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A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

Edited by **DAVID GOW**

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Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe

"Whatsoever doth make Manifest is Light!"—Paul.

No. 2558. VOL. L.

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PRICE FOURPENCE

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

BIDING THEIR TIME.

The late George R. Sims once told us that to him Spiritualism was no new thing. He had been quite familiar with it in his young days, but not until his later years had he seen anything in it to engage his serious attention. Other famous writers have told us much the same thing. It took some of them many years to make its closer acquaintance and join the ranks of avowed Spiritualists. Many others as we know, still stand aloof, knowing a great deal about the subject, but feeling no call to come in and proclaim themselves. They are still bidding their time. Some Spiritualists may feel inclined to denounce this laggard attitude, this temporising. But that is a matter between the man and his own conscience. In the end, as we know, every man has to pass judgment on himself. If there are any who are selfishly resisting the call of conscience to stand up for what they know to be true, we would at least remind them that they are incurring a great condemnation which will assuredly come sooner or later. Some may perhaps have good reason for delaying their confession of faith, but not all.

THE HAUNTING GHOST—A THEORY.

We once suggested, as a theory, that a haunting spirit might, in certain instances, be a mere phantom of a pictorial kind, rather akin to a cinematograph picture. When, however, it became animated and showed intelligence it might, we suggested, be a case of the actual spirit coming into relation with the phantasm or "thought-form". This idea seems to be rather confirmed by what the late F. W. H. Myers told Sir Oliver Lodge, from the "other side", as mentioned in Sir Oliver's "Myers Memorial Lecture", in October last, from which we may quote:—

Supposing I [Myers] make a strong mental impression on the mind of a psychically-sensitive person while yet I am talking with someone else many miles away, that impression of myself, which is Number Two . . . would not be in full consciousness with Number One. The normal image of myself would be left with

Number One. The record once produced would be fixed in the Medium's mind again. It requires only a touch to get it going. I myself have often come into touch with a sensitive whom it has not been my intention to influence, but my proximity seemed to touch a spring in the Medium.

Is it not rather suggestive of the idea of an image or impression, mental or psychical, through which the actual spirit may manifest itself? The apparition of a haunting spirit may be frequently present in a place, and visible to sensitive people, but not always showing any sign of intelligence. That phase may come when the actual spirit uses the image of itself as a means of manifesting its consciousness.

SHAW DESMOND'S LATEST BOOK.

The flame of Shaw Desmond becomes increasingly well-known. As a novelist he has won a high reputation; as an orator he has travelled extensively and gained a recognition which is world-wide. Of late months his articles in the daily and weekly Press on a variety of subjects, social and political, have made him known to millions of newspaper readers. In the conflict between the Sadducees and those who stand for a spiritual world he has come out "on the side of the angels", and so is one of the champions of a cause which the stress and terror of the time have brought to the forefront. We have just received his latest book, *Tales of the Little Sisters of Saint Francis* (Grant Richards. 7s. 6d. net), in which his versatility is again revealed. It is a volume of racy sketches of Irish life and character, and not only provides us with a feast of wit and humour, but a new insight into the mind of the Gael. Raffy and Joe the tinkers, Peter the Poet, the sisters of St. Francis in their mountain retreat in Connemara, are quaintly mingled with banshees, elves, leprechauns; and the horns of Elfland are heard faintly blowing throughout the book, every chapter of which abounds in graphic description and rich colouring. Shaw Desmond has distilled some of the essence of the life and spirit of Ireland—strange, beautiful, tragic and transfused with that humour and drollery, which has made Ireland so great a problem to those who can laugh but who yet do not understand. As an interpreter of the Gaelic soul, we see Shaw Desmond at his best.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

W. CULLEN BRYANT.

PSYCHIC RESEARCH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

BY THE LATE DR. ELLIS T. POWELL.

(Continued from page 15.)

Up to this point the exact psychic character of the phenomenon may be differently interpreted by different students. My own view would be that the human body of Jesus was, as it were, laid aside, and became the means for the materialisations of Moses and Elias, which took place, as the narrative distinctly says, "before them" (i.e., Peter, James and John). The human physical frame being thus disintegrated, the spirit form² was left uncovered, unveiled, and glowed with the original splendour of its native beauty in the spirit world whence it had come to earth. On this interpretation Jesus was himself the medium, whose powers were able not only to support the dazzling splendour of his own personality, but to furnish the means for two unique materialisations as well. Moses and Elias, we are told, were seen talking with Jesus. In fact, the Greek verb says that they were all "talking together." St. Luke alone of the three evangelists gives the subject of their conversation. In the language of our Authorised Version of the Bible, they "spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." The Revised Version maintains this rendering, but gives the reader, in the margin, the choice between "decease" and "departure." The Greek word here is, fortunately, one which has taken a permanent place in our own language,* so that we can all study its peculiar significance. It is the word *ἐξόδος*, transliterated into modern English, through the Latin, as "exodus." The word *ὁδός* (*hodos*) in Greek means a path, a road, a way. Consequently, "exodus" means a going out of the beaten track, the making of a new departure. Hence its application, as the title of one of the books of the Old Testament, to the account of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. I think we might well render it in St. Luke's account of the Transfiguration by "passing on." They "spake of his passing on, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." The rendering is perfectly justifiable. It gives us, as the idea which was in St. Luke's mind when he wrote this passage, the same simile which is constantly employed among students of psychic science to denote the departure of their friends from this plane of existence.

This word is so remarkable and suggestive that we may well dwell upon it for a moment. It occurs only four times in the Bible (the title of the book of Exodus excepted), and three of the four occurrences have direct reference to spirit life. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews employs it (Heb. xi. 22) in allusion to the "departure" of the children of Israel. About the use of the word in that way there is nothing remarkable. The second occurrence of the word is in the passage from St. Luke, which is before us. The third instance is in the Second Epistle of St. Peter (2 Peter i. 13-15):—

Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance: Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover, I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease [exodus] to have these things always in remembrance.

The word used here for "tabernacle" (*σκήνωμα* = *skenoma*) is a derivative of that (*σκηνή*) employed by the Evangelists in describing Peter's proposal,

when he was rapt on the mountain side, that they should make "three tabernacles—one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias"; and the word "exodus" was the one which (either in Greek or else in its Aramaic equivalent) had caught the Apostle's ear long ago, when the spirit visitors on the mountain side spake of the "passing on" of Jesus. Peter employs it to signify his own "passing on." And then, as these words brought the whole of that great scene to his recollection, he goes on, with exquisite naturalness, to make an allusion to the voice which he and the other two Apostles had heard when they were with Christ "in the Holy Mount." The genuineness of the Second Epistle of Peter has been strongly assailed. Here, at all events, is a rather striking verbal reminiscence, a selection of terms, a collocation of thought, which seems to me to be quite beyond the skill of a forger. The argument is urged in the late Dean Farrar's *Early Days of Christianity*. That most charming of writers alludes very forcibly to these subtle *reminiscences* of the Transfiguration. He thinks that an *appeal* to that episode as a source of the writer's belief and conviction might occur to anyone who had assumed the name of St. Peter, and was forging an Epistle in his name; "but the casual subsequent introduction of the word 'tabernacle' (*σκήνωμα* as against *σκηνή* in Matthew and Luke), and of the most unusual word for 'decease', not in any formal connection with the appeal, but by an inevitably natural association of ideas, has always seemed to me an important item of evidence."

