

Chapter 5 — The Psychic Phenomena of Spiritualism

from *The Truth About Spiritualism* (1923)

by

William S. Sadler, M.D., F.A.C.S.

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Sources for Chapter 5, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) William S. Sadler, M.D., *The Physiology of Faith and Fear: Or, The Mind in Health and Disease* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1912)
- (2) Wilfred Lay, Ph.D., *Man's Unconscious Spirit: The Psychoanalysis of Spiritism* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1921)
- (3) Bernard Hart, M.D., *The Psychology of Insanity* (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1912, 1916)
- (4) William S. Sadler, M.D., *Worry and Nervousness: Or, The Science of Self-Mastery* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1914)
- (5) Pierre Janet, Ph.D., M.D., *The Major Symptoms of Hysteria* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1907 and 1920)
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- (7) Isaac K. Funk, D.D., LL.D., *The Psychic Riddle* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1907)
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- (9) A. T. Schofield, *Modern Spiritism: Its Science and Religion* (Philadelphia: P. Blakiston's Son & Co., 1920)

- (10) Rev. Samuel **McComb**, *The Future Life in the Light of Modern Inquiry* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1919)
- (11) Joseph **McCabe**, *Is Spiritualism Based on Fraud?: The Evidence Given by Sir A. C. Doyle and Others Drastically Examined* (London: Watts & Co., 1920)
- (12) Edward T. **Bennett**, *Psychic Phenomena: A Brief Account of the Physical Manifestations Observed in Psychological Research* (New York: Brentano's, 1909)
- (13) David P. **Abbott**, *Behind the Scenes with the Mediums*, Fifth Revised Edition (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1916)
- (14) **Anonymous**, "Spirits Guided His Plans: Great Rail Builder Tells of Help Given Him: Came to Him in Dreams," in *The Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, June 14, 1922)
- (15) Morton **Prince**, M.D., LL.D., *The Unconscious: The Fundamentals of Human Personality Normal and Abnormal* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1914 and 1921)
- (16) Horatio W. **Dresser**, Ph.D., *The Open Vision: A Study of Psychic Phenomena* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1920)

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source first appears, or where it reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and Sadler pointedly differ from one another.
- (e) **Bold type** indicates passages which Sadler copied verbatim, or nearly verbatim, from an uncited source.
- (f) **Pink** indicates passages where Sadler specifically shares his own experiences, opinions, advice, etc.
- (g) **Light blue** indicates passages which strongly resemble something in the Urantia Book, or which allude to the Urantia phenomenon.

- (h) **Red** indicates either an obvious mistake, in most cases brought about by Sadler's miscopying or misunderstanding his source, or an otherwise questionable statement on Sadler's part.

Matthew Block
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XXXVIII: PSYCHIC FADS AND
 FAKES (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 457)

SPIRITUALISM (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 466)

[contd] Like mental telepathy, spiritualism is not a matter which can be adjudged in the experimental laboratory.

Recent investigations have convinced the author that

nine-tenths of all so-called spiritualistic phenomena are purely fraudulent,

sheer chicanery and trickery;

but we are equally willing to admit that in certain rare cases real phenomena are produced in the name of spiritualism, which are not of a fraudulent nature.

These spiritualistic manifestations we regard as beyond the pale of scientific investigation.

They are problems in theology and spiritual science (*PF&F* 466).

V — THE PSYCHIC PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM

5:0.1 SPIRITUALISM is not a matter which can be finally tried and adjudged in the experimental laboratory.

While the investigations which I have made into spiritistic phenomena have convinced me that

practically all so-called materializations and other transactions of the “seance” are purely fraudulent—

sheer chicanery and trickery—

it is not my intention to assert that all so-called occult or spiritistic phenomena are of a fraudulent nature.

There may be a residue that will have to be accounted for otherwise, but it has never been my privilege to come in contact with mediums of this unusual sort.¹

Such genuine spirit phenomena, of course, would be beyond the pale of scientific investigation.

They constitute problems for study by the theologians and philosophers.

1. PHANTASY AND IMAGINATION

[For some people the easiest thing in the world to do is to sit and day-dream (Lay 13).]

5:1.1 There can be little doubt but that certain human beings possess a tremendously large “bump” of phantasy. That is, they have the day dreaming faculty developed to the point where it has acquired the proportions of a well-nigh separate personality. This must be the case with many clairvoyants, mediums, and other occult practitioners. They might be said to possess an automatic power of phantasy—one that acts quite independently of their ordinary mental processes—and one which forms its conclusions and formulates its statements quite without the conscious knowledge of the higher powers of such individuals’ minds.

IV: PSYCHOLOGY—HOW WE THINK
(*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 35)

IMAGINATION AND PHANTASY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 42)

As we ascend in the realms of thought, we reach more and greater possibilities of mental confusion and mind deceptions.

It is quite impossible for the very young child to discriminate between imagination, memory, and images.

The child of three years will vividly describe his meetings with lions and other wild beasts,

and may tell these things as real experiences which have just happened.

5:1.2 As we ascend in the realms of thought, we reach more and greater possibilities of mental confusion and mind deception.

It is quite impossible for the very young child to discriminate between imagination, memory, and images.

The child of three years will vividly describe his meetings with lions and other wild beasts in the back yard,

and may relate these things as real experiences which have just happened.

SOURCE

He is really recalling the pictures of lions from his books, or reviving the memory images of the beasts observed at the zoo (PF&F 42-43).

What is to hinder the imagination from setting in operation false notions, resurrecting disagreeable impressions,

and, by its well-known powers of reconstruction,

creating new feelings and strange sensations? (PF&F 43)

XI: PHANTASY (Hart 143)

5: THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

He is really recalling the pictures of lions from his story books, or reviving the memory images of the beasts observed at the zoo;

and many of our mediums and clairvoyants are so constituted of mind that their own subconscious plays the same subtle trick upon them. They see, hear, feel and perceive things that have not just happened, as facts, and as such portray them. These experiences are the phantasms of a short circuited memory acting under the impulse and inspiration of a misguided imagination.

5:1.3 In the case of these mediums, the mind has grown up in some respects, but in this particular feature they have remained juvenile, and we all know that the younger we are, the more active, vivid and uncontrolled is the imagination and phantasy.

5:1.4 What is to hinder an over-developed phantasy from setting in operation fictitious feelings and impressions

and, by its well known powers of reconstruction,

creating spiritistic forms, unreal apparitions, and the fantastic concepts of the spirit world?

5:1.5 The highly organized nervous system of a psychically unstable individual can easily imagine itself to be the hero of the moving picture play, identifying itself with all the experiences portrayed on the screen, as indeed he will in the case of

Identification is intimately bound up with those day-dreaming processes which have been dealt with in the earlier portion of the present chapter. The day-dreamer who witnesses the triumphal progress of some popular hero through the streets

lives himself into the part of the central figure, and marches with him through the cheering crowds (H 162).

[Identification] consists in identifying ourselves with another individual, either real or fictitious, so that we experience his joys, sorrows, and desires, as if they were our own (H 158).

This mechanism, which has been termed “wish fulfilment,”

furnishes a psychological interpretation for a vast number of the manifestations of insanity (H 149).

the public procession in which some prominent individual, or some hero, is on parade;

such individuals will imagine themselves to be the hero

and will experience all the pleasant and gratifying emotions experienced by the hero himself.

This sort of “identification,” or, as it has been termed, “wish evolvment,”

furnishes the psychological interpretation for a vast number of mediumistic phenomena.

The mediums desire to be what they profess to be and thus, through the mental processes of “projection,” on the one hand, and the phantasy of “identification,” on the other, they seek to bring about their “wish evolvment;” and thus, from the unlimited supply of material in the reservoir of the subconscious mind they bring forth those things which complete the picture and enable them, through their clairvoyance and clair-audience, to depict to the devotees of spiritism the images of departed spirits and to hear messages from another world.

5:1.6 Mental confusion, crossed wires, endocrine disturbances, and a dozen other influences, mental, chemical, and physical, not to say spiritual, may all contribute to the making of a first class, sincere, utterly self-deceived medium or clairvoyant.

5:1.7 Personality determines the psychic tendency of those unique individuals; and we now know that personality is largely determined by the secretions of the endocrine, or ductless gland system, of the body. There is not only a psychic basis for spiritualistic tendencies, but also an hereditary and a chemical basis.

2. DETACHED COMPLEXES

[Compare Chap. 38 of *The Physiology of Faith and Fear* and *PF&F* 444.]

5:2.1 You should understand that the human mind is represented by a very intricate organization and grouping of cells, which hold the patterns of memory and thought, and which are undoubtedly formed after the fashion of groups, systems, constellations, and so on. Now it is known that certain groups of mind cells or systems, commonly known as *complexes*, may be cut off, as it were, from active connection with the major mental powers, and may behave in an insubordinate manner, playing the role of a psychic insurgent, as regards the mental life as a whole.

[See Hart 54-55.]

These detached complexes are undoubtedly present in some forms of insanity, and they are able to assert themselves in such a fashion as to cause the demented individual to hear voices and in many other ways to disturb the mental equilibrium.

SOURCE

[Suffice it to say, the majority of trance mediums, no doubt, honestly believe themselves to be the channel of communication between Heaven and earth, and it is their enthusiasm and earnest confidence in their own work, coupled with the fact that they are sometimes really insane, that gives such peculiar influence and power to their teaching (*Worry and Nervousness* 288).]

5: THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

5:2.2 It is highly probable that, in some cases of clairvoyants and mediums, we have a mental condition that actually borders on insanity.

These individuals may be suffering from a “complex detachment” in a very mild degree, so that they are able from time to time to recognize these voices and other impressions that come up from this sort of dissociation, complex detachment, or double personality—or whatever name it may be called—and they are, therefore, wholly sincere when they represent to others that they have heard these voices in the mind as from an outside source.

I am convinced that many mediums and other spiritistic enthusiasts have so persistently and successfully built up their “ghost complexes;” that they have so effectively come to transfer the “reality feeling” to these “spook” creations of their own subconscious mind; that they have so ardently welded their emotions to these spirit concepts, that in time, this grouping of complexes, having to do with spirit beliefs and desires, becomes so powerfully entrenched and so highly influential in the psychic life of such individuals that they become capable of instituting some sort of psychic insurrection, and come thus more or less fully to dominate the conscious life, opinions, and behavior of their victims.

