

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—*Goethe.*

'WHATEVER LOUH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.'—*Paul.*

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We are surprised at Dr. Marcus Dods, because, long ago, we learnt to think of him as, not only a clear thinker, but a spiritual 'son of the morning.' His late Glasgow lecture on the resurrection of Christ suggests doubts as to both. He stands for the resurrection of Christ's body. That, he says, is the crux of the whole matter. The disciples, he says, declared that they had seen him alive after he had died and been buried—just as though that proved anything as to a risen physical body! A very little cross-examination would dispose of that; but the disciples, so far as we know, were never properly examined at all.

Dr. Marcus Dods protests that the appearance of the spirit-Christ, apart from his body, will not do. Like Shylock, he must have flesh. And why? In order to 'divinely attest the truth of Christ's claim,' says Dr. Dods, and to establish a 'clear and close connection between this world and the unseen spiritual world.' It is wonderful! Christ's 'claim,' according to Dr. Dods, was that he was 'the Christ, the representative not only of God but of man.' How, then, does the resurrection of a body after three days' burial 'attest' that? It seems to attest the reverse, so far as his being 'the representative of man' is concerned; for no man's body rises after three or three million days.

As for the 'clear and close connection between this world and the unseen spiritual world,' surely the object-lesson of a spirit-self persisting after the body's death would be infinitely more to the point than the restoration to life of a dead body which would carry us no farther. The persistence of the spirit-self apart from the body would indeed carry us farther, and establish the closest possible connection between the two worlds.

As we have said—Dr. Marcus Dods is decidedly disappointing.

M. Gabriel Delanne's book, 'L'âme est immortelle,' translated by Miss Dallas, and issued by Mr. Wellby as 'Evidence for a Future Life,' is a useful summary of happenings during the past few years. Most of it is ancient history now, but it was well to have the records collated and set forth with such cumulative value as usually resides in repetitions over a sufficiently wide area both of space and time.

The book is what we may call a discriminating and discreet rather than a literal translation. In more ways than one it is French turned into English—as much transformed as translated: but, in one way, this does not discount its value or usefulness; it perhaps enhances it; and

the result is a book which is very valuable indeed for putting into the hands of uninformed but reasonable inquirers.

The following, from 'The Standard,' is more than a little puzzling, and we hope to hear more about it. Did this wonderful naked creature get rid of handcuffs, open a corridor full of locked cell doors, spirit away a prisoner and confine him, without keys, within six minutes? That seems to be what it says. We shall be glad to hear from Liverpool friends on the subject:—

Houdini, the amateur 'prison breaker' and 'Handcuff King,' who is at present at Liverpool, has succeeded in so interesting the police force of the city in his performances that yesterday, by special permission and in the presence of the Head Constable, he was permitted to demonstrate his prowess at the main Bridewell. As a result, the Head Constable wrote the following testimonial: 'I certify that to-day Mr. Harry Houdini showed his abilities in releasing himself from restraint. He had three pairs of handcuffs, one a very close-fitting pair, round his wrists, and was placed, in a nude state, in a cell which had previously been searched. Within six minutes he was free from the handcuffs, had opened the cell door, and had opened the doors of all the other cells in the corridor, had changed a prisoner from one cell to another, and had so securely locked him in that he had to be asked to unlock the door.—LEONARD DUNNING, Head Constable.'

'Merlin,' still writing in 'The Referee' on Immortality and 'Ghosts,' is tantalising but hopeful. He thinks Eglinton was nothing but an impostor, but we know he gave absolutely perfect tests of veracity. 'Merlin' is an expert in inventing difficulties and doubts. Nothing objective could convince him; and yet he is a blazing believer, and this is his account of his belief:—

Personally, and within myself, I have no greater doubt as to the immortality of the human soul and the eternity of its conscious experience of continuity than I have of my own physical entity as I pen these lines. But I cannot say whence I derive this so strong belief. It is most assuredly not based on reason. Nor is it, as the materialist may suggest, rooted in unreason. It reposes on an instinct with which the mind can no more dispense than the lungs can dispense with vital air. It relies on an intuition which embraces all that seems divinest in the total sum of life, and it is no more to be confirmed or shaken by the presence of an army of the apparitions of the human dead than by the constantly recurring spectacle of human death itself. There can be no more guarantee for the permanent existence of a disembodied spirit than there is for that of the embodied soul. We rest only on a sublime hope. We live by faith, and faith alone.

Well, salvation by faith, in this matter, will do.

Anxious, doubtless, for our welfare, unknown well-wishers rain upon us a gentle shower of tracts, with titles such as these: 'Have you made your peace with God?' 'Where will you spend Eternity?' 'Washed in the Blood.' They usually go, with a sigh, partly of wonder and partly of pity, into our capacious basket, from which there is no escape. But, occasionally, among the chaff there appears a grain of wheat. One such lies before us at this moment.

Its title is arresting—'The Angel's Song for all the

Year,' by S. J. C. (S. W. Partridge and Co.). The little tract is beautifully written, and at once wins sympathy by the pathetic story with which it begins. Its pleasant thoughts culminate in a happy recognition of the presence and ministry of angels. The following sentences are not at all profound, but they are very winsome and consoling:—

I want you to think when you wake,
 'There is an angel bright who loveth me,
 And who for love, whene'er I wake or sleep,
 Is ready, o'er my body, watch to keep.'

Remember there is one bright messenger specially your own.

'Every task that is before us,
 Some blest spirit shares,
 Watchful eyes are ever o'er us,
 Angels unawares.'

The God of Hosts is with us—hosts of ministering spirits, and one is your very own whose earnest prayer is for you, the precious child of many hopes and fears. Your guardian's sympathy, and keenest, tenderest love is all your own; it grieves for your failures, yearns over your heartaches, and is made happy and still more blessed by your repentance and every step upwards and homewards.

Does not this add a wonderful dignity to all skilled labour—that you have an angel teacher, that you are carrying out a thought of God? And if you listen, be sure the thoughts will come—the bright suggestion, the flash of inspiration for your work, for all work. Give of your very best, ask for Heavenly help, then let yourself go, and the tides of its love and energy will carry you to the victory.

I believe they are round about our lives, shaping circumstances for us, bringing us into touch with those that can help us, or with others we, in our turn, can help; preparing the way for our Lord to bless us.

A tremendous sensation seems to have been made in America by the book called 'The Great Psychological Crime'; and, oddly enough, Spiritualists there are divided in opinion concerning it. One 'grand old man,' Andrew Jackson Davis, thinks it ought to have been called, 'A Great Psychological Blunder,' and says:—

I deny utterly and for all time that individuals are led into evil and crimes by persons in the other world. I know the pranks and college-boy mischievousness of 'Diakka'—but, even for them and all such, I know that the police regulations of the other world are adequate and universally effective.

Every well-balanced mind will at once understand the heaven-wide difference between real mediumship and the almost numberless approximations thereto. In every department of life there are honest persons (not very wise) who are honestly deceived. It requires something higher than honesty to make progress in things spiritual. That higher something is wisdom.

At the same time he admits that 'Pure and undefiled contact with the individual citizens of the second sphere is a rarity,' and, as for the others, he bids us beware.

We do not shrink from that. We are always ready to admit that the gravest problem which persists in confronting us is that connected with evil communications—false, disturbing, provocative, abusive. A series of such communications lately gave us cause for anxiety—on the medium's account. The medium we did not know: the communications came by post. In the end, without any reply having been sent by us, we received a letter, full of contrition and with pathetic apologies, the writer explaining that at times he seemed to be the victim of a perverted imagination and of evil thoughts, beyond control. He begged of us to think of him at his best, and to disregard any evil-minded communications that might be sent in the future. It is well to face these things. That way emancipation lies.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East (near the National Gallery), on

FRIDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 26TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

BY

MR. J. BRUCE WALLACE, M.A.,

ON

'The Superpersonal Element in Man.'

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock, and the Address will be commenced punctually at 7.30.

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

No. XVIII. of the Alliance 'Articles of Association' provides that 'If any Member or Associate desire to resign, he shall give written notice thereof to the Secretary. He shall, however, be liable for all subscriptions which shall then remain unpaid.'

SPECIAL NOTICES.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PSYCHOMETRY AND CLAIRVOYANCE will be given at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., by Mr. W. Ronald Brailey on Tuesdays, February 16th and 23rd. These séances commence punctually at 3 p.m., and no one is admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. to Members and Associates; to friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—Arrangements have been made with Mrs. M. H. Wallis for a further series of meetings at the rooms of the Alliance, at which pleasant and instructive talks may be had with one of her intelligent controls. The next séance will be held on *Friday next*, February 19th, at 3 p.m., prompt. Fee 1s. each, and any Member or Associate may introduce a friend at the same rate of payment. *Visitors should come prepared with written questions, on subjects of general interest relating to life here and hereafter.*

PSYCHIC CULTURE.—Mr. Frederic Thurstan, M.A., kindly conducts classes for Members and Associates at the Rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., for the encouragement and direction of private mediumship and psychical self-culture. The next meeting will be held on the afternoon of *Friday*, February 26th. Time, from 5 o'clock to 6 p.m., and visitors are requested to be in their places not later than 4.55. There is no fee or subscription.

DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASES.—Mr. George Spriggs has kindly placed his valuable services in the diagnosis of diseases at the disposal of the Council, and for that purpose will attend at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, Charing Cross, W.C., on Thursday afternoons, between the hours of 1 and 3. Members, Associates, and friends who are out of health, and who desire to avail themselves of Mr. Spriggs's offer, should *notify their wish in writing* to the secretary of the Alliance, Mr. E. W. Wallis, not later than the previous day, stating the time when they propose to attend. No fee is charged, but Mr. Spriggs suggests that every consultant should make a contribution of at least 5s. to the funds of the Alliance.

TRANSITION.—The friends of Mrs. Katherine St. Clair will learn with regret that she passed to spirit life on Thursday, the 4th inst. Mrs. St. Clair was a clairvoyante and psychometrist of considerable ability.