The fourth occurrence of the word *ἐξόδος* is the most remarkable, perhaps, of all. It is in the Greek version of the Apocrypha (Wisdom iii. 2). Let us set forth verses 1, 2, and 3:—

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God; and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure [exodus] is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace.

Here the word "exodus" has the precise and exact significance of passing on. The writer goes on to say that their "going from us" was taken to be utter destruction: but so far from that being the fact, they entered into conscious peace. It was the approaching "passing on" of Jesus, then, which engaged the attention of himself and the two visitants from the spirit world. And doubtless the circumstances which were to attend it, as well as their deep and eternal significance for humanity, and the return of the victim to the spirit world, were all included in the exchange of thought at this unprecedented meeting of some of the great souls who have deeply influenced the history and engaged the imagination of the human race. So that these three occurrences of this rare word (*exodos*), all of them with a special and vital significance, come home to the mind of psychic investigators, too, more forcibly than to the mind of any other class of persons, though the peculiar meaning is utterly obscured when the word is rendered "decease", as in our version.

Returning from this digression, we may resume the study of the phenomena themselves. A careful comparison at this point of the three versions of the account of the Transfiguration will suggest the strongest reasons for believing that this episode was, in essence, a materialisation on the most splendid scale. If that were the case we should naturally look closely for the mediums, since a scientific analysis of the facts would lead us to the supposition that

² Advanced students of psychic science are asked to bear in mind that this pamphlet is written for non-experts.

not even the sublime central Personality of this scene would be free from the law which demands the intervention of a sensitive when the incarnate and discarnate are linked in communion, or when the one is made manifest to the other. And the narrative completely confirms the hypothesis. We are told that Peter and they that were with him (i.e., James and John) had been weighed down with sleep (*βεβαρημένοι ἕπνο* = *bebaremenoi hūpnō*), but that on fully awaking in the middle of the séance "they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him." That phenomenon which the Evangelist calls being "weighed down with sleep" is more familiar to us as the medium's utter insensibility, under the conditions necessary for a materialisation.

And here, again, we are rewarded for the labour of an excursion into the Greek. The expression "weighed down with sleep" is composed in the Greek (as we have seen) of two words. The first is the perfect participle passive of the Greek verb *βαρέω* = *bareo*, I am weighed down. This, in its turn, is derived from the Greek word *βάρος* = *baros*, weight or pressure—a word still in daily use among us when we speak of the *barometer*, the measurer of atmospheric pressure. The other word is *ἕπνος* = *hypnos*, sleep, very familiar to us all in its English dress in such words as "hypnotism" and "hypnotic". Now, investigators who have witnessed the return of the medium to consciousness after the hypnotic sleep are well aware that there is generally a certain confusion of mind, an inability to comprehend the realities of the position, very much akin to the bewilderment of a man who wakes in a strange room, after an accident, perhaps, and sees strange faces and unfamiliar objects around him. We find these phenomena accompanying the Transfiguration, just as we should expect. When the mediums were awake, we are told, they saw His glory, and the two men that stood with Him:—

And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said (Luke ix. 33).

How perfectly all this accords with the experience of the psychic researcher! Peter and his companions wake from their hypnotic sleep while yet there is sufficient "power" for the materialisation of the two prophets to remain visible to their normal eyes. Peter becomes conscious, not only of the presence of the two majestic figures, but of the coldness of the atmosphere. Not only was it night on the mountain-side, but the temperature of the immediately surrounding area would tend to fall, in accordance with the well-known law which gives us the cold wind and the low temperature of the séance room. Peter, therefore, suggests that three huts, made of boughs, be constructed, as a protection from the cold. To the Evangelists (who tell the story) the proposal seems so unusual that they hasten to add "he knew not what he said." In the charming Old English of St. Mark's Gospel, he "wist not what to say, for they were sore afraid." St. Peter was fresh from the hypnotic trance, and he was dazed. St. Luke alone adds the vivid detail that the proposal of the dazed Apostle was uttered as they separated. That is to say, it was at the very close of the séance, when the cold would be most obvious, and the sense of exhaustion most severe. At this moment a cloud overshadowed them, and "they feared as they entered into the cloud." Why? Is a cloud on a high mountain-side so unusual? The answer is that even to the half-dazed eyes of the apostles it was evident that this was not the ordinary atmospheric phenomenon with which they were familiar. It was, I suggest, the screen for the process of dematerialisation which had to follow this matchless display of spirit power. Out of the cloud there came a voice and a command. And then, "suddenly looking round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves."

(To be continued.)

A VISION OF PEACE.

BY FLEUR CHARLEY.

I dreamt I was sitting at a table in a crowded restaurant, having lunch with friends. It was summer. I could feel the hot sun shining through the windows, reflecting itself in rainbow hues as it lit up the silver and glass on the tables, whilst the already drooping flowers drooped still lower under its merciless glare. All around was noise and bustle, the hum of voices intermingling with the clink of china. Waiters hurried by intent on their busy tasks. The air was heavy with the stale scent of perfume and the fetid atmosphere of food. I looked around and said to myself: "*Is this life? Is this true happiness? Surely it cannot be!*" I felt oppressed, suffocated. I longed to be away upon the mountain-top, drinking in the pure fresh air, and feeling the cool wind blowing against my face.

Suddenly I felt a light touch on my arm, I looked around, thinking that perhaps I had been recognised by a friend, when, to my amazement, I looked into the face of a dearly-loved relative who had passed over some weeks previously. Before I could recover myself she said: "Come with me, I will show you where true happiness lies." I followed her, gladly, blindly, and swiftly we moved through cool, shadowy spaces, until—here I seemed to lose consciousness. I found myself sitting in what seemed like the dim cloisters of a Cathedral. The light was shadowy, but through the gloom I could see tall columns rising up and away into the Heavens; my guide was bending over me. "You are faint with the journey; you must drink," she said. Immediately, without a word or sign, I saw two great doors slowly opening, to the right of where we were sitting, and the veiled figure of a woman came through. She was carrying a pitcher of water which she offered me to drink. As I drank, I raised my eyes and tried to pierce the veil that hid her face; dimly, I could discern a face of spiritual beauty. Her eyes shone with the light of Heaven; she smiled wistfully; and then took the pitcher and departed, the great doors opening to receive her; they closed and she was gone.

