

# Experiments in psychical research at Leland Stanford Junior University Volume 1

John Edgar Coover



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Experiments in psychical research at Leland Stanford Junior University Volume 1 John Edgar Coover This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can usually download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1917 edition. Excerpt: ... we have found that the empirical central measures derived under all these varying conditions, do not deviate from the theoretical central measures farther than theory prescribes. Both theoretical probability and the formulae derived therefrom which are applicable to central measures have received confirmation. The Infinitesimal Probability. When considering the application of mental habit to experiments on thought-transference we noticed the unsatisfactory nature of the conditions of experiment which permitted the unreckoned influence of common associations, resulting from "psychical communism," 103 and observed that the infinitesimally probable upon which reliance is placed may in reality be highly probable. Again, when considering Venn's statement that any given highly improbable event (e. g., the production of Milton's "Paradise Lost," by recording the letters drawn at random from a bag) must certainly occur if the trials are only kept up long enough, and his counter-assertion, to the claim that any given empirical event may be one of the occurrences which theory prescribes, "it is inconceivably unlikely that it should be one," we reserved for separate consideration the "infinitesimal probability." 184 It is now time to see what we can make of it. We have found that the distribution of frequency values derived from empirical chance events agrees, within the limits prescribed by the law, with the law of chances, and that when the empirical value under consideration is the occurrence of a least probable or a highly improbable event, or is a central measure, the empirical value falls within the prescribed limits in the theoretical distribution, also in accordance with the law of chances. If the ...

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