BRISTOL OR BATH.—'Keynham' wishes to know if there are Spiritualists in Bristol or Bath who would be willing to admit him, as a student, into their fellowship. He can be addressed to the care of the Editor of 'LIGHT.'

PSYCHOMETRIC CLAIRVOYANCE.

In the 'Notes by the Way' in 'LIGHT' of January 23rd, reference was made to the curious case recorded by Mr. Myrick of how a lady occupying a room dreamt of his personality although she was a stranger to him, and to the fact that he had often previously occupied that room; and how this experience gives rise to the question—does our personality so impress itself even on chairs, walls, rooms of houses that the presence remains there for years after the person himself has departed?

In connection with this explanation I remember reading years ago in the 'Life of Mrs. Conant, the American Medium' (I have not the book by me for reference and quote from memory), how that gifted lady had often similar experiences and how such phantasms were often indistinguishable to her waking consciousness from normal impressions. On one occasion she entered the compartment of a railway carriage at a by-station and immediately got out again, remarking that the carriage was full. A friend accompanying her said that it was empty; so they entered again and seated themselves, and Mrs. Conant described all the persons she continued to see in the various seats. A few minutes afterwards the very persons she had described entered the carriage and took the seats. They had merely alighted to get some refreshments before Mrs. Conant had approached the train, it being a station where a stoppage was made for meals.

I remember a gentleman of highly psychic temperament who once told me that he rarely slept in a strange bedchamber without being conscious of the personality of the previous occupier of that room, and he related to me several curious experiences of this nature, which he found, on mentioning them to his host the following morning, to be veridical.

In cases of this kind a further problem arises for inquiry as to the method and nature of the psychometric impression. Was the previous impression, afterwards sensed by the psychometrist, made upon the ether interpenetrating the walls and furniture, and a 'record' of vibrations maintained there? Or was the record made upon what the late Mr. Myers called the 'met-etherial' space—or the plane of 'mind-stuff'—a metaphysical plane above that of matter and comprehending it, and in which the several minds of incarnated beings have, as it were, a common habitat or connection, somewhat as the various pistils and stamens of a flower have a common junction at the base?

If more light could be thrown on this last explanation—a common metaphysical 'community' of experiences and personal consciousness—some more light would also be thrown on many puzzling cases of dreams where, as has once or twice been verified in my own dreams, what comes as a 'phantasmic' experience to the dreamer has been the actual experience of some other human being—it may be of some friend with whom he is in constant outer contact, or it may be of some stranger who somehow on the psychic plane has come into contact with his wandering soul.

In three cases certainly in my experience I discovered subsequently that peculiar adventures in my dream-life were the actual experiences of other people—in one case of a close friend, in the second of a person who twelve years afterwards became a close friend, and in the third of one who is still a stranger to me, but akin in mental views. Consequently it is now one of my vital private beliefs that in my dream-life I am being taught by other people's experiences as well as by my own, out of some common 'storehouse' in the mind-world; in short, that often—I do not say always—when I dream I am studying history, and so extending my 'humanity.' Truly it is difficult to say where our psychic self leaves off and where that of another self begins. Probably the psychic consciousness is more fluidic than the normal consciousness, and being, therefore, less set in a fixed form of personality, easily takes a temporary shape from the mould of some other personality into which it may be fusing, through the interblending of spirit in some higher common, social, metaphysical, or cosmical body, some body which gives a community of life to certain groups, to lesser personalities, just as the body does to the groups of affiliated cells which compose it.

FREDERIC THURSTAN.

MR. J. G. PIDDINGTON ON MRS. THOMPSON'S MEDIUMSHIP.

Part XLVII. of the 'Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,' which has just been issued, should be of especial interest to Spiritualists, seeing that it is mainly devoted to a Paper by Mr. J. G. Piddington on 'The Types of Phenomena displayed in Mrs. Thompson's Trance,' in which Mr. Piddington makes it clear that he is thoroughly satisfied that Mrs. Thompson's trances are genuine. In the 'Introduction' he refers to the fact that Dr. Hodgson had expressed the opinion that at the six sittings which he attended Mrs. Thompson simulated a state of trance, and he endeavours to excuse Dr. Hodgson's conclusions on the ground that Mrs. Thompson's transition from the waking to the entranced state differs materially from that of Mrs. Piper—is so easy and sudden, and usually so free from any physical discomfort—and that during the trance her attention and behaviour are so alert that, 'to one accustomed to Mrs. Piper's trance it might well appear to be shamming.' Thus, as in duty bound to a brother Researcher, he lets Dr. Hodgson down as gently as he can.

It is, perhaps, unfortunate that while, throughout his paper, Mr. Piddington admits the genuineness of Mrs. Thompson's trance, he should promise to abstain from discussing the source of her trance communications. He does not hesitate, however, to suggest the possibility that they originate either in her subliminal, or in her normal consciousness, although he distinctly disavows any intention to convey the idea that she consciously makes observations for use while in the trance, and declares that he is convinced of her absolute *bona fides*. In short, in regard to the phenomena which he records, he admits that no theory satisfies him, and that he has given up the attempt to define his opinions in despair. With reference to the 'controls,' or trance personalities, of Mrs. Thompson, 'Nelly' seems to have found most favour with him, but even with regard to 'Nelly' he does not appear able to decide whether she is a secondary personality or an independent individual! On p. 282 he says:—

'Mrs. Thompson's opinion about her familiar control fluctuates; at one time she seems overborne by a conviction of the separate existence of "Nelly," and at another half disposed to think that "Nelly" is no more than her own subliminal: a state of indecision faithfully reflected in my own mind, though I sometimes incline towards a third alternative, namely, that "Nelly" is "a bit of both"!'

Professor Henry Sidgwick died in the summer of 1900, and early in the following year communications were given purporting to emanate from him, regarding which Mr. Piddington says:—

'The Sidgwick control then made its first appearance, and though the words were few, the voice, manner, and style of utterance were extraordinarily life-like; so much so indeed that, had I been ignorant of Professor Sidgwick's death and had happened to hear the voice without being able to tell whence it was issuing, I think I should have unhesitatingly ascribed it to him.'

Then why hesitate because the Professor had died? From whom else could 'the voice, manner, and style of utterance' so 'extraordinarily life-like' have originated but from the Professor himself—showing that though he had died he was still alive? Referring to another occasion, when he really seems to have been nearly led to believe, Mr. Piddington says:—

'The Sidgwick control then took "Nelly's" place; and again the impersonation was most extraordinarily life-like. The only two occasions on which I have been *émotionné*, or have experienced the slightest feeling of uncanniness during a spiritualistic séance, or have felt myself in danger of being carried away, was during these two manifestations of the Sidgwick control. I felt that I was indeed speaking with, and hearing the voice of, the man I had known; and the vividness of the original impression has not faded with time.' (p. 237.)

It was at this time that Mrs. Thompson was influenced to write some messages which bear a marked resemblance to the handwriting of the late Professor Sidgwick, on one of which the name of F. W. H. Myers also appears 'in an entirely

different handwriting.' Regarding the latter Mr. Piddington says :—

'It is badly and weakly written, and would not, I imagine, be considered a good imitation of Mr. Myers' ordinary signature; but it is extraordinarily like some specimens of Mr. Myers' signatures as he wrote them in the last few years of his life.'

Several of these 'automatic writings' are reproduced, as also are four specimens of Professor Sidgwick's handwriting for comparison.

In regard to the Sidgwick messages, Miss Alice Johnson (who had been Mrs. Sidgwick's private secretary for many years, and who is of a very cautious and critical temperament) admits that there is a resemblance, and that the words 'Myers is' are especially like Professor Sidgwick's style of writing; and Mr. Piddington says :—

'Mrs. Sidgwick, in a letter addressed to Sir Oliver Lodge, speaks of the "unmistakable likeness of the handwriting"; and Mrs. Benson (Professor Sidgwick's sister), 'in a letter addressed to me after examining the various sheets containing the script, says of them: "The more I look at them the more I am struck with the likeness."'

Mr. Piddington showed specimens of the script to one or two people well-acquainted with Professor Sidgwick's handwriting, and in each case they unhesitatingly recognised it as his; but Mr. Piddington goes on to say, and we quote it as a sample of his extremely critical attitude :—

'It is true that Mrs. Thompson says that she has never seen Professor Sidgwick's handwriting; and I entirely accept that statement if taken to mean (and Mrs. Thompson, I should say, meant no more than this by it) that she has no conscious recollection of having seen it. But it is possible that either at Mr. Myers' house, or at some other house at Cambridge, some specimen may have come within her range of vision.'

But is this fair criticism? Of course it is possible that some specimen of Professor Sidgwick's writing may have been seen by Mrs. Thompson, and entirely forgotten by her; but how does that account for her ability to reproduce it so faithfully? Even a clever forger requires time and opportunity for study and practice to enable him to imitate successfully the writing of others; whereas our very clever critics credit the 'subliminal' liars and forgers with almost miraculous skill and ability, especially in 'getting at' the 'latent sub-conscious' knowledge of others! It is but fair, however, that we should quote Mr. Piddington's justification for his extremely critical attitude :—

'Our insistence on the great allowance to be made for mal-observation has, more than anything else, brought on us the remonstrances of Spiritualists; but such remonstrances would, I think, have been less vigorously expressed if they had but realised that it is our own personal and sad experiences which have largely contributed to our recognition of the untrustworthiness of human observation. Such attention as the work of the Society for Psychical Research has met with from critical minds is perhaps due to a large extent to our frank recognition of our own fallibility.'

It is hardly because of their insistence on the necessity for allowance for mal-observation that Spiritualists have remonstrated with Psychical Researchers so much as their readiness to accept, and to invent, theories which exclude from consideration and recognition the very possibility of incarnate intelligences taking active part in the production of these phenomena. We venture to think that Psychical Researchers sometimes manifest 'the credulity of incredulity' in their resolute antipathy to the thought of spirit communications; and in their readiness to attribute everything to telepathy, the sub-conscious mind, or the subliminal or super-normal faculty of the medium. So Mr. Piddington is careful to avoid committing himself to any phrase that may look like an admission of the real presence of Professor Sidgwick, and therefore speaks, not of Mr. Sidgwick, but of 'the Sidgwick control,' and the nearest he gets to the recognition of spirit existence is when he confesses that he sometimes inclines to the belief that 'Nelly' is 'a bit of both'—that is, both a separate existence from, and a part of, her mother's subliminal!

