son's photograph; next day she laid several photographs before me, and in a moment, without the slightest hesitation, I picked him out from his wonderful likeness to my vision." The facts were verbally communicated to and corroborated by Mr. A. Lang within a week of the occurrence.

Another case, also vouched for by Mr. A. Lang, is interesting as it appears to be a telepathic transfer of the vision, seen by Miss Angus, to a friend, Miss Rose—

"At a recent experience of gazing, for the first time I was able to make another see what I saw in the crystal ball. Miss Rose called one afternoon, and begged me to look in the ball for her. I did so, and immediately exclaimed, 'Oh, here is a bed, with a man in it looking very ill [I saw he was dead, but refrained from saying so], and there is a lady dressed in black sitting beside the bed.' I did not recognize the man to be any one I knew, so I told her to

look. In a very short time she called out, 'Oh, I see the bed too. But, oh, take it away, the man is dead.' She got quite a shock, and said she would never look in it again. Soon, however, curiosity prompted her to have one more look, and the scene at once came back again, and slowly, from a misty object at the side of the bed, the lady in black became quite distinct. Then she described several people in the room, and said they were carrying something all draped in black. When she saw this, she put the ball down and would not look at it again. She called again on Sunday (this had been on Friday) with her cousin, and we teased her about being afraid of the crystal, so she said she would just look at it once more. She took the ball, but immediately laid it down again, saying, 'No, I won't look, as the bed with the awful man in it is there again.'

"When they went home, they heard that the cousin's father-in-law had died that (Sunday) afternoon, but to show he had never been in our thoughts, although we all knew he had not been well, no one suggested him; his name was never mentioned in connection with the vision."

With regard to this incident, Miss Rose, independently and without consultation with Miss Angus, wrote, that on looking at the glass ball after Miss Angus had said she saw a man ill in bed,—

"I received quite a shock, for there perfectly clearly in a bright light, I saw stretched out

in bed an old man, apparently dead; for a few minutes I could not look, and on doing so once more there appeared a lady in black, etc. At the time I saw this I was staying with cousins and it was Friday evening. On Sunday we heard of the death of the father-in-law of one of my cousins, but my thoughts were not in the least about him when looking at the crystal. I may also say I did not recognize his features."

This looks like a prophetic vision, or *precognition* of the death two or three days before it actually occurred; it may be only a chance coincidence, but if the evidence on behalf of precognition compels us eventually to accept it this case may well come under that designation.

The following case is given by Sir Joseph Barnby, the well-known musician, and is quoted by Mr. Myers in his *Human Personality*, vol. i., p. 590. Sir J. Barnby writes—

"I was invited by Lord and Lady Radnor to the wedding of their daughter, Lady Wilma Bouverie, which took place August 15, 1889.

"I was met at Salisbury by Lord and Lady Radnor and driven to Longford Castle. In the course of the drive, Lady Radnor said to me: 'We have a young lady, Miss A., staying with us in whom, I think, you will be much interested. She possesses the faculty of seeing visions, and is otherwise closely connected with the spiritual world. Only last night she was looking in her crystal and described a room which she saw therein, as a kind of London

dining-room. [The room described was not in London, but at L., and Miss A. particularly remarked that the floor was in large squares of black and white marble—as it is in the big hall at L., where family prayers are said.—H. M. Radnor.] With a little laugh, she added, 'And the family are evidently at prayers, the servants are kneeling at the chairs round the room, and the prayers are being read by a tall and distinguished-looking gentleman with a very handsome, long grey beard.' With another little laugh, she continued: 'A lady just behind him rises from her knees and speaks to him. He puts her aside with a wave of the hand, and continues his reading.' The young lady here gave a careful description of the lady who had risen from her knees.

"Lady Radnor then said: 'From the description given I cannot help thinking that the two principal personages described are Lord and Lady L., but I shall ask Lord L. this evening as they are coming by a later train, and I should like you to be present when the answer is given.'

"The same evening, after dinner, I was talking to Lord L. when Lady Radnor came up to him and said: 'I want to ask you a question. I am afraid you will think it is a very silly one, but in any case I hope you will not ask me why I have put the question?' To this Lord L. courteously assented. She then said: 'Were you at home last night?' He replied, 'Yes.' She said: 'Were you having family prayers at such a time last

evening?' With a slight look of surprise he replied, 'Yes, we were.' She then said: 'During the course of the prayers did Lady L. rise from her knees and speak to you, and did you put her aside with a wave of the hand?' Much astonished, Lord L. answered: 'Yes, that was so, but may I inquire why you have asked this question?' To which Lady Radnor answered: 'You promised you wouldn't ask me that.'"

In commenting on the account Mr. Myers adds—

"This incident has been independently recounted to me both by Lady Radnor and by Miss A. herself. Another small point not given by Sir J. Barnby is that Miss A. did not at first understand that family prayers were going on, but exclaimed: 'Here are a number of people coming into the room. Why, they're smelling their chairs.'"

Among others who have the faculty of crystal-vision may be mentioned Miss Goodrich-Freer (now Mrs. Hans Spoer)—whose papers on this subject in the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R. (vol. v., etc.) are of great interest.

Space will not allow the quotation of further illustrations of this strange faculty. What we find is a mingling of mere fantasy, dream, memory, telepathy, and clairvoyance; sometimes apparently even prevision and traces of spirit communion. "A random glimpse," as Mr. Myers says, "into inner visions, a reflection caught at some odd angle from the universe, as it shines through the perturbing

medium of that special soul." This, however, is precisely what we find in other directions of psychical research. The hidden subliminal self, sensitive to telepathic impress, emerges through various "autoscopes" accompanied with a medley of normal and supernormal knowledge. In fact, all autoscopes whether sensory or mechanical (p. 28) seem at times to become *heteroscopes*—"other viewers"—a means whereby some distant intelligence appears able to give fragmentary glimpses of its presence. Automatic writing tells us the same story, and only by patient and long-continued labour can we unravel the tangled skein and discover the high transcendent powers that lie concealed in even the humblest human personality.

CHAPTER XI

SUPERNORMAL PERCEPTION: SEEING WITHOUT EYES

THE existence of some kind of supernormal percipience possessed by certain individuals has been widely believed in, as in cases of so-called second sight. The business of psychical research is to ascertain whether there is trustworthy evidence on behalf of that belief. The preceding chapter has afforded some evidence in its support, and we must devote the present chapter to a further examination of this subject.

In the mesmeric trance, a state of "lucidity" or "clairvoyance," as it was called, was asserted by competent observers in the middle of the last century. Thus, Dr. Mayo, F.R.S. (referred to on p. 70), gives cases he himself had witnessed, which he thought could only be explained by "seeing without eyes." The entranced patient often appeared to locate his organ of transcendental vision in his hand, or pit of the stomach, or any part of the body that lent itself to the illusion. In 1826, the French Medical Commission appointed to inquire into mesmerism

relates several cases in which persons in the mesmeric trance could describe objects or read lines in a book, when their eyes were bandaged or eyelids closed by the fingers. But this may be explained by thought-transference, as we are not told whether the operators knew the thing selected.

Here, for example, is a comparatively recent case, which appears on the borderland between telepathy and so-called clairvoyance. It is attested by one of the most eminent continental physiologists now living.

Professor C. Richet states (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. vi.)—

"On Monday, July 2, 1888, after having passed all the day in my laboratory, I hypnotized Léonie at 8 p.m., and while she tried to make out a diagram concealed in an envelope I said to her quite suddenly: 'What has happened to M. Langlois?' Léonie knows M. Langlois from having seen him two or three times some time ago in my physiological laboratory, where he acts as my assistant. 'He has burnt himself,' Léonie replied. 'Good,' I said, 'and where has he burnt himself?' 'On the left hand. It is not fire: it is—I don't know its name. Why does he not take care when he pours it out?' 'Of what colour,' I asked, 'is the stuff which he pours out?' 'It is not red, it is brown; he has hurt himself very much—the skin puffed up directly.'

