

It is a pleasure to turn from the generalities and abstractions of the learned Genoese professor to the criticism at closer quarters of the next author on our list.

*Zur Kritik des telepathischen Beweismaterials.* EDMUND PARISH. Leipzig, Barth, 1897. 8°. Pp. 48.

*Hallucinations and Illusions, a Study of the Fallacies of Perception.* EDMUND PARISH. London, Walter Scott; New York, Charles Scribner's Sons. 1897. 12°. Pp. 390.

The English version of Mr. Parish's book, already reviewed in its German shape in Vol. II., p. 65 of this REVIEW, is greatly improved and brought up to date. The author incorporates in it much of the criticism contained in the lecture '*Zur Kritik*,' etc. He was collector for Germany of the Census of Hallucinations reviewed there and in the present lecture he criticizes the Sidgwick report. Although he gives the authors credit in the handsomest terms for the quality of their work, he nevertheless thinks that their conclusion—that apparitions on the day of death are far too frequent to be ascribed to chance—will not hold good. His chief reasons are as follows: First, they have believed the reported amount of coincidence between the apparition and the event to be greater than facts warrant. He gives cases to show how a figure, not recognized when seen, may be described, when news of a death is later received, as the figure of the person dead. This error, which he calls *Erinnerungs-adaptation*, he believes to be very frequent in the narratives. Secondly, he doubts whether most of the hallucinations which figure as veridical are *waking* hallucinations at all, believing them to be more probably dreams or hypnagogic visions. But if dreams are to slip in and get counted, the numerical statistical argument, he says, is entirely upset; for dreams are such frequent occurrences that coincidences between them and distant events must be frequent in proportion. And that the so-called waking hallucinations *were* mostly dreams, he proves in detail by analyzing the 26 cases which the English report prints as 'best accredited.' Most of them actually occurred at night, when the percipient was in bed or sitting up watching, or else in some other situation where a nap might naturally have occurred unawares.

This latter seems to me by far the strongest objection yet made to the Sidgwick report. In my own review of the Sidgwick report (*supra*, Vol. II., p. 74, note), I admitted this to be its weakest point.

But another objection of Herr Parish's, and the one which he himself considers his weightiest, seems to me to have very little

weight indeed. He shows, by three examples, through what sub-conscious links of association, granting the hallucinatory tendency to be there, the ensuing hallucination may have its subject-matter determined, and then says: Not till *the possibility of all such associative links is excluded*, are we entitled to invoke an hypothetic agency like 'telepathic impact' as the cause of the hallucinatory content. But one does not see how this should effect the statistical argument, unless associative links are in themselves more likely than unassigned organic or other causes to produce visions *coincidental with deaths*. If the mental associations of the percipient belong to a cycle of events disconnected with the cycle concerned in the distant person's death, it remains as improbable as ever that the several outcomes of the two cycles coincident in content should also coincide so often in *date*. That they actually do so shows, according to Mr. Parish, a methodical flaw in the Sidgwick report. Its authors accept as an empirical fact (with a slight correction for oblivion) the measure of frequency given by the Census for visions of recognized persons, and then proceed to cipher out the improbability that any one such vision will occur by accident on the day when its object dies. But they ought rather, says their German critic, to have ciphered out, from the number of *such coincidences* as an empirical fact *what the real frequency*, as distinguished from the recollected and reported frequency, of the visions must actually have been. This would give (as I apply his reasoning) the figure of 35 hallucinations at least, of the species immediately discussed, to each adult in the community, and 60 times that number, or over 2,000 miscellaneous hallucinations of all kinds to each head of population,<sup>1</sup> most of which we must suppose to be forgotten immediately, if the reasoning is to be seriously applied to facts. Mr. Parish, of course, would not so apply it, for the result is absurd and incredible. He only makes a logical nut of it for the other side to crack, disbelieving himself that the returns of the Census have any definite numerical value at all. In this contemptuous estimate I cannot possibly agree. W. J.

<sup>1</sup> The computation is this: By the English figures 17,000 persons yielded 32 death-visions, each of which had only 1 pure chance in 19,000 of occurring when it did. To produce the 32 happy chances there must, therefore, have been  $19,000 \times 32$  such visions in the whole 17,000 persons, or  $19,000 \times 32 \div 17,000 = 35.7$  such visions in each one of the 17,000. But, since the 32 death-visions were extracted from 1,942 hallucinations of all kinds experienced by the 17,000 answers of the Census question, each answer must have had a number of hallucinations of all kinds as much greater than 35 as 1,942 is greater than 32, which would give him approximately 2,000 hallucinations, not one of which in 9 cases out of 10 he would have remembered, for roughly 9-tenths of those questioned in the Census replied 'No.'