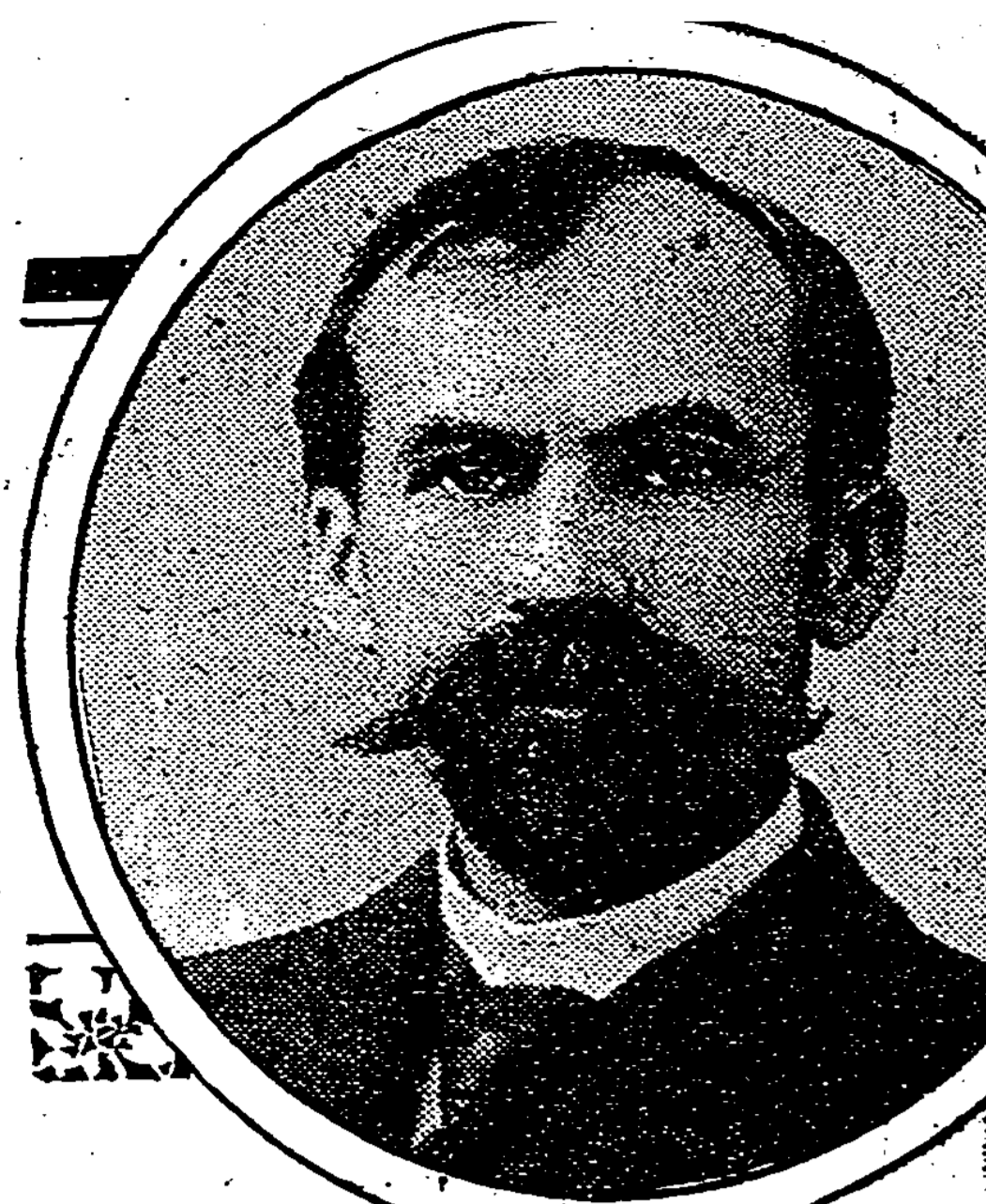


# PALLADINO OUTDONE BY A NON-PROFESSIONAL MEDIUM



Dr. James H. Hyslop.