5:2.3 An individual may bury certain unwelcome ideas or unpleasant emotions in his subconscious, from whence, as time passes, they may come forth again to plague and harass him. So may the mediums and clairvoyants, as the years pass, bury things in their subconscious minds, from whence these long forgotten ideas and emotions may constantly spring forth during the spirit seance to impersonate, through the process of “projection” and the technique of “transference,” the person, mannerisms, and voices of dead and departed human beings.

3. COMPLEX DISSOCIATION

I: THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS (Lay 13)

[PREAMBLE] (Lay 13)

My experience is that the feeling of sameness and the feeling of reality are qualities that may, under appropriate circumstances, occupy the focus of attention

and thus be the *only* sense quality in consciousness for certain brief periods.

5:3.1 Now it is believed that some individuals possess such a power of dissociation, in connection with a peculiar and uncanny concentration of the attention, that at any one moment the whole stream of consciousness may be so directed and so successfully diverted that

the “feeling of reality”—the sense of reality—may be so focused

upon a single idea or desire as to shut every other sensory feeling or emotional experience out of the mind’s eye, or the awareness of consciousness;

and thus the whole psychic machinery would be concentrated upon this single idea of the mind.

As will later appear, this is a most important point in considering the validity of the so-called proofs of the existence of **disembodied spirit** (L 19).

XVIII: HYSTERIA—THE MASTER IMITATOR (*Worry and Nervousness* 221)

COMPLEX DISSOCIATION (*Worry and Nervousness* 223)

In the presence of this temporary sort of complex dissociation, it would appear that in the case of these highly suggestible individuals, that

some sort of dominating and all-pervading idea—now free from natural restraints and customary restrictions—

sweeps through the mind and out over the body, completely dominating and absolutely controlling the organism

to such an extent as to be able to produce cramps, paralyses, and fits, as regards the body;

while, in a mental way, the patient may become as one possessed of the devil on the one hand, while on the other hand,

In this way, psychologists believe that mediums sometimes come to materialize

disembodied spirits in the eyes of their own minds,

to become—mind, body, and soul—possessed with the reality of the thing which they think they see outside of their minds, but which, in reality, lives and functions on the threshold of their own psychic life and which had its inception, origin, and birth within their own subconscious mind.

5:3.2 In the presence of this temporary sort of complex dissociation, it would appear that in the case of these highly suggestible individuals, that

some sort of dominating and all-pervading idea—now free from natural restraints and customary restrictions—

sweeps through the mind and out over the body, completely dominating and absolutely controlling the organism

to such an extent as to be able to produce cramps, paralyses, and fits, as regards the body;

while, in a mental way, the patient may become as one possessed of the devil on the one hand, while on the other hand

she may establish herself as a spiritualistic medium,

SOURCE

she may go forth in some noble and daring rôle as did the heroic maid of Orleans (*W&N* 224).

XXXVIII: PSYCHIC FADS AND FAKES (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 457)

SPIRITUALISM (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 466)

There can be no doubt that the minds of many so-called mediums are striking illustrations of that dissociation among groups of conscious processes

which was previously discussed in connection with double personality, and hysteria in general.

In as far as this is the case, one must in fairness admit that such a medium is not fundamentally (I mean morally) a fraud,

but rather the subject of an elusive functional nervous disorder,

and at the same time, clever enough to capitalize the disorder and make it provide the necessities of life.

In whatever instances this is the case, the so-called messages from the dead are made up of the more or less coherent trains of ideas that troop in from the marginal consciousness

in response to those suggested ideas which come into the medium's attention when he or she is in a state of semi or complete trance. To whatever extent this represents the nature of mediumship, it, together with so-called spirit messages, admits of scientific psychologic investigation (*PF&F* 466).

5: THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

or she may go forth in some noble and daring role as did the heroic Maid of Orleans.

5:3.3 There can be no doubt that the minds of many so-called mediums are striking illustrations of that dissociation among groups of conscious mental processes—

they verge on actual hysteria and double personality.

In so far as this is the case, one must in fairness admit that such a medium is not fundamentally (I mean morally) a fraud,

but rather the subject of an elusive, functional disorder,

and at the same time clever enough to capitalize the disorder and make it provide the necessities of life.

In whatever instances this is the case, the so-called messages from the dead are made up of the more or less coherent trains of ideas that troop in from the marginal consciousness

in response to those suggested ideas which come into the medium's attention when he or she is in a state of semi- or complete trance.

4. THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

IV: THE UNCONSCIOUS AS AN URGE (Lay 93)

§ 7. *The Unconscious an Hypothesis* (Lay 117)

[contd] The unconscious is of course not a state of mind of which we can become directly aware. It is, on the other hand, a **working hypothesis**, a supposition necessary to explain the sequence of thoughts in the stream of consciousness; but, as a hypothesis, it has worked so well that a great many extraordinary thought occurrences in normal waking life are explained by it (L 117).

5:4.1 The subconscious mind, like the atomic theory, is a splendid and practical **working concept**,

whether it really exists or not.

One thing we are sure of—the thing which it stands for is an actual part of our mental life.

IV: PSYCHOLOGY—HOW WE THINK (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 35)

INACCURACIES OF THINKING (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 38)

Sensations can produce ideas, and it should also be borne in mind that ideas can produce sensations (*PF&F* 39).

While sensations can produce ideas, it must also be borne in mind that ideas can produce sensations.

THE POWERS OF MEMORY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 45)

It is impossible to conceive of the possibilities of mind deception, extending from mental delusions to fictitious physical disease,

5:4.2 It is impossible to conceive of the possibilities of mind deception, extending from the mental delusions of fictitious physical disease

to the consummate deceptions of spiritualistic phantasms,

SOURCE

that would be made possible by a working conspiracy between imagination and memory,

when both these mental powers are irritated and diseased by a poisonous blood stream (PF&F 47).

5: THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

that would be made possible by a working conspiracy between imagination, phantasy, and memory,

when all three of these powers are unstable from heredity or irritated and diseased by a poisoned blood stream.

5:4.3 It is my opinion that much of the psychology of clairvoyants and spirit mediums takes place out in the dim consciousness of the marginal state. That is, these spirit manifestations, in their ideas and images, originate in the subconscious mind, much as the phantasms of the dream world originate during the night season, when the higher reasoning, the logical, analytical and conscious centers of the brain are asleep—dead to the world.

5:4.4 Unquestionably the seance room, as conventionally conducted, constitutes a very favorable setting—one which is in every way calculated to encourage the emergence of visual or auditory hallucinations from the realms of the unconscious. These no sooner appear than the expectant attitude of both medium and spectator disposes them early to transfer to these children of subconscious creation that “feeling of reality,” which justifies the consciousness from that time on in its recognition and reception of these phenomena as a bona fide experience.

XIII: HYSTERICAL STIGMATA—
SUGGESTIBILITY (Janet 270)

Our poor patients were not lucky. Formerly, they were burnt as witches; then, they were accused of all possible debaucheries;

5:4.5 Hysterical patients, in a former generation, were burned at the stake as witches.

then, when the manners had become gentler, one was content with saying that they were versatile to excess, remarkable for their spirit of **duplicity**, of **falsehood**,

of *perpetual simulation* (J 277).

Today they preside over parlor seances and perform as spirit mediums.

And today, as in olden times, their performances are characterized by **falsehood** and **duplicity**,

as well as by a continuous series of impersonations.

It should be remembered that hysterical women are not only able to impersonate serious diseases of the body in their attacks, but that they are equally gifted in psychologic legerdemain, in that they are able to impersonate, and other-wise make representations to onlookers, the spirits of departed human beings.

5. THE PHYSIOLOGY OF SPIRITUALISM

VII: BELIEF BEFORE KNOWLEDGE (Lay 247)

§3. *Continuousness of Urge* (Lay 251)

And it is **but a step** from the separate existence of the conscious life after death

to the separate existence of **consciousness** during life, just as the savage or the child when **dreaming**, thinks he is in another place than where his body is.

5:5.1 In the mind of the primitive savage

it constitutes **but a short step**

in reasoning (from his **dream-experiences**), to lead to the belief that his **"consciousness"** could be absent from the body,

And, the dream, whether in the night or in the day, has this characteristic that it presents the dreamer with an apparent power over space (L 253).

Similarly the medium's communications with spirits are an extension of power greater than ordinary in the average waking existence (L 253-54).

XI: PRESENT STATUS (Lay 325)

§3. *What is "Spirit"?* (Lay 327)

[contd] As far as science today knows, spirit is nothing. There is no such thing to be revealed as a force operating from without upon real things with anything more like human intelligence than the swelling of water before it becomes ice (L 327).

[See 5:0.1, above.]

and so these two ideas put together—or rather, the one growing out of the other—lead the primitive mind to believe in “consciousness” separate and apart from the physical body, and thus the foundation is securely laid for a belief in spiritism.

Dreams seem to endow the mind with a power that is quite independent of time and space,

and the fancies of the dream world are not wholly unlike those extraordinary claims and superstitions of the spirit medium.

5:5.2 As far as psychology is concerned—the physical sciences—there is no spirit.

Spiritual forces are not able to manifest themselves to the instruments employed in scientific investigation. They are immaterial, and science deals only with the material.

X: SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS
(Lay 300)

If the medium were analysed he would then have it made clear to him that all the trance utterances are but emanations from his own mind (L 311).

XI: PRESENT STATUS (Lay 325)

§4. *Quality of Content* (Lay 328)

[contd] A word should be added about the quality of the content of the spiritistic messages.

Not only are they trivial and without the remotest resemblance to the grandeur of thought of the bibles of the world which contain the phantasy of the races backed by the claim of authoritative inspiration;

5:5.3 Science comes more and more to look upon that which lays claim to being supernatural, or spiritual, in the performance of spirit mediums, as being

an emanation from the unconscious realms of the medium's own mind,

and that the entire performance is subject to natural explanation by the laws of physio-psychology; that the laws of physiology on the one hand, and of psychology, on the other, are adequate quite fully to explain these apparently supernatural phenomena.

The very nature of the content of these spirit messages and revelations

is sufficient to brand them as wholly human,

and in every way very ordinary

not only have they in every instance failed to give what would be the most desired by humans, and have besides criticized the questioners for wanting it; ... but it is possible in these spiritistic communications to detect the mercenary, the quibbling, the fencing, the indirection of a wild attempt to guess out what will please the hearer, without any attempt whatever to gain true breadth of vision and nobility of thought (L 328).

