

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT !"—*Goethe.*

"WHATEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—*Paul.*

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	49	Miss Freer and Mrs. Piper	55
The S. P. R. and Eusapia Paladino ..	49	Spirit of Handel	55
Proposed Psychic Institute	50	Clairvoyance and Psychometry	56
Our Public Mediums	52	Electro-Dynamisme Vital	57
A Vision	52	Higher Potentialities of Spirit	
Recent Personal Experiences	53	Intercourse	58
Theosophy in the East	53	Mr. F. W. H. Myers and Mrs.	
Progress after Death	54	d'Esperance	59

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Eusapia is reinstated. It is a curious object-lesson. When the Cambridge experimenters, guided by a conjurer, dismissed her with something like contempt, and when the Psychical Research Society seemed disposed to find her no place for repentance, certain very competent scientific men on the Continent received her and were convinced of her genuineness. Upon this, a member of the Spiritualist Alliance Executive, at one of the Psychical Research Society's meetings, asked whether Eusapia's case would be reconsidered. In so far as any reply at all was given, the answer seemed to be in the negative.

The Society, however, has thought better of it, or Mr. Myers, with his splendid pertinacity, has been too strong for it. At the invitation of Professor Richet, who was convinced of Eusapia's genuineness, Mr. Myers went to Paris, and there, as he told us at the last meeting of the Psychical Research Society, he was himself entirely convinced.

This is interesting indeed. But Mr. Myers is as certain that Eusapia cheats as that she is genuine, and Professor Oliver Lodge, who also spoke at the last meeting of the Society, thinks so too. This is still more interesting. But most interesting of all is the fact that Sir William Crookes, Professor Richet, Professor Lodge and Mr. Myers all agreed that fraud was not a valid scientific reason for dropping a medium;—or at all events, that the coincidence of fraud and genuineness ought to be co-ordinated with all other considerations. We have long tried to persuade the Society that this is necessary, and now we, of course, are gratified at this sign of progress.

Mr. Myers, in one of his curious oblique speeches, made an onslaught upon those who condone frauds. Probably this was to take the edge off the axe which will assuredly be wielded by those who will try to make out that by surrendering to Eusapia and justifying her at Westminster, he is himself condoning fraud. We gratefully welcome every exposure of fraud, and every denunciation of attempts to condone fraud, but we entirely agree with the great men we have named, that in professedly scientific investigations, cheating is not a good reason for entirely flinging over a palpable medium. But then, what is cheating? The next lesson the Psychical Research Society has to learn is related to this very subtle and interesting point.

It may assist the Society if we suggest a few questions—to begin with.

In experiments of a psychical nature, and at psychological moments, where does mediumship end and normal personal volition and action begin?

A medium is a sensitive. How far may a sensitive be dominated, at critical moments, by unseen operators who, one way or another, insist on the 'performance' going on?

Is it quite certain that the unseen operators know the precise effect of what they are doing? The long reports of séances with Mrs. Piper suggest nothing so much as that they do not. If this is so with writing, why not with other attempts to use the medium's body?

Attracted by an enormous placard filled with the words 'Conjuring and Spiritualism,' we purchased a copy of 'To Day.' It was a bad investment. We found Spiritualism dragged in at the end of a gossip with a conjurer, and the reference to the subject is of the weakest. One is driven to the charitable conclusion that these conjurers have never taken the trouble to look into the subject. This particular one strongly suggests it. He begins by saying that of course he does not believe in spirit-manifestations, gives the most ridiculous descriptions of what is done at séances, and, quite in Mr. Podmore's manner, invents a way of doing everything that is said to occur, so of course it is all fraud. Q.E.D.

Here is just one specimen of this conjurer's knowledge. The subject of writing on slates is introduced; and this is how he disposes of it:—'The writing on the slate is done with a prepared slate and a little luminous paint.' That is every word. He actually does not know what slate-writing is, and thinks it is luminous writing done and made visible in the darkness. Neither does he seem to know anything about writing done on carefully guarded and tested slates.

But the writer of this conversation prepares us at the beginning for the reference to Spiritualism which comes at the end. He says: 'Mr. Devant readily consented to tell me all that he knew about conjuring (no one expects a conjurer to speak the exact truth).' This is truly naive and refreshing, and we have no difficulty in accepting it.

Our correspondent, writing from Mecklenburgh-square, asking for more cordiality at our Sunday evening meetings, raises a point which, time out of mind, has been raised against every congregation we have ever known. The formula is always the same:—

I have been attending meetings off and on for some months, and yet no one has ever spoken to me or asked me to come again, and there seems to be a feeling of indifference as to whether others receive the light or not. This I think is wrong. If Spiritualists [here insert Baptists, Congregationalists, Unitarians, or any other designation] feel that they have the light, surely they should copy our orthodox friends, and be anxious that others should have that light too, and should press them to come forward and join their ranks. Unity is strength, and if the world is to be won for our grand and noble truth, I would urge all true believers to be on the alert and let the good tidings 'There is no death'—be spread throughout the land.

We do not deny our correspondent's statement, but we do say that there is something a little comical about it. If the writer of this stirring appeal is so much in earnest, why does he (or she) not 'speak,' 'press' forward, 'join the ranks,' make advances for 'unity,' 'be on the alert'? &c. We are not chaffing our friend: we are very seriously in earnest. If there is nothing else to say, speak to someone,

anyone, and say, 'What a lot of silent tombstones you are here!' That would be a beginning, any way. Don't wait, friend: walk in and join: then stir the lazy ones up!

'Mind' for January contains a rather out-of-the-way little Essay on 'Woman and Theology.' The following passage gives an observant explanation of the tenacity of women in holding by the Church, long after the active masculine reason chilled off the ardour of the devotee. The passage turns upon the exclusion of women from active life on equal terms with men:—

The opposing attributes of justice and mercy were discovered to be impossible through the logic of reason; yet woman clung to the mysteries of her faith, and the element of fear worked a spell that bound her. Even when her doubts took root there was no abatement of her habits. She prayed as frequently, if not as fervently. Knowledge was too forceful, and wisdom too unveiled, to find ready acceptance in a mind accustomed to allegories. The mesmerism of fear had stilled the germs of reason. In the soil of self-immolation ambition flourished but slowly.

The ceremony of the Church was her only recreation—the society of the sacred edifice her only field of opportunity. Beneath the dim lights and shadows of the holy place, strange fancies nestled in her tender bosom. The voice of music thrilled her weary soul, but for its ecstasy she had no explanation. Through the incense of superstition, truth showed distorted outlines to her eyes; and the whisper of reason brought little meaning to the ear that listened unceasingly for the 'gnashing of teeth' among the sinners who dwelt in that 'outer darkness.'

When men had forsaken the God of their fathers, women still clung tenaciously to the religion of their mothers. When men lost interest in church ceremonies and responsibilities, women forced them to continue the burden of maintenance. When men declared their contempt of dogma and creed, women argued eloquently for influence and example. Comprehensive truths were not sufficient for their needs, nor could the nakedness of science replace in their souls that adoration which they felt for veiled mysteries and parables.

This is acute as far as it goes, but it is not deep enough. The explanation of the adherence of woman to religion, sentiment and mystery, is to be found in her spiritual nature and not merely in her circumstances.

This, from 'Mind,' too, is not exactly new, but it is old with a difference. The new conception of the power of faith, or thought, is going to make many old things seem new:—

We affirm our belief that man *has* a soul; but we must reach the point of knowing that man *is* a soul. Then we shall find that the body, to which we have given so much attention in the past, really requires no thought. It will be strong and whole, because it will express the wholeness of the soul life. This may seem visionary, or of remote fulfilment; but it need not be. We can make it a living reality in the present. Each and every soul can prove the truth of these things, for it is not a matter of time; it is a question of realising the power of God as an indwelling Force in one's own being. Some say: 'Well, I believe that to be true; I believe many people are realising that fact: but I do not think it is for me.' They are quite right: it is not for them while they think that way. But just as soon as they begin to think that it *is* for them, and that there is something within them that may be what it wills to be—because every soul when it *wills* to conform to the laws of being may be well, strong, and whole through the power of God latent within it—then it is just as much for them as for others. One does not receive this power by proxy. He must realise it for himself. Another may tell about it and point out the path; but if one would know all about it he must walk therein.

THE MISSES BANGS.

In last week's 'LIGHT' we published a letter from Dr. Hodgson in which he invited the attention of 'Quæstor Vitæ' to certain allegations against the Misses Bangs. It may be as well, therefore, to state that 'Quæstor Vitæ' is travelling, and will be away from England for some weeks. On his return Dr. Hodgson's letter will no doubt have due consideration.

'LIGHT SUSTENTATION FUND.'—The Treasurer acknowledges with thanks the receipt of £1 from 'A. M. L.,' 10s. 6d. from J. L. Bain, and 9s. from A. Baillie.

THE PROPOSED PSYCHIC INSTITUTE.

Those who realise the divine and deathless nature of the human soul—by knowing what it is, and thereby its main life purpose—and who also see how vital is the supremacy of that enlightenment to the permanently progressive well-being of mankind, and the only safety of empires—must rejoice at the Psychic Institute suggestion being discussed in 'LIGHT' by such notable thinkers. It is therefore cordially to be hoped that funds may soon be subscribed for the realisation of the proposed Institute worthy of the science, which is able to confer immeasurably the greatest service on the human race; for man clearly, simply, and absolutely to know himself, his spiritual nature; and so be most potently aided towards being true to it.

Even from the sense of a mere money expression of personal gratitude, the needful thousands should be furnished by those, far too worldly rich to miss them, who have derived the priceless blessing of realising, through communion with the spirit realm, the power of immortal progress with which the soul is endowed; to say nothing of the peerless solace of seeing an eternal world of radiant and ever-varying beauty within the one which is otherwise destructively dark with purposeless sufferings.

If those possessing superfluous wealth prefer its chains to duties, the proposed Psychical Institute may have to owe its existence to people who are richer in a wise humanity than in money.