However, we thank Mr. Piddington for his testimony to the facts, which will speak for themselves; and for his vindication of Mrs. Thompson from Dr. Hodgson's hasty judgment and adverse opinion regarding her mediumship.

'SPIRIT WRITINGS BY INSPIRATION.'

Under this title is commenced, in the current number of 'Psychische Studien,' an essay by Herr Hans Kordon, of Zurich, who, it appears, is a very remarkable medium for inspirational writing.

The first instalment of the essay itself is introductory, dealing with spirit mediumship generally; but this is prefaced by several letters to the Editor which are very important and interesting. The first of these is by Hans Kordon himself, accompanying his essay or narrative, and giving some account of his and his wife's mediumship from the summer of 1901 to the present time. Each of these letters is accompanied by a few remarks by the Editor, Dr. Maier, who is evidently much impressed by them.

The next letter is from Eduard Reich, M.D., a highly-esteemed contributor to 'Psychische Studien,' who says :—

'Allow me to introduce to your notice Herr Hans Kordon and his wife, Frau Hélène Kordon, who are some of the best people I know, and in a high degree reliable, true, and honourable. The phenomena occurring with this excellent couple deserve to be scientifically studied; they are as wonderful as unique. I can speak highly of Herr and Frau Kordon, whom I know personally.—Yours, &c.,
'DR. REICH.'

The letter following this is a very long one from President Sulzer, of Zurich, whose séances with Frau Rothe and evidence in her favour at her trial will be familiar to most readers of 'LIGHT.' This gentleman speaks in the highest terms of Herr Kordon, who is a journalist by profession, and whom the president says he has known since December, 1901. He then describes the manner in which the inspirational writings, mostly poems, are produced :—

'He seats himself at a little table, upon which he places both hands, the right one of which holds a pencil. After a short time the table begins to quiver; at the same time he writes a sentence or verse which he says is dictated to him by an inner voice. This procedure is repeated till a whole poem is written, without a word needing alteration.'

The inspirer of these poems is said by Kordon's control to be none other than Goethe. The president, however, who had doubts on the subject, begged a lady friend—who is a medium, and who neither had nor has the slightest acquaintance with Kordon—to ask her controls if they could throw any light on the subject, and after some time this lady told the president that she was informed by her controls that Kordon was inspired by a group of spirits, headed by Goethe.

This question of the authorship of the enormous number of poems, &c., through Kordon is discussed at great length by President Sulzer, and he suggests that Goethe himself may have written occasionally under inspiration—a hypothesis which may also apply to other great geniuses, such as Shakespeare or Scott—and that the 'group' may even be headed by the inspirer of Goethe.

The concluding letter is from the Baron von Erhardt, of Zurich, of whom Dr. Maier speaks as a most honourable and convinced Spiritist, well-known and esteemed in the spiritistic circles of Zurich. This gentleman writes that during the last year and a-half he has been a 'friend of the house,' and an almost daily visitor at Herr Kordon's, and a witness of what he calls the wonderful and incomparable inspired writings of the married couple. These comprise no less than two thousand poems (*Gedichte*)—philosophical, theosophical, spiritualistic, ethical, religious and social, besides dramas and tales; all produced within the short space of a year and a-half, or a year and three-quarters, without any previous preparation! He writes that this is the more extraordinary when we reflect that Goethe in his whole life did not compose more than one thousand poems, &c., including epigrams. He thinks it much to be regretted that, with the exception of a few specimens printed in the papers, these works, for want of funds, should not be published, so that the public might have an opportunity of judging of their value. He concludes by saying that the severest criticism should be exercised, especially concerning the verification of predictions, and that Herr Kordon himself, who has been tormented by doubts, and suffered much from this wonderful drain upon him, desires the closest examination and criticism.

The next number of this journal will doubtless be more interesting, as it will contain a record of Herr Kordon's personal experiences.

M. T.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.

At a recent séance with Mrs. M. H. Wallis, in the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 'Morambo,' the medium's control, answered, among many others, the following questions. The report is from shorthand notes taken by Miss May Harris:—

Q. : Can any light be given on the misleading character of many messages and directions received by automatic writing when not sought from curiosity or from frivolous motives?

A. : This is an experience which perplexes very many people, because the supposition usually is that, if there can be automatic control of the arm or hand, there ought to be exact and clear expression from the spirit side; but there are spiritual and physical conditions which have to be mastered before that degree of control can be established. Given the suitability of the medium, and possession of knowledge and power on the part of the spirit, the messages are likely to be clear and exact; but there are many conditions on your side which act with interfering power upon the spiritual, and make it at times extremely difficult for the spirit to transmit the thought or to direct the action clearly. There are also mischievous spirits who are only too glad to have an opportunity to play any little prank, even at the expense of accuracy. I am, however, inclined to think that the impulse to write is not always the direct action of the controlling spirit but is the result of a special sensitiveness on the part of the medium, so that in some way, which I cannot explain and do not fully understand, the sub-conscious action of the mind of the medium is brought into play, without any really directing control. A good deal of the trouble referred to is, however, due to the imperfect development of the writer. It is not altogether to be regretted that there should be a degree of unreliability, otherwise too much reliance would be placed upon what is given, and the recipient would be inclined to put on one side his own reasoning power. It is well that man should exercise his own power of thought—should judge, question, discover, and endeavour to understand for himself, and what-ever tends to this development of power in regard to himself is of value. Therefore the spirit friends are not anxious, speaking generally, that what they say should be accepted without question, simply because they say so. Again, at times it is difficult to perceive clearly the difference between the individual thought and the impression from external sources.

Q. : Will a person who committed suicide on account of various troubles find, on the other side, that the old troubles are still with him, as well as others, through his having committed suicide?

A. : In the generality of cases that is so. There are exceptions to every rule, and where the suicidal experience has been gained through an unselfish desire to prevent others from suffering, then I think that usually the one who passes over is received into a kind of hospital or institution and nursed back to sanity; for it is practically an interference with the sane condition when such action is taken. There is, however, a great distinction between taking one's physical life through cowardice and through the desire to save others from suffering; but I think that in every instance there is strong remorse for the action. There are many institutions on our side for those who require the care and ministrations of the spirit people, for those who have been insane, either throughout the whole or for a short period of their lives, and for those who have grown very depleted through long physical illness, especially when there has been a crushing of the spiritual powers as well. There are places of rest for those needing it, where they are nursed from sickness to health. There are also many educational establishments, if I may use that term; but, on our side, the process of education is much more free; there is less going to school and more continual schooling.

Q. : Can our spirit friends discern our thoughts and answer if we mentally question them? And do they like us to ask questions?

A. : Provided a suitable rapport is established, it is quite easy for the spirit visitant to discern the thoughts; but if there is a break from any cause, that naturally would interfere with the degree of perception. All spirit people cannot discern the

thoughts of any particular individual, or of every individual, as the case may be; it needs a degree of unity or sympathy before that can be possible. Very frequently the possibility of communion is established for a short time for a purpose, so that there is a degree of perception or response to impression; when that is disturbed it needs similar conditions to be again set up. Often when using the medium we impress upon our hearers the usefulness of the mental request to some spirit visitant for help, guidance, or instruction; and from this it may be assumed that many spirit people are very glad when, through such desire, communication can be established. Reason, however, must hold sway; it is not wise to accept as entirely correct all that may be given by impression. It generally needs a certain degree of development to enable the one on your side to clearly perceive what is the result of his own individual thought and what is the result of impression from the spirit side.

Q. : Some spirits do not know they are dead. Can you explain this?

A. : That is not very much to be wondered at, because with many on your side the thought has been, and still is, that death means the cessation of life and of consciousness, and when they wake up here, quite strong, and find they are able to move, and manifest their thought, it is extremely difficult for them to realise that they have passed through the change of death. Some spirits have to be brought back and shown their earth bodies to convince them they have passed on.

Q. : Do you think that those on the other side see more than we do about the length of life?

A. : Some may be able to pretty readily perceive that, but personally I find some difficulty in regard to the duration of your time, because on our side time is not, as you understand it. It is measured rather by experiences and feelings than by the length of years. Very often what seems to the spirits soon may be a matter of two or three years, and yet practically it is soon to them. Some spirits are able more readily than others to perceive the conditions, and to give the time pretty accurately.

Q. : Is it possible for those who have passed over to communicate quickly, or must they wait a certain amount of time before they can do so?

A. : If they know how and have the means at their command, sometimes it is easier for them to communicate directly after passing over than after they have sojourned in the spirit world a long time; because, just after transition, they are still in touch with some earth conditions. Consequently while these conditions hold, it may be easier to manifest, provided they understand the process and have the necessary degree of power. Because an individual passes away, and because spirit return is a fact, many people think that every spirit ought to be able to return and communicate; but it needs knowledge, power, and usually strength of will, to use the means which may be provided. It is well to remember that the spirit world is one of absorbing interests,—including travelling, exploring, and meeting celebrities of bygone days—so that it is not to be wondered at if spirits occasionally lose interest for a time in those on earth.

A SEANCE IN A RAILWAY CARRIAGE.

I heard Mrs. Fairclough Smith relate an interesting experience lately which I think quite worth passing on to you. In June last, Mrs. Smith took train at Victoria Station for Margate, and just before starting a lady in black got in after saying 'goodbye' to another lady in widow's dress. During the journey, Mrs. Smith clairaudiently heard a voice saying, 'Tell her, Fred is here.' After some hesitation, she felt compelled to ask her sorrowful fellow-passenger if she knew anything of Spiritualism. 'Oh, yes,' she replied. That paved the way for freer utterance, and Mrs. Smith then told her that 'Fred' was there, that the lady she had just left was his widow, that 'Fred' said he had been reckless and it was his own fault that he had caught the chill which caused him to pass over in three days. The lady said this was all true, and Mrs. Smith went minutely into details of family history which were also admitted to be correct. A séance in the rattle of a railway carriage is surely an unusual experience.

