

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF MEDIUMSHIP

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Of 925 women who came to me for neuro-endocrinological consultation for various disturbances, 43, or 4.64% appeared to have more or less marked psi faculties. I have classified them into four groups:

4. Five (.54%) whose outstanding second-sight I personally verified.

3. Thirteen who, under examination, showed noteworthy evidence of second-sight which I was unable to verify personally.

2. Nine who reported frequent, strong intuitions and many premonitions during sleep, and were able to offer convincing facts in support of their claim.

Sixteen who made similar claims, but who were unable to support them with straightforward, specific evidence.

Hysteroid, therefore mythomaniac, symptoms appeared in 51.16%. All 43 showed abdominal distention prior to menstruation; 41 showed a clear capillary fragility; 34 showed symptoms of ligamentary hyperlaxity; and the pilose system of 29 was more developed than that of the average woman. While abdominal distention is found only rarely among women not claiming intuitions, with one exception all the women claiming to have had intuitions were subject to it. A distended "stomach," which is among the manifestations of hysteria, was frequently mentioned in the middle ages as characteristic of "devil-possession."

If we eliminate the hypothesis of aerocoly, we are left with the problem of diuresis in its complexity—action of the anti-diuretic hormone of the posterior hypophysis,

the mineralocorticoids of the adrenal cortex, of the thyroid, the kidney, the liver, the proteins, sodium, etc. Capillary deficiency is also doubtless due to numerous factors, including action of the vasopressin of the post-hypophysis the action of cortisone and adrenalin, the action of the liver, that of vitamins P and C, the action of the sympathetic, and finally the action of the histamine, in our opinion a major one.

We have limited our study of mediumship to women, since we have found only three men showing developed psi faculties. One was an adiposogenital, one a marked homosexual, the third a bachelor with feminine mannerisms. This raises the query whether mediumship is not stimulated by a certain virility in women, and a certain feminine-ness in men! Could a given relation between androgens and estrogens be a factor?

We found a relative frequency of the psychological components of hysteria in 22 cases. In my opinion the phenomenon which is apparently a common factor in both mediumism and hysteria is aphasia: defective power of expression. This, which accounts for suggestibility and mythomania among hysterics, can also heighten the rapidity of perception and the synthesis of sensory impressions among mediums. It may also result in facilitating the emergence to the surface of sensory impressions from the depth of the unconscious.

What struck me most forcibly about these patients was the strength and extent of their dissatisfaction. Though intellectually curious, most had been unable to complete their schooling. Affectionate by nature, most had suffered deep disappointments; though generally sensual, most had not known fulfillment on this level.

Undoubtedly hyperesthesia and hypercoenesthesia of the epigastric region must be considered relevant to this study. Many delirium cases doubtless have coenesthetic or auditory hallucinations at that level. But the importance attached by some spiritualists to that region in the matter

of ectoplasmic cells is debatable, and the same is true of epigastrium readings. The reality, however, of physical sensations, swellings, external bodily marks, and other psycho-somatic manifestations, characteristic in this group, cannot be denied.