"Now, this description is admirably exact. At 4 p.m. that day M. Langlois had wished to

pour some bromine into a bottle. He had done this clumsily, so that some of the bromine flowed on to his left hand, which held the funnel, and at once burnt him severely. Although he at once put his hand into water, wherever the bromine had touched it a blister was formed in a few seconds—a blister which one could not better describe than by saying, 'the skin puffed up.' I need not say that Léonie had not left my house nor seen any one from my laboratory. Of this I am absolutely certain, and I am certain that I had not mentioned the incident of the burn to any one. Moreover, this was the first time for nearly a year that M. Langlois had handled bromine, and when Léonie saw him six months before at the laboratory he was engaged in experiments of quite another kind."

We may regard this either as a case of telepathy or what has been termed "travelling clairvoyance." The reputed evidence on behalf of the latter is indeed more widespread and more ancient than for the former. As Mr. A. Lang says, "Evidence proves that precisely similar beliefs as to man's occasional power of 'opening the gates of distance' have been entertained in a great variety of lands and ages, and by races in every condition of culture." Mr. Lang gives instances of this among the Zulus, the Lapps, the Red Indians, the Peruvians, as well as cases, ancient and modern, of Scotch "second sight." Aubrey in his *Miscellanies* (1696), gives "an accurate account of second-sighted men in Scotland,

in two letters from a learned friend of mine in Scotland." His learned correspondent concludes by remarking, "They generally term such as have this second sight *Taishatrin.* . . . Others call these men *Phissichin* from *Phis,* which is properly fore-sight or fore-knowledge."

Swedenborg, who was in his day one of the leading *savants* of Europe, is alleged to have possessed this faculty, and occasionally could "open the gates of distance." The evidence was investigated at the time by the philosopher Kant, and is given in an appendix to his book, entitled *Dreams of a Spirit Seer.*

The three most famous cases are :—

(1) Swedenborg's communication to the Queen of Sweden of some secret information, which she had asked him for, and believed that no living human being could have told him.

(2) The widow of the Dutch ambassador at Stockholm, Madame Harteville, was called upon by a goldsmith to pay for a silver service which her deceased husband had purchased. She believed that her husband had paid for it, but could not find the receipt; so she begged Swedenborg to ask her husband where it was. Three days later he came to her house and informed her, in the presence of some visitors, that he had conversed with her husband, and had learnt from him that the debt had been paid, and the receipt was in a bureau in an up-stairs room in her house. Madame Harteville replied that the cupboard had already been searched, but to no

purpose. Swedenborg answered that the ghost of her husband had said that after pulling out the left-hand drawer a board would appear, and on drawing out this a secret compartment would be disclosed, containing his private Dutch correspondence and the receipt. The whole company went upstairs, and the papers, with the receipt, were found, as described, in the secret compartment, of which no one had known before.

(3) In September 1759, at four o'clock on a Saturday afternoon, Swedenborg arrived at Gottenburg from England, and was invited by a friend to his house. Two hours after he went out, and then came back and informed the company that a dangerous fire had just broken out in Stockholm (which is about fifty German miles from Gottenburg), and that it was spreading fast; he was restless and went out often. He said that the house of one of his friends, whom he named, was already in ashes, and that his own was in danger. At eight o'clock, after he had been out again, he declared with joy that the fire was extinguished at the third door from his house. This news occasioned great commotion throughout the whole city, and was announced to the Governor the same evening.

On Sunday morning, Swedenborg was summoned to the Governor, who questioned him about the disaster. He described the fire precisely, how it had begun and in what manner it had ceased, and how long it had continued. On Monday evening a messenger

arrived at Gottenburg, who had been dispatched by the Board of Trade during the time of the fire. In the letters brought by him, the fire was described precisely as stated by Swedenborg, and next morning the news was further confirmed by information brought to the Governor by the Royal Courier. As Swedenborg had said, the fire had been extinguished at eight o'clock.

Sixty or seventy years ago, when the public were profoundly interested in the novel and wonderful accounts of mesmeric phenomena, many cases of alleged clairvoyance were noted by Dr. Elliotson and others who were constantly engaged in hypnotic treatment of patients. One of the most remarkable cases was that of a girl named Ellen Dawson, who had been subject to epileptic fits as a child, for which she had been treated mesmerically and with great success by a West-end surgeon, Mr. W. Hands. The latter, observing that Ellen, when in the trance, could apparently see objects without the use of her eyes, tried to cultivate her clairvoyant faculty, and, it is asserted, she developed a power of accurately describing distant places and persons she had never seen with her normal vision. If telepathy be accepted as a *vera causa* no doubt it affords a partial explanation, but the frequent relation of facts afterwards confirmed, though at the time unknown to the hypnotizer and others present, as well as the vividness and accuracy of description given by the subject, unduly strain any telepathic hypothesis.

Two most remarkable communications about Ellen Dawson's clairvoyance are to be found in the *Zoist* for 1845. The first is from Mr. Hands, who states that in order to satisfy himself that Ellen did not use her normal vision, he filled the covers of two pill-boxes with cotton-wool and tied one over each of Ellen's eyes with a broad strip of ribbon, taking care that the edges of the boxes rested on the skin:—

"Still she read and distinguished as before. I now placed her" (Mr. Hands continues) "in a room from which I had shut out every ray of light and then presented her with some plates in Cuvier's *Animal Kingdom;* she described the birds and beasts and told accurately the colour of each, as I proved by going into the light to test her statements. She also distinguished the shades and hues of silks."

This incident, assuming the observations are correct, presents an interesting psychological puzzle, as the colours of objects are due to their action on light rays, by selective absorption or otherwise; in the absence of light, colour, as our eyes know it, has no existence. If Mr. Hands knew what the particular colours and coloured plates were, a telepathic explanation removes the difficulty, but apparently he did not, and telepathy does not explain other incidents. Thus Mr. Hands asked her to visit his birthplace, Berkeley (where Mrs. Hands was staying), 140 miles from London. She accurately

described the church at Berkeley and various monuments therein, and also the house where Mrs. Hands was staying; asked what the latter was doing, Ellen said she was playing a game of cards, and described the other persons present. Then she exclaimed, "Mrs. H. has won the game and is getting up from her chair." All these details turned out to be perfectly correct, for Mr. Hands adds: "At this time (9 p.m.), as I subsequently learnt, Mrs. H. did rise from her chair, saying to her adversary, 'I have beaten you completely.'"

On another occasion, a lady having lost her brooch, asked Mr. Barth if Ellen, whom she had not seen before, could trace it when entranced. Accordingly she was put to sleep, whereupon

"Ellen Dawson described a former servant of Mrs. M.'s, who she said had stolen the brooch, and said that she had kept the case with some diamonds in it in her trunk, and sold the brooch for a very small sum; that it was then in a place like a cellar, with 'lots of other property,' silver spoons, etc., and that the servant had moved from the place she had lived at when she first left Mrs. M. This latter point was found to be correct, and Mrs. M. (who had suspected another of her servants), on the advice of the clairvoyant, sent for the girl to come to her house and taxed her with the theft. Finally, the girl confessed that she had stolen the brooch and pawned it, keeping the case and two diamond

chains which were worn with the brooch. All the property was finally recovered."

Many other well-attested cases by good observers were published both in England and the Continent some sixty years ago. Nor is the evidence for clairvoyance confined to the older mesmerists. One of the members of the S.P.R., Mr. Dobbie, living in Australia, has in recent years had several clairvoyants among subjects whom he had hypnotized. A case like the preceding one is given by him in the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R. Mr. Adamson, a leading citizen in Adelaide, communicates the facts, which are briefly as follows. His daughter had lost a trinket off her watch-chain, and both went to Mr. Dobbie to see if his clairvoyant could trace it. When entranced, the clairvoyant described what the trinket was, where it was lost, the person who found it, and the place where he had put it, and gave so exact a description of the house that it was readily found. Not only was the trinket thus recovered, but on questioning the finder, Mr. Adamson learnt that it was picked up on the road exactly as the clairvoyant had described.