V: MECHANISMS (Lay 147)

§19. *Desire for Excitement* (Lay 193)

[contd] It is more than likely that besides the unconscious desire for the amplification of the **ego** manifested in all spiritual phenomena there is also an additional factor in the unconscious **wish for excitement** (L 193) .

§18. *Desire for the Extraordinary* (Lay 191)

§17. *Miracles* (Lay 189)

[contd] The greatest miracles are the **commonest occurrences of every day life** ... One is impressed with the fact that there is nothing in any of the “phenomena” of spiritualism any more wonderful than almost anything that takes place around us or in us every day.

and utterly devoid of any ear-marks of that superiority which would in any way serve to class them as extraordinary or identify them as supernatural.

5:5.4 Spiritualism panders to that **egotistic human desire for excitement** and adventure.

The average man likes to dabble with the **extraordinary**.

We tend to overlook the remarkable nature of the **common occurrences of everyday life**,

and we long to make contact with big things and unusual events.

We enjoy the exhilaration of talking through the air;

The performance of the antennae or the coherer in the wireless is no less remarkable than the hypersensitivity of the medium in receiving spirit messages (L 189-90).

wireless telephony and radio appeal to our imagination;

and we long to project the experiment one step further—to hoist our spiritual aerials and get the wireless waves from other worlds. The one seems little more impossible than the other, that is, provided we but lead ourselves to admit the existence of a spiritual world and the reality of spiritual forces.

6. THE FEAR OF DEATH

[Compare Lay 63 and 333.]

5:6.1 The biology of spiritualism is rooted in the pain-pleasure complex of the human mind and nervous system. For numerous reasons, the primitive mind of the savage fears death. Death is usually preceded or accompanied by pain and suffering. Death spells the extinction of all possibility of pleasure enjoyment, and therefore death becomes the symbol—the goal, or culmination—of suffering, agony and pain. It becomes the central idea that stands for cessation of pleasure, and therefore, the primitive mind, on the basis of the desire to avoid pain and experience pleasure, desires in every way possible, in its efforts to survive the fear of death, to prove the unreality—the non-existence—of death. And so the unconscious mind of even the primitive tribes reaches out with a persistent longing to grasp any and all evidences and proofs that would tend to strengthen the belief of spirit survival after death, and thus directly and indirectly, in every way possible, to prove that death is but an illusion—

but the vestibule to another world—the veil behind which occurs the birth of another existence into a new and higher life.

XI: PRESENT STATUS (Lay 325)

§6. *Reality Thinking* (Lay 334)

The **unconscious** holds the **key** not only to the explanation of the “phenomena” of **spiritism**

but of the explanation of all the phenomena of present day existence, and is the only key which will unlock the door to a dignified and worthy social life in the future (L 335).

5:6.2 We are thus coming to that place where we are able clearly to recognize that

the **key** to **spiritualism**—that is to the non-fraudulent, non-materialistic phase of the phenomena—is to be found in the physiology of the **unconscious**.

Here in this mysterious realm of the human intellect are locked up the secrets and mysteries of mediumship, clairvoyance, trances, automatic writing, and other of the real and respectable manifestations of modern spiritualism.

7. WHAT IS A SPIRIT?

5:7.1 *Physiology is the key by which we will open the psychological lock which will enable us to begin our explorations of the secret birthplace and lodgement of the human well-springs of modern spiritualism.*

I: THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS (Lay 13)

§14. *Complexity of Consciousness* (Lay 44)

Finally the thesis of this chapter is that those who make any statement whatever concerning the thing they call spirit will be obliged not only to make a careful **definition** of what it is, and what relation it bears to the subjective sensations or mental images;

but also to orient themselves exactly as to the functions of these mental images in the mental life of the individual, before they venture to state that anything perceived *via* the subjective or objective sensations can be said to be scientifically true or to **prove the existence** of a force outside the body but related to the body—a force that preserves in its existence outside of the body something like a conscious personality.

[See 5:0.1 and 5:5.2, above.]

5:7.2 What then is a spirit?

I would offer two definitions:

5:7.3 1. Spirit, in a theological sense, is an invisible, non-material entity, or intelligence, operating in the spiritual world in accordance with spiritual laws and for the accomplishment of spiritual purposes; and limited, in its contact with the human mind, to the making of spiritual suggestions and to communicating with the spiritual monitors which are assumed to indwell the human mind.

The **proof of their existence** must ever be without the pale of science, and their recognition is purely and wholly a matter of belief. Their contemplation is a matter of faith, and their reality and existence are not for scientific investigation.

5:7.4 2. Spirits, as recognized and studied by science, as pertaining to mediumship and the phenomena of modern spiritualism, are psychic projections—fantastic creations of the subconscious mind. They have a biologic origin; they are the deceptive offspring of a working conspiracy between the physiological and psychological powers resident in, and operating upon the deep and unknown deposits of human sensation, memory and emotions, which we commonly call the subconscious mind, but which is more properly and scientifically known as “the great Unconscious.”

5:7.5 The spirits, then, that we deal with so largely in the study of spiritualism, exist within the human body, and from the realms of the unconscious centers of the mind project themselves outward for the production of their phenomena. They do not exist without the body and come in to possess the body, and thus work upon the mind as an extraneous spiritual force.

In brief

the direct experience we have of mind or “spirit” is only in connection with the body,

In brief,

as far as science has been able to discover,

the spirit operating in connection with occult manifestations functions only in connection with the body,

and so far science has not been brought face to face with any phenomena that cannot be adequately explained on this hypothesis, or that cannot be reproduced by psychic manipulations and in accordance with natural laws.

and it is a matter of deduction pure and simple to prove (1) its **existence** **apart from the body** and

(2) its **ability**

to **affect bodies with which it is not directly connected**. Some of the difficulties of such proof, not to say its impossibility, I shall attempt to show in what follows (L 45-46).

5:7.6 Science, therefore, makes two challenges to the spiritualist, and they are as follows:

5:7.7 1. That the **existence** of a spirit separate and **apart from the body,**

operating to produce spiritualistic phenomena, is as yet unproved.

The scientist calls for further proof—science asks for evidence.

5:7.8 2. Science challenges the **ability** of spirits,

the projections of the subconscious mind,

to **affect any human body with which it is not connected,**

except as through the ordinary agencies of suggestion and other well-known channels of psychic influence.

8. WHY ARE MEDIUMS NECESSARY?

III: MEDIUMSHIP (**Jones** 33)

30 The medium never brings our spirit-friends to us. We bring our own friends. The medium is the keeper of the gate, permitting us to pass through.... The medium forms the connecting link between the two phases of life.

5:8.1 The spiritualists tell us that

It is as though we had a house wired for electric lights. Unless we had the light-bulbs to insert in the sockets, we would not have light. We can never have only part of the conditions and still receive communications (J 41).

[See 5:2.1, above.]

[Compare: [T]he incompetent workman who ascribes his failure to the inferiority of his tools and the unfair treatment meted out to him by his employer is admittedly still sane, while the man who complains to the police that he is the victim of an organised boycott is certified to be suffering from “delusions of persecution” and is removed to an asylum (Hart 139-40).]

mediums are necessary for the same reason that you have to have copper wire to conduct electricity; you cannot conduct it through a board fence.

They tell us we cannot do it on our own hook, we have to have peculiar, sensitive mediums. You see our preparatory training has built up in us the idea that special people can do special things and it is very easy to make us believe this theory about spirit mediums.

5:8.2 The psychic laws regulating this thing are based on what we call “complex formations.” The brain cells in the human body are organized on the principle of the solar system. And these things can become dissociated so that you can have one part of your mind talk with the other part. You know how one part of your mind can be so engrossed in thought, that you can read two pages and never know it, never have the slightest recollection of what you read. We do these things and they are perfectly normal and natural.

If you can keep your thoughts centered on spiritualism you are all right, but if you go too far with them, we will put you in a blue wagon and haul you off to the psychopathic hospital. Just as long as you say you hear a spirit talking to you you can get away with it; but as soon as you say you hear voices and see things they will put you in an asylum. One leads to affluence and a large income, and the other incarcerates you.

[contd from 5:8.1] **31** The spirit-world tells us that **women are better mediums than men.** Their forces are **finer.** A great many male mediums lose their mediumship in a period of ten years.... There are many women mediums who have practised their mediumship anywhere from thirty to fifty years, without any apparent loss of their powers (J 41).

[contd] **32** The **woman medium is less likely to care for material possessions than the male medium.** The more the medium seeks the pleasures and things of the world, the smaller that medium's degree of mediumship. The more spiritual the medium, the finer the forces and the more wonderful the communications (J 41).

V: SPIRIT EXISTENCE (Jones 56)

18 We are told that the spirit-world is **much more beautiful than our world,** that it has what we call scenery—a surface of their earth, or ground, or whatever it may be termed;

5:8.3 Not only do we find more women functioning as mediums, as compared with men, but

we find instruction from the spirit world explaining that **women are better mediums than men.**

5:8.4 The spiritualists claim that

women are less likely to be mercenary than men.

They further tell us that the spiritual world,

inferring at least some degree of materiality,

is **much more beautiful than our world,**

and one writer goes on to describe, in superlative terms,

that they have rivers and lakes, but no oceans; that they have large and beautiful cities, live in homes that are far more beautiful than ours, eat food, have rest-periods corresponding our own sleep, some form of bodily waste and repair, are the same size they were on earth, live a social as well as an intellectual existence, and converse through mediums with spirits in higher spheres, who are as invisible to them as they are to us (J 59).

[See eight rows up.]

their rivers, lakes, and oceans, their beautiful cities and homes;

and explains that a woman's finer sense and more artistic tendency is more easily brought into sympathetic contact with, and more highly appreciative of, those things, and therefore serves as the better channel between the higher spiritual and lower material worlds.

5:8.5 So far as my personal experience goes, I have never detected anything in the line of mediumship, thus far, which would call for a resort to a spiritual hypothesis for explanation. I have met, in my practice, peculiar psychic cases, some of which I have not been able fully to understand in the light of physiologic and psychologic laws, but as before stated, none of these have been mediums, and in no case did they claim to communicate with the dead.

5:8.6 In ordinary psychic experience, when disjunction occurs in the mind—when a constellation of complexes inaugurate an insurrection and try to set up business for themselves, they usually seek to displace the real self—to supplant the actual ego of the personality—and thus establish themselves in the place of power, and immediately to assume control of the mental actions and nervous behavior of the individual. This is what we see taking place in hysteria.

