majority of these accounts have scarcely any scientific value. Spiritualists have, as a rule, sought to convince not by testimony but by ocular demonstration. Yet, if there is not a mass of •scientific evidence, there are a number of witnesses—among them distinguished men of science and others of undoubted intelligence —who have convinced themselves by observation that phe­nomena occur which cannot be explained by known causes; and this fact must carry weight, even without careful records, when the witnesses are otherwise known to be competent and trustworthy observers.

Among proposed normal explanations of these phenomena that of hallucination (*q.v.*), including illusion as to what is seen almost amounting to hallucination, deserves careful considera­tion. Sensory hallucination of several pcrsons together who are not in a hypnotic state is, however, a rare phenomena outside the séance room and must not therefore be lightly assumed within it; nor is it in most cases a plausible explanation where there is general agreement not only of all the witnesses but of more than •one sense as to what is perceived, as distinguished from what is inferred. Nevertheless something of the kind seems occasionally to have happened, especially at some of the séances with Home.@@1

What may broadly be called " conjuring ” is a much more probable explanation of most of the recorded phenomena; and in the vast' majority of cases the witnesses do not seem to have duly appreciated the possibilities of conjuring, and have con­sequently neither taken sufficient precautions to exclude it nor allowed for the accidental circumstances which may on any particular occasion favour special tricks or illusions. The ex­periments of S. J. Davey and R. Hodgson should be studied in this connexion.@@2 At a spiritualistic séance the medium has the privilege of failing whenever he pleases and there is seldom any settled programme—circumstances very favourable to deception. As it was put by Mr Stainton Moses, a leading spiritualist and himself a medium, who wrote under the *nom de plume* of “ Μ. A. (Oxen.)”: “ In 99 out of every 100 cases people do *not* get what they want or expect. Test after test, cunningly devised, on which the investigator has set his mind, is put aside, and another substituted.”@@3 In other words, the evidence is rarely strictly experimental, and this not only gives facilities for fraud, but makes it necessary to allow a large margin for accidents, mistakes and mal-observation. It may be urged that if none of the phenomena is genuine we have to assume a large amount of apparently aimless trickery in non-professional mediums. But it must be borne in mind that the most excellent moral character in the medium is no guaranteee against trickery, unless it can be proved that he was in no abnormal mental condition when the phenomena occurred; and extraordinary deceptions are known to have been carried on by hysterical patients and others with no apparent motive.

One of the possibilities to be allowed for is that of exceptional muscular endowment or anatomical peculiarity in the medium. For instance, it is not very uncommon to find persons who can make loud sounds by partially dislocating and restoring the toe, knee, or other joints, and some experiments made with the Fox girls in 1851 supported the view that they made raps by this method.

Besides the general arguments for supposing that the physical phenomena of spiritualism may be due to conjuring, there are two special reasons which gain in force as time goes on. (1) Almost every medium who has been prominently before the public has at some time or other been detected in fraud, or what cannot be distinguished from fraud except on some violently improbable hypothesis; and (2) although it is easy to devise experiments of various kinds which, by eliminating the neces­sity for continuous observation on the part of the investigator, would place certain phenomena above the suspicion of conjur­

ing, there is no good evidence that such experiments have ever succeeded.

Nevertheless there does exist evidence for the genuineness of the physical phenomena which deserves consideration. Count Agénor de Gasparin, in his *Tables tournantes* (Paris, 1854), gives an account of what seem to have been careful experiments, though they are hardly described in sufficient detail to enable us to form an independent judgment. They convinced him that by some unknown force tables could be got to move without contact. The experiments were conducted with his own family and friends without professional mediums, and in some of them he was assisted by Μ. Thury, professor of physics at Geneva, who was also convinced of the operation of an unknown force.@@4 The minutes of the sub-committee No. 1 of the committee of the Dialectical Society *(op. cit.,* pp. 373-391) report that tables moved without contact, whilst all the persons present knelt on chairs (the backs of which were turned to the table) with their hands on the backs. The report, however, would be of greater value if the names of the medium and of the working members of the committee were given—we only know that of Serjeant Cox— and if they had written independent accounts of what they witnessed. Sir William Crookes has published accounts of striking experiments and observations with D. D. Home, which have left him convinced of the genuineness of the wide range of physical phenomena which occurred through Home’s mediumship.@@5 Of considerable interest again are the experiences of Mr Stainton Moses between 1870 and 1880, of which the best account has been compiled from contemporary records by F. W. H. Myers in two papers published in the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research.@@\** More recently several men of science, including Sir Oliver Lodge in England, Professor Charles Richet in France, and Professors Schiaparelli and Morselli in Italy, have convinced themselves of the supernormal character (though not of any spiritualistic explanation) of certain physical phenomena that have occurred in the presence of a Neapolitan medium, Eusapia Palladino, though it is known that she fre­quently practises deception.@@7 Μ. Joseph Maxwell, of Bordeaux, has published accounts@@8 of raps and movements of objects without contact, witnessed with private and other mediums, which he appears to have observed with care, though he does not describe the conditions sufficiently for others to form any independent judgment about them.

The interest in spiritualism, apart from scientific curiosity and mere love of the marvellous, is partly due to the belief that trustworthy information and advice about mundane matters can be obtained through mediums—to the same impulse in fact which has in all ages attracted inquirers to fortune-tellers. The more thoughtful spiritualists, however, are chiefly interested in the assurance of life and progress after death, and the moral and religious teaching, which they obtain through automatic writing and trance-speaking. It was discovered very early in the movement that the accuracy of these communications could not always be relied on; but it is maintained by spiritualists that by the intelligent exercise of the reason it is possible to judge whether the communicating intelligence is trustworthy, especially after prolonged acquaintance with particular intelli­gences, or where proofs are given of identity with persons known to have been trustworthy on earth. Such intelligences are not supposed to be infallible, but to have the knowledge of spirit life superadded to their earthly experience. Still the agreement between communications so received has not been sufficiently

@@@1 See, *e.g., Report on Spiritualism of the Committee of the London Dialectical Society* (1871), pp. 207, 367-369. See also Guldenstubbe, *De ta réalité des esprits* (1857), p. 66; also Maxwell, *Les Phénomènes psychiques* (1903).

@@@2 See *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,* iv. 371; viii. 253.

*@@@3 Human Nature,* for 1876, p. 267.

@@@4 See Thury, *Les Tables tournantes considérées ou point du vue de la question de physique générale qui s'y rattache* (Geneva, 1855).

*@@@6 Quart. Journ. of Science* (July and Oct. 1871; republished with other papers by Crookes, under the title of *Researches on the Pheno­mena of Spiritualism* (1874-1876). See also his “ Notes of Séances with D.D.Home*," Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,* vi. 98.

*@@@β Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,* ix. 245; xi. 24.

@@@7 See E. Morselli, *Psicologia e spiritismo* (Turin, 1908); cf. also *Bulletin de Vinstitut général psychologique* (Nov.-Dec., 1908), and *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,* xxiii. 306.

@@@8 Maxwell, *Les Phénomènes psychiques* (1st ed., Paris, 1903). There is also an English translation entitled *Metapsychical Phenomena* (London, 1905).