

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER DOTHS MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

In consequence of the recurrence of Good Friday, next week's 'Light' will—in order to meet the business requirements of the Newsagents—be sent to press on Tuesday, so that any communication intended for that issue must reach us by Monday morning.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

'The Harbinger of Light' gives a summary of an article in 'Il Vessillo Spiritista,' describing some deeply suggestive experiences of the writer, Colonel Giulio Malvolti. Four controls write through his hand in the following way:—

Yielding his hand to their control, while he himself engaged in conversation with his friends at the table, several pages were written. One spirit would fill the first line with the commencement of a communication; a second would begin another on the second, a third on the third, and a fourth on the fourth. Then the first would continue on the fifth line, and so on to the end. Read consecutively, the manuscript was of course quite incoherent; but when the regularly recurring lines of each writer were perused, they were found to be beautiful messages. One of them was in Latin, another in French, a third in Italian, and a fourth in the latter language upside down; that is to say, it was written from right to left; and the communication commenced with the last and finished with the first!

The story seems to be very well endorsed by reliable witnesses.

A good deal of animated discussion concerning Spiritualism is going on in New York, in consequence of certain utterances by such prominent men as Dr. Heber Newton, Dr. Lyman Abbott, and Dr. Minot Savage. Dr. Abbott, at his last Prayer Meeting, as Pastor of the famous Plymouth Church, avowed his belief in the nearness of spirit friends. As is usual at early stages, he repudiated Spiritualism, but Dr. Hillis, his successor, publicly states that Dr. Abbott is deeply impressed with the work of The Psychical Research Society:—a blessed refuge! Dr. Heber Newton, a clergyman of the Episcopal Church and a strong leader of liberal religious thought in New York, says:—

I agree substantially with what Dr. Abbott has said, but I am glad that I can go beyond him in one respect. I have as poor an opinion as he has of the mass of spiritualistic 'experiences' and séances. Nevertheless, I do not share his contemptuous feeling toward the whole movement. It holds a residuum of fact that is well worth the attention of the scientific man and the philanthropist, and is highly important to religious faith.

If we can get hold of facts concerning man's nature here which make existence after death a scientific demonstration, the value of such a demonstration is beyond words. That is the argument of Mr. Hudson's new book on a new argument for immortality. Respecting the spiritualistic hypothesis he believes that Spiritualism, in a charlatan manner, has taken hold of facts coming from man's psychic power which make the belief in a continued existence after death no longer unreasonable. The whole result of the Psychical Research

Society seems to be a demonstration of telepathy—that is, of the power of communication apart from physical media. That involves a conception of man's nature that makes him superior to death, because he is superior to mere physical organisation.

More than that, many careful philosophers and scientific investigators, after long study of the subject, have become convinced of eternity through the residuum of fact that lies beyond the frauds of Spiritualism. This is the case with Mr. Myers, in England, and Dr. Hodgson, in this country, both of whom have plainly stated the conclusions to which they have been led.

In my study, a few days ago, a leading college professor, who had fancied himself a materialist, announced to me a similar conclusion as the result of such study. My friend, Professor Newbold, of the University of Pennsylvania, has said through the Psychical Research Society:—'Scientific men cannot say much longer that there is no future life. I have said it, but I shall say it no longer. I know now there is evidence of a future life, for I have seen it.'

This is a decidedly new position for the scientific man, and is very significant. If Spiritualism offers even a chance to demonstrate existence after death it deserves not contempt, but close scientific investigation.

We do not much mind the conventional hits at Spiritualism in such statements. As these gentlemen go on, they will find that we hate fraud as much as they do: and have done more to stop it than they.

'The Banner of Light' publishes prominently a remarkable statement, strongly attested, concerning the Talmage sermon to which we lately referred. The editor, on his own responsibility, says that this sermon was received through the Ouija board two years ago. 'Excepting the introduction, certain other embellishments, and an orthodox colouring given by the brain through which it passed, the sermon is identical with the communication received on the Ouija board two years previous by our friend. Whole paragraphs are the same, without the variation of a word. From whence came the inspiration?' It is difficult to say. If Talmage somehow got hold of a copy of the sermon (it had been type-written), he could, of course, have stolen it and preached it as his own; but that is immensely improbable. Is Talmage also a medium, after all?