Let me add that subject to approved conditions in its establishment, with an adequate fund being contributed thereto in the course of the next three months, I now gladly offer to devote to it *one thousand pounds*. You have my name and address.

ONWARD.

Any proposal coming from 'Quæstor Vitæ' merits our most serious consideration. In this, I think, we are all agreed. And as criticism is a part of the consideration due to both proposal and proposer, I feel sure that neither you nor he will resent a few remarks of a critical nature from a 'friend of the Cause.'

'Quæstor Vitæ's' proposed Institute seems to embody two distinct aims, which are not necessarily inseparable. Firstly, the formation of an association which, by bringing the scattered forces of Occultism together, will give that strength to the students of the invisible universe that is proverbially said to come from union; and, secondly, the establishment of a College of Experts in occult theories and practices, who shall examine into the claims and pretensions of psychics, and confer what may perhaps be called 'degrees' in mediumship.

With the first of these aims I am in complete sympathy; and I do not think that anyone but a bigot can be otherwise. But I must say that, as far as my lights enable me to see at present, the latter aim appears to me to be distinctly mischievous.

We have already a pretty conclusive experience, in the case of other colleges that examine candidates and grant diplomas, that, however excellent the intention, the practical result of the system is the establishment of monopolies and orthodoxies, the fruitful causes of arrest of development, and the worst impediments to the growth of knowledge; another result being the creation of endless favouritisms and partisanship. It is notorious that all progress in religion, medicine, or law comes from comparative outsiders—from those who are heretical, those who are dissatisfied with the established theories and practices, to defend and perpetuate which those colleges were founded. 'Quæstor Vitæ's' proposal, in fact, lands us back in the old contest between the opposing principles of Protection and Free-trade. He seems to be essentially a Protectionist: I am, heart and soul, for Free-trade in 'spirits' of all spiritual kinds.

And who, pray, are to be the 'experts' in occult things who shall decide for us which medium we may frequent, and which we must avoid; what phenomena we may swallow raw, off the half-shell, as it were; and what phenomena we may not taste with ever so long a spoon? Is it to be the pretentious ignoramuses who stultified themselves (and, as some of us think, disgraced themselves) by their treatment of Eusapia? It strikes me that in our present ignorance of

the invisible world and its inhabitants, for any set of men to appoint themselves, or get their friends to elect them spiritualistic 'Judges in Israel,' is sheer impertinence.

The pretence of these self-appointed judges is that they benevolently want to prevent poor, simple-minded people from being imposed upon by designing, unscrupulous humbugs, to the detriment of their purses and the harrowing of their affections, and to the scandalising of Spiritualism. But such is the plausible pretext of all censors, monopolisers, and would-be 'bosses'; and it is notorious that the effect of that kind of benevolent protection is to keep simple-minded people in a chronic condition of simple-mindedness; for it releases them from the obligation of using their own critical faculties, and thus prevents them from acquiring the experience that would enable them to discriminate for themselves between what is spurious and what is genuine—to discriminate, in our case, not only in the matter of phenomena, but in that of 'experts.' If the certificates of trustworthiness (or whatever other form the guarantees of genuineness might take) are intended only for the use and benefit of simple-minded people, who wish to be led by their ears to the spiritual pond from which they may drink without trouble or danger, then let it be so understood; but in that case, the proceeding would not be of much value, even were it effectual.

After all, it is a matter of very minor importance that silly people should be insured against humbug. The great need in Spiritualism is that all should inquire into the facts for themselves. There are silly people to be found in every movement; and since it is in the nature of silly people to be humbugged, and to humbug each other and themselves, they are necessarily a source of weakness and of scandal for whatever cause they honour with their patronage. The evil is inevitable and irremediable, and the wisest thing to do is to put up with it philosophically. The really important thing is to stimulate independent investigation; and the question—a question which urgently requires an answer—is, how this can be done. How, for example, can we induce ten or twenty thousand families throughout the land to sit regularly two or three times a week, for an hour at a time, with their hands on a small table, waiting for results? If raps or tilts came in even a quarter of those family circles, those little raps or tilts would do more for Spiritualism than a thousand gilt-edged certificates, even were those guarantees of genuineness and honesty signed by every member of the Society for Psychical Research, and countersigned by all the conjurers in Europe. Indeed, it may be truly said that if our object were to discourage people from inquiring into Spiritualism for themselves, certificates of genuineness, given by a College of Experts, would be the most effectual way of attaining it; for they would very naturally be taken as a proof that only an expert can tell a phenomenon from a trick, and that mediumship is possible only to very exceptional people; and also as showing that the reality of the phenomena has already been authoritatively and satisfactorily demonstrated, so that only faith is required in order to become a good Spiritualist; and it is needless to say that any of these inferences would discourage the independent investigation which alone leads through knowledge to real belief.

This argument, of course, takes it for granted that the members of these family circles are intelligent enough to recognise genuine raps or tilts if they occur, and to appreciate their significance; and it also presupposes that the evidence of one's own senses is more to the point than the evidence of another's, even when that other wears an academic cap and gown. Well, a family circle is, I think, a pretty wide-awake committee, very often even too suspicious and exacting; and my experience goes to show me that even 'the man in the street' is by no means such a fool in psychic research as it is the fashion in occult circles to make him out. He is very often endowed with sturdy common-sense, a valuable quality and saving grace in which the self-styled 'experts' in observation and experiment—the 'scientific' tiers, and sealers, and grabbers—are in general lamentably deficient, as is amply proved by the obstructive conditions they impose, and by their absurdly far-fetched 'explanations of phenomena' that contradict their preconceptions. Above all, the 'man in the street' has no pet theory to maintain against all evidence to the contrary, as is so often the case

with so-called experts; and open-minded ignorance *may* arrive at a correct judgment in time, but learned prejudice *never*.

Another thing is that there seems, after all, to be no real occasion for this censorship and these guarantees, even in the interests of the simpletons; for this cry of 'Fraud, fraud,' is, to say the least of it, a gross exaggeration. Who started it? The Spiritualists? No; 'it is an ill bird that fouls its own nest.' It was the enemies of Spiritualism that started the cry that 'Mediums are frauds,' and they added, and still add, 'and Spiritualists are fools to believe in them.' Why are Spiritualists so eager to endorse the first part of this accusation, and so anxious to repudiate the second?

Well, it is not pleasant to be regarded as a fool; and, human nature being what it is, we might have expected that Spiritualists (or some of them) would squirm under this accusation of foolishness, and would hasten to clear themselves from it by admitting that there are, unhappily, some silly people in the ranks of Spiritualism, who bring discredit on the movement by their credulity; and we might have anticipated that this admission would lead on to the 'graceful concession' by Spiritualists that there are, unfortunately, such things to be found as fraudulent mediums. Once this is admitted—and it is not only admitted, but loudly trumpeted forth by Spiritualists—it is apparently the obvious duty of all honest Spiritualists to repudiate the fraudulent mediums, to hunt for them, and, when discovered, to kick them out; and as the enemy are clamorous, mediums are shy, and a good reputation is sweet, scapegoats become necessary. And, with the kind assistance of the enemy, scapegoats are easily found, for there is no more defenceless creature on earth than a public medium. Scapegoats being available, a reputation for virtue can be very cheaply acquired by Spiritualists, and their character for good sense redeemed in the world's eyes by parading a burning desire to 'purify Spiritualism from even the suspicion of fraud'; and as it would not be easy to silence those who manufacture these suspicions, a far more convenient method is adopted, namely, the simple process of assuming all mediums to be guilty until they can prove themselves innocent, and bullying, maligning, and torturing them accordingly. Of course the more numerous and outrageous the frauds can be made out to be, and the greater the number of unfortunate mediums entrapped and 'exposed,' the more virtuous, intelligent, and useful to the cause do these pretended 'purifiers of Spiritualism' appear.

I am far from maintaining that all the would-be purifiers of Spiritualism act consciously from unworthy motives; but I say that it is a poor and contemptible business, this 'purification of Spiritualism' as now carried on in alliance with the enemies of the Cause. Spiritualists who thus help to entrap their mediums, and who hand them over to their foes for annihilation, are like Siberian travellers who throw out a companion to the wolves, that they themselves may escape. It is a coward's action; and it is not only a crime, but a blunder, for the more we feed the wolves the stronger and more ravenous they become, and nothing so greatly discredits Spiritualism as the popular belief that Spiritualists have no confidence in their own mediums. It is for the enemies of Spiritualism to justify their assertion that 'mediums are frauds' by proving it, if they can; not for Spiritualists to play jackal to the fraud-hunters, and to echo their cries—with the reservation, no doubt, that there are a few honest mediums, after all; that *all* mediums do not *always* cheat; and that this or that particular Psychical Researcher's pet goose is *really* a swan, since he says so himself!

That there are a few dishonest persons who think it is easy to simulate mediumship, and thus bamboozle the public, I do not deny; but, as far as the experience of many years warrants an opinion, I do not hesitate to say that these fraudulent mediums soon discover that the public is not so easily gulled as they anticipated, and quickly find themselves discredited and deserted. In fact, I feel sure that if no officious attempt be made to separate the tares from the wheat before it is possible to do so without killing the wheat, the tares will effectually separate themselves by disappearing of their own accord; and it is to a great extent on the strength of this tendency of mediumship to purify itself

automatically if left alone, that I am opposed to all attempts at censorship, or certifying, or guaranteeing, and that I 'plump' for Free-trade in all forms of occult research.

RICHARD HARTE.

OUR PUBLIC MEDIUMS.

Concerning some of the points raised by the various correspondents on this question, I should like to say that my sole object in trying to present some feasible scheme of organisation was the idea of *repressing* as much as possible the fraudulent and undesirable elements in our working midst; the word 'repressive' having been the keynote struck by the original correspondent on this subject.