**Dr. Hyslop Discovers a Girl Who Produces the Most Astounding "Spiritualistic" Phenomena Yet Seen—She Does Not Accept Money, Gives Tests Only in Private, and Her Identity Is a Secret.**

**D**R. JAMES H. HYSLOP, head of the American Society for Psychical Research, has discovered a medium of the Eusapia Palladino type who produces physical phenomena more wonderful than those attributed to the Italian woman.

This medium, a girl of twenty whose identity is not disclosed, for the reason, according to Dr. Hyslop, that she is not actuated by mercenary motives and has no intention of producing the phenomena in public, has been the subject of persistent investigation and experiment for the last two years.

There have been hundreds of sittings under the direction of two physicians of established reputation, who are mentioned by pseudonyms, and Dr. Hyslop himself. The result of the investigations so far has been to prove that what have been considered by some in the case of Palladino to be supernatural phenomena have been produced by the subject herself while in a state of hysteria.

The girl is a true hysteric has been demonstrated by exhaustive scientific tests. She develops areas of anaesthesia and hyperaesthesia. Sometimes one side of her body from the larynx down is insensible to pain while the other is in a condition of excited sensibility or hyperaesthesia. Again, and almost in a moment, these conditions are reversed in the right or left halves of her body. Frequently she is in a cataleptic condition.

Among the phenomena produced by this girl, who is called "Miss Burton" in Dr. Hyslop's report, are many of those common to the professional medium, such as the production of raps, the levitation of heavy tables, playing a tambourine, ringing bells, and so on.

Added to these were some original manifestations. For instance, whereas the girl is not musical and can neither sing nor whistle while in a normal state, when in the trance condition and in the dark singing and whistling are produced simultaneously; and the mode of the production of this phenomenon has not been explained satisfactorily. Dr. Hyslop says that the whistling is that of an expert vaudeville performer, and that if the normal state she could produce such sounds in a normal state she could realize a small fortune from her performances.

Another phenomenon is the starting and stopping of a phonograph at will when the machine is placed some distance behind the medium. This always occurred in the dark. It was found that she tied one end of a rope to the machine, while a knot in the other end probably was manipulated under her arm.

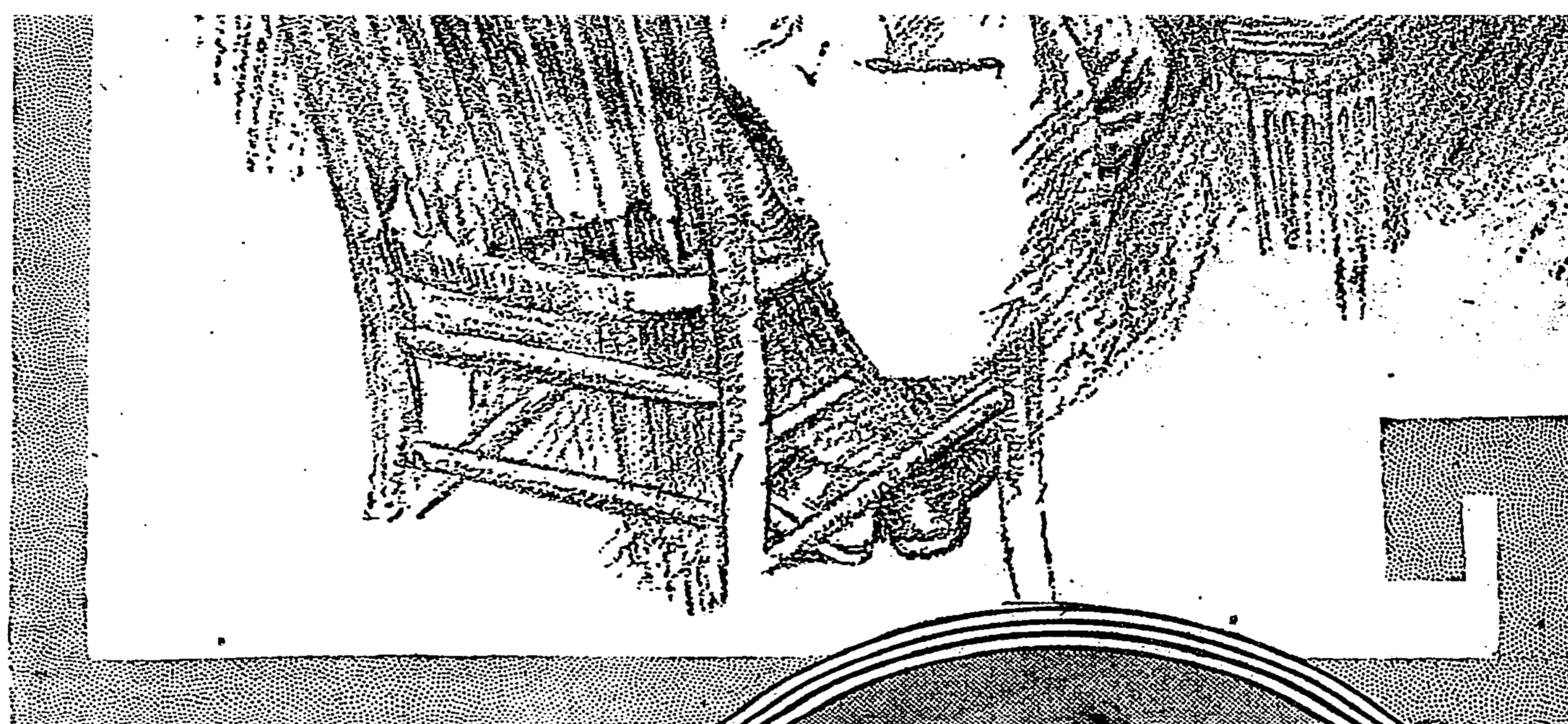
The fifth volume of the Proceedings of the American Society for Psychical Research, a forthcoming issue which contains some 500 or 600 pages, is entirely devoted to a report of this case and its analysis.