Now, it seems that in the case of the medium,

[The most common explanation of “spirit communication,” next to fraud on the one hand and spirits on the other, is the hypothesis of the **secondary personality**, or the “other self” of the medium.

this disjuncted, or insubordinate, **minor personality**, instead of crossing swords with the reigning ego of the psychic realm, rather chooses to establish itself as a separate entity—as a minor personality, distinct and separate from the mind and ego of its origin.

Often when the medium is in a hypnotic or trance condition a group or groups of latent brain cells seem to be quickened, and what appears to be another personality takes control and writes and talks through the medium and **claims to be a foreign intelligence** (Funk 71).]

Thus it **professes to be foreign** to the real self of the individual, alleging that it is an outside entity, often a discarnate spirit, present from a higher and invisible world.

5:8.7 How easy for this detached group of psychic complexes to take one step further, after organizing itself into a subconscious source of feeling and information, to relegate to itself the prerogatives of a departed spirit, and to palm itself off on the credulous and superstitious mind of its indwelling as a “spirit control,” as the discarnate spirit of some departed friend or relative of recent times, or the disembodied ego of some prince or hero of olden days. So our new personality, so mystically set up in business, proceeds to borrow the mind and muscles, the talking mechanism of the medium, as a means of expression on this so-called material plane to which it has returned for various alleged benevolent purposes.

9. THE TECHNIQUE OF “PROJECTION”

5:9.1 “Projection” is the technique of reversing the physiology of the conduction of sensory impulses from the body to the brain, there to form ideas, images, memories, etc. In “projection” this process is reversed—ideas and images are aroused in the mind and from there travel outward and are recognized through the sense organs as having had origin outside the body. Ordinarily, our visual images and our auditory sounds go with the feelings and emotions which they arouse and which accompany them, for registration and attention in the archives of memory; I say ordinarily these sights and sounds, as well as other sensory impressions, originate outside of the body as the result of its contact with the external and material world.

[*Compare:* It has been suggested that [hallucinations] might be due to a reversal of the nervous process by which a sensation reaches the brain. The external object produces the sensation, this travels along a nerve causing a perception, this perception is stored in the memory, and then, when very vividly reawakened, causes impulses to travel backward along the nerve to the periphery with the production of a feeling very like sensation (Walsh 604).]

5:9.2 Now, if we imagine a reversal of this process—that instead of these symbols of material things, these sights and sounds originating without the mind and external to it, and passing in as sensory impressions from the nervous system to the brain, to be there recognized by the mind and therein to be recorded and retained as memories—if we can imagine a reversal of this process so that we would have arising, down in the unconscious centers of the mind, various memory images and sounds which would travel outward over the nerves to the center of hearing and vision, there to be recognized,

there in reality to appear just as if they had come from without in the normal manner (and as they no doubt originally did arise before they were buried in the forgotten regions of the unconscious), then you will have a picture in your mind of the *technique of projection*. Your imagination need go but one step farther—to throw these sounds and images from the seeing and hearing centers of the mind, out of the body into the external world, and you have the foundation all laid for perfect **hallucination**. In this way an hysterical individual, a spiritualistic medium, or insane person, will be able to see and hear things that do not exist—that is, that do not exist in the external world—and they are not discoverable except to those people who, from whatever cause, are “seeing things” and “hearing things.”

V: THE MECHANISMS (Lay 147)

§7. *Projection* (Lay 165)

[contd] Projection is **normal** in every one,

5:9.3 This sort of “projection” is, to a certain extent, **normal** to all of us,

and is no doubt unconsciously practiced (to a limited degree) by most of us.

Occasionally we run across an individual who has become a victim of this sort of thing in one particular phase of his life. He is thoroughly sane and rational in every other avenue of thought, but on some one thing he has become a monomaniac. He hears and sees things that are not real, his mind is not controlled by reason and is not dominated by logic in this particular realm of thought, as in all others

but in those persons in which it reaches an abnormal degree it is considered one of the symptoms of **paranoia**.

We project an idea upon some person or thing when we attribute to that person or thing ideas or feelings that really originate in our own minds; and, in attributing to a person an idea, we think that he has that idea.

For example, a bad conscience is a quite universal instance of normal projection. If we have done anything bad, it is bad only because other people think it bad if they knew we had done it.... So it is evident that our **judgment of the morality of our own actions** is practically in every instance the criticism which we know or imagine **other people would make of that action** (L 165-66).

§8. *Animism* (Lay 168)

[contd] The earliest type of thought among peoples before the era of simplest civilization was a **projection of their own ideas and feelings** impartially upon other persons and inanimate things

and when this is well marked and classic, we say that such a patient has **paranoia**.

5:9.4 We are quite likely to project some of our own fears and feelings on other people—

it is notorious that we have a tendency to judge other people by ourselves.

We **judge many of our own acts** by the way in which we think **our friends and neighbors would judge us**.

Our standards of morality are largely those that are “projected” from the consciences of other people upon us. We are influenced by tribal standards; we are governed largely by fashion; we regulate our lives in accordance with convention; we are constantly interchanging ideas and feelings, emotions and reactions, between ourselves and other people.

5:9.5 *Origin and Nature of Projection.*

It would seem that

primitive people—savages—were wont to **project their ideas and emotional reactions** on a great variety of things, both animate and inanimate,

whether motionless, like rocks, or moving things, like clouds or rivers, the moon, sun and stars (L 168).

But other people and animals have breath. He can see and feel it too. They too have spirits (L 169).

On cold mornings he can see [his breath] leave his nostrils (L 169).

The waterfall has a spirit. He can see it passing from the cataract in a fine mist.

The trees have spirits too, which gather in film clouds on the mountain sides (L 169).

and so these simple children of Nature came to endow

rocks, clouds, rivers, not to mention the sun, moon and stars,

with spirits and various supernatural attributes as shown by the superstitious beliefs of ancient peoples, as well as the highly organized mythology of the Greeks and other olden tribes.

As the race developed it was observed that

animals breathed,

and then the savage saw the mist arise from the waterfall, looking not unlike

the condensation of his breath on a frosty morning.

How easy for the primitive mind to reason that

the waterfall had a spirit as shown in the mist floating from the plunging waters.

And so, later on, the trees were endowed with spirits,

and the whole primitive psychology of a spirit world was built up—which still clings to the human mind and infests the human consciousness, predisposing in such a deep-seated, pathological fashion, the men and women, even of a civilized day and generation, to the sophistries and vagaries of spiritualism.

10. THE “REALITY FEELING”**I: THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS**
(Lay 13)

§9. *Reality Feeling an Internal Sensation* (Lay 34)

In short, my reality feeling works pretty well in conjunction with vision in all the ordinary experiences of life. I believe it does also with other people and with other sense qualities of consciousness as well as vision (L 35).

IX: COLLECTIVE HYPNOSIS
(Schofield 155)

Power in Crowds (Schofield 157)

[W]hatever is presented to the collective mind seems objective to the senses, and thus sights are seen, and sounds are heard (hallucinations, as in the rope trick), that are merely the projection, objectively, of ideas that obsess the mind when in this condition, which may fairly be called “collective hypnotism” (S 158).

5:10.1 Thus we see that in certain peculiar types and temperaments

the “reality feeling” works very well in connection with the clairaudient state—automatic hearing.

And it is easy to suppose that in a seance many individuals whose minds are attuned—who are *en rapport* as the professionals call it—would be able to see and hear the same things the medium would. It is a sort of collective sensation, or collective illusion—

some one has called it “collective hypnotism.”

I: THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

(Lay 13)

§9. *Reality Feeling an Internal Sensation* (Lay 34)

But from time immemorial there have always been people who have attempted to give objective validity to their visual and auditory images.

Seers have seen **visions**

and solitary hermits and others have heard **voices**, which means only that the feeling of reality has become detached from external sensation and, in more than ordinary intensity, has attached itself to some visual or auditory image (L 35).

5:10.2 Every now and then some one arises who attempts to make other people believe in the things which they see and hear in their own minds.

Self-styled “prophets” arise to convince us of the reality of their **visions**.

Odd geniuses appear who tell us of the **voices** they hear,

and if they seem fairly sane and socially conventional in every way, they are sometimes able to build up vast followings, to create cults and establish churches; whereas, if they are too bold in their imaginings, if they see a little too far or hear a little too much, they are promptly seized and quickly lodged safe within the confines of an insane asylum.

5:10.3 When an individual has a great variety of these visualizations, and when he hears too many voices, we readily drag him from his pedestal as prophet or high priest of spiritualism, haul him before a sanity commission, adjudge him insane and confine him in the crazy house. That is the penalty of allowing his “feeling of reality” to once gain possession of the human intellect, of indulging in the failure to discriminate between the creatures of consciousness and the creatures of the material world, in the practical affairs of life.

5:10.4 If we intently **believe** anything, if we ardently will to believe a certain thing, it greatly helps us in transferring our memory images and our imaginative creations of the mind from one psychic association to another;

[contd] The cause of this transfer of association from the association of *feeling of reality with external visual sensation* to

the association of *feeling of reality with a visual image*

(or its transfer from sensation to image in the **auditory** or any other quality)

that is, to transfer the “feeling of reality,” which belongs to an **external visual sense,**

to an association that is purely and properly a **visual image** of consciousness;

or to transfer a “feeling of reality” connected with the reception of **sound waves** through the external ear, to a concept or sensation of sound which is internal in origin,

but which is made real to consciousness by such a transfer of these emotions and reactions which go by the name of “reality feeling.”

will be taken up in the second part of this book. Here, however, it should be said that in the nature of *belief* and in the relation which belief bears to the unconscious wish, there is an adequate and perfectly comprehensible cause for the transfer... (L 35-36).

11. DOUBLE PERSONALITY

5:11.1 Double, or multiple personality (for sometimes there are more than two) is one of the most interesting psychic phenomena to be described in modern times.

That an individual may actually possess a dual psychic nature, may actually be one person one day and another the following, and still a third a few days subsequently, is a fact now well established in the study of abnormal psychology.

5:11.2 Interesting as it would be further to go into this question here, space will not permit, and we can only touch upon it as an illustration of the manner in which some sorts of psychic phenomena may be adequately explained.