That any sort of scheme could hope to permanently stamp out trickery and deceit (as long as the very large element of mere fortune-telling in mediumship exists) is not likely. We must wait for the time when not only mediums, but sitters and investigators as well, shall have reached a higher plane of knowledge in psychical study than at present is the case.

But though we cannot attempt to organise any sweeping measures regarding some form of undertaking, it does not follow that we should sit with hands folded and do nothing at all.

It is because I so deeply sympathise with the honest, well-intentioned mediums, many of whom I learn to my sorrow are severely handicapped by an utterly unsuitable environment, that I desire to see something done which would place them head and shoulders above the sea of mediocrity, of half-and-half mediumship which does so much to bring discredit on their calling. The uninitiated investigator, a stranger to the various forms and phases of mediumship, is apt at first to lump all mediums together, good, bad, and indifferent, as people willing to give him his money's worth if possible, and he hopes that in his search for knowledge(?) he may be fortunate enough to secure a prize out of this 'olla podrida' of wonder workers. As we know he frequently draws a blank, and then, with or without reason, forthwith goes his way stigmatising 'the whole thing a fraud.'

I believe that later on, if we endeavour to give more care and attention to our genuine sensitives, we shall arrive at a time when we shall get a better and more intelligent class of séance for the general sitter, and when fewer mediums will be found to too readily risk discredit or pander to the more materialistic fortune-telling element among their visitors. They will better realise how this is calculated to deteriorate them materially as well as spiritually.

Concerning the idea for forming a mediums' college and training school for psychical development, I have little to say in favour. It seems to me that this would be quite out of the province of a business-like scheme for the repression of fraud such as I had thought of, nor do I consider the society prepared in any way yet to do anything of the kind. An enterprise of such magnitude as a training school for mediums could not be expected to come into existence in our time, except through a spirited philanthropy and good will on the part of a few private individuals who might happen to have sufficient money and leisure at their command to devote to so admirable a work.

I imagine it would be injudicious on the part of a public body to allow a hint of the scholastic or pedagogue to come in and dictate how mediums and students should study or develop. We are all free to give up our time and energy for the development of the mediumship of ourselves and others, if so inclined. As to our ultimate success in this line of endeavour, the judging committee or committees would soon give their opinions when they met, at our request, to test our claims to occult powers. Unless we can persuade a certain number of our reliable and scientific members to come forward and form themselves, on behalf of the society, into a testing expert committee, ready to voice (publicly, if necessary) a decision concerning some of the phenomena presented to them by various mediums, the inevitable must surely happen, viz., that the work will be practically left to the Psychical Research Society. If this should be a matter of indifference to the heads of our society (and there is no reason why it should not be), this ought not to be the case on the part of the mediums, as

it would probably mean for them that only every now and then would one of their members come in for any Psychical Research Society recognition at all, and if they did they could never then be quite certain that the outcome of a Psychical Research Society inquiry would not leave its members and the world at large in the same state of unhappy indecision it was before. This appears to have happened concerning the unfortunate Eusapia Paladino.

I think I have now said all that is necessary from my point of view, in regard to this all-absorbing desire on my part to see some kind of committee established for the special work already stated. I am quite devoid of prejudice as to how some sort of reform is brought about, wishing only in my heart for the general good and welfare of mediums and investigators alike.

J. STANNARD.

A VISION.

Mr. A. C. Swinton has kindly sent us the following letter which he has received from a lady with whom he is personally acquainted, and in whose integrity he has full confidence:—

'I have to apologise for the delay in sending you the following narrative, but, owing to press of work, I have not been able to write earlier. I shall now tell you what happened to me at B— House. I had been there a week or more, in May, 1885, nursing Mrs. C. (you must pardon my not mentioning names), when it was thought expedient that we should have a change of rooms, and as the lady of the house had to accompany Lady T. to Holyrood Palace—Lord T. being High Commissioner for that year—we got comfortably settled in our rooms in the early part of the day; and were delighted at the idea of occupying *State* rooms, which, needless to say, were luxuriously furnished. My patient had retired for the night, and the door of communication was open; a night-light burned in her room. I had no light but that of the fire, which was blazing up the chimney, and which lit up the room brilliantly. I experienced a feeling of comfort and restfulness, feeling glad that the time had come when I could retire to rest. I was in the act of viewing my surroundings when I perceived a lady standing in the doorway with a curiously annoyed expression on her otherwise handsome face. Although she seemed to be young, she had beautiful white hair, which was arranged high on her head. She had also beautiful arched brows, which were black. Her eyes were dark, but what I noticed most were her lovely hands—the most lovely hands I had ever seen. She wore no rings, and was attired in either a dirty white or faded yellow satin gown, which seemed to be crushed. Across her bosom was a *fischu* or *bertha*. She stood and looked at me for a few seconds, and then disappeared through the doorway. I became conscious of great fear, as I remembered there were no ladies in the house except Mrs. C., who was ill in bed. On telling Mrs. C., she did not seem to be surprised, and said we must tell Miss H., who has often wished to see this vision. It was known in the household that such a vision had appeared to another visitor some years previous to this. I am unable to account for this in any way; and notwithstanding the lapse of years, the whole circumstance is quite clear to me yet.'

HELENE KIRKLAND.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, will be held in the French Salon, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), at 7 for 7.30, on the evening of Friday *next*, February 10th, when

MR. THOMAS HEYWOOD

Will give an Address on the question,
'*WHY IS SPIRITUALISM TABOO'D?*'

Mr. Heywood, it will be remembered, acting as our Commissioner, supplied an able and interesting series of articles to 'LIGHT,' a few years since, entitled 'The Mysteries of Mediumship.' He is therefore well acquainted with our subject, and judging from a hint he has given us, we suspect that, in his method of dealing with the question, 'Why is Spiritualism Taboo'd?' he will take his audience somewhat by surprise.

SOME RECENT PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

BY 'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

The case I am now about to deal with in my judgment possesses some features of interest, because it demonstrates that our friends on the other side, as here, make mistakes, or rather do not always give correct information in answer to requests made for spirit intervention. The circumstances are as follow :—

For a considerable time past a member of my family has been affected with an irritating skin affection. Our ordinary medical attendant was called in on more occasions than one, and several prescriptions were given, with (occasionally) beneficial results; but the trouble always returned to the left hand, which was the one originally affected. After a temporary cessation of the trouble in the summer, it suddenly, about Christmas, 1898, attacked the same member again, and as we have on various occasions got excellent advice from a spirit doctor, I, early in January of the present year, addressed a letter to the ex-Lancashire doctor who controls my young lady clairvoyant relative, beseeching his aid. This letter, she informed me, she would allow him to read the first time he came athwart her 'inner vision.' About a week thereafter she came and informed me that he had appeared to her on the preceding evening (January 11th), and promised to control her on the following night, and write me a message. On the evening of January 12th she brought me a message in the usual caligraphy, extending to three pages of note-paper, and subscribed by the spirit doctor's initials. In that letter he tells me that he has been in consultation with a spiritual colleague whom he names as 'Dr. Moxton,' and who, he says, when on earth, was an expert in skin diseases; also that he has discovered that an expert in that trouble resides about a couple of miles from our house, viz., in L— place; but the message did not give the name of this specialist. Meantime he wishes my daughter to undergo certain treatment recommended by his spiritual colleague, including a prescribed course of dieting, the bathing of the afflicted hand in hot water at bedtime, and also that she should lightly bathe her face, neck, and arms in 'marsh-mallows water.' He also stated that he knew of a chemist in Brighton who sold a medicine for internal use in connection with troubles of this kind, and promised to write the following night and give me more particulars. This promise was fulfilled by a message in the following terms, automatically written by the same medium, and in similar caligraphy to the former epistles :—

'Spirit Land.

'DEAR — (my name),—I am, up to the hour arranged, with Miss — (the medium). I am satisfied as to the arrangements. I am wishing Miss — (the patient) to fall in with my tests just now, and not going to the skin specialist I spoke of, but if my plans have no effect she may consult the living doctor. In regard to the drug I spoke of, when writing put down in plain letters—(here follow the name of a firm and an address in Brighton). If you have anything else to question me about, I am at your disposal, and may write on Monday night (16th), so as to give my medium freedom—(here follow his initials).'

I presume giving the medium 'freedom' meant that he would not again control her till the evening of Monday, January 16th. On examining the message I saw that both drug and address were (to me) not very legible, so I spoke to the medium, who had written the whole message in my presence, saying: 'Tell the doctor to write plainer as I can't well make it out.' The medium therefore took up the pen and wrote, or was rather controlled to write, in her own natural handwriting, quite legibly, the name of the drug, and the firm in Brighton who sold it. Then followed, in the doctor's handwriting: 'Will write you further particulars on Monday. Writing to Brighton, stamps or postal order would be required to the amount of 1s. 0½d., including postage.' (Here follow the initials of the doctor.)

With regard to what is called in the last message 'marsh-mallows water,' I found that no such product appeared to be sold by any druggist, but on consulting a medical dictionary, under the word 'marsh' I came upon the word 'marsh-mallow,' and found noted 'see althca,' and on turning up that word I found it described as a plant which grows in marshy places, and whose root is used for medicinal purposes.

I, therefore, called on a medical botanist, and got a supply, with instructions how to infuse it, and then to use the water for the purpose ordered. I also wrote to the address given in Brighton, inclosing the stamps mentioned in the doctor's letter, and requesting a supply of the drug in question. Five days elapsed and no reply came to hand, so I, with some difficulty, in the forenoon of Tuesday, January 17th, obtained the use of a Brighton directory for 1898. On looking for the address I found the street had been accurately stated, but there was no firm of the name given in the message as carrying on business there. This, coupled with the non-receipt of the drug and any reply to my letter of January 12th to the Brighton firm, made me doubtful if all was correct. The same evening my lady relative came to me with a very hurried scrawl from the spirit doctor, which was barely legible, although the distinctive caligraphy was there. In this epistle he informs me that Dr. Moxton was to give him still further information as to my daughter's case, and if I would write down certain queries, particularly as to what particular spa the patient should be sent to, as soon as the season permitted, in order to complete recovery, I would receive a reply as soon as he met Dr. Moxton again. I complied with this request the same evening, and handed the queries to the medium.