I felt refreshed, light-hearted—as, after a night of pain, ease comes with the morning—mind, soul, and body enveloped in an ecstasy of peace. And so I sat, serene, content, drowsily watching the shadows that seemed to surround us.

Suddenly I glanced downwards, and there below, before me, I saw a crowded thoroughfare. I could see the streets quite plainly, and coming up, right out of its midst, was a great staircase. *We were sitting on the edge of the World!*

I watched, fascinated by the unexpected sight, and as I watched, I saw that some of the crowd were slowly ascending the staircase; two of them (very scantily attired) had already almost reached the top.

I turned to my guide and cried aloud: "Look! They are coming here. They will take away this wonderful peace. You must stop them!"; but she was silent. So once again I cried: "See, they are almost here; stop them!"; but still she remained silent, and when I looked again, I saw, at the top of the staircase, a great cloud resting. It was impassable, and the people had been turned away. Turning to me, my guide said: "They cannot pass. See; yonder the children play; they know they cannot enter here." And there, close against the great staircase, was a group of happy, laughing children, playing in the stillness; from afar I heard a voice saying:—

"My Peace I leave with you, My Peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

And then I awoke to face the burden of the day.

IMMORTALITY.

A NOBEL PRIZE WINNER'S VIEW.

Professor A. H. Compton (a winner of the Nobel Prize, and holder of the Chair of Physics at the University of Chicago) speaking on the subject of "Immortality: Is Death the End?" at the Emil G. Hirsch Centre, Chicago, is reported in the Chicago *National Spiritualist* as saying:

"Though the scientist may be accused of heartlessness, he has earned the reputation of fairness. His efforts are directed toward finding the truth, with constant care to free himself from allowing his judgment to be swayed by prejudice. It is this disinterested approach of Science to the world which makes its conclusions command the respect of thinking men. So the seeker after religious truth comes to Science asking earnestly whether Science has an answer to its vital problems: Is there a God? Is man morally responsible for his actions? What about a man's soul? Does death end all?"

"The answers of Science to these questions are usually hesitating and tentative. Some things point one way and some the other. So in discussing the problem of immortality from the standpoint of Science I shall not attempt to draw any conclusion, but merely to present as fairly as I can the meagre evidence which Science offers. If one is to have either a positive faith in a future life or conviction that death ends all, such beliefs must, it seems to me, be based upon religious, moral or philosophical grounds rather than upon scientific reasoning.

"Is it not obvious to one who views without bias the course of life about him, that life is invariably followed by death? If then Science is a description of the way in which things happen, how can Science state any other conclusion than that death is the inevitable terminus of life?"

"... There are many ifs and buts. While on the mechanistic view the mind could not survive the brain, the evidence seems against this view, and no cogent reason remains for supposing that the soul dies with the body. The evidence of revived persons brought back from Hades is unreliable. If consciousness is merely the servant of the living organism we should expect the two to die together, but if, as seems perhaps more plausible, intelligent consciousness is the objective of the evolutionary process, we should expect it to be preserved."

There were strong reasons, remarked Professor Compton in conclusion, for believing that "in spite of his physical insignificance man as an intelligent person is of extraordinary importance in the Cosmic Scheme. If we were to use our own best judgment, what would we say is the most important thing about a noble man? Would it be the strength of his body, or the brilliance of his intellect? Would we not first place the beauty of his character? A man's body is at its prime before middle life, and his intellect somewhat after middle life. But it takes a whole lifetime to build the character of a noble man. The discipline of youth, the struggles and failures and successes, the pains and pleasures of maturity, the loneliness and tranquillity of age, these make up the fire through which he must pass to bring out the pure gold of his soul. Having been thus perfected, what shall Nature do with him? Annihilate him? What infinite waste!"

SPIRITUALISM IN CANADA.—FROM MRS. STIER MCGUIRE, President of the Spiritualists' National Union of Canada, we have a letter conveying New Year greetings and giving an encouraging report of the progress of the Society.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(The Editor does not necessarily identify himself with the opinions expressed by Correspondents)

"A NEGLECTED SIDE OF SPIRITUALISM."

Sir,—With reference to the letter of Mr. Tudor Morgan and the comments thereon by Mrs. A. E. Menzies, the danger to which they direct attention—that of concentrating upon the phenomena alone—is one which I personally foresaw from the first and against which I have particularly directed attention in my work *Man's Survival After Death*, now in its third edition, and my pamphlet *Present Day Spirit Phenomena and the Churches*, now in its thirty-first edition. In these books I give particular attention to the implications of Spiritualism, and to the importance of these to the individual, to the laity, and to the Churches.—Yours, etc.,

(Rev.) CHARLES L. TWEEDALE.

Weston Vicarage, Otley, Yorks.

Sir,—Everyone who takes an active share in our movement will heartily endorse Mr. Morgan's testimony as to the lack of interest in its higher aspects, but the more we study the development of Spiritualism to-day, the more do we see its resemblance to the growth of that earlier Spiritualist movement which we call the Christian Church. What we need then to-day is another St. Paul, "to link up our philosophy with every branch of human activity and learning", and doubtless in due course such a one will be forthcoming, for the time will surely come when phenomena will have played their part, and the resulting facts remain to be applied to the great problems of the age.

In the meantime, there is something which we Spiritualists must realise—that while phenomena can arrest attention, arouse the keenest interest and the deepest emotions, yet in the end it must ever be the ideas which spring from these phenomena which alone can grip men's minds and bring about that permanent change of character which we call conversion.

It is ideas which rule the world.—Yours, etc.,

(Rev.) R. W. MAITLAND.

Norwich.

"SPECTACULAR SPIRITUALISM."

Sir,—As you have opened your columns to Mr. Ernest Hunt's subtle attack on the work of "Zodiac" and his instrument, as a co-worker with Miss Moyes and Hon. Editor of *The Greater World* I give the following facts:

Objection seems to be taken to the statement that the communications of "Zodiac" are Christ-inspired. That is our claim—a not unnatural one as "Zodiac" listened to the Saviour when He, as Man, lived upon earth. Moreover, "Zodiac" was among those who were massacred for preaching that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Dozens of clairvoyants have seen the Christ Presence in the conditions while "Zodiac" has been speaking.

At a sitting with Mrs. Osborne Leonard in October, a message was received from a highly evolved spirit stressing the importance of "Zodiac's" work. This spirit said that it was the Christ teaching as would be given by the Master Himself were He on earth now in a physical body. In addition, that spirit warned us that an attack would shortly be made upon us. He added: "Do not allow it to influence you in any way but go straight on with the work."