5:11.3 In cases of double personality, individuals may wander off and be under the guidance of the subordinate personality, and then return, after days or weeks, not knowing where they have been or what has transpired.

APPENDIX C: MULTIPLE PERSONALITY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 524)

“... I will give a few illustrations: If there is one thing which Miss Beauchamp has a perfect horror of, it is snakes and spiders. They throw her into a condition of terror. One day Sally went out into the country and collected some snakes and spiders and put them into a little box.

She brought them home and did them up in a little package, and addressed them to Miss Beauchamp,

Under the influence of one personality,

a girl will go into the woods and gather garter snakes and bring them home in boxes

addressed to her other personality,

just to witness the consternation of the other individual

SOURCE

and when B. I. opened the package, they ran out and about the room and nearly sent her into fits. In order to get rid of them she had to handle them, which added to her terror..." (PF&F 527).

"[Sally] cannot read French or any of the foreign languages which Miss Beauchamp knows, and she cannot write shorthand; in short, she lacks a great many of the educational accomplishments which the other character possesses..." (PF&F 526).

[Compare 5:0.1 and 7:5.1.]

5: THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

when the wriggling reptiles crawled out of the box when it was opened.

One personality is afraid of snakes, the other is not;

again one personality may be able to write shorthand, the other cannot; one may speak French fluently, while the other knows not a word of the language.

Those are but a few illustrations to show how one personality may know absolutely nothing of what the other personality, dwelling in the same mind, may say or do.

5:11.4 It is my opinion that about seventy-five per cent of our commonplace spiritistic manifestations are frauds—conscious, deliberate, commercial frauds, and that about twenty-five per cent belong to the order which we are describing at this time, and include the possible cases of actual spiritual or supernatural phenomena, which I, it will be observed, all the way along, accept as possible, though I have never personally come in contact with but one or two cases that, could lay even remote claim to falling into this last named group.

5:11.5 What a calamity that the uncertain cerebrations of such abnormal minds should come to be regarded by such a large number of people as constituting information from a supernatural source, and wisdom of Divine origin;

or that these ebullitions of automatic, psychic origin in the human mind, should come to be regarded by tens of thousands of persons as communications from the discarnate spirits of departed friends and relatives. The time has certainly come to apply common sense methods of reasoning to our investigations of psychic phenomena, and to apply rigid, sober-minded, scientific tests to all men and women who claim to be channels of either supernatural communication, or mediums through whom disembodied spirits manifest themselves to living men and women.

12. SOMNAMBULISM

5:12.1 Perhaps there is little difference between the performances of the sleep walker and the phenomena of the trance medium. They are each in more or less of an unnatural and artificial state of mind, and are more or less automatically executing their various actions.

5:12.2 In other cases, when these subordinate personalities or constellations of complexes start on a rampage they exceed the limits of a mere mental mood, although they fall short of carrying their insurrection to the point of an independent existence such as would be exemplified by trances, cataleptic hysteria, or spirit voices, and then such an individual experiences the keen suffering which accompanies the variegated vagaries of neurasthenia, brain fag, nervous exhaustion, psychasthenia, etc.

5:12.3 We are all more or less familiar with the somnambulistic phenomena of the “sleep walker;” how he will automatically perform marvelously intricate pedestrian feats while oblivious to all surroundings, and utterly unconscious in his own mind of the things which he does as he goes forth on these extraordinary nocturnal strolls. This common phenomenon is so well understood that attention only needs to be called to it to emphasize the fact that sleep walkers are unconscious of what they are doing and that they continue to do it exceedingly well as long as they are not aroused from their slumbers, or otherwise molested in their performance.

[Compare Janet 225.]

5:12.4 Now, in the case of numerous phenomena connected with abnormal psychology in general and with mediumistic performances in particular, we have conditions that are in every way identical with, and analogous to, the sleep walker’s automatic performances. In the case of the sleep walker, the subconscious mind is directing the legs—the feet are made to execute the mandates of the great unconscious—while in the case of automatic writing it is the hands that have fallen under the control of the subconscious centers. In automatic talking the tongue and speaking centers of the mind are dominated by the unconscious. In the case of hearing voices and seeing images of supposed spirits, we have the same general condition prevailing, only in these latter cases it is the sense of hearing and the sense of sight that have become in their turn the victims of subconscious domination—the subject of this outward projection of subconscious machinations.

5:12.5 *An Interesting Case.*IX: SPECIMENS OF THE EVIDENCE
SUPPLIED BY PSYCHICAL
RESEARCH (McComb 166)THE AMAZING STORY OF DORIS FISHER
(McComb 179)

Not long ago Doctor Prince reported a case of dissociation, or multiple personality, which is very interesting when studied in the light of mediumship.

It should be borne in mind that in these cases of multiple personality

“Dissociation,” which is a phenomenon of very rare occurrence, but recognized by all modern psychologists, consists (employing the psychologically orthodox explanation) in a **fissuring** of the mind,

much as the main **branches** of a **tree** part from the trunk, into two subsistences, in which case they are called “dual personalities,” or into more than two, which are accordingly known as “multiple personalities” (McC 179-80).

At the time that Doris was discovered by Mrs. Prince and taken in hand by Dr. Walter F. Prince, she had **five personalities including the primary one.**

But previous to the death of her mother in 1906, there were three

the mind is sort of split up, or **“fissured,”**

after the fashion of a **tree** with many **branches**

which in turn are connected with numerous similar sub-branches.

5:12.6 This interesting individual was **Doris Fisher,**

who had **five personalities including the primary one.**

Before the death of her mother she had at least two or three personalities,

the uncertainty being due to the fact that

(if “Sleeping Margaret” was a personality and not, as she has since claimed, a spirit), of which two were of such nature as to then manifest themselves to beholders (McC 181).

[These cases, several of which the author had the opportunity of fully examining a few years ago, are illustrations of those peculiar and unusual automatic talking performances which come to be regarded as the miraculous gift of tongues ... (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 462-63).]

VIII: AUTOMATIC WRITING (McCabe 129)

she claimed one of her personalities was a spirit.

Here we have scientific proof of the psychic origin of much that appears in the performances of modern spirit mediumship.

13. AUTOMATIC WRITING

5:13.1 The automatic talkers and writers, those who “speak with tongues,” etc., constitute the most interesting group of individuals who live their queer lives out on the borderland between the normal and the abnormal in psychology. These individuals are very interesting to study, from a psychologic standpoint.

I have recently been privileged to thoroughly examine and carefully study not less than half a dozen men and women who are supposed to have the “gift of tongues,”

and who are prominently identified with numerous present-day religious movements that exhibit these gifts of the spirit as evidence of Heavenly authenticity.

5:13.2 I have had some very interesting experiences in connection with the study of automatic writers.

But beyond [professional mediums] are hundreds, or thousands, of private individuals who discover that they are mediums. They take a pencil in their hands,

fall into a passive, dreamy state,

and presently the pencil “automatically” writes messages

from the spirit world.

Others use the planchette (a pencil fixed in a heart-shaped board which, when the medium’s fingers are on it, writes on a sheet of paper) or the ouija board (in which the apex of the heart spells out messages by pointing rapidly to the letters of the alphabet painted on a larger board over which it travels). I have studied all three forms, and may take them together as “automatic writing” (M 133).

I remember one case which came under my observation some twenty years ago, and after giving this man a thorough course of instruction regarding the physiology and psychology of his strange performances, he gradually lost the power of automatic writing and for the past six or eight years has been wholly unable to indulge in this phenomenon. Years ago he was able to

take a pencil in his hand,

drop off into a sort of passive dream-state,

when suddenly the pencil would start in to write messages,

as he supposed,

having their origin in the spirit world.

In this connection let me record it as my opinion that automatic writing and the automatism manifested in the ouija board performance are very nearly, if not quite, one and the same thing.

That is, I regard them as identical in their psychologic roots—in their psychic origin and direction.

5:13.3 I have found it exceedingly difficult to segregate the sincere and subconscious automatic writers from those performers whose writing is more or less controlled—

[contd] The first question is whether this *can* be done unconsciously. If such messages are **consciously** spelt or written by the medium, it is, of course, **fraud**, because the messages purport to come from the dead. My own experience convinces me that even here there is a vast amount of fraud (M 133).

those who are to a certain degree **consciously fraudulent**.

5:13.4 There seems to be an inherent tendency on the part of these psychic freaks and so-called “sensitives” to exaggerate their gifts and, **childlike**, magnify their performances.

The mental attitude of the medium seems to be to try and

People get into the attitude of the **child**. “**I can do what you can’t do,**” you constantly hear the child say to its fellows. There is a good deal of the child in all of us (M 134).

outdo other “psychics,”

and so there is ever present this sort of urge to the perpetration of fraud.

But while there is much fraud even in automatic writing,

5:13.5 **Notwithstanding the frauds to be found among automatic writers,**

there are certainly hundreds of mediums of this description who quite honestly **believe that they are spirit-controlled** (M 134).

there is, nevertheless, a residue who are wholly sincere, honest men and women who **believe they are “spirit controlled,”**

or that in some other way their automatic writings have a spiritual origin.

14. TELEPATHY AND MIND READING

VIII: THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE DRAWINGS (Bennett 89)

5:14.1 Telepathy has been variously called mind reading, thought transference, and universal intelligence, and it has been more associated with the propaganda of spiritualism in Great Britain than in this country. This is probably due to the fact that early in his spiritistic investigations Myers attached a great deal of importance to the role of telepathy in connection with various spiritistic and occult manifestations. Myers was so impressed with the province of telepathy in the study of spiritualism that

The reader is referred to a passage in the concluding chapter, quoted from Mr. Myers, in which he claims an exalted position for Telepathy, as almost the fundamental doctrine of Spiritualistic Philosophy (B 109).

he once stated that it was “almost the fundamental doctrine of spiritualistic philosophy.”

5:14.2 Telepathy should not be confused with alleged second sight, intuition, clairvoyance, etc. It rests upon an entirely different and separate hypothesis. In this connection it is well to remind the reader that these peculiar psychic tendencies appear to run in families.

VIII: THE ARGUMENT FROM
PSYCHICAL RESEARCH (McComb
140)

1. *The telepathic hypothesis.*

The word “telepathy” is a convenient
symbol

to cover coincidences between living
minds

not due to chance; but we have not even
an inkling of the process by which these
coincidences come about (McC 160).