Space will not permit me to deal with the rest of this experience, so I reserve it for a later issue.

(To be continued.)

THEOSOPHY IN THE EAST.

The report of the twenty-third annual convention of the Theosophical Society, held at Adyar, Madras, last Christmas, is to hand. It is interesting as showing that, like the Apostle Paul, the Theosophical Society can be 'all things to all men.' Here, Theosophists are semi-Christian; in India they seem to be wholly heathen. This, of course, would be none of our business, were it not for one thing; and that is, the willingness expressed by some of the theosophical leaders here to work in unity with Spiritualism in opposing the prevailing materialism of the day. We may well ask whether it is possible for Spiritualism and Theosophy to work together in harmony if such sentiments as the following may be taken as indicating the real beliefs of Theosophists.

Mr. Bertram Keightly, general secretary, ends his report of the Indian Section as follows :—

'Slowly and surely, through the blessing of the Great Gods, a nucleus of devoted and spiritually inclined souls is being gathered together. Year after year from India and from other lands ardent and devoted souls are being brought into unison, linked by the imperishable bonds of common spiritual aspiration and work shared for the regeneration of the race. Even in the darkest hour the mercy of the Compassionate Ones has kept a flame of hope, however feeble, steadily burning, and even though the gloom and darkness which envelopes and saddens this earth should grow even more dense and oppressive, yet still They will keep that flame alive; and if we, relying under all trials and tribulations upon Their Wisdom, Power and Love, strive ever cheerfully and undauntedly to purify ourselves and spread the light of Their divine teaching in the hearts of men, then surely and without fail shall a new and glorious life shine forth in this holy land of the spirit, and spreading ever more widely, fill the minds and hearts of all with its peace and illumination. Then shall the Golden Age return upon earth and life become truly divine in purity, in nobility, in wisdom and in peace. So may it be!'

A certain 'Dr. Pascal from France' declared to the meeting that 'his heart was full of gratitude':—

'above all to the Great Souls who guide the spiritual evolution of Humanity, to Whom we owe a reverence so profound that to speak of Them in any other language than that of the silent adoration of the heart, seems a profanation;—for the mighty spirit who was called H. P. Blavatsky, and who was that channel of that flood of Life and Light which the Great Brotherhood poured out upon earth on the eve of that critical moment which is to see one cycle expire and another be born; for H. P. Blavatsky, who was of all of us the teacher, of all the mother, who bore with a courage we too often forget, the frightful blows aimed by the spirits of evil against the edifice which shall regenerate our race made gangrenous by materialistic scepticism; for H. P. Blavatsky who, like all Saviours of the world, had to bear a heavy cross on the road to her Calvary and drink to the last drop the bitter cup of the Passion.'

It would be impossible, we fear, to comment upon these somewhat effervescent utterances without hurting the feelings of our good friends, the Theosophists!

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EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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PROGRESS AFTER DEATH.

We introduced our readers, last week, to Dean Lefroy's curiously enlightening book, a veritable sign of the times which (notwithstanding its old-world obscurantism in some respects) ought to rejoice the hearts of all good Spiritualists; and all the more because the Dean's strong declarations concerning the possibility of salvation beyond the grave are only the echoes of similar declarations loudly heard or anxiously whispered on all sides.

A very short time ago, for instance, 'The Western Morning News' gave a full report of a sermon by Canon Thynne on this subject. This sermon is in entire harmony with the teachings that have hitherto been generally regarded as 'unscriptural,' certainly as 'unorthodox.' The worthy Canon is not at all afraid, either, of being regarded as tainted with 'Romanism.' He believes in something so much like Purgatory that one need not trouble to trace any difference. Very boldly, indeed, he commenced his sermon with a vigorous facer, clean aimed at the old Heaven and Hell school. He took it for granted that, in the congregation he was addressing, 'there were few, if any, so little instructed in the Christian faith as to fancy that at death the souls of the good passed at once to Heaven, while the souls of the bad were committed at once to Hell—that was a belief which was once general in the land, but, thank God, a closer study of the Bible had to a great extent, if not entirely, rooted it out.'

That is rather outspoken for a Canon. It is not so very long ago that these very Heaven and Hell were the foundations of sound Bible theology. It was truly 'general in the land'; but this high authority assures us that people who believe it now are but poorly instructed in the Christian faith, and are cherishing something that ought to be 'rooted out.' In the meantime, the Spiritualist looks on, smiling and content.

Another mistake, it appears, has been made all this time;—that there were 'only two classes of those who pass hence and are no more seen: on the one hand those who at death go straight to Heaven, and on the other those who at death go straight to the place of final torment.' But we were brought up to believe that this was not to be questioned, and we can scarcely adjust our minds to the fact that a Canon in high standing denies it. Moreover, he is not alone. He quotes a brother Canon, who has said: 'Even amongst the most marked extremes of good men and evil men, few even of the best are so free from stain or fault as at death to be certainly fit for Heaven, and few so vile and degraded as not to have still some good in them; and between the two extremes there are multitudes of mixed characters in part good and in part bad. Many dear to us, whom we know to be full of worth, are yet, we

know, full of imperfections—too frail for Heaven, too good, too lovable, for Hell.' We do not care what people call that,—'Popery,' 'Rationalism,' or 'Spiritualism': we hold it to be common justice and common sense: and we further hold that it is the only interpretation of spirit-life which can preserve to us faith in the Fatherhood of God.

Canon Thynne, like a sensible man of the world, knows that there are multitudes who have not given serious thought to what is called Religion. They have not 'rejected the Gospel,' still less have they 'rejected God.' They are interested in the world, they take their place in the battle of life, and then, perhaps suddenly, they pass on. A few years ago, there was only one alternative, but Canon Thynne sounds the note for the times when he says of these: 'For such they hoped and pleaded with the all-loving Saviour that He has prepared a place for them also, where in His infinite mercy they should have a time of light, a time not of discipline, as we understand it here, but of purification and perfecting. Surely such thoughts helped them to a Diviner charity than the theology which seemed to take a grim delight in condemning all poor sinners alike to everlasting flame.' The only criticism we, as Spiritualists, care to suggest is that there is no need to 'plead with the all-loving Saviour.' That casts a doubt upon the infinite justice and pitifulness of the Father, and suggests concerning Jesus that which was not true of him here. We note also the shrinking from full trust in the larger hope, but we shall deal with that later on.

Of course, as we have hinted, this very significant change in the general outlook naturally exposes the advocate of it to the reproach that he is only dressing up the Popish Purgatory for the Protestants' need. And this is true: but, as Canon Thynne frankly urges, 'Because Rome, in greed and folly, had invented a purgatory from which souls might be delivered by purchased indulgences, should we deprive ourselves of the Church's heritage of love and consolation, which bids us hope that besides such saintly souls as his whom to-day they mourned there were many who had passed the dark river tainted, perhaps, with grievous sin, barely conscious, perhaps, of the greatness of Divine love,' who might find the infinite mercy and the needed purification beyond the veil?

The preacher very wisely drew attention to the gain that would accrue to real religion with the acceptance of these more humane ideas. Up to a certain point, the fear of God, or, as it ought to be called, the fear of Hell, is a deterrent: but beyond that point it is simply a promoter of agnosticism; and we are persuaded that much of the agnosticism of these days is due to bankrupt beliefs such as these good men in the Church are now trying to put away. Canon Thynne knows this as well as anyone. He says: 'The three great dangers to which the human mind was liable were indifference, unbelief, and despair, and, when the revelation of a loving and not an avenging God took hold of the soul, it was inspired with hope.' That is undoubtedly true: and, on the other hand, the presentation of an avenging God is bound, in the long run, to create resentment, or retirement from the subject altogether, where it does not unwholesomely alarm.

As we have intimated, this enlightened preacher shrinks from the full application of his brighter faith. We do not greatly blame him for that—if at all. It is very difficult to be perfectly logical at periods of transition. Canon Thynne will speedily be conscious of his difficulties in relation to two subjects—the resurrection of the body and the final condemnation of 'the lost.' As to the first, he is, unfortunately, too clear: as to the second, we may possibly misunderstand him, and we hope we do.

His view of the future life is thus set forth:—

The Bible told us that the life of the soul was divided into three periods—one of probation on earth in the flesh;

one after death—a life of waiting—an intermediate state, in which the disembodied soul dwelt apart; and the third period following the resurrection and judgment, when soul and body were to be reunited, the body so spiritualised and refined as to suit the heavenly existence. We must conclude that our blessed Lord intended us to understand that at death the soul lived in the hands of God, awaiting the final judgment. If at death souls passed at once to heaven or hell, the whole teaching of the Bible was contradicted. Jesus revealed much concerning the day of judgment, especially in a vivid picture in Matthew xxv., and it was to be noted with astonishment that the righteous as well as the wicked are described as in a state of uncertainty.

We say nothing about the teaching of the Bible here assumed: we must confine ourselves to the Canon's teaching. Anyhow, the resurrection has still to take place. Are we, then, to understand that everything is in 'a state of uncertainty,' and that both the good and the bad are waiting for the resurrection, before closing the account? But why imagine that the restored body is necessary at all, if it is to be 'so spiritualised and refined as to suit the heavenly existence'? Why not assume that the spirit itself is such a body; and so get rid of this crude clinging to clay?

The truth is that this is a very gross survival which has come down to us from the days when the fact and the philosophy of spirit-life were ill understood, if at all, and when, in consequence, the gross earthly body was regarded as necessary to the gaseous soul. Our good Canon must shake himself free from that crudity: and, as to that, if he will only come to our school, we will teach him much.