In another case in which the clairvoyant was tested, she accurately described what a gentleman, then fifty miles away, was doing, the furniture in the room where he was, and a book he was holding. On returning home a week later, the gentleman was astonished to hear what the clairvoyant had said, and stated that she was perfectly correct in every

particular, even to the book which he had purchased on his journey from home. (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. vii., p. 68 *et seq.*)

Some critics have objected that the evidence on behalf of clairvoyance is never written down before the facts are confirmed; this, however, has been done, as in the following case sent to us by an American naturalist, Dr. Elliot Coues, of Washington. It seems that a friend of Dr. Coues, Mrs. Conner, was going up the steps of her residence in Washington one afternoon, carrying some papers, when she stumbled and fell. About the same moment a friend of hers, Mrs. B., had a singular vision of the whole incident whilst she was in her own house a mile and a half away. The vision was so vivid that Mrs. B. wrote to Mrs. Conner the same evening about it, telling her, in a letter seen by Dr. Coues, that when sewing in her room at two o'clock that afternoon "what should I see but your own dear self . . . falling up the front steps in the yard. You had on your black skirt and velvet waistband, your little straw bonnet, and, in your hand, some papers. When you fell your hat went in one direction and the papers in another. It was all so plain to me that I had ten notions to one to dress and come over and see if it were true. Is there any possible truth in it? I can distinctly call to mind the house in which you live, but can't for the life of me tell whether there are any steps."

On investigation it appears that not only

was the description of the dress, bonnet, etc., perfectly correct, but also the entrance to the house and the steps up to it. Mrs. Conner had only moved to this house a few days before and Mrs. B—— had never seen it. (*Journal S.P.R.*, vol. iv., p. 89.)

Perhaps the most extraordinary and apparently unimpeachable evidence of clairvoyance is given in a little book kindly sent to me by Dr. Heysinger, of Philadelphia, who suggests the term *telegnosis*, or knowing at a distance, instead of clairvoyance. The book bears the strange title of "X + Y = Z, *or the Sleeping Preacher of North Alabama.*" It was published in 1876, and includes statements by numerous witnesses of the supernormal knowledge possessed by the sleeping preacher, as he was called, a respected Presbyterian minister, the Rev. C. B. Sanders. Additional corroboration of the facts was obtained by Professor W. James and Dr. Hodgson. The late U.S. Chief Justice Brickell, whose home was near Mr. Sanders' residence, states that the witnesses named in the book are of the highest character, and some of considerable learning. In this case any explanation by fraud, collusion, or fabrication cannot be suggested. It seems from the evidence of the medical man, Dr. Thach, who attended Mr. Sanders, that his patient periodically went into trances, often accompanied with violent paroxysms and extreme sensitiveness to touch. It was during these trances that Mr. Sanders became conscious of events taking place at a distant spot

to which his attention was directed. On returning to his normal state, he was totally ignorant of anything that had occurred during the trance or "sleep,"—which lasted from a few minutes to days. During the sleep Mr. Sanders ignored his own name, and signed himself X + Y = Z.

The Rev. G. W. Mitchell, who gives a careful record of the evidence relating to Mr. Sanders' clairvoyance, quotes sixty-nine witnesses who testify to the fact that during his sleep he described incidents afterwards verified, which could not possibly have been known to him through normal means. Among these witnesses are ten clergymen and six physicians, the evidence being corroborated by others present. We have only space to quote one or two incidents. Here, for example, is an amusing case. Mr. Sanders having been confined to his bed from a dislocated thigh, a neighbouring minister, the Rev. De Witt, one day took him over some delicacy and had to cross a fence before getting to the house. Having both hands full and the fence being very unstable, with its top rail loose, he nearly tumbled off in crossing it. On arriving at Mr. Sanders' house, more than half a mile away, he found Mr. Sanders in his so-called "sleep," but animated and laughing, saying he was greatly amused at the predicament in which De Witt had been placed in crossing the fence with his hands full. As it was impossible to see the fence from the house and no one else present had witnessed the occurrence,

Mr. De Witt was greatly astonished. A friend who was present at the time, Mr. J. W. Pruitt, writes as follows concerning this incident—

"I certify that one day about the middle of the month of February 1866, while Brother Sanders was confined to his bed from a dislocated thigh, I was at his house, and he was lying in his bed and in one of his so-called 'sleeps.' He attracted my attention by a hearty laugh. I asked him the cause of his amusement. He replied, 'I was laughing at De Witt.' I asked what was De Witt doing. He said, 'He was having a hard scuffle to keep from falling off the fence, for the top rail was turning with him and he was trying to keep from falling over it.' Nothing more was said on the subject until De Witt arrived, which was in ten or fifteen minutes.

"The fence where the difficulty occurred was from three-fourths to a mile distant, on the other side of a thick grove of timber and underbush, and of an intervening hill.

"And I further certify that no communication from any person or source was received in reference to De Witt until he arrived and confirmed what Mr. Sanders said.

"J. W. PRUIT."

Several cases, corroborated by witnesses, are also recorded of Mr. Sanders' knowledge that a distant person was just dying or dead, of accidents occurring to friends at some

distance, of a fire taking place in a distant town, with a description of a shop in which it broke out and the extent of its ravages, much resembling the far vision of Swedenborg already quoted. Various cases are also given of Mr. Sanders in his sleep finding lost articles, coins, a watch-chain, and specifying correctly where they would be found. Here is a striking instance, attested by three witnesses; Mr. Bentley writes—

"Some time during the summer [1867] a bunch of keys, among which was my wheat-garner key, was lost. After a lapse of about one week, I requested Mr. William White, who was employed in the store and boarded at the Rev. C. B. Sanders' in the village, on going to his dinner, to ask him to tell me where my keys were. On his return Mr. White said he made the request; but Mr. Sanders paid no attention to what he said, he being in one of his spells. However, during the same afternoon, while my younger sister, in company with other persons, was at his house, he told her that my keys were under the steps at the west door of my dwelling. In consequence of this information I returned home earlier than usual. As soon as I arrived, I told my wife what I had heard. She ran immediately and found the keys under the doorstep, just as Mr. Sanders had said; and somewhat rusty. They must have been thrown there a week before by a little child that played about the house.

"I add that I know Mr. Sanders had not been in my house, nor on the place for at least twelve months before that time.

"A. J. BENTLEY."

The other witnesses present certify that "the above statements are true, as far as they relate to us personally; and that we heard all the particulars as above mentioned, at the time they occurred." Another case of the finding of a gold coin from Mr. Sanders' description of the exact position in which it was actually discovered is signed by four witnesses, but the details are too long to quote here.

Some may be disposed to say, if these facts are well established why does not Scotland Yard keep a professional clairvoyant? Like all other psychical phenomena such cases as we have described are rare, and frequently normal and supernormal knowledge are intermixed. At present, at any rate, they must be studied for their scientific interest rather than for their practical utility. It is said that, years ago a challenge was made to give a £1,000 bank-note, enclosed in a sealed opaque box, to any clairvoyant who could read its number. A similar challenge has been made as I write these pages, for a conclusive proof of thought-transference. Others, no doubt, would give a large multiple of this sum for a demonstrative evidence of survival after death. All such pecuniary short-cuts to gain knowledge are futile. Those who wish to

arrive at any definite conclusions with regard to either rare normal or alleged supernormal phenomena must pay due attention to the subject and study the evidence of trustworthy and independent witnesses, as the late Professor Tait said concerning the phenomenon of "globe-lightning."