Notwithstanding the fact that the investigators explain the physical phenomena, when Dr. Hyslop takes up the question of the mental phenomena exhibited by the same medium, he takes to task in advance any or all who may disagree with him on the question of the spiritualistic value of these mental phenomena. These include automatic writing, purporting to be communications from the dead.

Here are some of Dr. Hyslop's views and explanations of this singular case:

"The phenomena of this report have the usual superficial claim to being supernatural physical ones, and when I say 'superficial' I do not mean to beg any questions regarding their real character. But they invited the interest and created an obligation in the investigator because they occurred in a private family of good standing. There was no professional background or experience in the case, though this was unfortunately one of the prospects entertained in the development of it. But the first important thing which the investigator had to recognize was the fact that Miss Burton—this not being the real name of the subject—actually believes in herself, though she has borrowed this belief from the convictions of Mrs. Milton, her foster mother, who is undoubtedly sincere in her belief that the phenomena are what they purport to be.

"These two circumstances, the absence of professional antecedents and the sincerity of the belief of the parties concerned, make the case one of extreme psychological interest to start with and exclude the amateur investigator at once



The Phonograph Test, Showing How the Medium Started and Stopped the Music at Will—by a Rope.

from any part in the determination of its character.

"It was not long before Drs. Hamilton and Smyth—both names are pseudonyms—in their investigations discovered the marks of hysteria in the case and this opened up a rare opportunity for scientific and humane work in this field. They were not slow to accept the situation and to make their observations to fit the discovery.

"Mr. Myers and Dr. Hodgson held that mediumship was a normal function of human nature. To many hysterical conditions seem to be its cause and explanation. But it may be more proper to regard them as its disease rather than as its essential characteristic. The present case will throw light on that question.

"One thing is clearly indicated by this report. It is the absolute disqualification of the conjurer for experimenting with such cases or for passing judgment upon the phenomena. Had we proceeded with his ideas on the type of phenomena we should never have found traces of hysteria or have been able to study the changes of personality involved.

"The public, both scientific and lay, has accepted too readily the conjurer's point of view and methods in such cases, but I now regard this report as forever shutting out that class of self-constituted authorities and as justifying the policy of wholly ignoring them in the future. Conjurers have their place, but it is not in the investigation of hysterics or phenomena that are associated with them.

"The two physicians who were asked to investigate the case had to come to it with the pre-emption of other views by the strong conviction of the parties that spirits were the agents in the phenomena, and it must be said to their lasting credit that they were neither frightened by this idea into ridiculing the facts nor attracted to it by ready acceptance of its claims.