This advice we intend to follow; and judging by the crowded churches and halls in various parts of

England which Miss Moyes visits, it is obvious that thousands of people are longing for the Christ message which "Zodiac" brings.

The word "spectacular" is used in connection with our work. This jibe falls flat when it is remembered that *The Greater World* is not run as a financial enterprise, but entirely to help those in spiritual distress. During the years in which Miss Moyes has been used by "Zodiac" and other spirits, she has not accepted any fee. On the contrary, she has spent a great deal of money so that those who are in trouble may be comforted. The work done by the Zodiac circle is advertised because we have proved that there are numbers of people who do not know that help of this kind can be obtained without payment.

In nearly all announcements regarding messages received through Miss Moyes from spirits with well-known names, the following sentence appears: "Hundreds of spirits who, when on earth were numbered among the humble and obscure, have also given messages through Miss Moyes."

Would Mr. Hunt advocate that spirits with well-known names are to be refused a hearing?—Yours, etc.,

C. A. AESCHIMANN.

23, Leonard Street, London, E.C.2.

Sir,—As a very old reader may I be allowed to express my surprise at what your respected correspondent writes under this heading. He appears to register a protest against a weekly journal—but does not mention its name—for publishing, or advertising its intention to publish, messages from high spiritual sources.

Surely there can be no good reason for such a protest if the teaching of these messages is good and uplifting? Personally, I am aware of only one journal—one of comparatively recent appearance—that claims to have received messages from those high sources mentioned by your correspondent. If this is the journal referred to by your correspondent then I aver, from a fairly long experience and close study of the messages, that I have found nothing of a spectacular kind in them. On the contrary I have found much spiritual help from these messages, and know quite a number of other persons who have also much benefited from them. None of these would or could be accused of being influenced by anything in the nature of the spectacular.

During my more than fifty years' experience of this mighty movement I have found nothing more helpful or truly spiritual.—Yours, etc.,

ALFRED MORRIS.

Kingsdown Park, Whitstable, Kent.

Sir,—I am afraid Mr. H. Ernest Hunt, whose letter you publish under the heading "Spectacular Spiritualism", in your issue of January 4th, with all his "experience—psychic and psychological", has not availed himself of the privilege of listening to one of the many addresses given by "Zodiac" in public during the past two years, and I would ask him to take the first opportunity of hearing this Guide of Miss Winifred Moyes, before again questioning the claim of Christ inspiration, or criticising the mission he is sent to earth by God to perform.

To a world which recognises the present-day chaos in the Churches "Zodiac" gives the support of the Cross of Christ—the example of His life; if Mr. Hunt, among many more, would attend to his own job as "a non-subscriber to these claims", rather than attempting to pull to pieces the jobs which others, by effort, sacrifice, and unflinching principle, have prepared themselves to accomplish, the truth of Spiritualism—the Christ-teaching—might be listened

to with universal respect as a truth which does not engender petty jealousy among its many adherents.—Yours, etc.,

(Mrs.) JESSIE M. WHITTAKER.

25, Churston Mansions, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1.

Sir,—The letter of Mr. H. Ernest on the above subject is timely. However sincere our faith as Spiritualists we must respect the feelings of others to some extent. None of us will say "this return of 'So-and-So' is impossible" but many of us will say it is incredible. Especially so when we read "the message" alleged to come from the illustrious dead. What the unfortunate surviving relatives think of this use of the name they reverence, (if such an advertisement comes before them) is a matter for thought. I hope Spiritualism is not going to penalise in this manner every great man or woman regardless of living friends. If so it will alienate many.

May I remain hopeful that Mr. Hunt's letter bears fruit.—Yours etc.,

"AN APPRECIATIVE READER."

Sir,—I was very interested to read Mr. Ernest Hunt's letter in LIGHT for January 4th, but was surprised to find so well-read and well-trained a man condemning a series of messages after the mere perusal of an advertisement (as he appears to do) without investigating for himself the quality of the teaching thus conveyed. Had he heard for himself even one of these addresses I cannot help feeling that he would, at any rate, have been impressed with the genuineness of the direct inspiration claimed, both from the matter contained and the manner of its delivery.

I would like, if I may, to comment on two points raised.

In the first place, if any returning spirit claims to have been famous in earth life, and, trading on his name, comes in a spirit of self-aggrandisement, by all means treat his claim with reserve and caution. But in the instances to which I believe your correspondent refers, and which I have studied closely, it is very noticeable that, beyond a bare mention of name—doubtless to establish the personal link—no advantage is sought on the grounds of their rank or station in earth life.

On the contrary, they one and all come in a spirit of true humility and express regret for their lost opportunities, a wish that they had used them more in the service of others, and a desire for ever further spiritual development and the privilege of helping others along the same path.

Also, many who, when on earth were quite unknown to the world at large, have given messages through the same channel in much the same vein, evincing a sincere realisation "of the comparative unimportance of the individual and of the greatness of the theme".

In the second place, when Christ came to the world 2,000 years ago, He chose His friends and disciples from among those who, even then, had sufficient spiritual insight to receive and pass on the message the world needed.

Is it not possible that they, or others like them now in spirit life, may, under special conditions, be enabled to come back into contact with the earth, and, working as of old under the *direct* instruction and inspiration of their Master, Christ, bring again His message to the world, and call it once more to take up its cross and follow Him?—Yours, etc.,

MARJORIE MARRIAN.

Orford, 13, Northumberland Road,
North Harrow, Middlesex.

A number of letters are unavoidably held over until our next issue.

LIGHT,

Editorial Offices, 16, QUEENSBERRY PLACE,
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PROOF POSITIVE.

Those who know their Dickens and who have not forgotten *Sketches By Boz* will remember "The Parlour Orator"—that red-faced politician who was accustomed to shout "*Prove it!*" whenever he met with any argument to which he could not easily reply. He was very proud of this accomplishment for it helped him to many petty triumphs over unskilled opponents.

Dickens describes the red-faced orator as one of a class of "weak-pated dolts". He knew the tribe. Probably there are still some of them about. We recall that some years ago we were present at a lecture given to medical students on the subject of psychic phenomena, and that there was a modest demand from a group of light-hearted listeners that the lecturer should "do some of those things" on the platform there and then to prove his case!

Our position to-day is that we have proved the reality of the supernormal up to the hilt. The phenomena are no longer contested except by the very ignorant or the very stupid. The question has been proved, not by giving a demonstration to every individual doubter, but by making the facts of psychic phenomena more or less common knowledge. The thing has been established in the mouths of many witnesses. If there are still any persons who would join with the red-faced man in the cry "*Prove it!*" one answer to them might be that they should depart and prove it for themselves—if they are sufficiently interested. If they are not, then their disbelief is of no earthly consequence to anybody but themselves.