5:14.3 I think the consensus of opinion
among the scientists² today would be that

telepathy is merely a popular word-
symbol which has come into use

in explanation of certain coincidences
which take place between living
individuals

and which are to be explained in two
general ways:

5:14.4 1. Chance. Coincidences, pure
and simple.

5:14.5 2. Similarity of hereditary
predisposition, or environmental influ-
ences, either or both of which tend to
cause two individuals to think of the
same thing, approximately, at the same
time and under similar circumstances.

5:14.6 In consideration of the fact that
hereditary similarity may account for the
apparent coincidence of two individuals
in different parts of the world thinking of
the same thing at the same time, we may
cite the many experiences recorded of
identity of thought on the part of so-
called “identical twins.”

[See *The Mind at Mischief* chart 19:2.1-2 for mention of
Popenoe’s research into identical twins.]

5:14.7 *The Universal Mind.*

XXXVIII: PSYCHIC FADS AND FAKES (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 457)

TELEPATHY AND MAGNETIC HEALING (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 463)

This plausible hypothesis of a Universal Mind completely does away with the assumption of the transfer of thought from one finite mind to another.

This is a Universal Intelligence whose emanations radiate to all who are in harmony with the Divine Mind.

Every soul who is “in tune with the Infinite” enjoys the possibility of receiving messages and inspirations from the Holy Spirit.

If this is true, it is not difficult to see that two minds may have the same thought at the same time,

just as two wireless telegraph stations which are attuned alike may receive, at the same time, the same message, which has been flashed from a vessel many miles from each station.

Many good people adhere to this view and derive comfort therefrom.

Their own intimate experiences, they affirm, supply testimony in its favor (*PF&F* 465).

[contd] Even the American Indian had in his religion the “Great Spirit.”

All modern religions recognize the presence of a universal spirit.

This plausible hypothesis of a Universal Mind completely does away with the assumption of the transfer of thought from one finite mind to another.

There may be a Universal Intelligence whose emanations radiate to all who are in harmony with the Divine Mind.

Every soul who is “in tune with the Infinite” would enjoy the possibility of receiving messages and inspirations from this Central Source.

If this is true, it is not difficult to see that two minds may have the same thought at the same time

just as two wireless telegraph stations which are attuned alike may receive, at the same time, the same message, which has been flashed from a vessel out at sea many miles from each station.

Many good people adhere to this view and derive comfort therefrom.

Their own intimate experiences, they affirm, supply testimony in its favor.

5:14.8 Even the American Indian had in his religion, the “Great Spirit.”

All modern religions recognize the presence of a universal spirit.

SOURCE

It is a cardinal thought of Christianity that God should pour out His “Spirit upon all flesh.”

Jesus told His followers before His death—before He departed, that He would send them the “Comforter,” the “Holy Ghost,” who would teach and guide them “into all truth” (PF&F 465).

[contd] The author is not disposed to follow the deceptive and illogical reasoning of the telepathist in order to find an explanation of these common experiences of thought harmony and identity.

We are rather disposed to accept the equivalent of the Christian doctrine of the omnipresent Spiritual Mind, the doctrine of the Great Spiritual Teacher,

as a basis for the phenomena described under the title of telepathy (PF&F 465).

[contd] If such phenomena find their explanation either in the doctrine of the Universal Mind or in any other doctrine which assumes the activity of spiritual forces in their production,

they, of course, lie outside the realm of physical science and in that of personal religious belief; they are problems in spiritual science (PF&F 465).

5: THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

It is a cardinal thought of Christianity that God should pour out His “Spirit upon all flesh.”

Jesus told His followers before His death—before He departed, that He would send them the “Comforter,” the “Holy Ghost,” who would teach and guide them “into all truth.”

5:14.9 I am not disposed to follow the deceptive and illogical reasoning of the telepathist in order to find an explanation of these common experiences of thought harmony and identity.

We are rather disposed to accept the equivalent of the Christian doctrine of the omnipresent Spiritual Mind, the doctrine of the Great Spiritual Teacher,

as a basis for some of the phenomena commonly described under the head of telepathy.

5:14.10 If such phenomena find their explanation either in the doctrine of the Universal Mind or in any other doctrine which assumes the activity of spiritual forces in their production,

they, of course, lie outside the realm of physical science and in that of personal religious belief; they are problems in spiritual science.

5:14.11 *Mrs. Piper and Thought Transference.*

V: TYPICAL CASES OF SEVERAL CLASSES OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA
(Funk 166)

Class V: *Indicating intelligences outside of human bodies* (Funk 187)

CASE 2. Prof. James H. Hyslop tells of the following concerning his first series of many tests through the medium Mrs. Piper:

Professor Hyslop at the time of this series was personally unknown to Mrs. Piper. He went into her presence in disguise, and communications came to him through her while she was in a trance or cataleptic condition (F 190).

The Professor has published, under the auspices of the Society for Psychical Research, a complete report of this series of sittings, every word uttered, however trivial, having been taken down in shorthand and published in this report.

By the time Mrs. Piper got into the spiritualistic game it was becoming rather dangerous for mediums to indulge in physical manifestations, and so Mrs. Piper stuck rather closely to the direct-voice mode of transmitting spirit messages, occasionally indulging in performances that bordered on the trance.

Prof. James Hyslop, in his investigation of Mrs. Piper,

was so impressed by the large number of coincidences—he was so influenced by Mrs. Piper’s shrewd guessing—that

in a published report of his sittings with this medium

The result of this series of sittings was to convince Professor Hyslop that the dead can and do at times commune in a physical way with the living, and that in this case they did identify themselves to him so that he was convinced that he was talking to his father and other of his relatives (F 190-91).

Here is a fact that must be included in the explanation: Professor Hyslop assures us that the Society for Psychical Research has secured transatlantic communication through Mrs. Piper in America and another medium in England,

the message having started in English and been received in Latin,

neither medium understanding Latin (F 192).

[Compare 3:6.3.]

he advanced the opinion, that no matter what his ideas might be about Mrs. Piper's ability to communicate with the dead,

he was sure of her ability to communicate with the minds of the living.

In one case it was claimed that

Mrs. Piper was able to project a trans-Atlantic communication, getting a message from some living mind in England,

and it was asserted that

this particular message while started out from Great Britain in English was received in this country in Latin,

and yet it was claimed that

Mrs. Piper understood nothing of the Latin tongue.

5:14.12 Most of the investigators who studied Mrs. Piper, if they believed at all in telepathy, usually reached the conclusion that her seances were largely to be explained on that hypothesis.

And so it seems that the theory of telepathy has become, in recent years, very convenient to the psychic researcher as a means of accounting for a vast sphere of psychic phenomena which, on the one hand, the investigators cannot prove to be fraudulent, and which, on the other hand, is not sufficiently evidential to establish its claim to supernatural or spirit origin.

SOME MODERN SORCERY (Abbott 193)

IV. The Use of the Card *Servante* and Blackboard (Abbott 211)

[My brother-in-law] suggested to me the idea of ... wireless telephony ... He thinks that an apparatus can be concealed on the person of the medium, with wires leading to the same "watch-case receiver" on his ear. The tassel from the turban can conceal it if the medium be a gentleman, while if a lady, the hair can be dressed and combed so low as to conceal it effectually. ... (A 213-14).

When the manager returns to the stage with the sealed envelopes, the medium, who is on the stage in full view, immediately begins giving tests while he walks about (A 213).

5:14.13 I recently attended a mind reading performance in which I am satisfied that communications were carried to the medium by means of radio.

She wore a form of hair dressing which extended high upon her head, and I believe she had a radio antennae concealed within it, and her hair covered her ears in such a manner that I am convinced a small watch-case receiver could have been so concealed as to enable her to hear messages completely.

This is the first time I have seen a medium carry on such an exhibition

and at the same time move about the stage.

IV: THE UNCONSCIOUS AS AN URGE (Lay 93)

§11. *Magnification* (Lay 130)

If I could do this thing and it were a scientific fact,

like telegraphy and telephony and gramophony or any other thing, anybody could do it.

When radium was made by Curie,

his description of his process enabled any other chemist having the same materials to make the same product.

When Jenner told others how to vaccinate,

any physician could do the same.

When serum therapy was discovered,

every physician was in a position to use it.

5:14.14 And it should be borne in mind that most of these demonstrations are offered to the public as proofs of telepathy.

5:14.15 *Natural Law and Telepathy.*

If telepathy is based on natural laws, then any person who would master these laws could practice telepathy.

If telepathy were based on science,

like telegraphy, and gramophony, anybody could do it.

When radium was discovered by Curie,

the description of the process of its detection was sufficient to enable any other chemist, having the same materials, to secure the same product.

When Jenner published his discovery of vaccination,

any other physician could perform the operation.

When antitoxin was discovered,

every intelligent physician was in a position to use it successfully.

When telepathy is scientifically proved,

all I have said that I would do, if I could, will be possible for me and for any other psychologist as soon as he reads the description of the proper method. It has not yet been scientifically discovered (L 133-34).

“SPIRITS GUIDED HIS PLANS: GREAT RAIL BUILDER TELLS OF HELP GIVEN HIM: CAME TO HIM IN DREAMS” (Anonymous)

New York. June 14—(Special)—At an exhibition of spirit pictures at the Anderson galleries to-day, a railroad builder told how spirits had furnished him nightly with the plans for more than 3,000 miles of track, which he constructed (A).

Mr. Stilwell said that nearly all his life he had made a secret of his powers, because he feared that people would think him a “nut.”

For years, however, some of his friends and many directors in companies associated with him, knew the source of his inspiration and believed in his spirits (A).

When telepathy is scientifically proved,

then can any and all psychologists practise it.

Natural laws are universal in their application.

15. DREAMS AND SPIRITUALISM

5:15.1 Recently there appeared prominent mention in the daily press of a case of

a railroad builder who claimed to be under the control of spirits in the planning and executing of his engineering feats.

Mr. Stilwell said that nearly all his life he had made a secret of his powers, because he feared that people would think him a “nut.”

For years, however, some of his friends and many directors in companies associated with him, knew the source of his inspiration and believed in his spirits.

VI: UNCONSCIOUS CEREBRATION

(Walsh 134)

SLEEP COMMUNICATIONS (Walsh 136)

[contd] Any one who has been thinking much for several days about a problem is likely to wake up with the thought that he has dreamed a solution of it, though unfortunately the solution has not remained in his memory... I have discussed dream life with many men engaged in serious work, and practically all of them confess to such experiences (W 136).

