

resistance; but the point is that this failure has frequently been noted in normal individuals, in full possession of their faculties, and does not in the least indicate that they have failed to realize the *meaning* of the stimulus word (water, blood, whatever it may be). Similarly, the failure of 'Uvani' to obtain definite reaction words does not prove that he has failed to understand the word itself (though, on the spiritistic theory, this might be true in some instances, in his case); it merely proves that no definite image has presented itself to his mind, in association with that word—which is what frequently happens, in other cases. When reaction words *are* given, however, they are often entirely dissimilar, as we have seen; and, more significant still, the emotions aroused by these words are similarly different, in the two cases.

It must be admitted that 'Uvani,' in his account of himself and in his general statements, is not always consistent, and that certain contradictions develop—just as they did in the cases of 'Phinuit,' 'Harrison Clarke,' and others—and, it may be added, as living persons often do, in giving accounts of *themselves*! These facts must be frankly acknowledged and the problems thereby raised ultimately worked out. Again, 'Uvani' claims a knowledge of many events and inventions, etc., which were non-existent in 'his' day, showing just such a smattering pseudo-knowledge of them as Mrs. Garrett herself might be expected to possess. Some of this certainly might be accounted for by assuming that the Control personality had a certain access to the contents of her mind, and embodies her ideas and, to some extent, her normal phraseology in his replies. At the same time it must be acknowledged that we again have a problem—just as we did in the case of 'Phinuit,' who claimed all sorts of knowledge he did not really possess, and displayed ignorance of matters he should have known. But again 'he' (like 'Uvani') succeeded in some way in obtaining much genuine supernormal information for his sitters! These inconsistencies and contradictions are certainly among the most aggravating factors we encounter, in studying trance phenomena; yet they remain to some extent difficulties *within* the problem, once the supernormal be proved. And, in Mrs. Garrett's case, as we know, a quantity of such supernormal information *has* been given, during the course of her regular trance sittings, and was also given during the present series, when reading the crystal ball, when producing automatic writing, when giving replies from 'third entities,' and when giving messages in trance. (*See Appendices A and B.*)

It is to be noted that 'Uvani' claims a certain knowledge of the medium's "underconsciousness," as he calls it, and if that is actually the case it might serve to explain certain of these seeming difficulties. We might well assume this to be the case, since he also claims to *influence* the medium through this same stratum of her mind (and indirectly, through it, her organism). This would not imply that Mrs. Garrett had a reciprocal knowledge of 'Uvani's' mind—a fact which 'he' denies and of which we have obtained no direct evidence. His statements concerning 'his' alleged method of controlling the

medium are, on any theory, of interest, and will be found detailed in Appendix D.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF COMMUNICATION

The enormous theoretical difficulties which must exist, on the spiritistic theory, in order to render communication possible at all, have not perhaps been realized by the average investigator. Let us recall once again the words of Dr. Richard Hodgson, in this connection—based upon his long study of Mrs. Piper. He says:

"Let the reader start to hold a conversation with two or three friends, but let him be forced to spell out his words instead of speaking them in the ordinary way, and be absolutely confined to this method of expressing himself, no matter what his friends may do or say. Let him be interrupted at every two or three words by his interlocutors, who tell him that 'they don't catch the last word,' and ask for it to be repeated, and occasionally several times repeated. Let them, further, frequently interrupt him by asking fresh questions before his answer to a previous question is completed. Further, let him suppose that it is very difficult for him to hear precisely what their questions are, so that he hears only portions of what they say. Having made this experiment, let him then suppose further that instead of using his own voice to spell his words with, he is placed in one side of a machine so constructed that the thoughts running in his mind have a tendency to be registered in writing on the other side of the machine, not as fast as he thinks them, but at the rate of writing, and that it is only by reading this writing that his interlocutors know what he has to tell them. Let us suppose, further, that one or more other persons are standing near him on his side of the machine, and talking to him or to one another within his hearing, so that the words which they say tend to be registered in the writing; and let him further suppose that he is unfamiliar with the machine, and that the writing produced has a tendency to vary somewhat from the words actually thought of by him, owing to imperfections in the machine. Let him further suppose that the part of the machine in which he is placed is filled with a more or less suffocating gas which produces a partial loss of consciousness, that sometimes this gas is much more poisonous than usual (weakness or ill-health of medium) and that its effects are usually cumulative while he remains in the machine. . . ."

"Important failures are due primarily, I believe, to the ignorance of the sitters that communication is under some such difficulties as these. And I cannot too strongly emphasize my conviction that, unless the presence of such conditions is constantly recognised by the investigator, his further research in this field will be futile. Having recognised the limitations, he may be able to modify them and minimise the effect of them; and, in my opinion, it is to the fuller and more exact appreciation of what these limitations are, and to what extent they can be removed, that the main path of progress in psychical investigation trends. . . ."

In estimating the comparative theories which may be advanced, therefore—the spiritistic and the psychological—these theoretical difficulties must never be lost sight of, and must be taken into account by anyone combating the spiritistic interpretation of the facts. Were this done, it is certain that many of the seeming contradictions and difficulties would be—if not done away with, at least rendered intelligible. It is with these alternate possibilities in mind, therefore, that we must judge the results.