J. L.

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ENTER THE PRIEST.

It is a notable sign of the times that in our great English State Church, the word 'clergyman' or 'minister' is rapidly disappearing in favour of the word 'priest': and it is a change which profoundly interests and somewhat disturbs every lover of spiritual religion. We, as Spiritualists, have no ecclesiastical prejudices; and the ordinary terrors of the hysterical Protestant disturb us not; but the significance of this sign of the times no rational Spiritualist can fail to perceive.

What is the natural history of the mediator between God and Man, known as 'priest'? In order to answer that question we must take a survey of the stages through which Man has passed in coming into what we may call—contact with God. Very early in his history, Man simply feared the 'Great Spirit,' and saw him at work in all the natural forces,—an awful presence to be dreaded and bought off if possible by desperate prostrations and awful gifts, needing the intervention of mediators who were skilled in dealing with the gods. These were, in all probability, mediums, or men who, by dint of superior craft or courage, or, more likely, by superior insight and aspiration, led the way to the world's many Sinais and transacted the necessary critical business with the hidden gods.

Even to this day, and in the very centre of what we proudly call the world's civilisation, it is still very largely believed that Man must have miraculous persons to stand between him and the awful or heavenly powers; and it is mainly left to the 'heretics' to testify that inspiration is universal in varying degrees, and that God, who is not far from every one of us, puts His law into all our hearts as we are made, or as we make ourselves, receptive.

It is this survival of the old delusion that makes the priest inevitable: and, so long as priest and spirit-medium are identical, it is not altogether a superstition that the priest may be a channel for spiritual gifts, a 'means of grace.' The trouble begins when the priest is regarded as an accredited official whose function it is to appease a threatening Deity with sacrificial offerings, to avert wrath, procure pardon, and win peace: and it is necessary to bear in mind that the origin of the elaborate and sensuous sacrificial system attributed to Moses must be traced to ideas of God which carry us to very crude forms of heathenism, and which very well illustrate the emergence of a half-barbarous people into something like civilised life.

If we go beyond that, and say that God directly inspired men to paint the pictures of Him which are suggested by those ideas, and still further inspired all the details of the Levitical priesthood and its sacrifices, we confuse the modern mind, and darken and defile the Christianity which really was intended to lift us far above all that.

We repeat—and it is not for us to minimise the fact—that, in the early days, the priest was a spirit-medium; for mediator and medium are, for all practical purposes, the same. As such, the priest actually would put the worshiper *en rapport* with spirit presences—too easily called 'God.' It is the fashion to scorn or smite the medium now, but, to the free-minded reader of the Old Testament, who will really read the book and not only talk about it, it is perfectly obvious that priest, seer, mediator and prophet are, in regard to the essential matter, one and the same person—and that this person is a spirit-medium; and it is a noteworthy thing that this is true of all the ancient religions.

Of course, even when the priest is really a medium, all is by no means plain sailing; for mediumship, when united with priestly functions and authority, may easily open the door for every kind of superstition and mendacity: and it is not to be wondered at that the relations of priest and devotee have given us one of the darkest and most distressing chapters in the weird history of the evolution of Man; for the priest, often the medium for what are indeed 'strange gods,' and oft mixing even that with 'baser matter,' has been cunning juggler or pernicious tyrant as well as true mediator,—darkening knowledge, muzzling science, stifling freedom, and poisoning the home. Then, when even the pretence of mediumship is given up, and the priest is content to be a mere official person, clothed somehow with authority, his position is hopeless, his vocation is gone.

And yet, as we have said, the priest is, apparently, not going out but coming in. It can only be for a time. He is so manifestly a mere survival, and so thoroughly out of harmony with all the dominant forces of our time that, by sheer force of circumstances, he must ultimately go.

Strange to say, the Apostle Peter put on record a splendid truth which, of itself alone, ought to have kept the official priest out of the Church. Addressing ordinary folk, he said: 'Ye also, as living stones, are built up, a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ.' That is perfect. It sweeps away all the old sacrifices of blood and death, and invites us to offer the spiritual sacrifices of loving uses and life, really 'acceptable to God,' after the manner of Jesus Christ, whose offering to God was that of a 'sweet-smelling savour.'

Many Christians have failed to grasp that vital distinction, and have actually seen in Christ only a continuation of the old sacrifices of blood, rather aggravating than alleviating the old horror, by substituting a Christ for a victim instead of a bullock or a goat. The truth is that the Christian religion, rightly understood, is a farewell to the old order, of altar and victim and priest, and is a sublime testimony that we must offer better sacrifices because 'spiritual,' and be our own priests, make our own offerings, and be built up in the 'spiritual house' whose foundation is 'the well-beloved son.'

'WHO'S WHO.'—We have received from the publishers, A. and C. Black, Soho-square, three extremely useful books. The first of these, 'Who's Who,' for 1904, with which is incorporated 'Men and Women of the Time,' has been rightly termed 'the "Debrett" of the intellect.' It contains upwards of seventeen thousand biographies, every one of which has been personally revised, and is therefore not only an interesting record of the lives of great men and women, but an invaluable book of reference. The second book is entitled the 'Who's Who Year-Book,' and is a useful companion volume to the first. The third book of the series, 'The Englishwoman's Year-Book,' deserves a large circulation, as it is full of information upon every subject likely to be of interest to women in public and social life. It aims at giving some idea of the extent of women's work and interests, and some guidance to those who want to help their fellow-creatures.

MORE ABOUT THE 'N.' RAYS.

So much interest and curiosity have been roused by the now universally discussed 'N.' rays that readers of 'LIGHT' will probably welcome a little further news from Paris on the subject, and we are glad to be able to present the following fuller details culled from one or two French papers.

The importance of certain facts upon which official science has set her seal of verification is not to be under-estimated, though the acceptance, as new, of an order of physiological phenomena, such as these human radiations are said to be, is to do scant justice to all that has been experimentally proved by most careful thinkers and observers over fifty years ago in the field of animal magnetism. The greatest point of significance, to our thinking, is the fact that these rays have been found to be identically the same in inorganic as in organic bodies, and physical science, therefore, is at last shown how she can touch hands with the physiologist in laboratory observation, and future developments in psychology will be correspondingly great.

These 'N.' rays were primarily observed by M. Blondlot, a physicist of Nancy, who christened them 'N.' in honour of the town. Briefly, he proves that all inorganic bodies or objects which have been exposed to the influence of the sun, such as a brick or a stone picked off the road, emit rays. All matter, in fact, possesses the power of radiation, and those same potentialities can be seen and registered by a fluorescent screen just as surely both in the animal and the human organism. Wherever muscular or nerve energies are manifesting, rays are emitted, and it was found that they would pass through certain substances, whereas others would intercept and store them. They will, for example, pass through an oak board three or four centimetres thick, black paper, aluminium, &c., but water stops them or even a cigarette paper if wet. It is peculiar to note, however, that though fresh water intercepts them they will pass through when the liquid is salt.

Professor Durville, of the Ecole du Magnétisme, has a vigorous article on the subject in the journal of the Society, in which he says:—

'Magnetisers were practically aware of all this two centuries ago; their writings which we have prove this. We know that they frequently employed, as aids to health, various magnetised bodies and more especially liquids which had absorbed their radiations. . . . Apart from all human and animal bodies, these rays can be found in the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, particularly in crystals, the magnet, electricity, chemical decompositions, &c. With physiological qualities that differ according to the source from which they come, these rays are always subject to the same physical laws. . . . As I have demonstrated in my "Physique Magnétique," a force escapes from our bodies in the shape of vibrations, or, better still, luminous rays. This force, named by Reichenbach *Od* and by others, myself included, as the magnetic agent, is subject, like electricity and the magnet, to the general laws of polarity. Mesmer observes that mirrors reflect it and prisms and lenses refract it.'

M. Blondlot discovered that the 'N.' rays could be refracted by a quartz prism and according to him the sources of these rays are multifarious. Crookes' tubes; bodies such as the sun, incandescent lamps, and tempered steel are some of them. M. Blondlot is in no way an advocate of magnetism, but he came to the conclusion that since the human body is always in a state of compression these rays must be emitted by it; and as compression upon inorganic bodies has revealed this, it would be interesting to know whether M. Blondlot has tried to reproduce any of Professor Bosé's experiments regarding the sensitivity of minerals and other inorganic substances, and whether, in the case of a 'poisoned' or 'killed' body, these rays would be absent when the substance was under compression.

These observations, commenced purely in the domain of physics, were the direct means of enabling Dr. Charpentier, also of Nancy, and a friend of M. Blondlot, to try them physiologically, when the demonstrations were found to be easily reproduced. This fact gave at once extraordinary publicity and importance to the discovery, and the world has not yet done talking the matter over. MM. Blondlot and Charpentier are hailed as clever and fortunate researchers, and very different treatment is meted out to them from that which was

accorded to Mesmer, Du Pôtet, Reichenbach, and others too numerous to mention, many years ago. An interview reported in the 'Figaro,' of Paris, with Dr. Charpentier, is interesting, and informs us upon one or two notable points. Dr. Charpentier says:—

'I was making some researches in nerve oscillations, and Dr. Blondlot informed me of his discovery, but as in the beginning the experiments were found to be exceptionally delicate, it was some time, I must admit, before I fully grasped their meaning. More through chance than anything else I one day discovered that in the proximity of a muscle, the fluorescent screen which I had invented to facilitate my nerve oscillation researches became more brilliant. I repeated the experiment, with the same indubitable result. The muscles must, therefore, emit these rays. The whole human body emits them, though the emission is more intense in the more nervous regions of the organism. One may say that phosphorescence is the action of the nerve system. I proved, in fact, that the "N." rays had as much influence on phosphorescent bodies as fluorescent ones.