[Compare W 136-37, in which Walsh relates how dreams have provided inspiration to artists and led scientists to solve problems.]

5:15.2 I am familiar with many cases like this.

I know an inventor who dreams out most of his inventions. I am acquainted with an author who dreams out the plans for most of his books and the outlines of his chapters. I have a patient, a business man, who dreams out most of his financial deals—and they usually turn out well, too. I have myself dreamed out many a complicated problem, and the solution of the dream was very much better than the ones I had worked out during my waking moments.

The fact that dreams may “come true,” or that the conclusion reached in the dream state proves to be valuable or serviceable, in no way connects the dream life with supernatural forces or with discarnate spirits.

5:15.3 I want to make it clear to you that during sleep, the subconscious mind is in full commission, in fact is able to act much more freely, unhampered by the restraints and cautions of the higher powers of reason, judgment, and logic; although it must not be inferred that the subconscious mind does not reason—it does reason—

SOURCE

[Mr. [Thomson Jay] Hudson maintains that the subjective mind is incapable of inductive reasoning, that deduction is its process, and that it always reasons deductively without error (Albert B. Olston, *Mind Power and Privileges* [1902]), p. 18.]

[Our powers of phantasy find expression in daydreams and reveries. Phantasy represents the self adrift. It is the state of mind one finds himself in while resting in a hammock on a beautiful summer's afternoon, oblivious of all surroundings, wide awake, and yet letting the thoughts drift down the stream of mind without guidance, help, or interference (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 42).]

5: THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

but it reasons largely by deduction, not so much by induction.

5:15.4 We commonly meet with those individuals who dream much concerning their work, and they secure many valuable suggestions from their dreams—though they are the exception, not the rule. The average engineer who builds railroads by his dreams, or by the guidance of “spooks,” will make a sorry mess of the whole undertaking; but there are exceptions, many of which I have investigated and studied. But it is not necessary to fall into the arms of spiritualism in order to understand, explain, or account for these interesting and unusual occurrences.

5:15.5 Many individuals secure from their dreams suggestions just as they would if they reclined in a hammock, out on a mountain side on a summer's afternoon, and allowed the phantasy to run riot in the mind,

and as they indulged in day reveries, permitted the marginal consciousness to push far up into the central consciousness, and thus by reflection and meditation many new ideas will come trooping into the conscious mind. And this is true, whether the meditations be of the religious sort, indulged in by the religious thinker, or whether they be of the mechanical sort, indulged in by an engineer.

5:15.6 *An Experience of My Own.*

Hilprecht's Sleep Vision. (Walsh 137)

Quite as surprising a dream was that of Prof. Hilprecht, of the University of Pennsylvania. He had been trying for some time to decipher certain characters on ancient cylinders from the Orient. In spite of much hard mental labor he had been utterly unable to reach definite conclusions. In the midst of work on the subject he dreamt one night that a priest of the olden time appeared to him

and read off the inscription that he had in vain been trying to decipher.

Immediately after waking he told his wife of his dream and wrote down the interpretation that had thus been given (W 137).

I had a friend, a physician, who died a dozen years ago. We were very intimate, and two or three years back,

I well remember very vividly dreaming one night of his coming to me

and discussing quite minutely a certain article which I had in preparation, or which I contemplated preparing.

The suggestions he gave me, or the ideas I gathered from our dream conversation,

were very interesting,

and on waking up I jotted them down, feeling that I really had received a valuable "hunch."

In fact I wrote the article along this line, and it proved to be something out of the ordinary.

Now it would have been very easy for me to have utilized this as a demonstration of the return of the spirit, of spirit control, and of help from the spirit land, would it not? Indeed, but for two reasons:

5:15.7 1. I am not disposed to grab for spiritistic explanations for ordinary physical and psychic phenomena, and

5:15.8 2. After the article was published, in one of those periodical housecleanings that occur when one goes through the memoranda that accumulate in the desk drawers—I subsequently found the outline for this article which had been prepared by me and forgotten, and I found that I had outlined it almost exactly as my departed medical friend discussed it with me in my dream, and yet I can say I had truly and wholly forgotten ever having prepared these memoranda. I had written them down while traveling on a train one afternoon, en route to Chicago, and mislaid it and had forgotten all about it.

5:15.9 The psychology of my experience is simply this: the thing which I had thought out in a day reverie came up again with certain modifications in a night reverie, and this night reverie happened to collide and become confused with the dream vision concerning my departed friend, and what was more natural than that he and I should talk over this, as we had talked over many similar things in life. And yet how easy, without analysis, it would be to proclaim my article, which was one of the most unique I probably ever prepared, as having been indited by supernatural forces and having been transmitted to me by the spirit of my dead colleague.

5:15.10 And so one remarkable experience after another, as related by numerous individuals, vanishes into thin air, when accurately analyzed.

[?]

And yet I am frank to say that it would be very difficult for me to explain this experience as I do, had I not subsequently found the forgotten memoranda containing the outline for my literary effort, as I had prepared it several years before. But such an experience helps us to understand some others which we are not in a position to analyze in the fortunate manner of this particular experience of mine.

16. TRANCES AND CATALEPSY

XXXVIII: PSYCHIC FADS AND FAKES (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 457)

TRANCES AND CATALEPSY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 461)

It is not uncommon for persons in a cataleptic trance to imagine themselves taking trips to other worlds.

In fact, the wonderful accounts of their experiences, which they write out after these cataleptic attacks are over,

are so unique and marvellous as to serve as the basis for founding new sects, cults, and religions.

Many strange and unique religious movements have thus been founded and built up.

It is an interesting study in psychology to note that these trance mediums always see visions in harmony with their own theological beliefs.

For instance, a medium who believed in the natural immortality of the soul,

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It is an interesting study in psychology to note that these trance mediums always see visions in harmony with their own theological beliefs.

For instance, a medium who believed in the natural immortality of the soul,

SOURCE

was always led around on her celestial travels by some of her dead and departed friends.

One day she changed her religious views—became a soul sleeper,

and ever after that, when having trances, she was piloted about from world to world on her numerous heavenly trips by the angels;

no dead or departed friends ever made their appearance in any of her visions after this change in her belief (*PF&F* 461).

[contd] Nearly all these victims of trances and nervous catalepsy, sooner or later come to believe themselves to be messengers of God and prophets of Heaven;

and no doubt most of them are sincere in this belief.

Not understanding the physiology and psychology of their afflictions, they sincerely come to look upon their peculiar mental experiences as something supernatural,

while their followers blindly believe anything they teach because of the supposed divine character of these so-called revelations (*PF&F* 461).

5: THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

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and no doubt most of them are sincere in their belief.

Not understanding the physiology and psychology of their afflictions, they sincerely come to look upon their peculiar mental experiences as something supernatural,

while their followers blindly believe anything they teach because of the supposed divine character of these so-called revelations.

5:16.3 As far as my actual experience goes, as far as I have personally been able to test and observe those who have trances, visions, and other seizures or experiences of this sort, I have not yet contacted with a case in which I could not, after a thorough-going psychologic research and painstaking physical examinations,

determine fully—at least to my own satisfaction—those various psychic, chemical and physical influences which quite fully accounted for their unusual and extraordinary behavior.³

5:16.4 Another most interesting phenomenon I have noticed in connection with trance mediums, who, as previously remarked, are in the majority of cases women, is that these trance or cataleptic phenomena which in some respects are very similar to attacks of major hysteria—only carried out still further—I say, it has been my experience that they usually make their appearance after adolescence has been established, and in no case which I have observed, or of which I have known, have these phenomena ever survived the appearance of the menopause. The character of the phenomena associated with these female prophets or trance mediums is always modified by the appearance of the “change of life.”

17. HYPNOTISM AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

VI: SUBCONSCIOUS PROCESSES (Prince 147)

Neurograms may also function as subconscious processes exhibiting intelligence and determining mental and bodily behavior.
(Prince 150)

5:17.1 From our study of hypnotized subjects and trance mediums we conclude that

The automatic script that describes the memories of a long-forgotten childhood experience may at the same time reason, indulge in jests, rhyme, express cognition and understanding of questions—indeed (if put to the test), might not only pass a Binet-Simon examination for intelligence, but take a high rank in a Civil Service examination.

In these more elaborate exhibitions of subconscious intelligence it is obvious that there is an exuberant efflorescence of the residua deposited in many unconscious fields by life's experiences and synthesized into a subconscious functioning system (P 153-54).

the subconscious mind would be able to pass a very satisfactory Binet Simon test, and in many cases to take a stiff civil service examination.

If a subconscious mind—a marginal consciousness, or whatever other name it may be called—holds its memory material in such an organized form as to manifest such a high degree of intelligence it should not be difficult for us to conceive of such a realm of the mind as being wholly capable of the creation and perpetration of the psychic frauds which characterize modern spiritualism.

We must accept it as true—an established fact—that

the subconscious mind of man constitutes a practical, functioning system,

which embraces a creative imagination, association of ideas, employing a high degree of subtle reasoning and keen judgment, together with an ability of discreet deception, that is positively uncanny.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
(Prince 634)

If so, moods, trance states, fugues, somnambulistic states, secondary personalities, and other hysterical states come into being (P 642).

5:17.2 The subconscious may become responsible for our spells of periodic depression,

our temperamental moods, hysterical catalepsy, trance states, somnambulistic wanderings, as well as the unique phenomena of secondary personality.

And to any power of mind so versatile as this, it requires not a great stretch of the imagination to understand how the subconscious may be the birthplace of the deceptive vagaries and the unique hallucinations of spirit mediumship, for this unconscious realm is richly endowed with all the memory and experience material of one's past life.

5:17.3 *The Unconscious Wish.*

VII: SUBCONSCIOUS INTELLIGENCE
(Continued) (Prince 188)

IV. *Subconscious intelligence underlying dreams.* (Prince 196)

[contd] As is well known, Freud advanced the theory, now well fortified by numerous observations of others, that underlying a dream is a subconscious process which fabricates the conscious dream. According to Freud and his followers this subconscious process is always an antecedent wish and the dream is an imaginary fulfillment of that wish (P 196).

If dreams represent an effort on the part of the subconscious during sleep to experience wish-fulfillment,

to project its wishes out into the conscious mind by means of the symbolisms of the dream world, it may also be true that the mediumistic phenomena, in the form of visual and auditory hallucinations, spirit messages and spirit forms, may be but a representation of the same effort of the unconscious to gain expression—to eliminate its complexes—to experience wish-fulfillment.