As regards the bias which appears to limit the educational and redeeming possibilities on the other side, we feel sure that in the end this good man will see there is no halting place. Once admit the possibility of uplifting, education and salvation in that new life, it will not be possible to limit it. If the heathen who never heard of Christ will have their chance beyond the veil, why not the heathen who heard of him and were neither interested nor convinced? If Matabeleland will have a chance, why not Shadwell and Shoreditch? No, dear Canon, if your old creed rejects and limits, the Father will be wiser and kinder than His sons.

THE SPIRIT OF HANDEL CONDUCTING THE 'MESSIAH'

Mr. T. P. O'Connor's paper, 'M.A.P.', gives an extraordinary story of Miss Regina de Sales. 'It appears that Miss de Sales aroused unusual enthusiasm recently when singing the principal part in the "Messiah" at Liverpool. During her singing she became very excited, forcing the time here and retarding it there. "Why could you not follow my beat!" demanded the conductor afterwards in the artists' room. "Why," responded the fair singer, "because Handel himself was present in the hall, and he gave me the correct *tempi*. I saw him quite plainly." At this retort the conductor laughed, and Miss de Sales retired to her hotel with the well-known harpist, Miss Edith Martin, who had accompanied the singer to Liverpool. Being fatigued after the day's excitement, they were soon asleep. In the middle of the night Miss Martin was awakened by a loud cry of "Brava!" Opening her eyes, she was spell-bound to find an apparition of a burly man at the foot of the bed. It was Handel in full-bottomed wig, lace frills, and wristbands, with a roll of music in his hand, evidently conducting. On Miss Martin turning to arouse the singer at her side, she was surprised to find the latter sitting up in bed and making all the gestures of singing, but without uttering a sound. After this phenomenal occurrence had gone on for some time, Handel's portly form disappeared, and Miss Martin remembered no more till she awoke the next morning. At breakfast Miss de Sales related to the company a wonderful dream she had had the night before. Strange to say, it coincided exactly with what Miss Martin had actually seen.'

MR. AND MRS. WALLIS. A welcome letter from Mr. E. W. Wallis informs us that he and Mrs. Wallis have safely returned from the United States, and that they landed at Liverpool, on Monday morning last, 'well and happy.'

MISS FREER AND MRS. PIPER.

I find in 'LIGHT' of December 17th, 1898, the report of a meeting at the Sesame Club, where much of the discussion seems to have been concerned with the trance phenomena manifested through Mrs. Piper. Some of the views expressed deal with argumentative points to which I shall give detailed consideration later in the 'Proceedings' of the Society for Psychical Research; but I beg your kind permission to say a few words in 'LIGHT' upon some singular misrepresentations as to matters of fact exhibited by Miss Freer.

Referring to Mrs. Piper, Miss Freer apparently states that the experiments with Mrs. Piper cause Mrs. Piper 'pain and suffering,' and that they involve 'gross brutality,' and she further alleges that 'she had had Mrs. Piper at her feet in tears, begging to be saved from the kind of life she was leading.' I felt certain that no such incident as this described by Miss Freer ever occurred, and wondered what could have formed the foundation for Miss Freer's remark. I questioned Mrs. Piper upon the subject. Mrs. Piper has entertained the most kindly feelings towards Miss Freer, and remembers her gratefully, but she was indignant at Miss Freer's remarks as reported in 'LIGHT.' She recollects speaking with Miss Freer of her work, and, in answer to Miss Freer's inquiry concerning her willingness to submit to investigations by the Society, replied that she felt it was a severe strain upon her (not because of any physical suffering entailed but) because of the suspicion as to her honesty that was so manifest in many persons, and because she was so perplexed and puzzled herself about the meaning of her own powers. This conversation, Mrs. Piper states, occurred in Cambridge, during a walk through the College grounds, when they were accompanied by Mr. Myers and a friend (Mrs. Piper thinks it was Professor Richet), who, at the moment, were walking on in front. As for what Miss Freer says about her taking Mrs. Piper 'for drives in the park,' Mrs. Piper assures me that the only occasion that she remembers going for a drive with Miss Freer, or, indeed, being with Miss Freer at all alone, was on a shopping excursion in London. She was, she tells me, just after this expressly asked by Dr. A. T. Myers to avoid making excursions with Miss Freer, lest it should be alleged that Miss Freer was conspiring with her and supplying information to her concerning sitters. Dr. Walter Leaf, she thinks, was present on this occasion, and also made a similar suggestion. Mrs. Piper was, therefore, very little alone with Miss Freer, and I think that the conversation described to me by Mrs. Piper as having occurred in Cambridge probably served as the starting point for Miss Freer's misrepresentations, which doubtless arose from a misapprehension on her part as to the real cause of Mrs. Piper's trouble. This lay, not in the trances themselves, but in the feeling that she was constantly being brought into relation with persons who doubted her honesty, and who were testing her in various ways, accompanied by the feeling of her own helplessness in offering any explanation of her strange experiences. She has frequently to myself, in past years, mentioned her distress on these points, but she nevertheless willingly endured it, and was even anxious for any experiments to be made that might lead to a true appreciation of the significance of her trance phenomena. With this end in view, she desired me as far back as the year 1888, to have as many free sittings as I wished, and to test her in any way that I chose, without any restriction whatever. Miss Freer's remark about 'gross brutality' is, to anyone who knows the actual circumstances of Mrs. Piper's sittings, humorously absurd. Mrs. Piper herself writes to me under date of January 5th, 1899: 'I have often told you that I have never suffered any physical pain in connection with my trances, which is true. I am never conscious of pain or suffering of any sort, and I have never expressed to anyone that I did. My only apprehension has been in regard to the unknown condition. I may add that, although I am never robust, I have, during the past two years, experienced better health than before since I was thirteen years old.' This leads me to repeat that the convulsive movements, which usually in past years marked Mrs. Piper's going into and coming out of trance, ceased two years ago. Miss Freer was evidently ignorant of this fact when she made her remarks. I did, however, draw special attention to it

at meetings of the Society for Psychical Research during my recent stay in England, and my statements on the point appeared in both the 'Journal' and the 'Proceedings' of our Society. (See 'Journal' of Society for Psychical Research, January, 1898, p. 167; also 'Proceedings' of Society for Psychical Research, Part XXXIII., p. 409.) I trust that the statements which I am writing now may meet the eye of Miss Freer.

But although the particular objection urged by Miss Freer is two years out of date, it seems to me worth while to consider briefly how much validity it would have had if urged at a time when Miss Freer herself had sittings with Mrs. Piper. Miss Freer apparently holds that it was *wrong*—according to some ethical standard which she has not explicitly defined—for Mrs. Piper to go into trance under conditions involving certain convulsive movements. I infer that it was not the mere trance that Miss Freer complained of, but the convulsive movements. Similarly she holds it was wrong for all persons who contributed towards Mrs. Piper's going into trance under such circumstances. Now these convulsive movements were never accompanied by any pain to the waking Mrs. Piper, and I know of no moral law which says: 'Thou shalt not undergo any convulsive movements'; or which says 'Thou shalt not go into trance'; neither do I know a moral law which says 'Thou shalt not suffer pain.' But I do acknowledge a moral law which not merely permits, but commands me to suffer in all kinds of ways for the benefit of others. Indeed if I myself could, by going into trances, even if they were ushered in by most intensely painful convulsions contribute as Mrs. Piper has done towards the scientific solution of what I have regarded for many years as the most important problem now before the human race, I should consider it as not merely permissible for me, to go into such trances, but as a duty to which I was absolutely bound by my desire to serve humanity. I do not speak now of the ineffable consolation which so many persons have received through Mrs. Piper's trance, but of what Miss Freer calls 'scientific discovery,' and that independently of what conclusions might follow. Even on Miss Freer's own view as to the significance of Mrs. Piper's phenomena—which seems to be that of telepathy from the living—I fancy that readers of the various reports on Mrs. Piper will scarcely agree with her in thinking that the results were not at all 'in proportion to the suffering caused'—even on Miss Freer's view of what that suffering was, which is erroneous. But when, on my own present view of Mrs. Piper's work, I remember that Mrs. Piper has never had any physical suffering in going into her trances; that even the convulsive movements, of which Miss Freer would make so much, ceased two years ago; that such trials as she did have in connection with her trances were due to the flouts of scepticism, and the baffling mystery of her own phenomena; and when, on the other hand, I think of the inestimable happiness that she has been the means of giving to hundreds of persons still embodied (not to speak of the 'departed'), and of the assistance that she has rendered to psychical research in general, and to the problem of man's survival of death in particular, Miss Freer's assertion that the suffering outweighs the results transcends 'all description.'

One remark of Miss Freer's might possibly be more intelligible if I had a verbatim report of her speech before me. It seems to be related to the question which I have already touched upon, the moral standard which she desires to set up for Mrs. Piper and the Society for Psychical Research. She says, as reported: 'Another question in regard to these matters was, Had they a right to force what was not granted to them in the order of nature?' I am not sure that I recognise Miss Freer's claim to know what 'the order of nature' is, or to know what is 'not granted' in that order, &c., &c. She may mean that it is granted in the order of nature to Miss Freer to write automatically and see visions, but not to Mrs. Piper to go into trances. In any case the claim to know the order of nature already and what is or is not granted to us in it, whether put forward by the professed scientist or theologian or Miss Freer or any other, is not one that calls for any more comment here.

RICHARD HODGSON.

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CLAIRVOYANCE AND PSYCHOMETRY.

ADDRESS BY MISS ROWAN VINCENT.

On Friday evening, the 27th ult., MISS ROWAN VINCENT addressed a large audience of members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance in the Regent Saloon of the St. James's Hall. The subject was 'Clairvoyance and Psychometry,' and was illustrated by experiments in both the psychical faculties treated of, Miss Rowan Vincent giving psychometrical delineations, and Mr. A. Peters following with clairvoyance.