But that is another and larger question. Do the manifestations prove a life after death? In the aggregate they do. Even in a single line of inquiry—the finger-print experiments conducted by Dr. Crandon and the "Margery" circle in Boston, the thing is established. The finger-prints are unanswerable in our view and that of many people of good judgment and understanding. Of course there are counter-arguments and objections, some of them of a quibbling kind. But on the material side of things the test of the finger-print on a question of normal identity is regarded as unassailable. In the present instance it is good evidence of the existence of an unseen person in the spirit-world. If we add it to all the other tests and proofs of survival—many thousands

of them—it becomes almost overwhelming. But there are still many persons (red-faced and otherwise) who continue to shout "*Prove it!*" and think that the absence of any personal proof in their own particular case is an insuperable argument. Well, so it is—but only for *them*. And they have their uses, if it is only to teach the indiscreet enthusiast that if he puts himself into a position of responsibility for psychic facts, and stands as their custodian and champion, he will always be at the mercy of those who are anxious only to defeat an opponent. The right position, it seems to us, is that we should announce our facts and our conclusions and leave those who are interested to test the question for themselves in their own way. The facts are not *our* special preserve. They belong to the world at large. The inferences are various. Our own inference from the facts we do not conceal, but we are not in the least desirous of forcing it on the acceptance of other people. The can "*take it or leave it*"—whichever they do is their business, not ours. Experience has taught us that the most effective and most lasting form of proof is that a man should convince himself. That is why we find the questing, incredulous type of person more inspiring than the class of weak-headed people who, being easily converted in the evening by an argument in favour of survival, are unconverted again on the following day by some other argument directed against it.

We have proof positive but not proof absolute. There is no *absolute* proof of anything on this side of the grave. Still, we feel sure enough of our own existence, and that somehow, somewhere, we shall go on living, whatever may happen to this fleshly body. In that deeply-rooted conviction we are supported by all the array of psychic evidences—the finger-prints amongst them. For we have no disposition to be numbered amongst those of whom a poet wrote as:

Untaught by trial, unconvinced by proof,
And ever looking for the never-seen!

ROBERT BROWNING AND SPIRITUALISM.

A recently-published book on Elizabeth Barrett Browning has raised anew the question of her husband's attitude towards Spiritualism and his supposed detestation of it. In his book on Robert Browning, published some twenty-five years ago, Mr. G. K. Chesterton expresses the view that Browning's aversion was not so much to Spiritualism as to Spiritualists. In those days, naturally enough, the subject was new and regarded with distrust, and those who pursued it were drawn to some extent from the shallower types of the community. Browning had a strong dislike for Bohemians and freakish and slovenly cliques. Small doubt a good many of these gathered around the subject and gave it a flavour very offensive to a mind like that of Browning, whom G. K. C. describes as "a thoroughly typical Englishman of the middle class" who "met the Spiritualists and hated them with all the hatred of the middle-class for borderlands and equivocal positions and playing with fire". It must have seemed very much like that sixty or seventy years ago. How tremendously things have changed in the meantime we can realise by contrasting to-day with those old days when Spiritualism was a rather "ugly duckling"—something newly-born with all the uncouth and ungainly traits of some undeveloped creature, which has slowly to gain stature and form and symmetry. In those days Spiritualism had a good many camp-followers and hangers-on who misrepresented and discredited its message. That is still the case to some extent; but to-day they are less conspicuous by reason of the great number of adherents of high character and good-sense—the kind of people who, in the old days, would have remained in the background sharing the prejudices of the time.

SIDELIGHTS.

Mr. Stanley Lupino, the comedian, tells in the *Sunday Sun*, of December 29th, of an adventure in Drury Lane Theatre some twelve years ago when playing the pantomime rôle of "Widow Twankey". The dressing-room allotted to him was one formerly used by the late Dan Leno. Says Mr. Lupino: "One evening, as I was sitting at my table applying the grease paint, I was startled to see the reflection of another face in the mirror. I recognised the visitor immediately and was too startled to speak. It was Dan Leno. He was dressed in an old tattered dressing-gown. A few grease smears across his forehead told me that he had hastily wiped a towel across his face; perhaps his work for the night was done. Suddenly he threw his head back and laughed in the jaunty manner which delighted the audiences of a generation ago. At least, I presume he laughed, for I heard no sound. I turned my head to catch a glimpse of my companion. He had disappeared."

* * * * *

Mr. Lupino continues: "But I had not yet seen the last of Dan, for he visited me again in more dramatic circumstances. On this occasion, my wife and Mrs. du Calion, the wife of the ladder acrobat, were talking with me in the dressing-room. We were discussing the play in which I was acting when, without warning, the ghost appeared. The shock of his appearance was so great that Mrs. du Calion collapsed in her chair. Frightened, perhaps, by the unintentional scare he had given us, Dan suddenly vanished and left us wondering whether our nerves had not been playing tricks with us."

* * * * *

A third time Dan Leno appeared. Says Mr. Lupino: "The last occasion on which I saw the ghost was the most startling experience of all, for it was at night, and I was alone. Owing to an unusually heavy fall of snow, I was unable to reach my home, and decided to spend the night in my dressing-room. I had made myself comfortable in an arm-chair, when something—I do not know what—caused me to look up from the magazine I was reading. I had an uneasy feeling I was not alone in the room, and I was right. Dan Leno was standing before the fire."

* * * * *

"But now he was dressed differently. He had an old-fashioned lounge suit of some dark material, with a white shirt and a high Gladstone collar. With his hands clasped behind his back, he smiled down at me, and, I thought, seemed anxious to tell me something. He rocked himself slowly backwards and forwards, as though wondering how to start the conversation. Then he changed his mind. He walked across the room, and passed through the door, which was closed. For all that, I heard him slam it. A second later, I heard the sound repeated, as though the outer door had been closed. I rose and examined them both. They were securely bolted from the inside."

* * * * *

Mr. Shane Leslie, the Irish novelist, writing in the *Evening Standard*, of December 31st, describes a vision and a message which preceded a railway disaster in France. He had arrived at the P.L.M. station in Paris on Sunday evening, March 9th, 1924, intending to take the 8.10 p.m. *Rapide* for Cannes. Pacing the platform, while waiting for the train to start, Mr. Shane Leslie's attention was drawn to a hooded woman, who looked at him "with the most piercing and beautiful eyes I ever saw". She was dressed in black, and was standing at the far end

of the platform. Each time that he reached the end of the platform, in the course of his walk backwards and forwards, he noticed the woman, and felt moved by her piercing scrutiny. Says Mr. Leslie: "I did not think she was supernatural at the time, and I cannot say so now, though I lost sight of her before the train started, but it was borne in upon me that I must change my train."