'The Banner of Light' also reports an address by Mr. R. F. Woodward before 'The School of Psychic Philosophy' at New York. The conclusion lifts the mission of Spiritualism to a plane worthy of its name:—

Now, as to the practical application of our work to the affairs of daily life. Let us strike at the root of this question. Let us start within and work outward. To begin with, then, I believe it to be a perfectly safe proposition to state that every ruined life in this world, every disrupted home, every case of decadence and fall among nations, had its initiative in spiritual degeneracy. I care not what your religious belief may be, or whether you have none at all. I challenge you to disprove this statement. Every one has his moral code, and the moral side of man is his mental, or what we call his spiritual, side. Search the records of insane asylums, our charitable and penal institutions, and the pages of history, and find therein the proof of this assertion. The curse of the world being spiritual degeneration, the remedy must be spiritual regeneration. This then is a part of your work, the spiritual regeneration of mankind. In it you have the co-operation of thousands and millions all over the world. The churches and all the great moral forces of the universe are working toward the same end as yourselves. But I verily believe that

you are in the vanguard of truth, and if this be so, you must inevitably occupy a leading place in human progress in future years. It is a glorious task you have set before you. The ties of family affection, the cries of suffering humanity, and the voice of patriotism all call you to it. Oh! will you not answer with all your strength, with all your love and with all your faith?

'The Progressive Thinker,' in denouncing pretended mediums, who are mere showmen, strongly recommends Spiritualists and inquirers to turn their attention more to private home circles. It says:—

We honour and esteem for their works' sake the true and genuine mediums, and realise the great benefit and help they have been in establishing our cause, and would do nothing detrimental to their interests, their success, and their just reward spiritually and materially. The work of the trickster, it must be evident to all, must and does inevitably tend to bring discredit to Spiritualism, doubt and disbelief in all mediumship, of whatever phase; and invincible, stubborn rejection of all cited proofs of spirit manifestation; and thus tends to injure the genuine medium.

Not so the work and result of the family circle; for genuine spirit manifestations therein give confidence and credit to genuine mediumship everywhere. Hence the urgency of our appeal for family circles does in no degree or manner indicate antagonism to genuine mediums or public mediumship.

Genuine mediums will realise no loss in the downfall of fraud and treachery. The worst enemies of true mediums are the brazen unscrupulous tricksters who carry on their rascally operations under the name of 'mediums.'

Our object in this matter is, primarily, to advance the cause of Spiritualism by the use of the most effectual, easy and advantageous methods, and secondarily, to counteract and eliminate the frauds palmed off under pretensions of mediumship. Neither of these objects, thus obtained, will or can injure true and genuine mediums, but rather will benefit them in the long run.

So again we say, establish family and private circles.

We have received several reports of lectures on Spiritualism, in different parts of the country, all indicating increased activity and interest. One, given at Taunton, by Mr. Will Phillips, organising secretary of the National Federation of Spiritualists, is an excellent one of its kind, but the interest centres in the questions asked and the answers given. We think attention should be specially given to that method of getting and giving information.

'The Lyceum Banner' for March contains a portrait and brief autobiography of Mr. Wm. Mason, a genuine bit of real life. The autobiography is followed by 'Mr. Mason's idea of conducting a Lyceum,' an excellent guide to beginners, full of good sense and practical wisdom.

Mr. George Redway has just published a work of very great value both on account of the subject itself and because of its historical relations. We allude to a collection of James Braid's writings on the subject of 'Hypnotism' or 'Neurypnology,' 'the rationale of nervous sleep.' The book also contains an important Biographical Introduction, the Author's Preface and Introduction, a Bibliography of Braid's writings, and a useful Index. The whole is edited by Mr. Arthur Edward Waite. At the present moment the work is well-timed, and we are glad to see some sort of justice done to a memorable pioneer.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LIMITED.

A meeting of Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the French Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), at 7 for 7.30 p.m. on Friday, April 7th, when

MR. E. W. WALLIS (OF MANCHESTER)

Will give an Address on

'SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA—OBSERVATIONS AND DEDUCTIONS.'

Mr. Wallis, as our readers are aware, has recently spent six months in the United States, and will be able to impart some interesting information as to the condition of Spiritualism there, and to give some hints which may be of importance to the friends of the movement in this country.

SPIRITUALISM AND ITS GREAT REVELMENTS.