'Q.: "Is it easy to prove the emission of the 'N.' rays by the human body?"

'Nothing is simpler. One paper said that in order to succeed in the experiment it was necessary to stay about two hours in the dark. This is nonsense. At that rate we should have much difficulty in repeating the experiments in laboratories. This is how we proceed. You take a piece of black paper, part of which is covered with phosphorescent sulphide, and in a dark room bring it close to a muscle, when you will see the fluorescence better. The intensity grows the nearer you bring the little screen to a nerve centre or muscle. In order, however, to view the phenomenon more clearly it is better not to look at the sulphide directly, but glance away to the dark before observing.'

Dr. Charpentier then demonstrated his observations, showing the different effects through the biceps of his arm, the heart, the diaphragm, and the brain. The interviewer wishing to know what likely results might be expected regarding medical work and this discovery, Dr. Charpentier replied:—

'You are too impatient; the discovery dates from yesterday only, and the physiological side of the "N." rays is but just being considered. From the immediate medical point of view, however, certain results will be forthcoming. It will be possible, for example, to recognise the limits of the heart and liver, and fix the position of the diaphragm. Another application, and a very interesting one, can be utilised. By these means search can be made for nerve centres; for all nerve centres which function emit rays. You know that what we styled the centre of articulated speech could be detected by the means of fluorescence. With this screen I am able to find correctly this same point which was fixed on by doctors, and when the screen is placed close to it the rays will develop brightness, and this even when speech is made in a low voice.

'Q.: "And the utilisation of this method?"

'The matter is delicate and requires many improvements. Doctors must study them. When the Röntgen rays were discovered it was never imagined that such universal medical use would be ultimately made of them. From the physiological point of view these rays are of capital importance, as they enable us to establish the *rappor*t which exists between the phenomena of life and those of physics. In the human machine, as well as in the inert being, these "N." rays play an important part.'

We are told that there are distinctions between the radiations from the muscles and those from the nerves, the nerve rays producing a stronger effect on phosphorescent sulphide warmed to about forty or forty-five degrees Cent.

The 'comptes rendus' of the Académie des Sciences in Paris, contains an exceedingly important document drawn up on these new rays, and read by M. d'Arsonval, a well-known scientist. In that portion which deals with the physiological aspect, and the discovery of the speech centre in particular, he remarks: 'I have reason to believe that thought unexpressed, concentration, or mental effort, give equal rise to rays acting on phosphorescence.'

We should like to reproduce much more of what was reported to the Académie, but shall hope to return to the subject on some future occasion, when still further observations are forthcoming.

Since the above account was written, statements in the Press inform us that two experimentalists, one from Germany and the other an Englishman, have tried to repro-

duce these observations and discoveries without success, and that consequently they conclude that these rays must be a phase of subjective phenomena. If M. Blondlot is to be endowed with second sight then we must also accord that distinction to Dr. Charpentier, M. d'Arsonval, and last, but not least, to a 'Figaro' interviewer. This latter gentleman's words I reproduce in French, as they leave us with the impression that the rays were demonstrated easily and readily:—

'Joignant l'exemple à la parole, M. le docteur Charpentier accomplit sous nos yeux une série d'expériences, approchant tour à tour l'écran fluorescent du bras, du biceps distendu ou contracté, du cœur, du diaphragme, du cerveau. Ces expériences, qui nous émerveillent, durent à peine quelques minutes. Nous sommes loin de compte avec les deux heures indiquées par notre confrère.'

Again it seems hardly probable that a scientist of the reputation of M. d'Arsonval would have read two separate reports on these discoveries to the Academie unless he himself had witnessed the demonstrations, and felt able to corroborate them.

It is possible that in these last abortive attempts to reproduce M. Blondlot's experiments certain subtleties of observation have been overlooked, or that the experiments were not carried out under exactly similar conditions. We must remember that Charpentier himself declared to the interviewer: 'M. Blondlot m'avait fait part de sa découverte, mais comme les expériences au début étaient particulièrement délicates, je fus assez longtemps, je l'avoue, avant de les saisir.'

We have no doubt that a great deal more will be forthcoming on these experiments, and that the French discoverers will be able to enlighten the scientific world as to whether their discoveries come under the range of subjective phenomena!

J. STANNARD.

THE FRENCH PSYCHICAL PRESS.

In the January number of the 'Revue d'Etudes Psychiques' M. de Vesme, the editor, discusses a theory propounded recently by Professor Grasset in a little 'brochure' called, 'Le Spiritisme devant la Science.' M. de Vesme's criticism of the Professor's theories is quite in line with that of Dr. Maxwell in his work, 'Phénomènes Psychiques.' Dr. Maxwell charges Professor Grasset with suggesting explanations without having made himself thoroughly acquainted with the facts. He says:—

'The small influence which the criticisms of the most highly-esteemed savants have had on contemporary thought . . . is due precisely to this lack of exact information which they display. They have repeatedly reasoned beside the mark; analysing the facts very imperfectly, and only admitting those which they could easily explain, while rejecting others as fraudulent or doubtful. For those who have studied them personally these facts are neither doubtful nor fraudulent, and the obstinate denials of certain savants have only one effect, that of depriving their expression of opinion of all value and serious influence.'

This condemnation of Professor Grasset's manner of discussing the subject of Spiritism is the more effective because it proceeds from one who has evidently much respect and admiration for M. Grasset's mental ability, for he speaks of the Professor as among 'the most open-minded and elevated' of French doctors. M. de Vesme also praises some portions of this 'brochure,' adding, however:—

'But as far as it relates to Spiritism and to super-normal psychic phenomena, and not to the caricature of these, the book has about as much value as there would be in a study of the antique goldsmith's work in the tiara of Saitaphares. It has absolutely nothing to do with "Spiritism before Science."'

The Theory of the O and the Polygon.

For the benefit of those who may be interested in knowing something of the character of Professor Grasset's theory, I will translate the paragraph in which M. de Vesme summarises this theory, which is called 'La Théorie de l'O et du Polygone':—

'He denotes by O what is called the normal consciousness. Under this point O are found, in the diagram given us by

M. Grasset, six psychic centres, arranged symmetrically in the form of a truncated pyramid, reversed, three on each side. Those on the right represent the sensorial centres (auditive, visual, tactile); those on the left, the motor centres (kinetic, speech, writing). Fibres of all sorts bind these centres to one another and to O. The polygon represents the subliminal consciousness, which thus has two psychic regions. One may be either conscious or unconscious of the automatic actions of the polygon, according as the automatic activity is communicated or not to the centre O, which is the centre of personal consciousness. The activity of the polygon only becomes conscious through the intervention of the activity of O in the activity proper of the polygon.'

That anyone should find this theory, diagrammatically expressed, of any efficacy in throwing light on the complex problem which states of consciousness offer for consideration, is sufficiently incomprehensible, but that one of the 'most open-minded' members of the medical faculty should claim, as does Professor Grasset, that it explains 'le Spiritisme entier dans ses plus hautes manifestations,' and that, apparently, without having made any adequate study of the facts to be explained, is yet more astounding to ordinary students of this subject, whose knowledge of the complexity of it has been gained by immediate contact with facts rather than by theorising about them.

From the same number of 'Les Etudes' we learn that Dr. Pierre Janet and Dr. George Dumas have given up the direction of the 'Bulletin de l'Institut Général Psychologique de Paris,' and that they have founded a review called, 'Journal de Psychologie normale et pathologique.' The four articles which appear in the first number are all of a character interesting to psychical researchers. One of these is a curious case of communication by 'typtology' supplied by Professor Flournoy.

Did the Table Lie?

The communication came very unexpectedly and bore the characteristics of a genuine spirit message. It purported to come from Alexandre G., a relative of the gentleman who received it, but who believed Alexandre G. to be at that time still in the flesh, and confined in a lunatic asylum:—

"But my cousin still lives," he expostulated.

"No! No!"

"Is he dead?"

"Yes."

"When did he die?"

"He is dead."

"Is it some months or some years ago?"

'No reply, nothing further; and the medium said: "There is no one: I feel none."'

Subsequent inquiries proved that the relation was still an inmate of the asylum. The conclusion drawn is the usual one in these cases, because it is the simplest—"the table lied." The simplest solution is not always the most correct, however, and one would like to know, before accepting this solution, in what condition Alexandre G. happened to be at the time the communication was made. Was he asleep? And if so, may he not have really communicated? He thought he was dead. Why not? Again we want to know something further concerning his mental state. It is quite conceivable, if he had been for years incarcerated in an asylum, and if during that period the spirit had been dead to the life and interest of this world,* that the spirit, freed in sleep from the imprisoning limitations to which it was subject during the waking state of the lunatic's brain, should really consider that he, Alexandre G., was dead. We insist on interpreting these communications from the standpoint of those to whom death means chiefly the cessation of the ability of the physical organism to function; but possibly the communicator's definition of what death is would not be that of the man to whom he spoke. In any case it is hardly satisfactory to hastily conclude that 'the table lied,' without taking into consideration other possible solutions of the puzzle.

H. A. DALLAS.

* In this connection it is instructive to remember one of the utterances of Mrs. Piper when coming out of trance. 'Mrs. Piper coming out of trance begins to weep and murmurs, "I do not want to go back to the darkness. . . . It is funny. . . . I forgot that I was alive. . . . Yes, Mr. Hodgson, I forgot. . . ."—See 'Mrs. Piper and the Society for Psychical Research,' by M. Sage, p. 180.

MR. HUSK'S MEDIUMSHIP.