We may close this chapter by recalling Goethe's remark to Eckermann: "If any one advances anything new . . . people resist with all their might; they act as if they neither heard nor could comprehend; they speak of the new view with contempt, as if it were not worth the trouble of even so much as an investigation or a regard; and thus a new truth may wait a long time before it can make its way."

CHAPTER XII

THE SO-CALLED DIVINING- OR DOWSING-ROD

THE singular success of certain "dowsers" in locating underground water, hard by wells that had been sunk in vain, led the Council of the S.P.R. to ask me to investigate and report upon this subject some twenty years ago. Like most people, I was at that time not only sceptical but inclined to scoff at what seemed a mere relic of an ancient superstition. Scientific men as a body held that dowsers were merely clever charlatans and the twisting of the forked rod a bit of stage-play. It soon became evident that such views were absurd, —for one thing many successful dowsers were amateurs, whose good faith it was impossible to question. Men of distinction and of high rank, church dignitaries, and even the president of a geological society, informed me they were unable to restrain the motion of the forked twig and abundant water had been found at the places so indicated. Nor was their success due to the detection of surface signs of water, for ignorant country-folk and young children were no less successful as dowsers. In fact the evidence on behalf of dowsers, in

finding comparatively shallow supplies of potable water in very unlikely spots, was far more extensive and remarkable than one had imagined. Hence the collection and verification at first hand of such evidence, the experimental tests made and the hunting up the history of the subject became a formidable task and it was not until after some years that my first lengthy report was published in the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R. for 1895. This was followed by a second lengthy report in 1900, and abundant materials have since accumulated for a third report.

Obviously in a brief survey such as this it will be impossible to do more than relate a few cases personally investigated, and give an outline of the conclusions arrived at, referring those who wish for fuller information to the monographs mentioned above.

So far as historical researches in the British Museum and other libraries extend, the first mention of the forked rod, or *virgula divina*, as it was then called, appears to be in an ancient Latin folio, entitled Sebastian Munster's *Cosmography* published early in 1500. At that time the rod was only used in the search for metallic ores, and a quaint picture is given in this work of a diviner striding over the hilly country with his uplifted forked rod prospecting for minerals. A little later the first great treatise on Mining, Agricola's *De re metallica*, published in Basle in 1540, gives a more detailed account of its use for this purpose, with a couple of admirable plates showing the

diviner at work. Agricola calls the rod the *virgula furcata*, forked rod, to distinguish it from the *virgula divina*, the name attached to the ancient superstitious practice of rhabdomancy,—divining by bits of sticks, referred to by Cicero and other classical writers. Nevertheless, the word divining-rod has persisted, together with some of the superstitious notions attached to the old virgula.

The miners of Saxony and the Hartz mountains seem to have been the first to use the forked rod. Possibly they were led to its use from the belief, once universal, even among educated men like Melanchthon, that metallic ores attracted certain trees which thereupon drooped over the place where those ores were to be found; the drooping no doubt being due to the soil or other causes. A branch of the tree was therefore cut and held to see where it drooped; later on a branch was held in each hand and the extremities tied together as shown in an old Italian plate; finally, for convenience, a forked branch was cut, the two ends grasped one in each hand with palms upwards, the arms of the holder were then brought to the side of the body, so that the forked rod was held in somewhat unstable equilibrium, and the "diviner" set forth on his quest with, in old time, certain solemnities and invocations.

In Queen Elizabeth's reign the exploitation of the Cornish mines was entrusted to a few notable "Merchant Venturers," who went over to Saxony to examine the best methods

of prospecting and mining ore. These merchant venturers probably brought back with them a "diviner" with his rod, for soon after we find its use common in Cornwall. Now, the colloquial German word for the rod was then *schlag-ruthe* or *striking rod;* this, translated into the Middle English, became the *duschan* or striking rod, and finally "deusing or dowsing rod." Locke, born under the shadow of the Mendips, where the rod early came into use in the search for lead ore, is the first writer using the word "deusing rod," in 1691. To dowse or "strike" the sail is still a common expression in Cornwall, so we get the word "dowser" now used throughout the south-west of England. The phrase to "strike" the lode in a mine, or to "strike" oil, may thus have arisen. The esteem in which the dowsing-rod was held by old English miners is shown by a passage in Robert Boyle's famous scientific essays published in 1663, and still more by Pryce's standard work on Cornish mines published in 1778. Pryce tells us that nearly all the Cornish mines were located by the dowsing-rod, and to the present day it is widely used for this purpose.

It was not until near the end of the eighteenth century that the rod was used in England for finding underground water, and as might be expected it first came into use for this purpose in the south-west of England. Two centuries earlier it was employed for this purpose in the south of Europe. For in a recent admirable Life of St. Teresa of Spain, the

following incident is narrated: Teresa in 1568 was offered the site for a convent to which there was only one objection, there was no water supply; happily, a Friar Antonio came up with a twig in his hand, stopped at a certain spot and appeared to be making the sign of the cross; but Teresa says, "Really I cannot be sure if it were the sign he made, at any rate he made some movement with the twig and then he said, 'Dig just here'; they dug, and lo! a plentiful fount of water gushed forth, excellent for 'drinking, copious for washing, and it never ran dry.'" As the writer of this Life remarks: "Teresa, not having heard of dowsing, has no explanation for this event," and regarded it as a miracle. This, I believe, is the first historical reference to dowsing for water. In a little book published at Lyons in 1693, entitled *La verge de Jacob* (it should be called, as Sir Thomas Browne remarks, "the Mosaical rod," not Jacob's rod), pictures are given showing different kinds of rod, or baguette, different ways of holding it, and the success attending those who can use it in discovering springs. Other and more learned writers of that date, such as the Abbé de Vallemont (1695) and Father le Brun (1702), deal with the mystery of the baguette and afford evidence of its widespread use in water-finding throughout arid districts in the south of France.

As stated in a previous chapter, the use of the baguette in the seventeenth century, especially in the south of France, spread to many

other hidden things, such as the finding of buried treasure and even the tracking of criminals ! Jacques Aymar, a poor mason of Dauphiny, obtained great reputation as a *sourcier* in 1692, and when a terrible murder was committed in a wine-shop in Lyons he was sent for to track the criminals with his baguette, as no trace of them could be found. The whole details of this famous case have been preserved in contemporary documents. Arriving at the scene of the murder with his rod, Aymar started off in pursuit of the murderers like a bloodhound on the scent : he tracked them to the river Rhone, followed them from place to place, discovered there were three engaged in the crime, traced two of them till they crossed the frontier, finally ran down the other one, a hunchback, who was arrested, confessed the crime, and was executed : the last person in Europe who suffered that terrible penalty of being " broken at the wheel." Strangely enough the depositions made at the trial showed that Aymar was correct in every detail, witnesses testifying to the flight and halting-places of the culprits in the very places Aymar had indicated. The keen interest this case excited, and the critical examination it underwent, is shown by the large amount of literature it called forth for some years afterwards, and Aymar became notorious throughout Europe. He was, however, subsequently somewhat discredited owing to his failure in some tests devised by the Prince de Condé.

The often fallacious and mischievous results which followed the indiscriminate use of the baguette for all sorts of purposes rightly led to its use being prohibited in the *moral* world early in the eighteenth century. Its widespread use in finding underground water nevertheless continued throughout France and many other parts of Europe. One of the physicians of Louis XVI, Dr. Thouvénel, published able and lengthy reports in 1781 and 1784 of the results of his critical tests of a *sourcier* named Bleton, a charity boy, who was perhaps the most remarkable dowser known in history. According to contemporary evidence, Bleton by his discovery of numerous underground springs in an arid province in France "converted a desert into a fruitful country." Nor must we suppose, as we are apt to do, that the critical and sceptical spirit belongs exclusively to ourselves or to our own age; such startling results as were achieved by Bleton led to the most searching inquiry, the severest tests were applied, and many of the most sceptical were convinced.