"While it opens the way to the possible discovery that even the supernatural is either conditioned or accompanied by the existence of hysteria in some form during the incipient stages of its development. Such a view would completely alter the terms of the controversy and force the scientific man as well as the layman to approach the problem in a different manner and with less confidence in superficial interpretations, whether they be fraud or spirits.

"Such an approach would save much trouble and bickering, as well as many a failure to settle mooted points. I do not know any case to which this remark will apply more effectively than that of Eusapia Palladino. If the man who essayed to investigate her in this country had first tried to determine whether she was a hysteric or not they would have saved all the foolish discussion that has centered about her phenomena. It would have offered a scientific alternative between fraud and miracle for investigating it and the prob-

lem taken out of the hands of mountebanks for its solution.



Eusapia Palladino.

lem taken out of the hands of mountebanks for its solution.

"The various situations and actions of Miss Burton, when put together, collectively, are not capable of any other interpretation by any one who could have witnessed them than hysterical simulation, with occasional vistas of the supernatural, unless she be given credit for unconscious genius at deception that is wholly incompatible with her normal experience.

"On one occasion Miss Burton remarked that she saw lights. We were experimenting to get them. At times they were visible to all of us, but usually they were not seen by Miss Burton. On this occasion she was evidently anaesthetized except above the larynx, and she was probably making the lights with her left hand and did not know it, in spite of her eyes being open and she looking for them as we were.

"Like all other cases the phenomena were of a type where the real or alleged mystery of them was concealed by the darkness, and when we attempted to overcome this handicap, which was affronted by hyperaesthesia, which was an effectual in putting an end to experiment as any fear of discovery in fraud could be.

"While darkness made it impossible to observe what was necessary to determine whether independent physical phenomena occurred without controlling the psychic, it did not interfere with the study of her hysterical condition. Indeed it rather tended to help it, because it kept her from knowing what the eyes might have betrayed if the light had been on and her concentration on the phenomena prevented her from knowing what we were investigating in certain tactical actions. It was in this way that I discovered many indications of the hysteria, which I might not have been able to detect in the light.

"The discovery and study of the unconscious associates of the phenomena that purported to be miraculous afforded an excellent test of the mental states involved in the production of the incidents, and they were often decisive proof of automatism and unconscious action. This discovery was to me of more importance than the proof of physical miracles.

"For the purpose of studying the muscular actions of Miss Burton while any phenomenon was occurring it was necessary to establish some sort of contact with her. For instance, when whistling or singing, which were always or nearly always, accompanied by the use of a trumpet on the table, we had to assume that she held the trumpet in her hand



Levitation Is Done by Palladino in the Presence of Scientists.

and did the whistling or singing into it, so as to make the sound appear where it was not, and to ascertain whether there was any evidence that this hypothesis was true or not. I usually held the right hand to diminish the resources at her command for doing the things and to enable me to study sympathetic muscular actions which would betray the use of the left hand for the imagined purpose.

"More than one of us discovered that Miss Burton could actually rise to a standing position without detection while holding her right hand. Apparently also she could lean forward and turn around a considerable distance without the right hand betraying any evidence of it in sympathetic movements. The motor dissociation was one of the remarkable phenomena of the case, a dissociation which none of us have been able to completely duplicate or imitate in our own conscious action.

"It seems that the two physicians first endeavored to exclude the possibility of confederates. This was done well enough, and as experiments were made in the offices of one of them it was quickly demonstrated that confederates were not involved in the phenomena. They turned out to be much simpler in method than such an hypothesis implied.

"In one of the early tests a personality called Oma sang in the trumpet while Dr. Hamilton held Miss Burton's right hand and while a handkerchief remained tied over her mouth tightly and while Dr. Hamilton held his right hand and finger on the larynx of the medium, noticing that her larynx vibrated with the tones of the voice, though the music seemed, as perhaps it naturally would in the trumpet, to come from several parts

of the table. During the same séance she grasped the hands of both physicians and whistled in the trumpet. The larynx showed the same sympathetic action as in the singing.