The recent challenge to Mr. Husk, and the statement by 'H. C.' that, unless it is accepted, he 'must regard the whole business as a vulgar fraud,' have brought us a considerable number of letters in Mr. Husk's defence. Several of our correspondents justify Mr. Husk's refusal on the ground that a change of conditions might altogether prevent the desired results, and that even with the present conditions sufficient evidence can, with patience, be obtained of the genuineness of the phenomena without any necessity to rely upon the good faith of the medium. We select some of the most salient points from a few of our correspondents' communications:—

MRS. C. LEIGH HUNT WALLACE writes: 'It is a question with me whether people are really advanced by being forced against their wills into acknowledging the existence of spiritualistic phenomena. And certainly our Cause is not helped by such persons, as they either stigmatise the manifestations as of evil origin, or as something forbidden. Such people are continually on the search for trickery, thus destroying the requisite conditions for the production of the medium's best phenomena. If people will only have patience they will receive without asking such tests as no complicated organising for them can provide. I should be glad if you would kindly allow me the space to record three instances of tests out of the vast number I have received. It must be now quite thirty years ago when the following experience was related to me by an advanced Spiritualist. It was, he said, in the days of old Mrs. Marshall when he was beginning his investigations. In response to tunes mentally suggested by himself, these tunes were drummed by invisible fingers on a piece of paper held at its corners by himself and another sitter. Amongst them was the "Rat-tat, tat-a-tat-tat" of the "Kentish Fire" tune. Now this was before lunch time, at 17, Brunswick-square, and no one was visibly present at our conversation. That evening we two were going by invitation to a séance in Bayswater, to be held at the house of Colonel Greck, the mediums being Mr. Williams and Mrs. Olive (afterwards Madame Greck). I remarked to him, "I wonder whether I shall get such an experience as that this evening," and from then neither of us spoke further upon the subject. The séance was no sooner commenced than loudly and forcibly, on the soles of our shoes, was beaten the "Rat-tat, tat-a-tat-tat." Now that at least could not have been trickery, and to me it was a test. The other instance occurred with Mr. Husk and was equally satisfactory to all sitters, and so is perhaps more to the point, especially in view of the present discussion. This séance took place some sixteen or eighteen years ago at my own flat in Oxford-Mansions. The medium was Mr. Husk, who arrived alone. The sitters were all sceptics save our two selves and one other; or at least they were not "convinced." It was a dark séance and we sat round a heavy mahogany table, but as the screws that fastened down the top were absent, it was easily tilted if a one-sided pressure was brought to bear upon it. After we had sat for a few minutes we were instructed by the direct voice to "light up" and to place the medium outside the circle. This we did, and, save for our singing, all else was silent. In three or four minutes we were again told to "light up," and you can imagine our astonishment and concern on finding Mr. Husk, all unconscious of his position, seated on a discarded, old, and very topply music-stool placed on the centre of this tilting table. The difficulty in restoring him to the floor, especially in his then partially blind state, made us keenly appreciate the fact that this manifestation was not the result of trickery. My third instance is to me even a greater testimony to the power of this same medium. At this time we were living at Regent's Park, and had arranged a séance at Mr. Vango's house at Notting Hill. Almost immediately on sitting down, the direct voice said to me, "We've got something for you, Mrs. Wallace," and in a few minutes a book was placed in my hands. Judge of my surprise when I found this to be a volume taken from the top shelf of an eight-foot book-case in my back drawing-room in Regent's Park. There was no doubt about its identity, as it was a present from the author, who had written my name in it. This also to me was a test. Those who want to know shall know and those who search for trickery and are determined to find it will undoubtedly be equally successful.'

MRS. M. JOHNSON writes: 'As a stranger, lonely at heart, I first went to one of Mr. Husk's séances, and there to my great joy and consolation I saw once more the face of the loved one I had mourned as lost. If Mr. Husk is a "vulgar fraud" by what means did he obtain a knowledge of the features, voice, and manner of the one I had thought dead, but found to be still living and loving as of yore? At different times I have

seen my father, mother, sister, brother, and other loved ones, and spoken with them. I have on several occasions sat with Mr. Husk when Mrs. Husk has not been present, and have had the same results, which is a proof to me that there is no "collusion between husband and wife."

MR. H. BLACKWELL says: "'By their fruits shall ye know them." Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of truth seekers have had the best of all evidence as to the genuineness of Mr. Husk's mediumship by being able to recognise the well-remembered features, and in many cases hearing the voices, of loved ones gone before. Let me relate a few instances from my own experience. On one occasion I was accompanied by a well-known minister, who was startled by seeing the familiar countenance of a brother whose body had only been laid to its rest some ten days previously. Another time I had arranged to take a friend, who had, however, to postpone his visit through having to attend a funeral in Yorkshire. We went the following week, and his first experience of materialisation was in looking on the face of the one over whose remains he had so lately heard the thrilling words: "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." At another séance a friend, who is a practising barrister in Washington, U.S.A., was welcomed by his son, whose face and voice I also easily recognised, as he had materialised to his father when I was in Washington. Again, a Danish lady on a visit from Natal was delighted to meet the dear mother to whom she had said, as she thought, a last "Good-bye" so long ago in her native Denmark; while at a séance at my own house the wife and son of a gentleman from America came and gave him hearty greetings. At a special private séance, where the only visitors were an Australian friend and myself, Mr. Husk sat in a corner of the room and Mrs. Husk with us. After several of the well-known controls had appeared, my dear father, who had previously materialised to me in New York, stepped out in the full form and gave me his blessing; and my little niece renewed her fond welcome. A lady who had also materialised and spoken to me in New York, came forward and alluded to matters quite unknown to the medium. My Australian friend was also similarly favoured, and, as promised to him beforehand by his guides, the majority of the manifesting intelligences dispensed with the illuminating cards and provided their own spirit-lights. With this accumulated testimony of so many years' honourable work, it is no wonder that Mr. Husk (who, it may be remarked, is unfortunately blind) disdains to accept challenges either from "H. C." or anyone else. If "H. C." would be satisfied with holding the hands of the medium, another doubting Thomas would come forward and expect, under the usual penalty, to hold his feet as well, probably being quite ignorant of the fact that the near presence of anyone permeated with thoughts of fraud is of course highly detrimental to the medium, and frequently prevents any good results. It may not be generally known that many years ago, long before the majority of us commenced our inquiries into the phenomena of Spiritualism, Mr. Husk underwent most exhaustive tests in a series of some fifty séances held in Paris. The result was, needless to say, quite satisfactory, though a then well-known conjurer was one of the committee.'

'G. H. L.,' whose name and address we have, writes as follows: 'Now that your correspondent, "H. C.," expresses his opinion that the manifestations which take place through the mediumship of Mr. C. Husk are a "vulgar fraud," it is certainly time that some of the many friends of this excellent medium should speak out. For years my wife and I have sat in Mr. Husk's circles weekly, and enjoyed the audible and visible presence of our beloved friends and relatives. The manifestations take place either in the presence or absence of Mrs. Husk. Indeed, some short time back she was ill in bed for weeks, and her absence made no difference. The forms of my mother and other relatives were just the same, and their voices also, as when Mrs. Husk was present. I have also received hundreds of Masonic tests from the materialised forms of "Brethren" who have passed over, but, as a matter of fact, Mr. Husk is not a member of the Craft, and perhaps even "H. C." will allow it is a foregone conclusion that Mrs. Husk is not. I have always considered that the semi-private sittings with Mr. Husk were for those who knew the fact of spirit return, and not for the sceptic, or outside public. I, for one, am glad that the medium has not been led into the acceptance of any vulgar test, thereby possibly risking his health to satisfy the mere curiosity of a sceptic.'

MR. J. H. M. says: 'The letter of your correspondent in "LIGHT," of January 30th, surely suggests an attitude at once unfair and prejudiced. "H. C." has no right to assume, because Mr. Husk will not at present allow certain tests which would have a disturbing effect both upon him and his controls, that the manifestations under his mediumship should be designated "a vulgar fraud." This is holding a pistol to his

head with a vengeance, and is intolerable to fair-minded persons. I am not an avowed Spiritualist, but have sat with Mr. Husk some half-dozen times, and the week before last, during the whole of the séance, I held the hand of Mrs. Husk and the manifestations took place as usual. I was also allowed to privately seal all doors. At the last séance, during the greater part of the time I held Mr. Husk's hands, and whilst in that position he and his chair were raised and placed upon the table, whilst two heavy musical boxes were taken up to the ceiling and floated in positions that must have been quite out of the medium's reach. I write only in the interests of fair-play and impartial judgment.'

We have many other letters to the same effect, but the above must suffice. It is only fair, however, to give the following, the only communication which has reached us taking a different view of the question:—

'As a reader of your broad-minded paper I regret to see that Mr. Husk has declined the test offered him to prove that his mediumship is genuine. To many who, like myself, are hungering for confirmation in a wavering belief, these refusals bring disappointment, with the horrid suspicion that the things we so wish to regard as *facts cannot* be proved. If Spiritualism is to be lifted to a scientific basis, its exponents must submit to scientific tests, and all caprice, chance, or vague assertions must be eliminated. All exact sciences *can* be logically or demonstratively proved; why, therefore, should Spiritualists like Mr. C. Husk decline any reasonable proof? Should not those who are strong in the faith assist their weaker brethren? Why despise the doubting Thomases, who are only longing for the *truth*, and eager to accept it on reasonable evidence? Will not Mr. Husk, "his friends, clients, and principal guides," reconsider the question?'—L.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.

The Fourth Dimension Theory.

SIR,—Mr. E. D. Girdlestone appears to have quite failed to grasp the meaning of this theory. He writes:—

'If the Doctor's analogy is a sound one, we have only to advance this solid wooden cube one inch in a straight line either upward or downward, or to the North or South or East or West, and there will palpably emerge a Four-Dimension figure.'

Now by analogy we have to do no such thing. In passing from Line to Area, or from one to two dimensions, Mr. Girdlestone did not advance by addition in the same straight line, but as he says, 'side-foremost,' *i.e.*, by adding something of the second dimension. Nor in passing from Area to Solid did he advance lengthways but 'flatside-foremost,' *i.e.*, by adding something in the third dimension. In the same way, if he would carry on the analogy and advance to a fourth dimension, he must advance neither 'upward nor downward nor to the North, South, East or West' (for all these are in three dimensions), but by adding something of the fourth dimension.

In four dimensions of space we have to assume not only length, breadth, and thickness, but something else, of which, as three-dimensional beings, we can have no actual experience, but which for want of a better word we may denominate *throughth*. To complete our analogy, we must advance our solid in the direction of *throughth*, and then our fourth-dimension figure will eventuate.