Later on, in our own country, De Quincey tells us of the wonderful success of the "jowsers," as he calls them, in Somerset, where in certain parts underground water is very hard to locate, and where scientific skill is frequently at fault. At the present day landowners and well-sinkers in the south-west of England, when in difficulty where to sink a well, almost invariably employ a dowser; usually an un-

educated man who has discovered that he possesses this peculiar "gift," as he terms it. The use of the dowsing-rod has also spread to America, where it is employed not only in the search for underground ores and water, but also for finding oil-springs. Here, however, as mentioned on p. 22, a sort of plumb-bob, suspended by a wire or chain, is frequently employed, as it is also in some parts of France. A recent number of the *Journal* of the American S.P.R. gives some striking results of numerous successful tests made with a dowser using this ancient magic pendulum.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century in England, among other notable dowsers, John Mullins, of Wiltshire, achieved extraordinary success in locating underground water, especially when all other means had failed. In some districts, of course, underground water can be found anywhere upon digging down a few feet, *e.g.* where a bed of gravel rests upon an impermeable bed of clay; but these are places where the dowser is rarely called in. It is in what may be called "fissure water," which is the geologist's difficulty, that the dowser's opportunity occurs. At first it seemed to me probable that the successful results were merely due to the dowser having a shrewd eye for the ground, experience having taught him the surface signs of underground water. But this hypothesis broke down; then it seemed likely his success was due to lucky hits, which were remembered and the failures forgotten: this theory also had to be given up.

Finally, and with reluctance, I was driven to the conclusion that certain persons *really* possessed an instinct or faculty new to science, of which the muscular spasm, that causes the twisting of the forked rod, is the outward and visible sign. It is impossible to give here even an outline of the evidence on which this conclusion rests; a brief summary of a few remarkable cases, which I have personally investigated, is all that can be attempted.

The late Sir Henry Harben had built a mansion, water towers, etc., on his fine estate near Horsham, in Sussex. He then had a well, 90 feet deep, sunk, hoping to get water, but the well was dry. Acting upon expert advice, he next had a well, 55 feet deep, sunk in another place, with no result. Then he was advised to sink a third well at another spot; this was done, and a huge well, 100 feet deep, was sunk in the Horsham clay; alas! little or no water was found. Scientific experts then advised him to run adits in different directions at the bottom of this big well. This he did at the cost of £1,000, but the result was a complete failure. Finally in despair, he reluctantly sent for the dowser John Mullins. Sir Henry met him at the station, drove him to his place, and gave him no information. Mullins perambulated the estate holding his forked twig, and, after searching for some time in vain, at last the dowsing-rod turned violently, and he asserted an abundant supply of water would be obtained at that spot at a depth of under 20 feet; another spot was found close

by, and both were on a small elevation. Two wells were dug at these spots, through a sandstone rock, and an immense perennial supply of excellent water was found at about 15 feet deep. It is true, shallow wells are generally objectionable, but this happens to be an excellent potable water, as it comes from the hill-top. This sandstone cap over the Horsham clay was unsuspected, being covered with surface soil and grass. The explanation of the dowser's success might possibly have been attributed to a sharp eye for the ground, had it not been for the fact that the dowser was no geologist, was a stranger to the locality, and the spot had been passed over by the scientific experts previously engaged.

The next case is still more remarkable, and here J. Mullins was also concerned. In 1887 the proprietors of an extensive bacon factory at Waterford, Messrs. Richardson & Co., needed a larger water supply than they possessed; accordingly, they had a well 62 feet deep sunk at the most promising spot, but no water was found. They then obtained professional advice, and, based on geological considerations, determined to have a boring made at another spot. This was carried out and a bore-hole 292 feet deep was sunk, and, as only a trifling quantity of water was obtained, the bore-hole was widened; but it was no use, the yield of water was so insignificant that the bore-hole was abandoned. The next year, acting upon other skilled advice,

they had a bore-hole, 7 inches diameter, sunk at the bottom of the 62-feet well. The work was undertaken by the Diamond-drill Rock-boring Company. With difficulty, 612 feet were bored through a very hard silurian rock, but no water was obtained. The boring was, however, continued 338 feet deeper, or a total of 950 feet, which—added to the depth of the well—made 1,012 feet in all from the surface. The result was a complete failure, and this bore-hole, which cost nearly £1,000, was abandoned. Then, acting upon the best geological advice, another spot was selected, and a bore-hole 52 feet deep was made. The strata encountered were, however, identically the same, and geologists advised the firm to go no farther, as the quest was hopeless. They were considering the advisability of moving their factory elsewhere when they were urged to try John Mullins, the English dowser. Mullins was sent for from Wiltshire. He came over, was told nothing of what had been done, he walked over the premises, about 700 by 300 feet in area, asked no questions, but traversed the ground silently, holding his dowsing-rod. Suddenly, at one spot, only a few yards from the deep bore-hole, the forked twig twisted so violently that it broke in his hands. Here Mullins declared there was an abundant supply of water, which he estimated would be found at 80 or 90 feet below the surface. At two or three other places hard by the rod also twisted as he walked in and out of the sheds. Boring was begun at

the spot indicated by Mullins, where the rod broke. It was considered a waste of money, and a local geologist was asked to report progress to an officer of the Irish Geological Survey. His letters, written at the time, I have been allowed to copy, and the result reads like a fairy tale. At a depth of rather less than 90 feet water suddenly rushed up the bore-hole, pumping was begun, and so great was the yield that the bore-hole was enlarged to a well, and from that time (1889) to the present an unfailing supply of excellent water, of from 3,000 to 5,000 gallons an hour, has been obtained from the dowser's well. Mr. Kilroe, of H.M. Geological Survey, has kindly investigated the whole matter for me, and his report shows that Mullins must have struck a line of fault or narrow fissure in the hard "ordovician rock," as the water-bearing points he fixed on all lie in a straight line. Through this fissure the water, no doubt, streamed from the adjacent high ground, but there were no surface indications of this fissure, as the rock was covered by 40 feet of boulder clay.

Here, again, are the results of some severe tests to which an amateur dowser, Mr. J. H. Jones, of Waterford, was submitted by an experienced lawyer, my friend Sir John Franks, C.B., the former Secretary to the Irish Land Commission. Sir John wanted a water supply on some property of his in West Kilkenny, and, being very sceptical as to dowsing, tested Mr. Jones as follows. It

seems there are some old long-disused wells on the property with nothing on the surface to show where they were. Sir John writes to me that Mr. Jones, who was a stranger to him and to the locality, " had never been over the ground before and knew nothing of these wells, which were only apparent when quite close, with no paths leading to them; he (Mr. Jones) quartered the ground backwards and forwards like a dog looking for game . . . found the direction of flow of the water, followed it steadily until he hit off the place where the concealed wells are. The last test was quite wonderful, as I brought him quite half a mile away to the top of the watershed, to a place from which he could not have had an idea where the well opened, in a spot quite out of sight until one got within two yards of it, but he hit it off with absolute accuracy. In the place where he indicated a site to sink for a new well, there were no surface indications at all, and it was quite half a mile away from any of the old wells. We had to cut and blast principally through solid rock, 38 feet down before we hit the spring. There are now 20 feet of water in this well."

I was anxious to put the dowser to the test of comparing his indications with those of another independent dowser, and ascertaining whether both would indicate the same spots where water would be found, and also where it would *not* be found. A site was therefore selected on a mountain slope in Co. Wicklow which no dowser had ever visited,

and where the most shrewd observer could not possibly predict beforehand the presence or absence of underground water at any particular spot. The rock is sandstone and quartzite, and water springs only occur in a few places. I sent for a good English dowser, Mr. W. Stone, who came over specially from Lincolnshire, where he lived. The field was covered with grass, and the bed-rock was believed to be only a few feet below the surface. The dowser marched to and fro, and fixed on two spots where he said plenty of water would be found within 20 feet from the surface, and another adjacent spot where he said no water would be found. Then I took him to another field on the other side of the mountain, here he declared no water would be found anywhere, the forked twig refusing to move in his hands.