* * * * *

"If I did not hear a voice saying so, I received the message, '*Il faut changer de train*', and I was so stirred by the incident and the idea, that I seized my hand luggage and threw it into a slow train to Marseilles. As I saw the *Rapide* leave, I experienced the feeling of being 'fey'. It is a feeling that you experience but cannot describe. I watched the train departing as in a dream . . . I arrived at Cannes at two in the afternoon [by the slow train] and learnt that the 8.10 had crashed with serious loss of life. An old Etonian friend of mine was among the killed."

* * * * *

Among the psychic stories contributed to the *Evening Standard* by its readers is one, in the issue of December 27th, which is well worth quoting here. The writer, N. H., a Catholic, states that in 1920 he was so terrified by a blackmail gang that he procured some poison with the intention of ending his life. To continue: "A nun suddenly appeared at my side; she took the flask out of my hand. I was too amazed to speak. She told me to go to Confession at once, adding that the Priest would tell me a better way out of my difficulties. With that she vanished. What happened to the flask was a mystery. I never saw it again. The priest to whom I went gave me excellent advice. The cause of my worry ceased and all turned out well."

* * * * *

"Seven years later," continues N. H., "one Sunday evening I was passing the Grotian Hall in Wigmore Street, when a heavy and unexpected shower came on. I stepped under the portico to shelter and was told that a Spiritualist Medium was in the hall conducting a service. Imagine my surprise when the Medium, whom I had never seen before, turned to me and said: 'A nun is standing by your side and she asks you if her way was not the better way. She is telling me that she once took a bottle from you, which she is still keeping, as it is safer in her hands than in yours.'"

MR. G. C. ASHTON JONSON.

In the sudden passing of Mr. G. C. Ashton Jonson on Friday, 10th inst., the cause of Psychic Research has lost a good friend and an earnest worker. The British College of Psychic Science has special reason for regret as he was Hon. Vice-chairman of the Council, and was always ready with advice and assistance when required. Mr. Ashton Jonson was a man of versatile tastes; a fine musician, practically and theoretically; a good speaker and a capable organiser. As Hon. Librarian of the Royal Automobile Club he did invaluable work, and incidentally established a section devoted to psychic literature of wider range than is generally met with outside the psychic societies. He and Mrs. Ashton Jonson accompanied Sir Arthur and Lady Conan Doyle on their travels in South Africa, and lately in Northern Europe, taking much of the spadework on their shoulders.

Spiritualists in all parts of the country will sympathise with Mrs. Ashton Jonson in her great loss.

R.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

PSYCHIC INVESTIGATION IN THE POST OFFICE.

BY JAMES G. COATES.

Just over twelve-months ago the Victoria Psychic Research Society came into being, the members consisting of employees at the South Western District Post Office.

We are part of a huge machine comprising some 2,000 postal servants of all grades, that works practically unceasingly day and night to ensure that your letters shall reach you in time for breakfast; yet into this practical and materialistic organisation has come the recognition of a great spiritual truth.

The inauguration of a psychic research body amongst us caused comment from all quarters; in some cases hostility was very marked, yet generally it was viewed with good-tempered tolerance and a short life was prophesied for the new society. We asked colleagues to join us with an open mind and investigate for themselves.

To-day we can report an increased membership. Our notice-board hangs in the corridor with those of other societies, such as the Trade Union, Sports Clubs and the P. O. Christian Association. In the Office Library LIGHT figures amongst the periodicals and we were able to obtain permission to instal a glazed book-case containing some eighty psychic volumes which are available to non-members, as well as members of the Society; these are well patronised.

We have held public meetings and our speakers have included Miss Estelle Stead, Sir Frank Benson, Mr. Stanley De Brath and Mr. R. H. Saunders. Seances have been held covering all phases of phenomena.

We have obtained wonderful evidence and perhaps the most valuable has been that, when in the quietness of the studio at Smith Square (kindly lent by Miss Stead) with no other Mediums present except those of ourselves, who have in some small degree developed psychic faculty, rays of light have filtered through. We impart the news to those of our non-member colleagues who in turn impart it to others or carry it home and so like a pebble thrown into a pool, the circles widen.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of our work is the continual interest shown in the office; arguments and debates occur daily.

Such is the work of the Victoria Psychic Research Society. I hope that the time is not far distant when other large bodies of workers will start similar organisations. To those who have so kindly helped us I take this opportunity of tendering our thanks. If I can help any society finding it difficult to fill its Sunday platform I am willing to do so. My address is—108, Thornhill Road, Surbiton.

THE MYSTERIES OF BREATHING.

There have been many expositions of what may be regarded as occultism in breathing. Beginning with the physiological power of simple deep breathing in relation to health and disease, passing such wonders of it as were expounded in works like *Ars Vivendi*, and more magically in eastern forms of esoteric philosophy, we come to its western mysteries in the life of Swedenborg, plainly described by him, and in some measure open to experimental verification. In his *Spiritual Diary* he says that if we carefully attend to our profounder thoughts we shall find that in *drawing breath* "a host of ideas rush from beneath as through an open door into the sphere of thought", whereas by *holding* the breath for a time and letting it out slowly "we doubly keep the while in the tenor of our thought, and communicate as it were with the higher faculty of the soul." This he had observed, times without number, in his own person. Should

any casual experimenter be disappointed with the results in his own experience, he should remember the marked tendencies of Swedenborg to psychic developments.

For instance, his vision of the dangerous fire about 300 miles away, with startling news of its advance, and two hours later his joyful cry: "Thank God, the fire is extinguished, the third door from my house!" Also his assurance to the widow of the Dutch ambassador that her deceased husband had duly paid a goldsmith's account which was charged against her, giving full particulars as to where the receipt would be found. And more amazing still, his transmission of a message from the Queen Dowager Louisa Ulrica to her brother, the Prince Royal of Prussia (deceased), with his answer concerning a matter of which the Queen declared: "No one except God knows this secret."

Swedenborg thus phrases the difference between inhalation and exhalation: "Retaining or holding back the breath is equivalent to having intercourse with the soul; attracting or drawing it amounts to intercourse with the body." He explains how he became accustomed to such breathings in his infancy, during morning and evening prayers, then at times afterwards when exploring the agreements of the heart and lungs, especially when he was writing from inner thought what he has published on those subjects. He says:—

In this way, for many years from infancy, I was introduced into such breathing, especially through intense speculation, in which the (ordinary) breathing subsided; otherwise, no intense speculation of truth can be given. Then afterwards, when heaven was opened, so that I spoke with spirits, I breathed so completely in this way that I did not take in a common breath for the space of about an hour, only just enough air being drawn to enable me to think.

W. B. P.

THE SEANCE ATTITUDE.

So much has been said and written as to the correct attitude of sitters on entering the seance room—particularly of inexperienced sitters—that I should hesitate to discuss the matter further were it not for a question recently put to me. Said my interrogator: "What attitude had I better adopt at the seance I am going to attend?" That word *adopt* attracted my attention.

