

INTRODUCTION

By Professor W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.

Those of us who took part in the foundation of the Society for Psychical Research were convinced from personal investigation and from the testimony of competent witnesses that, amidst much illusion and deception, there existed an important body of facts, hitherto unrecognised by science, which, if incontestably established, would be of supreme interest and importance.

It was hoped that by applying scientific methods to their systematic investigation these obscure phenomena might eventually be rescued from the disorderly mystery of ignorance; but we recognised that this would be a work, not of one generation but of many. Hence to preserve continuity of effort it was necessary to form a society, the aim of which should be, as we stated at the outset, to bring to bear on these obscure questions the same spirit of exact and unimpassioned inquiry which has enabled science to solve so many problems once not less obscure nor less hotly debated. And such success as the society has achieved is in no small measure