A second dowser, a successful amateur, was then tried a few weeks later; he knew nothing of the previous dowser's visit. His indications exactly coincided with those of the first dowser. Boring apparatus was obtained and a set of bore-holes were made, first in one field, then in the other. The bed-rock was deeper than we thought, and after boring through 16 feet of hard, dry boulder clay, at the spot where the dowser said water *would* be found, a splendid spring of water was encountered. At the spot, a few yards distant, where the dowser said there was *no* water, we bored down to the solid rock, and spent a week boring into the rock, but no water was

found. At the third place where he predicted water we found on boring a splendid supply at 18 feet below the surface. The first and third borings showed that a bed of sand and gravel, through which the underground water streamed, lay above the bedrock and below the surface boulder clay. But how had the dowser hit upon this permeable water-line, when there was nothing whatever to indicate its presence? In the other field, on the other side of the mountain, which seemed much more likely to be water-bearing, but where both the dowsers said no water would be found, we bored in several places down to the solid rock, spending nearly a month making bore-holes, but not a drop of water was found.

It was in consequence of the unexpected and plentiful supply of water found in the first mountain field, that I secured the land for the purpose of a country cottage, which was subsequently built, and a well sunk in place of the bore-hole; even in times of great drought—when most springs have run dry—this well at Carrigoona has never failed.

These cases are only illustrations (though striking ones) of upwards of a hundred other cases I have investigated of the dowser's success when other means had failed. No doubt there are rogues who pretend to be dowsers, and who hopelessly fail when underground water is difficult to locate; and, no doubt also, when a large water supply to a town is needed, it would be far better to seek

skilled geological advice than trust to even the best dowser.

The twisting of the forked twig occurs with many persons who are not good dowsers; with such any subconscious suggestion will start its motion. A dowser requires to be tested before he can be relied upon, and it is always better before sinking a well to have the independent evidence of more than one water-finder: for the dowser is by no means infallible, though he generally thinks he is.

What is the explanation of this peculiar gift, or instinct, if such it be, that is possessed by a good dowser? The dowser himself usually thinks it is electricity, but that is only a convenient, and to the ignorant a meaningless, word, used to account for any mysterious occurrence. If the dowser knows that he himself or his forked twig is insulated from the ground, it is true the rod will not work, but if he *doesn't* know it, although good insulation has secretly been effected, the rod works as well as ever, and *vice versa*. Precisely the same effect of suggestion occurs, if the dowser be tried with radio-active substances and is disposed to believe that is the cause: or if he believes the rod moves upward for approaching underground water and downward on receding from it; or if it turns, for minerals when he holds a piece of ore in his hand, or for water if he holds a wet rag, or just the reverse of this, as is actually the case in some parts. All these are well-known

effects of suggestion, and the dowser is a very suggestible subject.

The sudden twisting of the twig, even the violent breaking of one branch of it, upon attempting to restrain its gyration, is an involuntary act, and probably only a remarkable instance of unconscious muscular action, as explained in Chapter II. It is true that cultured men of scientific tastes who are dowsers, like Dean Ovenden, utterly deny this explanation of its sudden motion and believe an unknown force of some kind is the true cause; but if so, it must be an external force of which we have not the remotest conception. The chief question, however, is the nature of the faculty which leads a good dowser to discover the hidden spring or metallic ore when other means have failed.

The explanation, I believe, is not physical, but *psychical.* All the evidence points to the fact that the good dowser subconsciously possesses the faculty of clairvoyance, a supersensuous perceptive power such as we have described in a previous chapter. This gives rise to an instinctive, but not conscious, detection of the hidden object for which he is in search. This obscure and hitherto unrecognized human faculty reveals itself by creating an automatic or involuntary muscular spasm that twists the forked rod. Sometimes it produces a curious *malaise* or transient discomfort, which furnishes some dowsers with a sufficient indication to enable them to dispense with the use of a forked

twig, or loop of wire, used by some. This hypothesis I have put to the test of experiment with a good amateur dowser and found he really possessed this kind of second sight. If so dowsers ought to be able to find other hidden things, besides water and minerals, and this is the case. Long ago the divining-rod was used in the search for buried treasure and hidden coins, and although we may smile at such credulity, nevertheless there is in recent times good evidence of the dowser John Mullins repeatedly finding carefully hidden coins. With two amateur dowsers, Mr. J. F. Young and Miss Miles, I have made numerous experiments to ascertain their powers in this respect. The experiments were in all cases arranged so as to exclude the possibility of their gaining any knowledge, from unconscious indications given by myself, of the position of the coin, hidden in their absence. To get rid of possible telepathy was more difficult; the person who alone knew where the coin was hidden was excluded from the room and unaware when the trial was begun; this made no difference in the results, which, though not invariably successful, were far beyond any success that could be achieved by mere chance.

There is, therefore, very strong presumptive evidence that a good dowser is one who possesses a supernormal perceptive power, seeing as it were without eyes. Like other supernormal faculties it resides in the subliminal self and usually reveals itself through

some involuntary muscular action. Possibly a like faculty of discernment beyond the power of vision may exist in certain animals and birds, and afford an explanation of the mystery of many otherwise inexplicable cases of homing and migratory instincts.

If the case of Jacques Aymar, narrated on a previous page, can be relied on, it might be accounted for by an extension of the clairvoyant faculty to the supernormal detection of traces of scent or footprints left by the criminals. Records exist of certain old Indian tribes in Mexico, among whom were certain persons possessing a like faculty, and from the Indian word for these men came the name Zahoris (meaning gifted with second sight or clairvoyant) applied to wandering individuals in Spain in the sixteenth century, of whom are related (as early as 1515) wonderful stories of their strange occult gifts of vision, etc.

Whatever truth there may be in these old stories, we are less inclined to ridicule them as fables after the conclusions to which we have been led as regards dowsing. These conclusions are: (1) that those who really possess this curious faculty are rare, and many pretenders exist; the good dowser is a case of *nascitur non fit;* (2) the involuntary motion of the forked twig which occurs with certain persons, is due to a muscular spasm that may be excited in different ways; (3) the explanation of the success of good dowsers, after prolonged and crucial tests, is—like that of

any other obscure human faculty or instinct —a matter for further physiological and psychological research, though provisionally we may entertain the working hypothesis suggested, viz. unconscious clairvoyance, an aspect of what Mr. Myers terms *telæsthesia*, "perception at a distance."

CHAPTER XIII

HAUNTINGS AND POLTERGEISTS

AMONG the most popular of traditional "ghost-stories" are those of haunted houses and places. Cases of reputed hauntings are to be found in the literature of all countries, both ancient and modern, the types remaining alike throughout.

This inveterate persistency of species in ghost-stories appears rather curiously in a letter of the younger Pliny to his friend Sura, containing three stories of three still well-marked types: a premonitory vision, a haunted house, and a "poltergeist." Of these the first, about Curtius Rufus, an eminent public man, is also told, more briefly, by Pliny's friend Tacitus in the eleventh book of his *Annals*. The second has the most orthodox features of conventional fiction. A commodious residence in Athens had long stood empty, its tenants routed by the nightly visits of a spectral old man of extremely emaciated and squalid appearance, with long beard and dishevelled hair, rattling the chains on his feet and hands, who so alarmed the beholders that some of them died. The

philosopher Athenodorus, seeing the house for sale on extraordinarily low terms, resolved to investigate the spectre and took up his abode there—a pioneer among psychical researchers. As he sat alone at midnight, the inevitable ghost appeared, and with beckoning hand and clanking chains led him to a place in the area of the house, where it vanished. Marking the place, Athenodorus next day induced the magistrates to order excavations, which disclosed a fettered skeleton. Whereupon the bones being publicly interred, with propitiatory rites, the house was haunted no more! In conclusion, Pliny begs his friend to consider the subject carefully; "and though," he adds, "you should as usual balance between two opinions, yet I hope that you will lean more to one side than the other, lest you should dismiss me in the same suspense and indecision that occasions you the present application." Pliny was neither the first nor the last of puzzled psychical researchers.