Now many people who take up a study of mediumship for the first time have the notion that it is necessary to force themselves into a special frame of mind on entering the seance room. They make earnest efforts to express a false *bonhomie*, with some vague idea of assisting the Medium. With the best intentions, they endeavour to eliminate all critical ideas from their mind, fearing that such an attitude may militate against good "conditions". They approach the Medium with an unconsciously spurious goodwill, as though in the presence of an over-timid child that needs to be caressed with gentle words and sunny smiles.

All this is well meant. But if the attitude is merely assumed for the occasion, far better dispense with it. Naturalness, sincerity, these are of infinitely greater value. Be critical—particularly if you are so by nature—without being grimly suspicious. Show goodwill and cordiality if you can do so without being artificial. Keep an open mind, if that very rare mental attitude is within your power. But, above all, be your natural self, and do not *adopt* any unnatural mental postures.

These, in brief, are my words of advice to the novice.

L. H.

OBSESSION ?

By "DOC. SAN."

We had a strange and eerie experience in our home recently. I had better explain first of all that my wife and I are passionately fond of animals, and our domestic pets (dogs and cats) have been well known for many years past to the inhabitants of the small town wherein we live, and at present a large Alsatian hound and an oversized cat are our particular favourites.

A few weeks ago a gardener presented my wife with a small coal-black kitten about six weeks old; this was all the more acceptable, because, as cat lovers are aware, it is none too easy a matter to get hold of a young cat absolutely free from grey or white hair. This little animal was absolutely negroid in colour, with not a white hair showing anywhere. On the day of its arrival the kitten ate as if it had not seen food for weeks, then slumbered for hours afterwards when we found it difficult to awaken it.

A day or two passed; the big dog tried to make friends, for he is a splendidly good-natured animal, and so did the other cat, but all to no purpose. So far as one could judge the kitten was normal in every respect except that it possessed a pair of the most malignant eyes it was ever our lot to witness; the little beast would stare—glare rather—at the dog and cat, or at anyone near, for what seemed hours on end, without batting an eyelid, and that glare was anything but pleasant to look upon. In short, evil and wickedness emanated from the small animal; one actually *felt* it, the sensation being most uncomfortable. Without warning the kitten would rise and, going over to the big dog, would hiss, spit, and scratch like a fiend incarnate. On several occasions when my wife fed it, the little beast would actually try to tear her hand, emitting horrible noises the while.

Our big cat took the law into his own hands one day and administered a severe thrashing, but the effect soon passed off and the horrid little kitten became as evil as ever. In a dim light its eyes shone with an unearthly sheen quite unlike what one sees in an ordinary cat's eyes.

An experience like this is difficult to explain; it must be experienced in order to be understood, but the mere presence of that kitten in a room seemed to upset every living thing present; evil simply oozed out of it, and I noted that my wife (who is of Highland descent and extremely psychic) became pale when she looked at it. Our Irish maid declared, "that the divil was in the baste!" and that it was not fit to live. So, placing the kitten in a bag weighted with a stone, she put the lot into the wash-house boiler which was half-full of cold water. Queer in life, it was similiar in its passing, for not a single struggle or movement was made as the animal died; that in itself was a most curious feature, as the feline tribe have a firm hold on this life, and do not give in without a struggle as a rule. Try as we might we could discover none of the attributes of the usual young cat about it; a ball of wool rolling on the floor left it absolutely cold, while it looked with contempt on the small field-mice running about the back doors. In many years of experience with domestic animals we had never encountered one like this; it did not eat—it wolfed its food, looking from side to side as if afraid of it being stolen and making the most eerie and peculiar noises of an unearthly nature. The animal was apparently normal until approached by another animal, or a human being.

What diagnosis could be made of such a condition? Perhaps the kindest conclusion is—obsession!

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

There have been cases in which spirits visiting a seance have been made angry by being told they were dead. I have never heard of one of them being vexed by learning that he was alive. Yet it might happen. Consider the case of a departed Rationalist who, after a life devoted to teaching that there is no hereafter, turns up at a gathering of Spiritualists and is told that he still lives. I can imagine him being very much annoyed indeed!

* * * * *

Mrs. Leaning sends me the following quotation from a letter she received lately: "The silence of the early morning was only broken by the occult cry of the milkman; in the evening, I suppose, will come the esoteric howl of the newspaper boy." The reference doubtless is to the spread of the mystical and the occult in these days. Mrs. Leaning comments that in view of the *Evening Standard's* recent excursion into the matter of ghosts, "esoteric howl" of the newspaper-boy would be more appropriately "ghostly howl"!

* * * * *

It would be a great thing if in all the newspapers there could appear an announcement that most of the best evidences of spirit-return have been gained by families sitting in the privacy of their homes without professional Mediums, psychic experts, conjurers or Pressmen. That might put a stop to the absurd statements with which I am constantly meeting in the newspapers to the effect that the public are thirsting for information on the subject—information which (it is asserted) is continually denied them by shy and secretive Spiritualists, who stand between the public and the famous Mediums, like "Margery" or Mrs. Osborne Leonard.

* * * * *

The late Sir William Barrett had a biting phrase about the people who were disposed to swallow everything they heard in connection with Spiritualism—he called them the "wholesale believers". But there is one thing to be said about these people. In the mixed mass of stuff which they accept without question there is bound to be a proportion which is good and true. Whereas, in the case of the wholesale *unbelievers*, by rejecting everything, they are doomed to reject much that is valuable, if they only knew it. Charles Dickens once said very truly that the man who goes through life in armour of proof wards off from himself at least as much benefit as injury.

* * * * *

I sometimes write on the subject of queer coincidences. Lately I heard of one which is rather new to me. It came from an old and trusted contributor, to whom a lady related that on one occasion a man friend, a cricketer, gave her a toy chicken as a mascot, jokingly remarking that between him and the chicken there was a kind of occult sympathy! Anything that happened to the chicken would happen to him! It was a great jest, until one day the chicken fell off the mantelpiece into the grate, and, when picked up, its foot was found to be twisted. It was suggested that the giver of the chicken must have hurt his foot; but that seemed to be carrying the joke too far. Yet it *was* so, for when told, some time afterwards, of the accident to the chicken and asked if he had hurt his foot, the gentleman concerned exclaimed, with surprise, that on that particular day he had been playing cricket and had sprained his ankle. It is a true story. It may be just chance coincidence, or have some deeper significance, for there have been very queer instances of this kind, as occult students well know.

D. G.

Hold on; hope hard in the subtle thing
That's spirit; though cloistered fast, soar free!

—BROWNING.

VALIANTINE AND A BERLIN REPORT.