ADDRESS BY MR. JAMES ROBERTSON, OF GLASGOW, GIVEN IN THE CAVENDISH ROOMS, MORTIMER-STREET, LONDON, TO THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

Towards the close of last century, in 1799, a French soldier at Fort St. Julien, in Egypt, near the Rosetta mouth of the Nile, then in the occupation of France, came across a black granite stone, on which has hung much of interest to scholars and Egyptologists. On this stone were engravings in three different characters, which for long were a puzzle to all who tried to solve their mystery. The stone, called the Rosetta Stone, afterwards became the property of this nation, and is now to be found in the British Museum. The solution of the secret of these engraved characters threw a flood of light on the past history of that ancient nation, and laid bare her religious system which had been so long hid. For centuries the pictures on ancient monuments and on the papyrus which were being continually discovered, exercised the brain of many scholars who sought to read the riddle. Problems which had resisted a hundred keys were, however, to yield to the key which was given by this stone, for it was found to have engraved on its surface the edict of one of the Ptolemies, carved some two hundred years before the Christian Era, and this edict being given in Greek, Coptic, and hieroglyphs, afforded a clue which laid bare this ancient civilisation. A great French scholar, Champollion, who had devoted his life to the study of Egyptian antiquity, saw here the missing link, and by it succeeded in laying bare the Books of the Dead, the story of the ancient Trinity, and a large amount of information regarding this ancient civilisation, and the origin of religions which have dominated the world. The name of Champollion has ever been held in grateful remembrance for shedding valuable light on these points, and for extracting the secret of the long ago. It was a great discovery, though it only brought us into relation with the dead past.

Towards the close of the first half of the present century, in March, 1848, in an American village called Hydesville, there was brought to light a knowledge of transcendent interest connected with the living present. A door of communication was opened up, and a set of signals set in operation which brought us into contact with a world which had been obscured—hid from our gaze; a world in which had been centred very much of our affection, but which had become a cloudland to us. Our loved ones had gone from our sight, and the only reality left us was the memory of their presence. We could only hope that our treasures were not dissipated in the cold clay where we had laid their remains. We knew so little; our guiding-posts had fallen down; the way had been lost, and we had only stories, which gave us but fitful glimpses of the possibility of another life. When from this obscure corner the message sounded that an opening into the hitherto masked world had been made—made without the help of ecclesiasticisms or universities, made by simple-minded people, made so clear and plain that all might see alike—no Champollion was needed to read the riddle. A child had first penetrated the mist and brought forth the knowledge that dead people could signal messages from another sphere of being. Here was a discovery beside which the finding of the Rosetta Stone was trivial; a priceless revelation which affected the whole human race, and which, had it come with the authority of great names, would have caused thanksgivings to have resounded through the whole earth. Coming in obscure fashion, like the teachings of the fishermen of Galilee, it was laughed to scorn by those who prided themselves on their intelligence and mastery over all the secrets which Nature could reveal. But the living demonstration of a future life had been born in the modern manger, and a stream of light let down to earth which is sure to be prized more and more as the ages roll. We had been pointed to many keys in the past as capable of giving us glimpses of the beyond, but here was a master key which actually opened wide the gateway and showed us the faces of our departed, chasing away the unrest of a ceaseless search and the pain of never satisfied desire.

We Spiritualists who have been born into a new life by the recognition of these actual occurrences, are not surprised

