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## V.—DISCUSSION.

### HALLUCINATION OF MEMORY AND 'TELEPATHY'.

By Professor JOSIAH ROYCE.

I have for some time intended to collect material in support of an hypothesis bearing upon the discussions aroused by the book entitled *Phantasms of the Living*. My hypothesis needs yet a good deal of examination before it can be of much service to anyone; but the present state of my health obliges me to suspend all work for some time, and I must leave this, like other matters, in other hands. If there be the least shred of value in my suggestion, I ought not to keep the thing to myself, unless, indeed, some one else has already anticipated me. If this last is the case, let what I say go for nothing. But if the suggestion, in its present form, is at all new, may some one be found more capable of testing it than I now am.

As an occasional worker in connexion with the investigations of the American Society for Psychical Research, I have tried to do something towards testing the stories furnished us as evidence for 'Telepathy'. The stories that come to hand, in so far as they are worthy of attention at all, seem to me, like the stories in *Phantasms of the Living*, to fall into three classes. The first class is the smallest, and is so small as yet that one can make little or nothing of it. It consists of those cases, valuable enough were they only more numerous, where the 'telepathic' coincidence, whatever it is, can be actually demonstrated by trustworthy contemporary records—*e.g.*, cases where the percipient A demonstrably wrote in a letter or in a diary "*I believe that B is ill,*" or "*drowning,*" or otherwise uncomfortable, *before* the coincidence could have been verified. I think that we may safely declare such documentary cases to be at present too few and scattered to serve as a foundation for any noteworthy hypothesis. All recorded cases of the sort are therefore *probably* mere coincidences. If we ever get them by hundreds or by thousands, we may have more reason to lay stress upon them.

The second class of cases is very large and, in the discussion about 'Telepathy,' is very insignificant for any present and positive purpose. It includes all those cases reported orally, and from the mere memory of even the most trustworthy people, *where the events lie in the remoter past*, say beyond ten years. 'Telepathy' will never have standing as an hypothesis if its facts, like rainbows, are always inaccessible to the recording observer. To say that the 'telepathic' phenomena always belong more than ten years back would be to say that they

belong nowhere. The already recognised errors of memory would make such distant cases valuable only as auxiliary and supplementary evidence in favour of 'telepathy,' were the 'telepathic' hypothesis otherwise almost wholly certain.

The *third* class of cases consists of *stories of recent date*, told by people of good character and of generally sound memory, whose 'telepathic' experiences have been sporadic, and who are *not* themselves open to the charge of being systematically or superstitiously imaginative. That such stories are comparatively frequent, and that they cannot be dismissed as mere folk-lore, or as mere superstition, or as mere fraud, Mr. Gurney's book has pretty clearly shown. Now my hypothesis concerns not all of these stories, but a very large proportion of them. I ask myself: 'Why should people who have no interest in believing in telepathy, who are themselves often despisers of the whole idea, and also haters of all superstitions, whose own personal honesty is undoubted, and whose memory is generally good—why should such people suddenly believe and relate that, at some very recent time, just before an affliction, or at the moment of a calamity, they knew, or were warned, by dream or presentiment, of the distant and, for them, otherwise unknowable fact of the affliction or calamity in question? Why should such tales be told at once, or very soon after the accident, and before the *ordinary* errors of imaginative memory could have time to distort the facts? Why should the experiences be sporadic for such people, so as to be almost wholly isolated in their lives, and so as not especially to affect their beliefs thenceforth?' And I answer these questions, hypothetically, by suggesting that in such cases we probably have to do with a not yet recognised type of *instantaneous hallucination of memory, consisting in the fancy, at the very moment of some exciting experience, that one has EXPECTED it before its coming*. Such a hallucination might of course be as irresistible as a delusion of the senses often is. Two or more persons among those concerned in any case might be equally subject to it, and then their stories would corroborate each other. On the other hand, as some peculiar state of health or some peculiarly painful excitement might be required for its appearance in any one person, a given sane and sound individual might plod on for years without any 'telepathic' experiences, and then at the very moment when he heard of his brother's death might with a sudden assurance exclaim: 'How strange! I dreamt of receiving this news only last night, and have been oppressed in mind by the presentiment all day.' Members of the same family would be especially apt to be similarly subject to this form of illusion, and then the same news would show them all the same mirage of memory, with startling results in the way of 'telepathic' evidence. As for mere supplementary corroboration, taking the well-known shape of a friend's assurance that he 'believes the story to be true as it is told, for the people directly concerned assured him of its truth.

from the very first,'—all that would be forthcoming in a very few weeks, and with the best intentions on the part of all concerned.

The illusion of double memory in one familiar type, *viz.*, in case of the feeling that one 'has been here before,' is universally recognised. This newly-suggested form of instantaneous hallucination is *a priori* just as probable as that old and well-recognised form. Its existence, however, is hard to verify, because while the double memory of the first and well-known type at once corrects itself through the sane knowledge that we are *not* living our lives twice over, the illusion of the second kind might persist as long as you please, either in the form of a general belief in presentiments, or else merely in the shape of an isolated 'telepathic' experience that one looks back upon. Even so diplopia is self-correcting for a normal consciousness; but a projected hallucination of vision is not so self-correcting. Such might also be the case with the two illusions of memory.

