

A DUAL EXISTENCE.

An Extraordinary Case Under Investigation by the
Society for Psychical Research.

RIVALLING STEPHENSON'S "DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE."

"It's one of the strangest cases I ever heard of," said Dr. Richard Hodgson, yesterday.

Dr. Hodgson is the representative of the English Society For Psychical Research, and the man he referred to is a well-known builder of Providence, who, it is said, possesses a dual existence. He at times fancies his name is A. J. Brown, and again believes that he is himself. The scientists are experimenting with him at frequent intervals,

the last test having been applied only a few days since.

As the story came out at the meeting of the Psychical Society, held Monday evening, in this city, this man left his home in Providence, R. I., on Jan. 17, 1887, and on March 14, 1887, he awoke, so to speak, from a hypnotic trance in Norristown, Pa., without knowing where he was, how he got there, or what he did during the time, notwithstanding the fact that he had bought a

business, managed it and lived as other people did.

When he is hypnotized now he remembers his Norristown experience, but nothing of his life before or after it occurred.

"Spontaneous hypnotic trance" is what the doctor calls it.

"Brown" is frequently in New York. In fact but a few days ago he transacted business here. At the request of Dr. Hodgson his real name is omitted. His other name and the facts of the case are vouched for by Mr. Hodgson, Dr. Harrison Weir, the eminent specialist in nervous diseases, Dr. M. L. Holbrooke, of No. 46 East Twenty-first street, and others.

The man is said to be perfectly sane, except in the mania mentioned, and the statement of the case which is being prepared for various medical journals, including the London *Lancet*, rival Stevenson's fiction showing a dual existence.

Mr. X—, as for convenience we will call this man, as he was originally known to himself and friends, lived for years in Providence, R. I., where his building business brought him a comfortable income. He was married and pleasantly situated. He was a religious zealot. On Sundays he could be found preaching to a gathering of men and women.

DID HIS PERSONALITY CHANGE?

On Jan. 17, 1887, occurred the singular change in his personality, which was destined to make Mr. X— and A. J. Brown an object of interest to the medical men not

only of this country, but of the whole world. On the day in question he left his home apparently in a normal condition. His step was steady, his eye was clear, and when he bade his wife good-by she thought him more than particularly good-natured. He said that he was going to the bank to draw \$550, which he needed to pay certain bills which he had to meet.

That was the last seen of him for eight weeks.

When the next day came around and he had not returned his wife became anxious about him. Two days later she became alarmed. In a week the country was flooded with police circulars offering a large reward for any information that might lead to the recovery of the missing man, whether he was dead or alive. Weeks passed and the poor wife of Mr. X— got no tidings of her husband. It was learned at the bank that he had drawn the \$550, but there the trail ended. The case was put down by the police as one of those mysterious disappearances which occur so often, and the man was given up for lost.

March 14, 1887, was a stormy day in Norristown, Pa. The snow blew in great surries up and down the principal streets, piling itself up in banks in front of the various business houses, and compelling householders to stay in their residences unless perchance they had urgent business to take them away from their cheery fires.

About midnight Edward Phelps

chance living on a quiet side street, was awakened by a rap at his room door. He was preparing to retire, but opened the door. There were several lodgers in the house, one of whom he knew kept a little candy and stationery store not far off. His name, Mr. Phelps had been informed, was A. J. Brown.

THE RETURN OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS.

As he opened at the knock of the unknown, "Brown" strode in.

"Good evening, sir," said Mr. Phelps. "I have never had the pleasure of meeting you, Mr. Brown, but if I can be of any service to you, command me."

The man addressed as "Brown" looked surprised.

"My name is X—," he said. "Mr. X— and I am wondering whether I have been sick. Nothing looks familiar to me. Have I been sick?"

"Not that I am aware of, Mr. Brown," replied Mr. Phelps. "I have seen you at your shop every day for a month."

"Shop?" ejaculated Brown. "I have no shop. I am X—. This is Providence, isn't it? Tell me, he went on, in a dazed sort of way, "what day of the month is this?"

"The 14th," replied the amazed Mr. Phelps.

LOST HIS MEMORY OF TIME.

"Does time run backward?" persisted "Brown." "I can swear yesterday was the 17th. (Note: He left Providence on the 17—this was March 14.)

"Of what?" inquired Phelps. "Of January, of course," answered Brown.

"This is March 14," said Phelps.

Brown looked at him for a moment, passed his hand over his head, and sank unconscious to the ground.

The now thoroughly frightened Phelps hastily called a physician, who fortunately happened to be a man thoroughly conversant with hypnotism, sustained trance, and the like.

He saw what the matter was, or fancied that he did, and saw also that the case was one of great interest to science.

When "Brown" recovered he talked in a perfectly rational manner. "Telegraph my family at Providence," he said, and they did so.

Two days afterwards his wife was in Norristown and there was an affecting meeting.

"Brown" was taken home.

THE DOCTOR'S EXPERIMENT.

Shortly after his arrival at Providence, where he was popularly believed to be dead, Dr. R. Weir Mitchell, the eminent medical expert; Dr. Richard Hodgson and several other physicians called at his residence.

He was questioned and a thorough examination made—so far as possible—into the peculiar features of the case.

That a man should lead an apparently normal existence in one town for eight weeks without knowing otherwise than that he had always been there seemed incredible.

He had purchased a stationery store there, boarded where he lived, lived an exemplary life, attended church, and yet when he came out of the trance he remembered nothing of what he had done in the eight weeks or even why or how he had left Providence.

It was remarkable.

THEY HYPNOTIZED HIM.

The doctors who took up the case were very brilliant men. Dr. Hodgson, one of them, suggested that Brown be hypnotized and made to tell in that condition what he had done when in a similar condition.

How he went through his Norristown experience; how he left Providence, &c.

They succeeded.

"Brown" was willing to be experimented with, and proved an easy subject.

Under the hypnotic influence he was questioned and said that he made up his mind, through some stronger will than his to go somewhere and go in business. He remembered taking a horse-car to Pawtucket and next being in Boston. He did not know anything about Norristown except that he found himself there. He never thought, he said, that he had a family, and then everything suited him so well.

He did not tell the above facts to the doctors as though he was conscious at the time he was telling them that he was explaining his mysterious disappearance, but rather as though the eight weeks were all of life he remembered, and as though he were a child telling the story of a day's holiday.

During the time the physicians had him in the hypnotic state his wife was brought in. He did not know her; said his name was A. J. Brown, and not Mr. X—, and absolutely denied that he had ever seen her before. He was in business still, he said, in Norristown, and his name was Mr. Brown.

Only five days ago the physicians again hypnotized him and urged upon him while in that condition that he must never leave Providence again.

This is commonly done in such cases to prevent the patient from doing what the hypnotic influence would otherwise lead him to do.

It is claimed that they always do as they are told.

Medical men say that the case is one of the most remarkable ever known, in that a man, otherwise in the possession of all his senses, has lived an absolutely dual life without knowing that such is really the fact unless he take the word of those telling him. When Brown is not under the hypnotic influence he remembers nothing of his Norristown experience.

When he is hypnotized he remembers nothing else.

That Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde should have a prototype in dual existence in real life seems incredible.

Yet this case exists and is being discussed by reputable medical men now, and will shortly become a part of the odd chronicles of the London *Lancet* and other medical journals of equal repute.