that the world has not received the message gladly. Somehow we always expect, in spite of what the past should have taught us, that great events should be heralded in some marked way; that there should be sky-rockets and trumpet-sounding and general illumination. And yet none of the great forces which have come into our daily life and coloured the aspect of our being made much noise when first seen. Steam and electricity may be said to have been lowly born. James Watt and Benjamin Franklin were not quite crowned with laurels while here, nor did the world rapidly recognise how much would flow from the facts which they proclaimed. Still, we somehow expect, in spite of this, that great events which are to move our life should make some stir at their introduction. Carlyle points out that the introduction of the printing-press caused less commotion than the passing of a 'Parish Vestry Bill'; and we know in our own day that a good deal more noise has been made about Mrs. Langtry and the elephant, Jumbo, when it was shipped to America, than ever was made about the introduction of the Christian religion or the advent of Modern Spiritualism. Spiritualism asked for a hearing at a time when some of our great thinkers had almost blotted the providence of God and the immortality of the soul from the universe, as fictions belonging to a barbaric period, and thus the age which was transcendent in other discoveries could only look at this discovery with scorn and ridicule. 'Evidence of an after-life, capable of being proved in objective form, as we would demonstrate some chemical experiment! Pure nonsense! Look at your facts? Why it would be condescension on my part. All this kind of belief belongs to the babyhood of the world. Dead people come back again to earth and tell their story? Why the Church said dead people were waiting in their graves till the trumpet would sound, while we who have probed deep into the mystery of being say there can be no future life, only a persistence of matter and force; that all nature points to oblivion for man.' Such was the attitude of modern thinkers. The time was surely ripe for dissipating this form of thought when Spiritualism made its advent. The need was great for light and knowledge on this hitherto obscure question. Those who spoke with their lips the Gospel of Materialism felt in their hearts the need of something more consoling. Emotions could not be stilled, the heart's hunger was there; but the peace which can only be felt when we have assurance was wanting. There was a great want felt, and had the knowledge come in any other way than from a simple farmer's homestead it might have been welcomed. The Church had nothing real to offer which earnest, reasoning minds could accept as a solution of the problems of life; each sect had its street lamps and its shop-lights, pretending to guide men to its particular huckstery of salvation, and little hand-lights to take into corners where the salesmen and shopmen stood with their wares. But when people are starving for the bread of life they cannot feast on antiquities, and thus the best of people hung back from a revelation which could not be authenticated, which claimed to be magical, and which condemned reason and criticism. People naturally said, 'If in olden time, why not now?' All that was shown was only related to the past, wherein had been centred the standard of truth and the source of light. The last authentic word which fell from the lips of God had been spoken 2,000 years ago, it was said, and now the avenues of communication had been closed. We must accept these ancient statements or be damned. While intellect was becoming luminous, our mental food must be the old withered straw which our barbaric ancestors had threshed out centuries before. We must not look at the new rich grain which was ready for the sickle.

The whole prospect was joyless, sad, and melancholy, and, if true, a sad calamity for mankind. But though huge buildings, robed priests, altars, and stained-glass windows might enthral the ignorant, thoughtful minds felt that reason was the highest gift and had to be revered and obeyed. Modern Spiritualism really meets the wants of humanity in every aspect, and is derided because it is not properly viewed. That it is needed beyond all else is clearly shown when we find that one from whom has come the loftiest and most impressive strain of ethical teaching could say that immortality was unbelievable, that there was so little chance of man's immortality that it was a grievous error to flatter him with such a belief. What George Eliot said many others of moral

excellence have thought, and without what we call spiritual evidence, the facts and phenomena with which we Spiritualists are familiar, there would only be darkness, or, at best, a hope; but of certainty and assurance none. It is, indeed, noble to see so many without even the charm of hope labouring for human progress, though they conceive that their work ends in the tomb. We have to help all such by telling out bravely of the knowledge that has come to us, and helping forward the proclamation in clear fashion of such facts as we know. It is our claim that we appeal to proof and experiment rather than to tradition, to scientific rather than historical inquiry. There are objective phenomena which the eye can see, which we can test in all conceivable ways, which are so real that already they have dissipated more materialism than all the preaching or pious tracts issued in the century. It is not a something which is far off from us, but literally dwells at our doorstep, and we scarcely need to go round the corner to look for it. If a few earnest truth-seekers who reverence conscience and right beyond all, with pure hearts and sound heads, sit down to investigate, they will be surprised at finding that there are forces and intelligences surrounding them of which they had hitherto been ignorant. Knock at the door of the spirit circle and there will flow to you revelations that make it possible that many of the signs and wonders recorded in the New Testament did not upset the sequence of things, but rather gave indications of laws which, in a sense, unite the seen and the unseen worlds. You will not need to discard these things, like Renan and Matthew Arnold, who were obliged to hint they had no basis in fact, and in regard to such strange occurrences as the reappearance of Jesus to set forth the theory that He was never killed at all, but was smuggled by some unknown disciples into the room where the twelve sat at meat, and then disappeared unaccountably from the scene, as Professor Myers says, crowning a Divine life with a bogus resurrection. Spiritualism is needed here, so that you can face everything squarely, without having to go back to superstition and supernaturalism, but rather to extend your vision and get a larger view of the wondrous laws which guide all spheres of being. Spiritualism will be a key by which you will understand how those early Christians, infused with a strange power which they could not understand, thought they were the direct instruments of the Most High. 'Thus saith the Lord' was only natural when they were moved by this controlling influence. We can read such statements as that, while the apostles were gathered together in one mind, there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty, rushing wind, and filled all the house where they were sitting, and see that here is a record of a real event—a fair report of a séance—people in the flesh speaking as the spirits gave them utterance. But we do not need to accept these things as coming from heaven or being the direct action of God. We know that inspiration is not infallible nor miraculous, but under law as real as the laws of our solar system; that some of those in spirit life who impress their thoughts on those in the flesh are not superior in wisdom to those whom they may address. Oliver Wendell Holmes has a fine conceit pointing in this direction. 'There may be angels in the celestial hierarchy to whom much we know would be interesting. I have often thought that spirits might be willing to learn something from the mind of a Newton, and I see no reason why an angelic being might not be glad to hear a lecture from Huxley or Tyndal.' Spiritualism comes to prove, firstly, that after the change of death we live on, not transformed by miracle, but divested of the body; are still mentally, morally, and spiritually as we were on earth with our loves and hates. Sitting at circles makes this plain, and also that there is mental, moral, and spiritual growth over there, that those who missed their chance here have still the opportunity for improvement there.