A century later, Lucian, in his *Philopseudês*, characteristically ridicules a similar story about a house in Corinth. The poltergeist related by Pliny was of a very simple type, merely an account of how "supernatural" visitants cut off the hair of certain of Pliny's servants, when they were asleep, and strewed it about the room.

Ancient and widespread as is the belief in hauntings, the evidence for the most part is open to suspicion, hence few educated

persons have been disposed to accept a supernormal origin for the stories, believing that some simple explanation would be found to cover the ground, such as rats, or owls, or practical joking. The subject cannot, however, be so easily dismissed, for the careful investigations made by the S.P.R. have shown that amid much that is absurd and exaggerated certain cases remain which cannot be explained away by illusion or practical jokes. At the same time we rarely find anything corresponding to the traditional ghost-story, like that of Pliny, which connects some tragedy in a particular house or place, with the vague and often confused accounts of sights or sounds which perplex or terrify the observer. We often wonder why the numerous cases carefully investigated by the S.P.R. and recorded in its publications have not been used by writers to furnish the mystery-loving public with ghost-stories more in accordance with fact.

Here, for instance, is a remarkable case, which has stood the test of long and searching inquiry. The account was first received in 1884 through Mr. J. W. Graham, Principal of Dalton Hall, Manchester, and the case subsequently investigated by Mr. Myers. To avoid injury to the owner of the house the locality is not stated, and also the name "Morton" is substituted for the real family name, but the initials are the true ones. Miss "Morton"—a brief outline of whose account is given below—is a lady of scientific training and an exceptionally good witness.

"In April 1882 Captain Morton and his family moved into a detached house at the corner of two cross roads, with a lawn and a short carriage-drive in front, and a garden and small orchard at the back. It was built in 1860, and occupied by Mr. S. and his family for sixteen years. His wife died there one August (year uncertain), whereupon Mr. S. took to drink, and when, two years afterwards, he married again his second wife contracted the same habit. They quarrelled continually, and a few months before his death, which occurred in July 1876, she left him, and lived at Clifton, till, in September 1878, she died of dipsomania, and was buried about a quarter of a mile from the house in question. After Mr. S.'s death it was occupied for six months by Mr. L. and his family. He died there, and it then remained empty for about four years, during which time the grounds are said to have been haunted by the figure of a lady, but the Mortons had heard no rumours. From June 1882 until 1889 there was frequently seen moving about within and without the house, by day and night, the apparition of a tall lady in widow's weeds, holding a handkerchief to her face, and seemingly weeping. The figure was believed to resemble the second Mrs. S., but in what degree the concealment of the face makes doubtful. It often went into the drawing-room, taking up a position in a window, where the second Mrs. S. used to sit.

The wraith was first, and most frequently,

seen by the eldest Miss M., who followed it, spoke to it, when it would stop as if about to speak, but never did so; tried to touch it, but found it elude her grasp, vanishing when cornered, though in full view a moment before. Then with scientific care, she tested its immateriality by stretching lightly across the stairs fine threads, at various heights from the ground; twice, at least, she saw the figure pass through the threads, yet its passage left them undisturbed. Its footsteps were faintly audible. Later on it was seen by Miss M.'s sisters and brother, to whom she had not mentioned it, and by visitors and servants, in all about twenty persons. Neither her father nor her mother, who was an invalid, ever saw it. Miss M. sometimes saw it when other persons present did not. It often vanished at a door leading into the garden. Once it was seen by Miss M. and her sister to pass from the drawing-room along the passage, and disappear at this door, while their sister E., coming in from the garden, said she had seen it emerge from the steps outside: the three sisters then went into the garden, when a fourth sister called from an upper window that she had just seen it pass across the front lawn and along the carriage-drive to the orchard. This is a noticeable feature in the case, since it seems probable that the figure was traced by independent observers through the successive points in space which a material body would have occupied in going from the drawing-room to the orchard; and this, *prima facie*,

implies some spatial relations. Mrs. Sidgwick observes (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. iii., p. 146) that, in the absence of accurate notes of the time, we cannot be certain that the appearances *were* successive, or in the order assumed, as a phantom might possibly appear in several places at once—which is doubtless true; but we seem to have no records of such an occurrence.

The figure was seen most frequently in the months of July, August and September, which include the anniversaries of the deaths of Mr. S. and his wives. The frequency was at its maximum in the summer of 1884, after which time the appearances became fewer, and finally ceased in 1889. Towards the end of this period, the figure, which had at first looked life-like and substantial, became shadowy and semi-transparent. There was also a gradual cessation of the phenomena which had occurred during these years, namely footsteps, soft and slow—unlike those of any in the house,—thumps on bedroom doors and turning of the door-handles, sounds of the dragging about of heavy weights, and unaccountable lights.

Miss M., who investigated the apparition quite fearlessly, describes herself as having had at first "a feeling of awe, as at something unknown, mixed with a strong desire to know more about it." Subsequently she became conscious of a feeling of loss, as if she had "lost power to the figure." Most of the other percipients were greatly alarmed, and felt

chilled as if by a cold wind. Two dogs in the house were at times much terrified. Full details of this case, which Mr. Myers considered "in some respects one of the most remarkable and best authenticated instances of 'haunting' on record," will be found in the *S.P.R. Proceedings*, vol. viii. Mr. Myers took much trouble in the investigation of this case, personally examined several of the witnesses, and was convinced of the genuineness of the whole story, which, however, loses much of its impressiveness in the brief summary which is all that it is possible to give in these pages.

A remarkable case of haunting occurred some years ago in a manor-house in the midland counties of England. I was invited to investigate the case and was offered hospitality. Though the ghost did not appear to me, whilst I slept in the haunted room, yet I heard certain mysterious knockings and some other disturbances which accompanied it; nor could I find any satisfactory explanation of these sounds. The first-hand evidence on behalf of the ghostly figure was, however, abundant and surprising. It was seen in the house independently by nearly a dozen different persons, who at first believing it to be a practical joke, tried to catch it, but it was uncatchable and impalpable; the latter was proved by a young officer, who when staying in the house saw the phantom one night, rose from his bed, followed it and shot through the figure, which moved on unconcerned. The children of my host, from whom the story of

the ghost had been carefully concealed, described the same figure, which did not frighten, but rather amused, them, as they said "they could see the wall of the school-room through its body."

Another case of haunting investigated by myself and also by Professor Sidgwick, occurred not far from my own residence in Kingstown. Here the phantom of a woman wrapped in a grey shawl was seen on the stairs and in a particular bedroom of a house tenanted by a lady and her brother. The figure was seen by different occupants of the room and by a child of five years old, though none were previously aware of the ghostly visitant: the door of the room was locked, yet still the figure made its appearance to the occupier of the room. All attempts at a normal explanation failed and the occupiers had at last to leave the house. Subsequently it was found that some previous tenants of the house had been troubled by inexplicable disturbances of various kinds, details of which they gave. (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. ii., p. 141.)

In all these cases one is naturally very sceptical that really similar phantoms have been seen quite independently. Even if the ghost be actually seen by the investigator, it is easier to assume that the figure is a pure hallucination, or some real person playing a trick. I confess, however, that a careful consideration of first-hand evidence has led me to the same conclusion at which Mrs. Sidgwick, one of the most critical and able of investi-

gators, arrived so far back as 1885, namely, that in spite of all reasonable scepticism, it is difficult "to avoid accepting, at least provisionally, the conclusion that there are, in a certain sense, haunted houses, *i.e.* that there are houses in which similar quasi-human apparitions have occurred at different times to different inhabitants, under circumstances which exclude the hypothesis of suggestion or expectation" (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. iii., p. 142).