"Again Dr. Hamilton tied the handkerchief tightly over the medium's mouth, and it was inspected by the others present, finding it so tight as to leave ridges in the face. He then held the right hand; whistling occurred while the tambourine was played and two bells rung. After this the tambourine was placed on the table and Dr. Hamilton was asked to catch the hand or fingers; that tapped the rim to the music. He still held the right hand, and it was pitch darkness. With the left hand he tried his best to catch the hand of the medium tapping the rim of the tambourine and failed, though it subsequently succeeded at times. Dr. Smyth, being skeptical of this inability, tried it, and failed to catch the hands or fingers.

"Another more complicated experiment was performed. It was desired that the phonograph be started and stopped at a distance with both hands and feet of the medium held. After half an hour's experiment this succeeded, but the medium showed increased heart beat from 60 to 90 and had a sick headache all the next day.

"On one of these occasions lights were seen and the smell of phosphorus noticed. The trance personalities denied that the lights were made with the fingers, but the lights were at times visible to one person and not to others, just as they would be if produced by the fingers. The difference between these and the lights magicians produce was remarked."

Dr. Hyslop describes séances which

the detailed record must be consulted for them. They show the same hysterical versatility of adaptation and ingenuity for overcoming difficulties that the medium would not resort to normally.

"Other phenomena connected with the production of lights should be summarized. The experimenters noticed that they could not reproduce the lights by the use of matches or in the ordinary way in which magicians imitate these phenomena. But Dr. Smyth, on one occasion, both physicians agreeing that the lights had degenerated into something like those producible by matches, suspected that she might have matches in her mouth, and suddenly seized her and forced her mouth open, finding the saliva saturated with phosphorescent light, and it ran out into her lap, still showing the light in her lap. But he did not find a trace of a match in her mouth, and no evidence that anything else had been prepared for the situation. Neither Mrs. Milton nor the medium could account for it.

"But their experiment in levitation of the table revealed the most probable explanation of that phenomenon in the use of crossed knees and lifting with her heel. Though I could not succeed in duplicating this phenomenon with a table that weighed about half as much as the table used in these experiments the method is so plausible that we must allow it a consideration, especially in the light of the anaesthesia of the medium, making her immune to pain, and the increased muscular power revealed by the dynamometer. On one occasion I was astonished to find Miss Burton standing, she having arisen while I held her right hand and arm and yet betrayed no sympathetic action in that arm in spite of the necessary actions and movements in rising. The secret of this dissociation of motor action was never clearly discovered. It may have been due to the effects of local or zonal anaesthesia, which might have produced muscular lethargy to such an extent that actions in one part of the body would not be connected with or transmitted to other parts.

"On these occasions, when holding both hands, I found that the jerks were simultaneous and exactly similar in each hand, and that whether anything subsequently occurred or not. Also at times I had reason to believe from slight movements of a jerking type in the body when the hand I held jerked that they were not attempts at 'trickery.' They proved to be automatic convulsions without any significance to the hypothesis of attempts to play tricks.

"The fact is that it was in the discovery of these sympathetic automatisms that I got the first suggestion that the subconsciousness was 'honest' as we found the normal consciousness to be. I have already indicated that normally Miss Burton is a perfectly honest young woman, and that not the slightest suspicion can be entertained about her in this respect. It readers cannot make this assumption in the case they must personally investigate her.

"The private character of the case, the mode of origin of the phenomena, the diffidence of Miss Burton, the absence of any claims on her part, the shock she felt when she discovered through the testimony of others that she herself was doing what they supposed was spiritistic—that is, independently produced—the conviction of her relatives, who first thought she was trying to deceive them; her previous habits of life, and a thousand incidents which cannot be narrated here, to say nothing of the uniform conviction of all who know her, are evidence that we do not have to assume any dishonesty in the girl normally.

"Besides the evidence that she is in a trance, as indicated by severe tests for anaesthesia, show that we do not have to reckon with the normal consciousness in the phenomena. We assumed that subconsciously Miss Burton was doing the things that purported to be independent physical phenomena, and it was our problem to prove or disprove it while we studied her motor habits in connection with them. The photographs and some other phenomena seemed to prove that the subconscious was playing tricks exactly as a normal person would do in such alleged phenomena, and hence we interpreted the case as one of trance deception.