What the world wants, in the first place, is to be certain that those who have disappeared behind the veil live on, and the spirit circle makes this palpable and clear. If you are patient you may see movements directed by intelligence which tell out a story. You may hear raps of the most varied kind which telegraph some message characteristic of one you know. You may see clouds of fire such as came to the apostles. Some may have their vision opened and be conscious that there is another sight than the physical, enabling them to

describe the form and features of loved ones for whom they may have mourned. Some one may be moved to write without volition a clear and distinct message, penning automatically the well-known signature. When Robert Dale Owen was Minister for America at Naples, a hard-headed materialist, he witnessed some automatic writing, which looked very trivial, perhaps, to some who were present, but to him it was a fact of great significance. It was a simple matter which some people would have passed over thoughtlessly, but he had the philosophic mind, and saw in the trifling circumstance the material of a great discovery, and it slowly changed the entire current of his life and thought. Before this incident he had looked upon Spiritualism as a supreme absurdity, but that night there came to him the indescribable emotion which the materialist feels when he first awakes to the possibility of another life. Ere he had slept he registered a vow not to rest until he had proved the possibility of spirit return to be a probability, or a certainty, or a delusion; and to him was granted the felicity of largely extending the boundaries of the known. Those who have read those charming books, 'Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World' and 'The Debateable Land,' will see how entirely satisfactory were his researches. He found in spiritual phenomena what dissipated all his former denials, and pointed him for the first time to the great truth—that the lever which moves the world has its fulcrum in the unseen; and afterwards through life he walked in fuller sympathy with the Master Power of the universe. Crowds of persons have met with spiritual phenomena in the same fashion, and been converted as Paul was by the spiritual voices. I am not going, however, to describe the varied phenomena which have brought conviction to crowds of eminent persons in this and other lands. The testimony of the noblest personage is not sufficient in a matter of this kind; we want every individual outside our ranks to make his own research and get fully persuaded in his own mind.

(To be continued.)

MEDIUMS IN BERLIN.

We publish with pleasure the following translation of a communication addressed to us by Herr Max Rahn, the able editor of the 'Uebersinnliche Welt,' who had charge of the séances recently given by Mrs. Corner to the Sphinx Society in Berlin:—

In the letter by a Berlin lady forwarded to you by Mr. R. Seithel, senr., and which appeared in 'LIGHT' of the 11th inst., the question is asked at the close, in regard to the séances recently held here with Mrs. Corner, why such barbaric methods (as binding the medium) are still used, when it is so easy to place the medium in a double cabinet. I beg to reply that for my own personal satisfaction methods of the kind referred to are, as a rule, unnecessary, for, as the result of many years' experience, I am able to judge, without the use of such precautions, whether the phenomena are genuine or not. But in this case the séances were held, not in order to convince *me*, but to convince other persons who had not yet been able to rid their minds of the hypothesis of deception, and to that end it was desirable to adopt such methods as would satisfy *them* that the phenomena could not possibly be due to any corporeal intervention on the part of the medium. 'Barbaric' methods I *never* adopt. That I must most emphatically affirm, and I am sure that Mrs. Corner herself will not only corroborate what I say, but will readily admit that of her treatment here she had no cause whatever to complain. I am anxious that all this should be made clear, lest any of your readers should for a moment imagine that mediums who visit us are in any way treated cruelly. Moreover, I myself made the direct offer to Mrs. Corner that in her séances here she should sit without being bound at all, merely taking a seat in an inner cabinet securely covered with a muslin netting, thus leaving her full freedom of motion. This offer, however, she declined.