5:17.4 When certain unstable types of human beings have long desired and intensely wished, in their minds, to communicate with the dead, when they have studied, thought and prayed over this problem; when they have faithfully attended seances and have allowed the longings of their souls to be focused and concentrated on the thought, the desire to draw the veil aside and communicate with the spirits beyond—I say, after all this preliminary psychic preparation, it is little wonder, then, that ultimately their day dreams and reveries should begin to flow in the channel of wish-fulfillment, and that the overflowing content of the subconscious should push itself up and out toward the attainment and realization of those visions and experiences which would in some measure gratify this intense longing of the soul.

XI: DIFFICULTIES AND OBJECTIONS

(Dresser 155)

5:17.5 Owing to the widespread prevalence of spiritistic teachings,

We have been prone to judge inner experiences

there is a great tendency on the part of many people to confuse their inner experiences or “inner voice”

by what we have heard about ghosts and apparitions,

with their beliefs about ghosts and apparitions,

and the **trickery** through which credulous people have been misled.

Our **scepticism** has naturally been increased by all that we have learned about **hallucinations**.

We have learned to our discomfiture that

the **average mind cannot be trusted to tell precisely what is** objectively real even when circumstantial evidence is called for. Then too we are doubtful about introspection and the imagination, about any one who is in the least degree visionary (D 158).

VII: BELIEF BEFORE KNOWLEDGE (Lay 247)

§1. *Belief* (Lay 247)

[contd] Belief is the **conscious expression** of an **unconscious wish**.

The unconscious wish of the individual is for **self-aggrandizement** in all forms.

One of the greatest of all the forms of human activity is that of the seer, who is one who can persuade his fellows that he can not only see but hear, or in other senses perceive, more than they. **In all ages** and in all grades of society

all the while **forgetting** how **tricky** the subconscious mind is in palming off on its owner the creatures of its own creation.

It is failure to recognize this fact that leads the insane and the near-insane to become victims of both **hallucinations** and delusions.

It must be remembered that

the **average human mind cannot be trusted to tell exactly, precisely, and truthfully what is** going on in its own depths.

5:17.6 *Belief and Will*.

In general,

belief is but the **conscious recognition or expression** of an **unconscious desire or wish**.

The dominant human wish is for self-glory, power and **self-aggrandizement**.

All down through the ages,

the **seer** has been accepted as one whose subjective ego has been most extensive, just as the **hero** in the shape of **king** or general has most enlarged his objective ego (L 247-48).

The medium has become in our day a **seer**, one whose subjective ego has enlarged itself beyond the bounds of the **ordinary man**,

and he is **worshipped** in the modern manner by all who feel the need for **hero** worship—of the subjective sort (L 248).

outside of the military **hero** and the **sovereign** of the realm, a “**seer**” was the most honored of all men.

We look with reverence and awe upon the men and women who are supposed to be in touch with unseen power. We are inclined to worship those of our fellows who have been able to push aside the veil and peer into the realms of another world.

In modern times the “**medium**” has become the successor of the ancient “**seer**.”

5:17.7 The **ordinary clergyman**, it is true, reads his Bible and prays, and then orates his message from the pulpit; but the medium leans over the threshold of another world, and there—so he claims—actually hears the voices and sees the forms of spirit beings, angelic hosts and departed humans.

The medium today is **worshiped** as a **hero**,

adored as a “**seer**” by the faithful believers in spiritualism—until of course such time as the grand exposure results, the fraud is made manifest, the deception is disclosed, and even then many of the faithful are slow to abandon their belief in the spiritual powers of their chosen medium.

18. TAPPING THE SUBCONSCIOUS

III: CONSERVATION OF FORGOTTEN EXPERIENCES OF NORMAL, ARTIFICIAL, AND PATHOLOGICAL LIFE (Prince 49)

I. Normal Life (Continued) (Prince 49)

Subconscious perceptions. (Prince 52)

[contd] It is not difficult to show that perceptions of the environment

which *never even entered the fringe of the personal consciousness, i. e., of which the individual was never even dimly aware,* may be conserved (P 52).

Mrs. Holland, both by automatic writing and in hypnosis,

describes perceptions of the environment (objects seen, etc.) of which she was not aware at the time.

5:18.1 It has been scientifically demonstrated that the subconscious mind can hold, formulate, and subsequently give forth for expression, ideas, images, emotions, and associations of ideas,

which have never been consciously recognized or entertained for one instant—even in the fringe of the personal consciousness.

Never have these things been brought to the attention of the individual, so that in their subsequent upbringing from the subconscious depths they are recognized as things wholly foreign to that very mind which has just given them birth.

That this is true is conclusively shown in the case of the study of

Mrs. Holland who, by automatic writing and in hypnosis,

described things transpiring in her environment of which she was wholly unaware at the time.

Miss B. and B. C. A. recall, in hypnosis and by automatic writing, paragraphs in newspapers read through casual glances without awareness thereof (P 52).

5:18.2 In experiments of this sort I have been able to have

subjects recall things which had been read in newspapers,

but without sufficient attention being paid to them to enable the consciousness to be aware of the fact,

and to trace out in the very depths of the subconscious mind experiences long since forgotten and which were produced as new creations in automatic writing, trance speaking, etc.

5:18.3 *Exploring the Subconscious by Hypnotism.*

Experimentally, by means of hypnosis and by the procedure of psychoanalysis, we are able as will be seen, to take these mystics, psychics, clairvoyants, and mediums, and after they have given us a beautiful spirit seance and have transmitted to us messages from their spirit guides and controls—after we have had most wonderful and touching converse with our dear and departed dead—then we are able to take these unstable, hysteric, and unique individuals in hand, and by scientific processes and psychologic procedure show, first to ourselves and subsequently to those mediums themselves—if they are sincere—that all this stuff, the whole sordid mess, had a purely human and wholly natural origin in the depths of their own subconscious minds.

5:18.4 *Psychoanalysis.*

Many years ago I became greatly interested in psychoanalysis and its possibilities in the study and treatment of nervous disorders, but I had not gone far in the employment of this method when, as the result of an experience that came to me through the study of a spirit medium, I saw I had accidentally stumbled upon what to me seemed the most valuable tool I had as yet discovered for scientifically investigating and intelligently explaining the more subtle phases and phenomena of spiritualism.

5:18.5 Suffice it to say, in this connection, that psychoanalysis enables us, without putting the patient into hypnotic sleep, systematically to explore the superficial strata of the subconscious mind. In this way we have been able to show, again and again, that practically all of these things which mediums bring forth as communications from departed spirits have been palmed off on their conscious consciousness by their own unconscious, or subconscious selves.

III: PSYCHOANALYSIS (Lay 73)

§1. *Ignorance about Psychoanalysis* (Lay 74)

To the contention, therefore, of the many writers who have supported the statements of spiritism

5:18.6 In the case of the sincere spiritualist today,

I am able to sit down and look him straight in the eye as I listen to his enthusiastic recital of the marvelous phenomena associated with his favorite medium,

we shall have to say:

while I say:

Is there not another explanation of these phenomena—an explanation that you have either never heard of, or have heard of only inadequately, or have perhaps misunderstood? (L 74-75)

“It is all very interesting, but has it ever occurred to you that

I have in my own mind another, and what seems to me to be a much more reasonable explanation for what you are telling me?

And furthermore, if your medium is sincere and you will bring him to me, and he will honestly and fairly submit to the tests that we can put him through, we will first prove to you that his physical manifestations and phenomena are materialistic and fraudulent; and, second, that his psychic phenomena—his messages from the dead—take origin in the subconscious depths of his own unconscious mind.”

By means of either or both hypnotism and psychoanalysis, and perhaps in certain cases by means of automatic writing, if these mediums are sincere, this can usually be demonstrated.

X: SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION (Lay 300)

§2. *Exclusion of Unconscious Factor* (Lay 303)

If a medium should be adequately analysed by a thoroughly scientific analyst of the Freudian school and after years of patient investigation on the part of the analyst and training and study on the part of the medium,

5:18.7 Mediums should be warned against submitting to

psychoanalysis of a thorough-going sort,

if they want still to persist in the practice of their profession as a means of gaining a livelihood, for all those of any honor will be forced to abandon their career and seek new economic paths as a means of making a living, because any experienced psychoanalyst will shortly

... the medium ... was not himself **convinced** that all his conscious and unconscious utterances emanated directly or indirectly from his own unconscious, then and not until then would science be justified in giving serious attention to what now seem to be exceptions to universally valid laws of matter (L 303).

convince them of the autopsychic origin of their so-called spirit communications.

5:18.8 Within the past year I have had not less than five cases of clairvoyants and mediums who have, after they had been but superficially studied and analyzed, abandoned belief in the supernatural origin of their voices and visions, and who are rapidly getting themselves under control and bringing their minds into safe and normal channels.

1. *Note:* In this passage from the same section in *The Physiology of Faith and Fear*, Sadler tells of his experiences with spiritualistic mediums who he believes to be associated with malignant spiritual powers:

The author of this book is personally inclined to accept the Biblical diagnosis, and urges again, as he repeatedly does in this volume, that his readers adopt the attitude of faith in their own better selves and in the Supreme Being. This, he believes, is the key which, together with a rational use of material means, will unlock the mysteries of the present and the future. From his personal experiences with spiritualistic mediums, he thinks that we have in them themselves about the strongest imaginable empirical evidence pointing to the existence of those spiritual powers which are by nature liars and deceivers. We feel confident that the phenomena of spiritualism will never be settled by so-called scientific investigation and laboratory experimentation (PF&F 467).

2. Speaking generally, “official” science rejects as pure fancy the alleged facts connoted by the term (M 160).

3. In Chap. 23 of *The Mind at Mischief*, Sadler reproduces this paragraph, but adds:

Perhaps this statement should be qualified by adding that there are possibly one or two exceptions to this

general classification of so-called psychics and trance mediums. Many years ago I was made acquainted with a very extraordinary phenomenon of this sort, which it has been my privilege to observe periodically from that time to this, and some day I hope to report more fully upon this unique case; but I hasten to say that in none of my observations of this individual and the peculiar associated experiences of the night period was there ever anything that pointed toward spiritualism. [Etc.] (*MM* 332)