Here is a typical case of haunting, resting on the evidence of educated persons who tried in vain to account for what was seen: full details are given in the *Journal* of the S.P.R., vols. vi. and ix. In 1892, Miss Scott, living at St. Boswells, Roxburghshire, upon walking home one afternoon in May, saw a tall man dressed in black a few yards in front of her. He turned a corner of the road, being still in view when he suddenly disappeared, although no exit seemed possible. Hurrying on to find what had become of him she met her sister, who was looking round bewildered; she too had seen the same figure, whom she took to be a clergyman, but the figure suddenly vanished and search yielded no clue.

In the July following, at the same place, Miss Scott again saw the same figure, the upper part of which was also seen by another sister who was walking with her; it was dressed like an old clergyman in knee-breeches, silk stockings, buckled shoes, white cravat and low-crowned hat. Resolved not to lose sight of him this time Miss Scott kept her eyes fixed

on the figure, but both sisters saw it gradually fade away before their eyes. Again in June, the next year, Miss Scott, walking one morning near the same place, saw the same apparition. Determined to solve the mystery she rushed to overtake it, but it seemed to glide away in front of her, then it stopped, turned round and faced her, enabling her to note in minute detail the features and dress, that of a Scotch clergyman of a century ago. Finally the figure again faded away by the roadside.

Other persons also independently testified to having seen the same figure at the same place. One lady, Miss Irvine, was attracted by the quaint dress of the old clergyman, and watched him walking to and fro by the hedgeside, when, to her astonishment, the figure vanished when she was about three yards off. The various witnesses gave separate written and concordant reports of what they had seen. The figure was not further seen until 1897, when Miss Scott and one of her sisters again saw it, noting the thin white features and dress of the phantom; they had not been thinking of it and are sure it was no morbid hallucination or illusion of their senses, or practical joke. A plan was sent of the road and locality, with the positions marked where different persons had seen the apparition. In July 1900 Miss Scott saw the figure again on two occasions near the same spot, and wrote an account to the S.P.R. the next day. Persons employed on that particular road have been interrogated, but have never seen the phantom,

nor has a man who passes up and down the road to the village every morning and evening.

It is very difficult to believe Miss Scott and the other percipients were all mistaken, and it is equally difficult to frame any theory to account for the persistence of the phantom in this spot, except by the hypothesis given below.

The case of the "haunted house at Willington" has been a familiar theme on Tyneside for half a century, and accounts of it have appeared in various publications. The best report will be found in vol. v. of the *Journal* of the S.P.R., where Mr. J. Proctor, a member of the Society of Friends, who was born in the house, gives a vivid account of his experience of the hauntings and of their wholly inexplicable character.

Other cases might be quoted, which, like the two preceding ones, suggest that some kind of *local imprint*, on material structures or places, has been left by some past events occurring to certain persons, who, when on earth, lived or were closely connected with that particular locality; an echo or phantom of these events becoming perceptible to those now living who happen to be endowed with some special psychic sensitiveness. Although this theory seems extravagant and incredible, there are not wanting analogies to it both in the domain of physics and psychical research. A coin left on a pane of glass and after some time removed, leaves a local imprint which may be revealed by breathing on the glass;

pieces of wood, coal, and many other materials laid on a photographic plate and then removed, leave a "local imprint" so that the very structure of the materials is revealed when the plate is developed, it may be long after. The causes of these and other curious phenomena are now known, but this cannot be said of somewhat analogous phenomena in psychical research.

Certain sensitives are said to be able to detect, or "psychometrize" as they call it, the influence left on material objects worn by an absent or deceased person. Whether this be the case or not, there are some startling and well-attested phenomena related by the older mesmerists which apparently indicate that some specific influence is left on a material object by the passes of a mesmerizer. The scientific objections to a specific influence are perhaps not so formidable now that we are acquainted with certain physical and psychical facts that would have been deemed utterly incredible a century ago.

In the early years of the S.P.R., Mr. Gurney was present with me when certain hypnotic experiments were made, in the rooms of the Society and under our direction. The results of these experiments seemed so incredible that I believe they were never published. Any particular book or coin or other object over which the hypnotizer had made a few passes, or even pointed his fingers, could be detected by a sensitive subject, who was subsequently brought by us into the room,

from which the hypnotizer had in the meanwhile been excluded and the positions of the objects then changed by us. In fact, every precaution was taken to avoid collusion or any direct knowledge being gained by the subject, who was not entranced at the time. Finally, we were driven to telepathy as a possible explanation; but even this seemed unlikely, for our presence in the room made no difference, nor was any difference found when *we* did not know which object had been treated by the hypnotist. Here, as in many other problems of psychical research, we have no solution to offer, and must leave future investigators to confirm or disprove the results we obtained.

To return to the subject of hauntings, different theories have been suggested—

(1) The popular view that the apparition belongs to the external world like ordinary matter, and would be there whether the percipient was present or not. Some cases appear to support this view, such as the one to which I have already referred (p. 191), in which the phantom was followed from place to place and seen by different independent observers at successive points. This theory, however, has insuperable difficulties, among others that of accounting for the clothes of the ghost, and it may be dismissed. (2) That the phantom was projected from the mind of the percipient, and was, therefore, a hallucination; not a baseless one, but created by a telepathic impact from the mind of a deceased person.

Dream reminiscences, it may be, of scenes on earth in which the deceased took part. Some such telepathic hypothesis is conceivable, but why should the hallucination thus created be dependent on a particular locality? (3) This latter difficulty is met by the hypothesis (suggested on p. 197) of a subtle influence or impress left by the deceased on the material environment, how we cannot guess; an impression perceptible to certain sensitives, and forming the starting-point for the hallucination. (4) Some cases of haunting suggest the existence of actual "thought forms," or shadows of persons and places, projected from the mind of the deceased on to an external, though not a material world; these images of the past becoming perceptible to certain persons on earth under favourable conditions. Many experimental cases might be quoted in favour of this creative power of thought, which Swedenborg asserts is the law of the spiritual world. (5) No doubt some reputed cases of haunting are merely due to illusion or imagination, stimulated by expectancy, and the hallucination transferred from one person to another through the influence of suggestion or even telepathy. Finally those sceptics who have never investigated the evidence will continue to assert that *all* cases of so-called haunting are to be ascribed to superstitious fear, delusion or fraud.

The term *Retrocognition* has been suggested by Mr. Myers to denote a knowledge of the past supernormally acquired. In some cases

of crystal vision or hypnotic trance fragments of such knowledge appear evoked from the subliminal self of the percipient. But it is difficult to conceive of the revival of the past except through a mind upon which passing events had at the time been impressed. If, however, we possess a transcendental self, below the level of our normal consciousness, we may "in some undefined fashion share at moments in the transcendental purview"—of things past, present and future, of events near and remote,—enjoyed by a timeless and spaceless Universal Soul.

Such a case of retrocognitive vision, whatever may be its origin, is believed by the two ladies, who are authors of a widely read book entitled *An Adventure*, published in London in 1911, to have been experienced by them. (See note, p. 248.)

On the other hand the following case is more probably an illustration of hypothesis No. 5 on the last page, *i. e.* an illusion caused by expectancy. About 9 p.m. on May 8, 1885, a gardener named Bard, returning from work, passed through Hinxton churchyard, in Essex, and thought he saw his former employer, Mrs. de Frèville, leaning on the railings round her husband's tomb, five or six yards distant. He recognized her black mantle and poke-bonnet, and her face, which was paler than usual. He supposed her to be, as was her habit, visiting the tomb, and he kept his eye on her as he walked round the railings to see if the gate into the vault were