That we cannot readily conceive of *throughth* need not trouble us. A creature that should live and move and have its being on a straight line could not readily conceive of breadth, nor could a creature living on a plane surface easily grasp the notion of height.

To the student of solid geometry the notion of four dimensions does not present insuperable difficulty. He has but to add a fourth 'co-ordinate.' And as in two dimensions we have the circle, and in three dimensions the sphere, so in four dimensions should there be a corresponding figure whose equation is $v^2 + x^2 + y^2 + z^2 = r^2$. And just as two spheres in three dimensions intersect in a circle, so would two of these four-dimension figures intersect in a sphere.

Should the theory be true (and on this I would not presume to offer an opinion), it is conceivable that a four-dimension being might regard our three-dimension world much as we regard a drawing on a sheet of paper, and pass as readily to any part of it as we can place a pencil on any part of the drawing.

Bristol.

M. A. (CANTAB.)

The Theosophical Society and its Methods.

SIR,—It is doubtless well-known to many of your readers that the official motto of the Theosophical Society is, 'There is no Religion higher than Truth,' but to those of us who have taken the trouble to read up its record the real working motto appears to be, 'Suppress the Truth at all costs,' and the Coulomb and the Judge affair are typical examples of the frantic and unavailing efforts that it makes.

The latest scandal that it is hoping to suppress is of a peculiarly objectionable character, being nothing less than an endeavour on the part of the Executive to turn out a member without a hearing, on secret information.

Now, as this is quite contrary to the published rules of the Society and the member refuses to leave, the Executive has found itself in rather an awkward position, especially as not one of its cowardly informants dare come forward with any charge, although constantly challenged by the member in question to do so. This being the case, and the Executive being so palpably in the wrong, one would have thought that they would have had the decency to apologise and admit their mistake, but instead of this they at once commenced a series of petty persecutions, interfering with the member's letters, and in one case apparently going so far as to open one (for they admit returning it to the sender), and venting their petty spite by trying to prevent the member obtaining refreshments, although they were far too frightened to actually refuse the member admittance to the rooms.

When I state that the object of this disgraceful persecution is a lady whose real offence appears to have been that she occasionally exercised her wit on some of their absurd psychic pretensions, your readers can judge for themselves to what great heights of philosophy these 'adepts' have climbed, and what a touching example of Universal Brotherhood they exhibit.

Personally I cannot help hoping that the member in question will take legal advice, and if possible make the Executive pay smartly for the annoyance to which she has been subjected, but in the meanwhile it is perhaps as well to warn your readers, and especially ladies, to what they may possibly be exposed if they join the Society.

23, Wilton-crescent, S.W.

WILFRID WILSON.

'A Curious Psychometric Experience.'

SIR,—Reading the truly horrible account of 'the miser' in your issue of January 23rd, has brought to my mind a remark made by Sir Edward Clarke respecting 'legal rights and moral wrongs,' wherein he says: 'Half of the avoidable suffering in the world is caused by the immoral exercise of legal rights.'

Sir Edward Clarke here definitely gives the moral law precedence over the merely 'legal law.'

It is my conviction that when, as in this case, a madman acts in such a grossly insane way, it is the imperative duty of the Government to step in and nullify all such acts, under the plea of the testator's insanity, for such a legalised act effects a serious moral wrong.

Whenever a private individual leaves a legacy or property, *the redeeming or withholding of which necessitates immoral actions*, is a continual menace to morality, or, as in this case, effects a definite moral wrong, the Government should be empowered to act, and either confiscate the property and absorb it into the national exchequer, or else hand it over to those who are rightly entitled to it, forbidding the fulfilment of the redemptive clause demanded by the insane testator. I have a case in my mind and should be glad if a strong association would take this view of the matter, and insist on the Government allowing the moral law to take its lawful precedence over the immoral legalised law.

LUX ET LEX.

An Apparition.

SIR,—Some time back, when I was alone in my room, an old lady appeared to me, showing me an oil painting of herself in an old-fashioned frame, and drawing my attention to a document lying athwart the back, between the picture and a wooden panel. She did not speak, but impressed me that 'there was a wrong to be righted.' The picture was hanging on the left wall of a long, low sitting-room that looked on to the country. The old lady had bright, piercing dark eyes, a good nose, and the under lip protruded very much, giving a fierce expression to an otherwise handsome face. She wore a close-fitting, soft white cap, tied under the chin with small white ribbons.

I should not trouble you about this but that she has appeared to me again; this time shaking her fist at me, and impressing me that she thinks I have done nothing to help her. I gather that she hid the paper herself, and is now very sorry for it. Perhaps someone, from this description, may identify her, find the paper, and give her peace.

'GEM.'

'Some Criticisms of Theosophical Views.'

SIR,—When Mr. Green says that the spirit, having retired into a spiritual condition after the so-called death of the body, prepares for a future earth incarnation in which a new personality altogether will form, he is surely confusing the creature with the Creator—the spark thrown off from the Infinite with the Infinite itself. When the Ego starts upon its journey as a self-conscious being it is an individualisation of the Godhead, of which the human personality is the lowest expression on the self-conscious plane. Thenceforth the Ego retains its individuality for ever or until absorbed in the Godhead. The latter proceeds continuously expressing itself in new individualities and personalities, thus fulfilling its principal attribute, Love. We are portions of God, but we are not God. If the Divine Ego is the whole man, then man ceases to be man and becomes God. According to my ideas—and I give them for what they are worth—it is the sub-division of the Godhead into self-conscious individual entities that constitutes the scheme of the universe, and it is this which differentiates the creature from the Creator; using 'Creator' in the sense of underlying cause, not a mechanic.

Dr. Helen Densmore says that the doctrine espoused by Andrew Jackson Davis, and by the average Spiritualist and Christian, is in direct conflict with the teaching of science that something cannot be made out of nothing. It is some years since I read A. J. Davis, but I certainly did not gather this from his teaching. Anyhow, I have always been taught that spirit is universal, filling all space, has ever existed, and consequently will always exist; that it undergoes changes like all things else in the universe; and that one of these changes is becoming self-conscious.

She then makes a statement which I think is the most singular I have ever met with since I began studying these subjects. Talking about overcoming temptation, she says: 'It is also easily seen that one in spirit life is in no more danger of sensual temptation than one living in a nunnery. One must be embodied and immured in the flesh to be subject to the temptations of the flesh, and this is why successive embodiments are necessary,' &c. This is the rock over which Theosophists always come to grief. What sort of an existence do they imagine it is after leaving the earthly body, I wonder?

The spiritual body is a real, substantial body—more real on its plane than our bodies are to us on this one, for the spirit realm is a realm of mind, and the more supreme mind is over its surroundings the more real must those surroundings seem to it—and is a counterpart of our present bodies; it is, in fact, the matrix in which our bodies are formed with all their organs, only refined and etherialised, and if organs they must have their functions. To strip the Ego of all means of sensing its environment is to make of it a senseless idiot. Do they imagine that it is the body of flesh that feels? Dr. Densmore comes out very strongly on science; is this scientific? Or is this the goal to which 'reason and logic' have led her? Who would undertake to say that pure spirit, even totally divorced from matter of all kinds, if such a state be possible, is nothing?

As to eternal progression, eternal anything is unthinkable to a finite mind. As man's capabilities and the expression thereof must be quite unthinkable to an animal; so the future that awaits mankind as the result of evolution is unthinkable to man on this plane. But one thing seems certain: if man ever becomes perfect he ceases to be an individualised entity and becomes God. To appeal to science as authority just when radium is showing its unreliability, is not wise.

Next the doctor talks about democracy as if it were the highest condition of human government. Is she aware that in this she is directly traversing the teachings of all the greatest minds of the ages, from Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, who divided governments into six classes, three good and three bad, and included democracy in the latter, down to John Ruskin in our own day? Surely a little thought will convince anyone that in the spirit spheres government is from the top, not the bottom! Government there is a monarchical aristocracy, the King being God, and the best people the higher angels and seraphs, &c.—the very opposite of democracy. People rank there according to their deserts; but democracy ignores all rank and considers all as equal. One of the most curious aberrations of the human mind!

In conclusion, with regard to every Ego having to undergo every possible experience, has this been thought out? Take the cases of such men as Commodus and Elagabalus; all history furnishes only a few examples of this character and yet there must necessarily be millions and millions of such if the doctrine were true. I was reading in to-day's paper of a fiendish woman who put her little child on a red-hot stove because it was disobedient. Are we all to come back until we have experienced the hot stove, or, at least, till we have had a cruel mother?

Personally, I entirely and heartily sympathise with the doctor's friend, a noted Spiritualist; it is a mere assumption that everyone is equal in quality; all the evidence, and strong evidence too, is against it. If spirit were of one uniform quality, how could its expression vary? A degraded couple when they have offspring attract the lowest quality of spirit that has reached the condition rendering it ready for self-consciousness; a refined, cultured couple will attract a far higher grade, according to their development, hereditary influences, &c.

Dr. Densmore's account of Mrs. Richmond's theosophic teaching is interesting, but let me relate a small experience which has always prejudiced me against this good lady. Towards the close of the Boer war Mrs. Richmond, an American (?), delivered a lecture in Chicago to an American audience, in which she severely scored England for being at war; and, although at the same time her own people were doing exactly the same thing in the Philippines, she passed them over unnoticed. This has always seemed to me to be such an outrageous piece of narrow bigotry and cowardice that her guides forfeited all respect as teachers as far as I am concerned. And this is only one example out of many of a similar nature.

When supposed exalted guides act in such a very human and unexalted manner one is apt to lose faith in them and their teachings.

A. K. VENNING.

Los Angeles, Cal. U.S.A.

January 18th, 1904.

'When Augurs Differ.'

SIR,—I am not sure I have quite understood the meaning intended to be conveyed by Mr. Robt. Jas. Lees in the last paragraph of his letter on the above subject in your issue of January 30th. But his view seems to be that a spurious 'Stanton Moses' was brought by the deceiving 'Phinuit' to recant his strenuously held theories made known in 'Spirit Teachings.'