The PRESIDENT (MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS) having opened the proceedings with a few introductory remarks,

MISS VINCENT commenced her discourse by referring to the admonition of St. Paul, 'Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.' It was a melancholy fact that mankind to-day were almost as ignorant of the meaning of spiritual gifts as they were in the ages of the past. People talked of the gift of music or the gift of painting, and many other gifts of genius, but they seemed to think that the gift of spiritual sight or hearing might not be quite as natural and worthy of exercise. It was true that there were many difficulties in the way of developing spiritual gifts. To many persons they might prove an inconvenient acquisition, if their friends were unacquainted with the subject. Looking back to the time of our earlier ancestors, it was difficult to realise how great had been the advance resulting in the civilised conditions of to-day. But our savage ancestors were, nevertheless, to all appearance, no farther removed from our present development than we were removed from an adequate understanding of the conditions of the spiritual world that was so close to us and yet so little comprehended. But as the spiritual nature of man expanded, and the need for its expression arose, the conditions were created whereby that need could be gratified. When we earnestly and sincerely desired these spiritual gifts they would be ours.

Science explained the chemistry of the human body; but the subtler senses that lay behind those of the body Science had regarded as outside the realm of natural law. Presently they would have scientists taking an interest in clairvoyance and psychometry, and having discovered the truth of them, they would probably christen these faculties with new names and gravely present them to the world as the discovery of some learned professor or other. (Laughter.)

Dealing with clairvoyance, Miss Vincent referred first to its naturalness. It was as natural for a man or woman to exercise clairvoyance as to employ the ordinary powers of vision. There were several kinds of clairvoyance. There was the kind which saw clearly the vision before it, just as the normal sight beheld the objects of everyday life. Then there was a type of clairvoyance which beheld visions in a dream-like fashion, sometimes scarcely able to realise that it was clairvoyance. Again, there was the clairvoyance that seemed only mentally to apprehend the picture or vision. Some clairvoyants could see into closed boxes or sealed packets, others could see across oceans and continents. These kinds, however, belonged more to the mesmeric condition, and were not often found in the normal clairvoyant. The clairvoyance that found favour with most people, however, was that which described the forms, features, and characters of those who had gone from our midst. In such cases the seer was enabled to draw back the veil that hid one world from the other; and his clairvoyance became a sacred gift, and as such should be esteemed by both the giver and the recipient.

Accompanying clairvoyance occasionally was the faculty known as clairaudience. Some clairaudient persons could distinctly hear the voices of spirits, others heard in a more interior fashion. It was, of course, necessary to distinguish carefully between the fanciful and the real in these matters; there were voices created simply by the imagination as well as the actual voices heard by the clairaudient. She (the speaker) possessed this faculty of clairaudience; she heard voices and sometimes got very interesting information from them. Another faculty frequently associated with clairvoyance was psychometry—the science of touch. It was difficult to explain exactly what psychometry was, but it seemed that we were not only able to impress each

other, but also to impress inanimate objects. We stamped our impress upon everything we handled, the garments we wore, and the place in which we lived. A fragment from a ruined city might reveal to the psychometrist the character and condition of the city when in its prime. From a piece of stone might be obtained impressions not only of the original building of which it formed a part, but of the people who had dwelt in the edifice, and of the tragedies and comedies which might have taken place within it. In the case of small objects—letters or trinkets, for instance—which had been handled or worn by several persons, the magnetic condition which was strongest would be the dominant influence, overpowering the rest. To illustrate this fact, Miss Vincent stated that on one occasion a letter was handed to her for delineation. She was unable, however, to get into *rapport* with the conditions of the writer of the letter, but nevertheless she correctly described the personality and surroundings of the writer of a letter which had been in the pocket of the gentleman who gave her the first letter to psychometrize. The two letters had been in contact with each other, and the dominant magnetism of the one had been transferred to the other.

This was one of the difficulties of psychometry. A person handed an object to a friend to be delineated by a psychometrist, with the result that the influence of the friend was also impressed upon the article, creating a mixed influence, or even, as had been shown, quite supplanting the first influence. Another difficulty was where the psychometrist knew the particular person who offered an article for delineation. In such a case there was the risk of the description being merely a question of telepathy. Pieces of stone, metal, cloth, trinkets, letters—all these things brought their history with them, and if they developed this gift of psychometry, as she hoped it would be developed in the future, there was no doubt that humanity would commence to read the history of the world from a very different standpoint. They would be able in future to read history from Nature's own pages instead of from the pages of biased historians. She had seen many instances of geological description. From a piece of limestone or a fragment of the Laurentian rock very remarkable psychometric revelations had been drawn. She had found the Laurentian rock very favourable to experiments of this kind, and it had furnished remarkable pictures of prehistoric periods.

A simple way for an inquirer to see whether he or she possessed psychometric power, was to seize the opportunity when the morning's letters were delivered, and placing them in such a way that the handwriting on the face of the envelopes was not visible, endeavour to discover who were the senders. To establish a psychometrical contact the hand should be placed on the writing. The experimenter should then notice the impression that came into his mind. If he found that his impressions were verified when he came to examine the letters, there was a fair presumption of the existence of psychometric power. In urging upon all present the interest and importance of such experiments, Miss Vincent said that in a movement like that of Spiritualism it was important that they should develop as many of their psychic powers as possible, and psychometry was a very neglected gift. Describing her own sensations when psychometrizing an object, Miss Vincent said that she did not see, but only seemed to 'sense' and know the things she described. It was 'as if one threw one's consciousness into the centre of the article and looked out from it upon the things around.'

In the course of her concluding remarks Miss Vincent said: 'We are told that the gifts of clairvoyance and psychometry—to say nothing of other spiritual gifts—are not good and righteous powers, but I contend that they are born within us as naturally as any other gift or talent we may possess, and if they are used righteously, then certainly they are righteous powers. Within every nature there is the germ of a great future. It does not exist in the spiritual world outside us so much as in the spiritual realm within us. . . . Within us lies all we can desire. There is the road to the highest. There are the heights, if we choose to climb them; there is the shrine of the Perfect One, but only the pure in heart can enter therein.' (Applause.)

Miss VINCENT then gave some twelve psychometrical

readings of various articles handed up by members of the audience. The results were generally successful, although the psychometrist was handicapped by the fact that in at least two instances the articles submitted were hardly suitable for the purpose. In one case it was a glove, an article peculiarly liable to become impregnated with the magnetic conditions of others than the wearer; in another instance the article had been 'picked up' and the finder was of course unable to verify all the associations recorded by the psychometrisation. It is no disparagement to Miss Vincent's powers to remark that the experiments suggested the advisability in future of insisting, as far as possible, on the articles submitted for psychometrisation being those which have always been in the possession of the owners, and of a kind unlikely to receive 'impressions' from other persons.

MR. A. PETERS then gave nine clairvoyant descriptions, of which four were fully identified and three partly so. Although the experiments in each case were fairly successful, it is just to the mediums to say that the meeting on this occasion took place under somewhat unfavourable conditions, the Regent Saloon, in which it was held, being, for various reasons, less suitable for a meeting of this kind than the French Drawing Room, in which the assemblies usually take place, but which on this occasion was not available. Mr. Peters, moreover, explains that on this occasion he suffered from an unaccountable nervousness.

The proceedings closed with a vote of thanks to Miss Vincent and Mr. Peters.

ELECTRO-DYNAMISME VITAL.*

By DR. DURAND DE GROS.

The primary force in the universe is electro-motor. Its nature is identical with the motor principle of life. It is spirit, *i.e.*, sensation, intelligence and emotion united in a trinity, and omnipresent in an infinite number of atoms; monads or souls, etheric or material. It is the cause of all inductive action at a distance, gravitation, &c., of which ether is the vehicle; ether being itself an essential form of electricity.

It exists in inorganic and organic form. In the latter form it constitutes the force acting in the nerves of living beings, as which it is the agent of all vital operations, in animals and in man.

The nervous system is the generator, reservoir, and distributor of vital electricity. Nervous action is not the action of the nerves themselves, but of the vital electricity of which they are the vessels. They may therefore be said to be columns of electricity.

The sensorium is only accessible to this agent, which, circulating in the nerves, is the immediate agent of the soul. The influence of the external world on the functions of sensation consists in the excitations it imparts to the nervous electricity in the conductors devoted to the service of those functions. The impressions so occasioned are transmitted by it till they strike against the centres (resonators?) of sensation. The intensity of a sensation is proportionate to the number of similar and successive impressions (vibrations) determining the sensation.

Conversely the faculties of the soul are transmitted to their respective functional organs by means of the neuric electricity circulating in the special conductors devoted to their service.

Through the cerebro-spinal system this energy sustains all the functions of sense relations, being itself the sole exciting agent of sensation. Flowing through the sensory nerves, it brings impressions or impulses (messages) to the various cerebral centres pertaining to distinct soul faculties, thereby generating thoughts.

On the other hand, all the materials taken from the external world are selected, worked up, modified and arranged by the vital-electricity generated in the ganglions of the vegetative system, by means of its positive and negative properties. It takes up organic molecules and fixes them in the tissues, as atoms of gold or silver are attracted and fixed in electro-plating.

The action of mind on body and of body on mind occurs by the reaction of the vital electricity belonging to these

* Alcan. Paris.

two systems, very fine ramifications of which, leading to and from all the organs of the body, are placed in close juxtaposition. The active fibres of the cerebro-spinal system react on the adjacent negative fibres of the vegetative system, and conversely the active fibres of the vegetative system react on the negative fibres of the cerebro-spinal system.* In this way the mind is swayed by the influence of the physical organs of its body, while being itself the seat of the faculties that govern the functioning of those organs.

It is this electro-vital force which causes the contraction of muscles, when propelled by will, and also the movement of organs in the vegetative system. That it can be transmitted by will, and that it is electric in character, is illustrated in the torpedo fish, which emits electrical discharges from its storage condensers at will. The generator in this fish may be compared to a galvanic battery, yet the electricity is drawn from the nervous system of the fish, and the conductors are nerves.†

The will may therefore be said to possess an electro-motor force, and the nerves are the conductors of this force emitted by will.