"We come now to the individual phenomena and the first to be noticed is the whistling and singing. Sometimes the whistling was alone and sometimes it was simultaneous with singing, as described in the detailed record. The simultaneous singing and whistling presented a problem for all of us, especially as it proposed the use of the physical organs of the larynx and throat for two purposes, assuming that Miss Burton did them herself, and that was the only supposition which any ordinary explanation would permit. We were to determine whether she or an external reality was responsible for them.

"But there was no doubt about the complexity or sympathy of her vocal action in all the whistling and singing which we were able to test in this way, and it is more than probable that the same conditions prevailed when we were not holding our fingers on her larynx. The only question is whether this implied that Miss Burton, the subconscious Miss Burton, did the whistling and singing entirely. The production of the singing and whistling has not been satisfactorily accounted for. Dr. Hyslop says it was not ventriloquism. The whistling probably was produced through the trumpet. Dr. Hyslop says there are persons who can whistle and sing at the same time. He takes it for granted, however, that Miss Burton herself is responsible for the phenomena. The experimenter considers the production of lights at length and concludes:

"But it was clear that, if the lights were not produced fraudulently or hysterically by means prepared beforehand, they were not independent of Miss Burton's organism. They are undoubtedly connected with her bodily action in some way. The only preparation that I can see reasonable in the case, judging from Miss Burton's normal honesty, would be that she goes into something like a trance and makes the preparation in that condition and hence remembers nothing about it."

Dr. Hyslop tells of the endeavor to find out how the phonograph was stopped:

"We tried it several times, but failed, and then a little later, with her right hand under control, the machine was stopped, when she quickly threw her left hand into mine, and with the same conditions as I have described the phonograph was started and stopped four times again. When it ceased the last time I called for the light, and at once there began a vigorous struggle on the part of Miss Burton to get free. I managed to hold her, and the light was turned up by Mrs. Milton—she and I being the only two present—there on the knot of the machine was one of the pieces of rope which usually lies on the table, tied in a knot, and probably put under the arm pits for pulling and relaxing it suitably to start and stop the machine."

Dr. Hyslop expresses the opinion that the raps were genuine phenomena, occurring independent of Miss Burton's organism.

The mental phenomena in this case include raps, automatic writing, trance personalities, such as Dan Rulland, the principal "guide," who said he was in the Spanish war, and Black Cloud, and clairvoyant visions. These phenomena are considered at great length.

In estimating the character of these phenomena Dr. Hyslop considers three hypotheses, namely: Fraud, trance deception, and spirits. The physical phenomena he attributes to trance deception, the result of hysteria. He says:

"There are three situations in her phenomena, when the facts prove her automatism. (1) There is the conclusive movement of the hands which we discovered to indicate a change of personality or control. (2) There is the convulsive movements which she herself struggles to control under test conditions, these involuntary movements tending to make her do the things herself. (3) There is the performance of acts herself which she observes without being conscious of their initiation.

He insists that even in the trance when the deceptions were carried out, she tried to perform the feats honestly. On this point he says:

Miss Burton actually exhausted herself in the effort to perform the feats 'honestly' in the trance. She was not at all averse to control and resisted her own propensities to the most painful degree. She usually assumed a very stern and obstinate skepticism, if I thought there was the slightest excuse for it.

In his consideration of the mental phenomena, Dr. Hyslop frees his mind. He says:

After the description of the case as one of hysteria and after explaining the phenomena by hysterical automatism it will seem preposterous even to suggest a spiritistic hypothesis in connection with it. Scientific men might wonder why it is given any consideration as an alternative to the more probable explanation of acts herself which she observes without being conscious of their initiation.

Whether it be a fact that such an explanation actually applies is another and different question. But after such phenomena as the Society for Psychical Research has accumulated for the last thirty years illustrating the claims of spirit agency as an hypothesis, that possibility is guaranteed, whether the fact be proved or not.

"This is perhaps a rather audacious introduction to a calm and cerebral consideration of the facts in respect to such a view, but I have deemed it best to defy the ordinary skeptic in a situation in which he usually assumes that he has a victory over me. I am not going to be frightened by any threats of ostracism or contempt on the part of respectable orthodox in either science or philosophy. I prefer the opposition of these classes to their respect-