

JANET, who is not a doctor at all but a Professor of Philosophy, of an insane girl in the Salpêtrière. He went backward through the whole series of the girl's illusions. He combated and cured one hallucination to find himself confronted by an earlier one, and thus peeled off these illusions one after another until he had freed her mind of a deposit of them which had been accumulating during five years. Prof. JAMES is not very explicit as to the permanence of the cure, but the incident is sufficiently curious.

RESULTS OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

Perhaps no one is better qualified than Prof. WILLIAM JAMES for the task to which he has addressed himself in an article in the *Forum*, which is to give an account of what up to this time has been accomplished by psychical research. His article is largely occupied with an account of the Society for Psychical Research and its proceedings. This society is English. There was formerly an American society, which ceased to exist. There is, however, now in this country a branch of the English society, which has imported from England a paid Secretary. The President of the English society is Prof. HENRY SIDGWICK, known, says Prof. JAMES, "by his other deeds as the most incorrigibly and exasperatingly critical and skeptical mind in England." The Conservative leader, ARTHUR BALFOUR, is one Vice President and Prof. LANGLEY, the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, is another. Prof. LODGE, the English physicist, and Prof. RICHEL, the French physiologist, are active contributors to the proceedings. Mrs. SIDGWICK, a sister of ARTHUR BALFOUR, is as earnest and, it would seem, as cautious an inquirer as her husband.

Recognizing the extremely uncritical character of most reports of psychical phenomena, the society has aimed to be above everything critical and exact. The rules of evidence established were so rigorous that a number of Spiritualists have seceded. Among others Mr. ALFRED RUSSELL WALLACE thought that, if such a standard of proof were insisted on in every case, no experiences based on mere eyesight could have a chance of being admitted as true. The society for the first two years of its existence was taken up with experiments on thought-transference. The earliest of those experiments were made with the daughters of a clergyman named CLEERY, and they convinced the leading members of the society that the girls could guess names and objects thought of by other persons. Two years later Mr. SIDGWICK and Mr. EDMUND GURNEY detected the girls in signaling to each other, and the entire series was abandoned. There were other experiments on Mr. G. A. SMITH and two Liverpool young ladies, which convinced all those who took part in them that the subjects did reproduce words, diagrams, and sensations occupying other people's minds. It is odd that since these experiments no subjects have turned up upon whom systematic experiments could be carried on.

The Proceedings discuss very fully the subject of apparitions, which are "veridical," that is, which coincide with some calamity happening to the person who appeared. EDMUND GURNEY instituted a "census of hallucinations." He obtained answers from some twenty thousand persons asked at random in different countries whether, when awake and well, they had ever seen a form, felt a touch, or heard a voice which they were sure was not that of a material presence. About one adult in ten had had such an experience at least once, and in the case of about one in fourteen of these the experience coincided with some distant event. Prof. JAMES is himself inclined to believe in the occult connection, but admits that the evidence is complete in only a few cases and the data are insufficient for a mathematical computation of probability.

Another topic of the Proceedings is the physical phenomena of mediumship, slate-writing, table-moving, and the like. This inquiry is destructive of the claims of all the mediums examined. The report of the Secretary, Mr. HODGSON, is adverse, also, to Mme. BLAVATSKY'S claims. The society's examinations of the American medium, Mrs. PIPER, seemed, however, to their minds to substantiate the claim that in her trances she had a knowledge of the affairs of living and dead persons which she could not have obtained in a natural way. It is the case of Mrs. PIPER which has convinced Prof. JAMES.

An important paper included in the Proceedings is on "Crystal Vision," by which is meant the power possessed by some persons to see visions when looking into a crystal. The lady who is the author of this paper says that one morning on looking into a crystal she read the death of a lady she knew, the announcement being in printed characters, the date and all the circumstances given. She looked at the *London Times* of the previous day and read among the deaths the exact words she had seen. On the same page were other items she remembered reading the day before. This would seem to a case of what Prof. JAMES would call extra-consciousness. Prof. JAMES means by extra-consciousness about what Mr. MYERS means by the "subliminal self." Mr. MYERS thinks that every man is a physical whole much more extensive than he knows, and too large to express itself entirely through any corporeal manifestation.

The interest which the public has taken of late in discussions of this character has been due to an impression that they may have some bearing upon the treatment of disease. Some years ago at a meeting in Boston Prof. JAMES expressed the belief that a good psychical researcher turned loose in an insane asylum might discover some things that had been overlooked by the doctors. A remarkable story is told of the treatment by a brilliant French inquirer into extra-consciousness, M. PIERRE