That this electro-vital force is also generated by the reflex spinal centres and ganglions has been proved by experiments with animals whose brains were removed or spinal cord severed. Flourens kept a hen whose brain had been removed, alive for a month. Not only its vegetative organs functioned, but its reflex centres did the work of making it run, every time an impulsion was communicated to it. (This is an effective illustration of poly-psychism.)

The identity of the nervous energy with electricity is shown by the fact that when a nerve is stimulated by a galvanic current, its function is provoked into activity whether that function be sensor, motor, or vegetative, and without the slightest alteration being manifested in the nature of the function. By stimulating certain nerves of the ganglionic system in this manner, the secretions which are the special product of that nerve become stimulated, without any change occurring in their quality. If the visual, auditive, olfactory, gustative, or tactile nerves are stimulated successively in this way, sensations of light, sound, smell, taste, touch are successively produced.

The reflex centres and vegetative systems, with their sub-souls and sub-consciousness, are relatively passive to the action of the cerebro-spinal system. Again, every individual sub-brain has its own active and passive fibres, or diverging and converging, sensor and motor conductors. The active state is that in which the centrifugal currents predominate over the centripetal; while the passive state consists in the inversion of this relation. People in whom the receptive, inflowing currents predominate permanently over the active outflowing currents, are temperamentally passive. People of strong positive will and domineering character are those in whom the outflowing currents are stronger than those belonging to their sensitive system.

But the passive state may be self-induced (hypotaxie), as already pointed out. The diffusion of the active radiation then becomes retarded, and passivity supervenes, 'delivering the soul and body to the domination of the mental impression.'

Q.V.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MRS. BATHE. W. (Ilfracombe), H. A. D., PROF. TIMSON, 'A TRUTHSEEKER,' &c.—We regret the impossibility of finding room for your communications in the present issue, but hope to give them next week.

'S. S.'—Have put the question to Mr. W., and posted you his reply.

THE LATE MRS. H. R. HAWES.—'The Woman's Signal' is responsible for the following statement:—'Quite late in her too brief life Mrs. Hawes became strongly addicted to occult and astrological studies, and she has left manuscript books full of the horoscopes which she was in the habit of drawing for various friends; most of which turned out to be strikingly accurate.'

* This influence is apparently similar to the induction exerted between two contiguous electric conductors.—Q.V.

† In the torpedo fish the nerves supplying the batteries come directly from the brain; in the African cat-fish, which gives a stronger shock, the nerves arise from a giant cell high up in the spinal cord. In the gymnotus the apparatus is supplied with more than two hundred spinal nerves. Its discharge is dangerous.—Q.V.

THE HIGHER POTENTIALITIES OF SPIRIT-INTERCOURSE.

BY PROFESSOR GIOVANNI HOFFMANN,
Editor of the 'Nova Lux,' Rome.

Written for the International Congress of Spiritualists, held in London, June 19-24, 1898.

(Continued from page 40.)

Divine Science is one and unique, and all other sciences are but relative to the One Science.

Thus, although in the human relative Science of Logic, the straight line is the one which passes from one point to another by the nearest course, yet in pure, Universal Logic this line is the curve, for otherwise the Universal Harmony of the Cosmos would be destroyed. Therefore is this curve followed by all heavenly bodies in their procession through the Heavens, and therefore the Psyche must likewise describe a curve when returning towards the emanating Centre. It is the spiral and not the straight line that is the road of Eternal Progress. And, again: If one quantity A, and another quantity A, form together a second quantity represented by two A's, yet in Manifested Nature and in mechanics it is not so; for one force A, together with another force A, corresponds to two A's, minus X; X here representing the Force of Inertia in the first factor A.

It is impossible either logically or philosophically to assert that A plus A are always equal to two A's; for this would presuppose the existence of two or more identical manifestations of force; which would in itself be entirely contrary to that Law of Variety in species which is impressed on the Cosmos.

All is Change, all is relative in Manifestation, but the Psyche alone exists immutable, eternal and absolute, like the Divine Pleroma of whom It is the Absolute Emanation, even as the Divine Pleroma is the Absolute which emanates.

The Psyche, reflecting the Light, becomes Itself Light and displays the Divine Glory, One with the Father.

Thus the Psyche may be considered as a Spiritual Sun, and those who have conquered the Power of Illumination may be regarded as Suns to the rest of Mankind, even as it is written in Scripture by St. John the Divine: 'And his countenance was as the Sun shineth in his strength' (Rev. i. 16); while St. Paul saith: 'But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord' (2 Cor. iii. 18).

And the mission of these great Souls is as a mission of a material Sun towards Physical nature, and the correspondence between these two, the symbol and the reality, is perfect—thus is the story of the Psyche written in the Heavens.

The phases of the Life or Soul centres are exhibited in the life of the vitalising centre of our Solar system.

Twelve are the cycles of the physical Zodiac.

Twelve are the gates of the Holy City.

Twelve are the stars that shine around the head of the Immaculate Mary, who here typifies the Immaculate Soul—Bride and Mother of Christ.

The Heavens are therefore the historians, both of the Psyche and of the Sun; and the Zodiac contains at once the most truthful and the most splendid chronicle of the Psyche-Sun.

The Psyche-Sun who would struggle and conquer all power and gain supreme Immortality, that is to say, she who would find Christ and become one with the Father, must first and in mystic sense, be born of an immaculate Virgin, daughter of the House of David, Queen of herself; she must be baptised by water and by fire, regenerate through the Union of Intellect and Intuition, tempted in the Desert of Life, crucified and wounded in the five extreme parts of her personality, or the five material senses, and in her burial have discovered the solution of the Riddle of the Sphinx.

Psyche must have completed the twelve labours of Hercules and have passed the twelve gates of the Holy City, and thus, become regenerate and powerful, the soul is evolved into a Sun, and is now a centre of strength and life for the renovation of Humanity.

Each solar system shineth in space as magnificent Psyches adorned with all possible power; and as each Sun is the ruling and regulating centre of Life and Strength for all the stars of its system, so doth the Psyche rule and regulate such elements as form an integral part of its individuality.

In the Microcosm and in the Macrocosm is shown the quaternary principle, which is again divided in triple manifestation.

Sun, Planet, Comet, Satellite.

Psyche, Soul, Fluid, Matter.

Seven are the elements of the Man-Psyche; seven are the principal planets which compose our solar system. The solar rays are divided into seven distinct colours, and the aura of the microcosm is composed of seven diversities of substance. Seven are the atmospheric strata of the earth, which in their turn correspond to the seven heavens, or circles sung by ancient poets, while also seven are the notes of the diatonic scale.

The correlations are infinite, but one Law governs all manifestation, from the Life of the Psyche to the rule of Cosmic evolution.

There is a Psychic Ego, even as there is a Cosmic Ego—the first representing in Universal economy the Active Principle, while the second is the Passive Principle. One the Subject, the other the Object.

A collection of Psychic Egos associated through harmonic affinity, will form a System of Psyche Egos.

A Constellation of Cosmic Egos will form a Solar System.

Four are the Elements which constitute these systems and triple is their manifestation.

The Psychic Ego and the Cosmic Ego are two living entities, endowed with faculties and powers.

They each possess a septenary constitution and an identical quaternary nature which is manifested on a triple plane.

Thus Pan is not dead, but lives in the life of His murderers, and the Zodiac contains His hidden and mystic history.

Virgo, Gemini, Libra speak to you of Psyche, of Atma, of Suns and Cosmic Powers. Sagittarius, Aries, Taurus tell you of the Soul, of the Intuition, and of the Intellect; they speak of Planets, and of the Centrifugal and Centripetal Forces.

Capricorn, Leo and Pisces represent the Astral Fluid, the Lingua-Sharira of Occultists, the Astral or Karma Rupa of Theosophists, while in material Nature they speak of Comets, of Electricity, and of Magnetism.

Scorpio, Cancer, Aquarius are the signs of Matter, of Form, and of Vital Fluid, of Satellites and of condensed and gaseous Matter.

All is Truth, all is Harmony, in Manifest and Immanent Nature. *Each group of stars is a Letter in the Eternal Bible*, while the teachings of the Vedas, of Rabbinic Theology, of Ancient Mystic, of Greek Philosopher, of Christian Bible, of Modern Science, form but the human commentary on this Divine Work.

DR. GIOVANNI HOFFMANN.

SUCCESSFUL WATER-FINDING.

Another striking water-finding success has to be credited to our local expert, Mr. Gataker. Last month he paid a visit to Scotland, and while there went to the mills and maltings at Haddington of Messrs. Montgomerie and Co., of Glasgow. As a consequence of his operations, Mr. Gataker predicted a small spring at 50ft., and an abundant supply at 100ft. to 150ft. Boring on the artesian principle was commenced, during the progress of which a small spring was struck at 66ft., and at 110ft. a supply of over thirty-five gallons per minute was obtained. This gives no less than a total of 50,400 gallons a day, and the water flows 13ft. above the level of the ground. On the Earl of Ilchester's estate, near Bridport, Mr. Gataker's assistant (Mr. Wills) has also been successful in finding water.—From 'The Bath Chronicle' of January 19th.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Mr. W. H. Terry, Austral Buildings, Collins-street, E.

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.

Mr. F. W. H. Myers and Mrs. d'Esperance.

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' of November 19th last the assistant secretary to the Society for Psychical Research quoted from a letter of Mr. Myers, which had appeared in the society's 'Journal,' to the effect that Mr. Myers had had three séances with Mrs. d'Esperance, or, to use his own words, 'sat with this medium.'

This statement I unhesitatingly assert to be utterly at variance with the facts, and I fully expected Mr. Myers to correct it; but instead of that he confirmed it, in his recent letter to 'LIGHT,' by his reference to October 16th, 17th and 18th, 1875, as though the quotation given by the assistant secretary from the 'Journal' was perfectly correct.