But if this be the right explanation the shadow is merely shifted from one part of the picture to another.

Can we believe that the real 'Imperator' and the real 'Stanton Moses' on the other side are ignorant of, and indifferent to, such a public recantation of their former doctrines? Why has there been no subsequent protestation through the same channel, for be it remembered Mrs. Piper is 'Imperator's' latest chosen medium.

It is just here that the zealous inquirer is brought face to face with the exasperating inconsequence and want of satisfying continuity in all protracted communications from the spirit world. The 'granite wall' is for ever materialising through the bewildering mists, and barring our access to light and knowledge. The Society for Psychical Research, in its welcome volume of 'Proceedings,' just published, gives us Mr. Piddington's scholarly and searching critique of Mrs. Thompson's trances. A similar light upon those of Mrs. Piper is to be earnestly hoped for. The cry is everywhere for more light.

CIRCUMSPICE.

Mr. A. V. Peters.

SIR,—I was considerably surprised during my stay in Paris to find that Spiritualism was comparatively little known. If there are any mediums there I could not discover them, and those who know of Spiritism are divided among themselves, some following Allan Kardec, while others are merely 'scientific' researchers. Although visiting Paris for a holiday, I gave a few sittings by request to some earnest inquirers, with good results. I was pleased to meet some French friends whom I have seen in London, among others Madam de Laversay, who is a constant reader of 'LIGHT.' I also had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Baraduc, whose wonderful experiments in photography and electricity are well known.

Before leaving England I was favoured with an introduction to Count MacGregor, the leader of an occult society in Paris, but I am afraid his fame is greater than his influence, for it seems to me that studies of old-time practices, even those of ancient Egypt, cannot compare with the living gospel of Spiritism. I strongly feel that the people in this beautiful land stand in need of a living religion, a fresh revelation, such as Spiritism can give them. The churches have lost their hold on the hearts of the people; the rising generation is turning from science as unsatisfactory; and Spiritism, as it is here presented, is too dogmatic to win general acceptance, but Spiritism, if rightly presented, would, I think, be of inestimable value.

I am now in the beautiful South of France, which, after the cold of Paris, is a very welcome change. Will all kind friends please accept my best wishes as I am unable to write to them individually?

ALFRED VOUT PETERS.

The 'Raison d'être' of Sin and Suffering.

SIR,—To one who has gone deeply into it, this vexed question (many a man's faith-killing enigma) seems to call forth an exceedingly optimistic answer, especially in the light of modern science.

Sin and suffering have their rational place in this material sphere. They are indeed the great schoolmasters, and progress is the outcome of their lessons only. Without sin and suffering we should remain in a state of spiritual stagnation. Thus it becomes apparent that sin and suffering are the true basis of human progress.

Let us, then, thank God most humbly and sincerely for His having given us sin and suffering.

Geneva.

EDOUARD ROMILLY.

Union of London Spiritualists.—May Convention.

SIR,—We have been requested by the committee of the Union to inform the readers of 'LIGHT' that the third annual Convention of London Spiritualists will be held during May next; and it is desired that this should be made even more successful and more representative than the two preceding conventions have been. Meetings will be arranged for the morning, afternoon, and evening of the day appointed; and we are desirous that the platform shall be occupied by the very best exponents of the truths of our movement. Fuller details will be duly advertised in your columns, and we earnestly appeal for the sympathy of all Spiritualists, and the active support of all London Spiritualists, to enable us to attain the end we have in view, namely, the bringing before the public the truths of Spiritualism for the good of humanity.

Unfortunately the funds of the Union are at present strictly limited, and as it requires a somewhat large expenditure to carry out the proposed arrangements, we venture to solicit the kind aid of all those who have our movement at heart, so that the very best hall available may be obtained, the very best speakers secured, and the very best method of advertising adopted. All the members of the Union make their work a labour of love, and every penny received in response to this appeal will be devoted to making the third annual Convention of London Spiritualists a matter of history in the movement.

Cheques and postal orders may be sent to either of the undersigned: and, with your permission, will be duly acknowledged through your columns.

Yours fraternally,

GEORGE TAYLER GWINN, President, Eastbourne House, Carnarvon-road, Stratford, E.

WILL J. PITT, Secretary, 82, Stormont-road, Clapham Common, S.W.

Spiritualism in Birmingham.

SIR,—I think your readers will be sorry to learn that, if certain gentlemen are allowed to have their way, we shall henceforth have a 'Spiritualist Union' in Birmingham no longer. For some time past trance addresses have been vetoed from the platform of the 'Birmingham Spiritualist Union,' thus depriving the members of the elevating instruction given through those highly-respected mediums, Mr. J. J. Morse, Mr. E. W. Wallis, and others. This step was but an indication of a more drastic measure about to follow, and which was, unfortunately, effected at a meeting held on the 2nd inst. A short time ago the Union included about eighty members, but some of them, dissatisfied with the way in which matters were tending, left the society, and at the meeting to which I refer only thirty-three were present. A proposal was put forth to change the name from 'The Birmingham Spiritualist Union' to 'The Birmingham Ethical and Psychical Society,' and that proposal was adopted by nineteen votes to seven, while seven abstained from voting at all; and of the nineteen who voted in favour of the change eleven were members of the Executive, who were apparently led to take that course by an influential member of the Executive who threatened to leave the Union if the proposed change of name were not adopted! The friends who have left felt that—being really and truly Spiritualists—it would be a mean subterfuge to attempt to attract other people to us by exhibiting false colours. Other societies flourish, honestly and boldly proclaiming themselves as Spiritualists; and we might do the same in Birmingham if we worked fearlessly and courageously for the simple and glorious truth of the continuity of life and of the possibility of spirit-return. I have been immensely pleased to witness the rapid strides of the London Spiritualist Alliance, which has never been ashamed of its name and has never sought to attract members by a resort to subterfuges of any kind. Fancy 'The London Spiritualist Alliance' seeking to attract outsiders by changing its name to 'The London Ethical and Psychical

Alliance'! Surely honesty and candour are not merely the best, but the only right and justifiable, policy; a suggestion which I would commend to the attention of the Executive of what was once 'The Birmingham Spiritualist Union.'

'VERAX.'

Scientific.

SIR,—Can you, or any of your readers, kindly favour me with the address of a medium who could obtain answers to scientific questions?

R. A. D.

SOCIETY WORK.

Notices of future events which do not exceed twenty-five words may be added to reports if accompanied by six penny stamps, but all such notices which exceed twenty-five words must be inserted in our advertising columns at the usual rates.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Cecil delivered an address on 'Spiritualism and Christianity' to a large audience, and also gave successful clairvoyance at the after-circle.—A. F.

PORTSMOUTH.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. George Cole gave an interesting address on 'Mediumship: Its Uses and Dangers,' and 'Spiritualism and its Newspapers.'—E. R. O.

CARDIFF.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, PARADISE-PLACE.—On Sunday morning last Mr. A. F. Davis delivered a good address on 'Signs of the Times'; and in the evening Mr. G. Green spoke well on 'Can Man Sin against God?'—W.

WEST LONDON SPIRITUALIST CLUB, 61, BLENHEIM-CRESCENT, NOTTING HILL.—At our monthly séance six mediums (members) addressed a large and appreciative meeting, giving loving messages and uplifting teachings.—A. W.

STRATFORD.—WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last a very impressive address delivered by Mrs. Roberts, of Manor Park, was much appreciated, Mr. G. W. Lear presiding.—S.

PLYMOUTH.—13, MORLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Captain Greenaway gave a powerful and instructive address on 'Healing.' Mr. Mitchell presided, and Mrs. Trueman gave several clairvoyant descriptions which were recognised.—M.

PLYMOUTH.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.—On the 3rd inst., Mrs. Evans gave successful psychometrical readings, and on Sunday last Mr. J. Evans delivered a good address on 'Law.' Mrs. Pollard's clairvoyant descriptions were recognised.—E.

CHISWICK.—AVENUE HALL, 300, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday last Dr. Berks Hutchinson gave an interesting address dealing with the phenomenal, scientific, and religious aspects of Spiritualism. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Graddon-Kent will be the speaker.—J. B. T.

CATFORD.—24, MEDUSA-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Claireaux ably presided. Mrs. Bliss-Godden's successful psychometric delineations were much appreciated by a crowded audience; and Mr. W. Millard discoursed on 'Spiritualism: Its Counsel and Teaching.'—R.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday last the morning public circle, conducted by Mr. W. E. Long, was well attended and was very helpful. In the evening, Mrs. John Checketts gave an inspirational address, entitled 'A Living God,' to a good audience.—J. C.

LEWISHAM UNITARIAN CHURCH.—Mr. Laurence Gilbertson, F.J.I., discoursed earnestly on the ethical and spiritual aspects of suicide. The subsequent remarks from the body of the hall were highly appreciative. Mr. T. H. Davis, an old-time Spiritualist and psychic researcher, presided.—Cor.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Kinsman gave an interesting and encouraging address on 'Spiritualism: Ancient and Modern,' which he prefaced by a reading from 'A Guide to Mediumship.' Mr. H. Boddington presided, and selections were capitally rendered by the string band.—S.

GLASGOW.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, 136, BATH-STREET.—On Sunday morning last Mr. W. Howell, of Birmingham, gave 'Some Thoughts on the Life and Labours of Thomas Paine'; and his evening address on 'Ethical Culture; A Basis for Moral Truth and a Future Life,' was delivered with earnest eloquence, which deeply moved his audience.—H. M.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—TEMPERANCE INSTITUTE.—On the 3rd inst., Mr. Archbold gave good illustrations of clairvoyance and psychometry; and the open circle on Saturday last was well-attended. On Sunday last Madame Stone delivered an instructive address on 'Do Spiritualists Believe in a God?' to an appreciative audience. Madame Stone and Mr. Lamb did excellent work at the after-meeting.—J. G. W.