To point the moral is not always to adorn the tale. Here is a true story which may be best told without unnecessary appendices by way of moralisings and pious reflections, or the drawing of inferences.

On the 28th day of August, 1928, Mr. Dennis Bradley received a letter from Mr. Florizel von Reuter. In this letter von Reuter said that he had been asked by Dr. F. Quade, President of the Berlin Society for Scientific Occultism, to approach Mr. Bradley to find out whether George Valiantine, the Medium, could be persuaded to visit Berlin.

Mr. Bradley was deeply immersed in business affairs when this letter arrived, and saw no overwhelming reason why he should take any steps in the matter. On reflection, however, he realised that Psychic Researchers in Germany have hitherto had practically no experience of direct-voice phenomena, so he replied helpfully. Later came a communication from Dr. Quade saying that a patroness, Frau von Dirksen, of Margaretenstrasse, Berlin, would bear all costs for Valiantine and accommodate him, together with Mr. and Mrs. Bradley, in her home, where the seances would take place.

The question then cropped up: what form of fraud-proof control should be adopted to insure against trickery? On this point Mr. Bradley took a firm stand; Valiantine, he pointed out, had sat for him on numerous occasions under fraud-proof test conditions and, during the last six years, this Medium had given satisfactory sittings in Bradley's private house without any formal control. He added that he (Bradley) did not base his conclusions on mere physical manifestations that happened while the Medium was controlled (*i.e.*, bound, gagged, etc.), but upon *mental evidence* only; he stipulated, too, that if Valiantine went to Berlin no binding, gagging or other control method should be used but that any communications that might be received should be judged entirely on their merits.

The first act of the drama now closes.

The curtain rises again on Act 2.—Scene: the Berlin house of Frau von Dirksen; Time: April and May, 1929. Charming hospitality is dispensed by the gracious hostess, Frau von Dirksen, to the Bradleys, the Medium and the investigators. Dinner parties are arranged; wine and liqueurs are served to a company of sixteen to twenty guests; the hospitality of Frau von Dirksen is warm and generous—too generous, Bradley fears for serious psychic enquiry. (He writes later: "The atmosphere was that of a series of social functions.")

The investigators "sat" after dinner; certain manifestations occurred and "voices" were heard. Generally, the phenomena were poor and considerably below their usual quality and quantity. Perhaps the preceding dinner was a little too luxurious; maybe, too, the attitude of the sitters was incompatible with good results. The reasons, whatever they may have been, can, for the moment, be disregarded. The fact remains that the first three sittings were (to quote Dennis Bradley's own words) "the worst I had ever experienced in Valiantine's mediumship." Frau von Dirksen, however, expressed herself satisfied with the results, and none of the sitters gave utterance to any dissatisfaction or adverse criticism.

At this stage Mr. Bradley, feeling that the general conditions for serious research were hopeless, wished to stop the experiments and to leave Berlin (with his wife and Mr. and Mrs. Valiantine). He consented, however, to a final sitting, but insisted that proper seance discipline must be observed. The result of this fourth sitting was "comparatively poor". Bradley then left Berlin; Mrs. Bradley remained and four

more sittings were held. According to Mrs. Bradley's notes they were comparatively negative, the last being a complete blank.

The matter would probably have finished here had the seance taken place in any English *milieu*; the sitters would no doubt have expressed some disappointment that the "mental evidence" was not forthcoming; the results led nowhere—proved nothing! That, no doubt, is how the irresponsible Englishman would have regarded the case.

The German mind, however, is nothing if not thorough. With characteristic Teutonic industry, a closely-printed fifty-page German report has been brought out and the whole case has been analytically presented with all the dull solemnity (and not a little of the inanity) of a Government Report. It is a fearsome document; it prints "declarations under oath" from each German witness; these are given with due legal pomposity, thus:—"I, the undersigned A.B., declare herewith under oath, for use at any law court or any other permitted place: At a sitting which Herr George Valiantine held in the house of Frau von Dirksen I have made the following observations on APPARENT SWINDLE which I give without commentary, etc." (The words "apparent swindle" occur many times in this weighty report. There are also references to "circumstances which seemed to me highly suspicious", to "impressions of fraud" and other indefinite statements.)

Dr. Quade, whose statement is given in full, thinks it "highly possible that most, if not all, the phenomena are artificially produced."

Bratton L. considers that "direct proofs of fraud, according to my observations, have not been established."

Frau von Dirksen says: "My impressions of the sittings are such that I am firmly convinced of fraud."

Frau Kröner, in her statement, says:—

The hostess told us to sit up straight, not to fold hands or cross feet or put the feet forward. . . . I tried to feel round in the space between Valiantine and the trumpet. I slowly lifted my leg to a height of about one metre. I knocked against some metal object which moved away elastically, *just as if Valiantine were holding it in his hand.* [My italics.] After this all phenomena stopped until a voice came out of the air saying somebody had interrupted. The Medium then demanded a pause *although we all assured him we had kept our legs quiet.* [My italics.]

By the exercise of great restraint I refrain from comment!

N.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"Beyond." A Continuation of *The Seekers*. Further Talks by "Dr. Lascelles". Edited by Rosa M. Barrett. (C. W. Daniel Co. 3s. 6d.)

An attractive photograph of the Chapel at 29, Queen's Gate, headquarters of the Guild of Spiritual Healing, faces the title-page of this Continuation of *The Seekers*. Although not formally divided into chapters, their equivalent is supplied by series of Talks and Answers to Questions, covering a wide field of interest. In special reference to the Guild, at the outset it is stated positively that "distance is no hindrance to the passage of thought or of prayer, so that it does not matter whether members live near or far away." Many stories are told of answers to prayer. As regards the fundamental teaching of the book, here is the keynote: "To a Christian, Christ is everything. To Spiritualists, Christ must be everything." As examples of the answers to questions may be cited: "The more we build up harmony and love in our homes, the easier it is for our prayers to be answered. . . . What does it matter whether you pass in a few hours or many? What is that to all eternity? You are making your place *now.*"

W. B. P.

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Friday, January 17th, at 5 p.m. .. MISS LILY THOMAS
 Friday, January 24th, at 5 p.m. .. MRS. CANNOCK

MEMBERS' MEETINGS.

Wednesday, January 22nd, at 8.15 p.m. .. MR. A. VOUT PETERS
 "Finland: a land, a people, and its Gods" (with Lantern Slides).

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 Thursdays, at 3 p.m., Class for Development— MISS EARLE and
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 circle; 6.30, Service. January 22nd, 8, Service.

Cricklewood.—Ashford Hall, 41, Ashford Road.—January 19th,
 6.30, Mrs. Maunders. January 22nd, 3 and 8, Miss L. White.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—January 19th,
 6.30, Rev. G. Vale Owen. January 22nd, 7.45, Mr. A. Punter.

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