But, of course, to verify this hypothesis even remotely requires more than such *a priori* suggestions. And it has occurred to me that the best course would be to ask whether any such hallucination of memory as my hypothesis demands is ever observed among the actually insane in asylum practice. I have consulted the literature to this end, and for some time had little success. Krafft-Ebing (*Lehrbuch der Psychiatrie*, ii. 146) mentions one case where a patient suffering from "Primäre Verrücktheit" was accustomed to say that, as he fell asleep at night, he sometimes heard voices telling him what he was to dream that night, and he dreamt accordingly. This looks like our desired form of hallucination of memory. But only recently, and very opportunely, have I met with two cases, fully described, in the *Archiv f. Psychiatrie* (xviii. 397), by Prof. Emil Kraepelin. Kraepelin himself had already distinguished the very class of hallucinations of memory of which I was in search. He speaks of it (*l. c.* p. 395) as represented by "a small group of observations". He classifies the cases as those where the patient, with perfect consciousness of his real surroundings, regards these surroundings as in some respect familiar or expected, because a supposed previous warning has given him notice of what was to come. Kraepelin adds that he himself has sought in vain through the literature for any previous account of such hallucinations. Of the two cases the first is less marked. A servant-girl, twenty years of age, is taken ill first with hallucinations and general excitement, and these pass over into what Krafft-Ebing has called Erotomania, *i. e.*, innocent love-madness of the Elaine or Ophelia type. The actual lover had in this case been a soldier. In her madness the girl converts him into a prince, and expects a wonderful future. In the asylum she declares, from time to time, when a new event attracts her notice, that her lover not long since predicted it to her. So a change of physicians in the asylum has been prophesied to her. And, in particular, when she is sent away to another place, she remembers at once precisely

how her lover had predicted this event also, and in what words. The second case, which Kraepelin regards as "quite classical," is one of "Primäre Verrücktheit". A young commercial traveller, who from childhood up had been eccentric, ill-tempered and foppish, devoted to fine toilets and to money-spending, but otherwise free from vices, first makes himself impossible in business by continual quarrels, and then begins to discover that he is a person of consequence, whose life is the object of great consideration on the part of both friends and enemies. The *Fliegende Blätter* publishes paragraphs about him; the journal *Ueber Land und Meer* makes caricatures of him. At last he reads in the newspapers that he is a promising pretender to the throne, and so he reaches the asylum. He appears at first very cool and rational, and evades discussion of all delicate topics. But at length he begins to confide to the physician his curious observation that nearly all the patients in the asylum are known to him from previous experience or from warnings. In fact, he heard in conversation some time before he reached the asylum all the details concerning everybody there, and concerning the management of the establishment. Characteristic is his assertion, given in Kraepelin's words (p. 399), that when he heard these things spoken of before he came, the matter did not especially attract his attention. But when he saw the various things and people, these reminded him ere long, he said, of the previous conversations. Such assurances from the patient were not in this case occasional incidents, but soon became fixed features of the illness. The asylum, so the patient said, had once been described in detail in the *Fliegende Blätter*. The chapel also appeared well known to him from previous descriptions. The news of the day was sometimes a matter not so much of direct presentiment to him as of curious and imperfect coincidence with long past conversations. Thus, a murder being committed in Munich, he remembers, after hearing of it, how he had not long since been asked about that very street where the murder was committed. In short, his abnormal memory gave him, in the form of somewhat slowly formed but always irresistible hallucinations, all our own best-known types of reported presentiments. Meanwhile he possessed an actually very good memory for real events. In addition to the illusions of memory, the same patient had elaborate systematic delusions, which included, among other things, the discovery that a great quantity of what he read in the papers had been really composed by himself.

Had I not been in search of evidence of the possibility of this form of hallucination, I should probably not have read Kraepelin's article, at least at the present time. I hardly need add that I find in his discussion no effort to draw analogies with sane presentiments of the type discussed in *Phantasms of the Living*. The fact, however, mentioned by Kraepelin (*l. c.* p. 428), that our so well-known hallucination of the ordinary double

memory-consciousness appears almost exclusively among the sane, encourages me to suppose that this new form of double memory, once verified as an existing fact among the insane, may be found to be an incident of normal life sufficiently frequent to explain a large number of 'telepathic' incidents. At all events, if there is any fair chance of such an explanation for stories that are not based upon purely documentary evidence, nearly the whole mass of narrative facts in the *Phantasms of the Living* will have to be reviewed with this hypothesis in mind.

The foregoing suggestion, as soon as formulated, seems so simple and commonplace that I should not have ventured to bring it forward here had I found Messrs. Gurney and Myers apparently well aware of the force of such a consideration. I have looked in vain in *Phantasms of the Living*, as well as in Mr. Gurney's reply to Prof. Preyer, for evidence of any consciousness of this hypothesis. I need not say that the value of the collection of stories in *Phantasms of the Living* is in no wise affected for scientific purposes by the discovery that these stories may prove rather the existence of a typical hallucination of the human memory than the reality of 'telepathic' communication between mind and mind. If it is the truth as such that we want to 'bag,' it is not ours to decide whether the truth shall turn out to be a wild goose or some other fowl.

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#### ON "FEELING AS INDIFFERENCE".

I. By JAMES SULLY.

The discussion on the alleged indifference of certain feelings, begun by Prof. Bain in No. 48 and followed up by Mr. W. E. Johnson in No. 49, is to be specially welcomed as promising to render a little less obscure one of the most perplexing points in psychology. My excuse for joining in it is not that I am likely to have anything conclusive to add, but that, my name having been mentioned by both writers, I feel in a manner obliged to express my view of the subject more fully than I have yet done.

Before entering upon the special question, I should like to put myself right with respect to a point related to this which is touched on by Mr. Johnson. Mr. Ward would, I think, be the first to admit that, though he has freshly emphasised the fact of the connexion and co-implication of the three constituents of mind, others before him have called attention to the fact. As regards myself, I stated the point insisted on by Mr. Johnson in almost his own words when I wrote, "Feeling, knowing and willing are *properties* of mind, and cannot exist in perfect isolation from one another any more than the colour, form and odour of a plant" (*Outlines of Psychology*, p. 22).