'LIGHT' SUSTENTATION FUND.—The Treasurer gratefully acknowledges a contribution of £3 3s. by Mr. W. Fowler, Yararoo, South Australia.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Annual General Meeting of the Members of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., was held in the Society's Rooms, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on the 15th inst., the President, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, in the chair. A copy of the following Annual Report of the Council, and a statement of the Assets and Liabilities, had already been posted to every member:—

ANNUAL REPORT.

The Council, in presenting the third Annual Report of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited (being the fifteenth Annual Report since the establishment of the Society under the name of the London Spiritualist Alliance), have to record that several friends and co-workers have during the year passed on to the other life, including Lady Isham, wife of Sir Charles Isham, Bart., of Lamport Hall, Northamptonshire, a staunch friend of our Cause; Mr. Fred. Tennyson, the elder brother of the late Poet-Laureate; Mr. J. W. Farquhar, of Aberdeen, author of 'The Divine Humanity' and 'Things to Come,' and for many years a convinced Spiritualist; Mrs. Berks T. Hutchinson, wife of Dr. Berks T. Hutchinson, late of Bournemouth, and now of Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope; Mr. Archibald Lamont, one of the oldest and most devoted Spiritualists in Liverpool, and brother of Mr. John Lamont, so well known as an energetic worker in our ranks; Mrs. Eliza Lutley Boucher, formerly resident in England, but more recently in Paris, a frequent contributor to spiritualistic literature; and Mr. Edward Hammond Bentall, head of the great engineering firm of E. H. Bentall and Co., of Heybridge, and who during many years freely gave substantial pecuniary help in furtherance of the interests of Spiritualism. To all their surviving relatives and friends we tender our sincere sympathy in their temporary loss.

The Council have the satisfaction of being able to record a steady growth of interest in the work of the Alliance, as evidenced by a gratifying increase in the number of Members and Associates, and a larger attendance at the periodical assemblies. At the meetings held during the past year in the French Room, St. James's Hall, addresses were given by Miss Goodrich-Freer, on 'Hauntings'; by Mr. Percy Ames, F.S.A., on 'Superstition and Science in Relation to Theoretical and Practical Psychology'; by Mrs. W. H. Wallis, on 'Spiritual Realities'; by Mr. J. F. Collingwood, F.G.S., on 'Limits Proper to the Inquiry known as Modern Spiritualism'; by Mrs. C. T. Dixon, on 'Psychic Photography'; by Mr. J. J. Morse, on 'Modern Spiritualism, its Origin, Growth, Work, and Workers, with Lantern Illustrations'; and by Mr. G. Horatio Bibbings, on 'Bible Spiritualism and Modern Spiritualism Compared.' A meeting was also held for the narration of personal experiences, opened by the Rev. J. Page Hopps. Of ordinary social meetings there were three during the year, two in the French Room and one in the Banqueting Hall; and also a special Conversazione in the Banqueting Hall, when Mrs. Besant kindly attended and gave an eloquent address on the possibility of improved relations between Spiritualists and Theosophists. To all the friends who have thus afforded their valuable assistance the Council desire to express their very cordial thanks.

Of course, the great event of the year was the International Congress of Spiritualists, and others interested in Psychical Science, held in the month of June, in St. James's Hall. Of the proceedings of the Congress the Members of the Alliance have doubtless a more or less vivid recollection, but it may be well nevertheless to allude briefly to some of the more salient features. The actual work of the Congress was preceded by a religious service in the Banqueting Hall, conducted by the Rev. J. Page Hopps, on the evening of Sunday, June 19th; an overflow meeting being held at the same time in the French Salon under the direction of Mr. J. J. Morse. On Tuesday, June 21st, the Congress was opened with an Address by the President, the assembly comprising, in addition to leading London and provincial Spiritualists, many distinguished visitors from the United States, Australia, South Africa, various parts of France and Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Greece, Switzerland, and other countries; and during the week large audiences