Though Mr. Myers alleges that he 'sat with this medium' on the above dates, the fact is that Mrs. d'Esperance never at any time held any séances for Mr. Myers which could, by any stretch of imagination, be called 'investigations.' Up to the time mentioned she had never held a séance for anyone outside of her own home. On October 16th, 1875, Mrs. d'Esperance was invited to meet a few friends at a luncheon party at an hotel in Grey-street, Newcastle. Mr. Myers was one of the guests. After lunch it was suggested that she should try for automatic writing. This and another slight attempt were failures, and were never regarded as more than mere attempts to satisfy curiosity, as they were entirely without proper arrangements and not in her own home, where all the writing had been done with a select circle.

Having satisfied myself from Mrs. d'Esperance's 'Journal' that Mr. Myers did not have any séance with her on the 16th, I will now refer to the two other dates.

On October 17th (next day) a séance given by Miss Wood to Mr. Myers appears to have been mistaken by him in some way as a séance by Mrs. d'Esperance. How he could make such a blunder I do not even attempt to explain.

On the day following (October 18th) another séance was given, this time by Mrs. Petty and her son, at which Mr. Myers attended. On both the 17th and 18th Mrs. d'Esperance was invited by Mr. Aksakof to make one of the *circle of sitters*. As she accepted the invitations Mr. Myers could not fail to see her in the séance room, but how his imagination could confound her with either of the two mediums is impossible for me to explain.

Should Mrs. d'Esperance care to reply in any way to the absurd statements which have thus been made, I have every reason to believe that she will support me in every detail above mentioned.

With respect to Mr. Myers' statement about her impersonating a spirit, the truth is so fully recorded in 'Shadow Land,' by Mrs. d'Esperance herself, that it is quite unnecessary for me to do more than refer to the fact that the principal and most vicious witness against her had been a lunatic and had been in an asylum. He made outrageous statements respecting both the séance and Mrs. d'Esperance, which were contradicted and refuted by most of those who were present at the séance. These reliable witnesses are still living and willing to confirm their evidence.

The witness who was at the time considered by many to be 'queer,' shortly afterwards again became a lunatic, and died in an asylum. Although insane, his evidence is quite good enough for Mr. Myers, who has not failed to make use of it in letters to those whom he could prejudice against the medium. His statements are in the hands of Mrs. d'Esperance's friends, and it is probable that in regard to them Mr. Myers may yet hear something further.

Because Mrs. d'Esperance went to Sweden, Mr. Myers tries to mislead his readers into supposing that he had no opportunity of investigating her mediumship. The fact is that he never afterwards asked her to hold any séances, but she was kept informed of his attempts to injure her. He went to Sweden to extinguish a hitherto good clairvoyante medium, and succeeded. Eusapia Paladino also was always

an honest medium until Mr. Myers was honoured by her sitting with him and a conjurer who had apparently been engaged to explain her 'tricks.' Fortunately for this lady the evidence as to her dishonesty is no more reliable than that of the lunatic as to Mrs. d'Esperance, and it is to be hoped that all Spiritualists will stand up in defence of mediums when thus unfairly attacked. If all Mr. Myers' reports are of the same value as that respecting the three sésances in 1875, we may safely assume that they are of no worth whatever.

The assertions as to the 'Senior Wrangler's' silly conclusions that Mrs. d'Esperance had committed to memory a small library of old text books so that she during a couple of years could answer three to four thousand questions on scientific subjects, is so utterly childish that I feel diffident about even saying a word more on the subject, but, if need be, I shall some day give full details of the investigation, as I have access to all the manuscripts left by the late Mr. Barkas.

Gothenburg, Sweden.

MATTHEWS FIDLER.

'The Mercenary Side.'

SIR,—As one of the paid mediums, I was interested in reading the letter signed 'Anglo-Irish,' and was greatly struck by the generous offer in the latter part. To those who have knowledge and experience of mediumship, this letter at once shows the extreme ignorance of its writer regarding mediums, who as a class are the most charitable and imposed upon of all workers. To the inexperienced inquirer the matter may appear quite natural, owing to the prevalent idea that a medium has merely to turn on a sort of mental tap for a stream of rich wine to flow by which the inquirer may refresh himself. But surely, both the initiate and the neophyte must feel, more or less, the truly mercenary spirit of 'Anglo-Irish' when he offers his half-crown to a charity if anyone will read his spiritual surroundings. I could tell him, 'free, gratis, and for nothing,' but am afraid I might hurt his feelings by what I should say.

As I have said, I am a paid medium, and my experience as such extends over many years, and these years have convinced me that they who really value mediums possessed of spiritual gifts are more than ready to pay adequately for the benefits they know they receive. I will make a point or two clear. My fee is a guinea (not half a crown). I fix this, not the person who seeks me, as I am the best judge of what my mediumship costs me. The other day I received a letter containing hair, a photograph for diagnosis, and twelve questions. It took me four hours of exhausting labour to answer properly. The client had not inquired my fee, but in reply to my letter thanked me enthusiastically, and begged to enclose five shillings, which I promptly returned, thereby presenting the sender with the benefits my gifts had conferred. One week this year I received thirteen letters (three in one day) from a lady, each requiring an answer from a spirit. In return I got an invitation to lunch! These are specimens of persons who do not think it *right* to pay fees to mediums, and who appear to think that one possessed of spiritual gifts is thus endowed merely to amuse and work for such as 'Anglo-Irish' appears to be. I am quite independent of fees; all the same, mine (when I ask one) is a guinea, and there are some persons for whom I would not exercise my gifts even if they *offered* to pay me a thousand guineas. 'Anglo-Irish' is one of these. If a thing is worth having, it has its price, and those persons who know even a little of the laws governing mediumship are satisfied that, even though a Spiritualist, the psychic must be permitted the necessities of life.

B. RUSSELL-DAVIES.

'Oaklands,' Chirk, Ruabon.

SIR,—You appear to have mistaken, or mis-interpreted, the spirit of my letter, appearing in your current issue.

When I said that it is the mercenary side to Spiritualism that repels would-be investigators, I was speaking in a general way.

It seems to me that when money-getting is the object of a person dealing in Spiritualism, or of a person engaged in any religious undertaking, that person necessarily degrades either himself (or herself), or his undertaking. When we see

a man who works for his living—either by his brains or by his muscles—voluntarily giving his services to any 'ism' or 'ology,' we are bound to feel that *that* man, or his particular 'ism,' is *genuine*. We know that, although he may be a fanatic, at any rate he is an *honest* fanatic. But when we find so much of £ s. d. mixed up with this creed or that 'ism,' we instinctively feel that there is something rotten somewhere, and I think this instinct ought not to be suppressed.

I may be wrong, but that is my view of the matter.

ANGLO-IRISH.

Dr. Berridge's Contradictions.

SIR,—In Dr. Berridge's article on 'Theosophical Contradictions,' he apparently fails to realise that the monads progressing through the animal kingdom are divisible into two classes: first, the few higher animals, on the verge of individuality; and, second, the great mass of animals which are very far from this stage. The post-mortem careers of the two, of course, differ, and a consideration of this fact will dispose of the apparent contradictions in the passages he quotes.

Again, he writes: 'If an animal only becomes individualised by intimate contact with the human race, how are the lower forms of animal life ever to advance?' I am not aware that either of the writers referred to states that contact with the human race is the *only* way by which animals advance. On the contrary, this is merely *one way* in which the attainment of individuality by a few of the higher animals is hastened. The general evolution of the monad through the animal kingdom is in no way dependent upon man, and could proceed if there were no human beings on the planet. Special conditions applicable to the few must not be taken as if they were the only conditions governing the whole.

It seems evident that Dr. Berridge would like to advance to the rank of a cardinal article of faith the idea that Madame Blavatsky was verbally inspired by the Masters in everything she wrote and published. No such position is taken up by her pupils with regard to her. Although she was taught by those wiser than herself, there is plenty of room for errors of judgment and opinion on her part in her books and writings.

H. S. GREEN.

51, High-street, Christchurch.

SOCIETY WORK.

33, GROVE-LANE, S.E.—In place of our usual service, we celebrate our anniversary on February 5th, at the Turkish Baths, Camberwell Green, at 6.45 p.m. Mrs. V. Bliss and Mrs. Holgate.—A.L.C.

4, MERRINGTON-ROAD, ST. OSWALD'S-ROAD, WEST BROMPTON.—On Sunday morning last, we had another of Miss Porter's inspirational addresses, which was followed by excellent psychometry by Miss Findlay, every description being fully recognised, even to names. Next Sunday evening, at 7 p.m., Miss F. Porter.—W.S.S.

BRISTOL, 24, UPPER MAUDLIN-STREET.—On Thursday 26th ult., and Sunday last, good meetings were held. We were favoured with a visit from a London medium. All friends are requested to meet us at Hamilton's Rooms, 40, Park-street, on Monday and Tuesday next, to welcome Mr. Will Phillips, of Nottingham.—W.W.

ISLINGTON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL, UPPER-STREET, ISLINGTON.—On Sunday last Mr. Catto gave a reading on 'Happiness,' and Mr. Brenchley gave an address on 'The New Catechism.' Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. Brenchley; subject, 'Spiritualism at Hastings, and its Outcome.' Thursday, at 8 p.m., circle for members only; medium, Mrs. Brenchley.—C. D. CATTO.

HENLEY HALL, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—On Sunday last our speakers were Mr. Boddington and Mr. Adams, Mrs. Boddington (president) occupying the chair. All spoke most eloquently, advocating total abstinence. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. Kinsman, president of the Hackney Society, will speak. Thursday, at 8 p.m., developing class. Saturday, at 8 p.m., friends' social evening.—L. P.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—Our platform was occupied on Sunday last by Mr. Marsh, who related some of his early experiences of Spiritualism. Mr. Emms, who witnessed many of the phenomena referred to by Mr. Marsh, also gave his testimony and experience. Next Sunday, the conference will meet at Manor Rooms, at 3 p.m. Tea at 5 p.m.; 6d. each. Usual meeting at 6.45 p.m. Wednesday, at 8 p.m., members' circle, 233, High-road, Clapton.—O. HUDSON.