were interested in listening to addresses by Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond (Washington, U.S.A.), Mrs. Jennie Hagan-Jackson (Grand Rapids, Mich., U.S.A.), Mrs. E. Cadwallader (Philadelphia, U.S.A.), Dr. Helen Densmore (London and New York), Madame Hornung (Geneva), Dr. J. M. Peebles (San Diego, Cal., U.S.A.), Mr. Harrison D. Barrett (President of the National Spiritualists' Association, U.S.A.), Dr. Gérard Encausse ('Papus,' Paris), M. Gabriel Delanne (Paris), Colonel de Rochas (Paris), Le Commandant Darget (Vouziers, Ardennes), Dr. Moutin (Paris), Cav. Ernesto Volpi (Vircelli, Piedmont), Prof. A. Alexander (Rio de Janeiro), Mr. Matthews Fidler (Gothenburg), Mr. C. de Crogh (Copenhagen), Mr. C. L. Geiger (Amsterdam), Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, F.R.S., Mr. W. T. Stead, Mr. E. W. Wallis (then President of the Spiritualists' National Federation), Mr. J. J. Morse (the present President of the Spiritualists' National Federation), and Mr. James Robertson (President of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists). The Congress gatherings were followed by a Grand Re-union in the Large St. James's Hall, on Friday evening, June 24th.

As an indication of the widespread interest in this, the only International Congress of Spiritualists ever held in London, it should be stated that, in addition to those already mentioned, Addresses were received from the Rev. T. E. Allen (West Dedham, Mass., U.S.A.), M. Alban Dubey (Secretary to the Syndicate of the French Spiritualistic Press), Mr. Henry Forbes (New York), Signora Virginia Paganini (Florence), the Countess Mainardi (Pisa), Mr. George Spriggs (East Melbourne, Australia), Mons. P. G. Leymarie (Paris), Prof. T. Falcomer (Alessandria, Piedmont), Mr. H. Junor Browne (Melbourne, Australia), Prof. Giovanni Hoffman (Rome), Dr. Foveau de Courmelles (Paris), and M. Caspar C. Lomise (Tiflis, Russia). For the presentation of these Addresses there was no opportunity during the Sessions of the Congress, but they have since been published in 'LIGHT.'

Looking back upon the great amount of work and the heavy expenditure which the Congress entailed, the Council feel that it was a somewhat daring experiment; but they are gratified by the assurance, freely expressed by all who took part in it, that it was in every way an unqualified success. That it was so was due in no small degree to the willing help of many friends, and to the very generous contributions towards the cost—so generous indeed that, after defraying all expenses, the Council found themselves in possession of a balance of £55 8s. 10d., which they placed to a deposit account, to be devoted to any practical work which it may be found necessary or advisable to undertake.

In conclusion, the Council confidently appeal to the work of the past year in all its various departments as a title to the confidence of Members and to a continued and increasing support.

Signed on behalf of the Council,
E. DAWSON ROGERS, *President.*

March, 1899.

THE PRESIDENT, having briefly congratulated the meeting on the success of the year's work, and especially of the International Congress, moved that the Report and Statement of Accounts be received and adopted.

MR. W. P. BROWNE seconded the motion, remarking that the success of the Congress was mainly due to the untiring energy and able management of the President.

MR. W. J. LUCKING said he had much pleasure in supporting the motion and in expressing his cordial concurrence with the remarks of Mr. Browne.

Several questions were addressed, mostly by Mr. T. Everitt, to the Hon. Treasurer (Mr. H. Withall), and the Auditor (Mr. T. Blyton), in reference to the Statement of Accounts, and these having been answered the motion was put to the meeting and passed unanimously.

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL.

THE PRESIDENT stated that the following members of Council retired this year by rotation, in compliance with No. 24 of the Articles of Association—Major-General Drayson, Mr. H. Withall, and Mr. William J. Lucking. They were, however, eligible, and had been duly nominated for re-election, and in the absence of any other nomination, he declared them duly elected accordingly.

VOTE OF THANKS.

MR. J. J. MORSE said that there was one special duty which he thought it was incumbent on them to perform before the

meeting separated. He had noted with satisfaction the admirable way in which all the work connected with the Alliance had been conducted during the past year, and he would accordingly move—and he did so with the greatest possible pleasure—that the cordial thanks of the members be given to the President and other officers of the Alliance for their very efficient services.

The motion was seconded by Mr. W. P. Browne and unanimously adopted.

THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE.

The above designation seems to me to describe what is essentially needed and should be aspired to, better than 'Psychical Institute.'

It is very cheering to see, by 'LIGHT' of March 11th, that America, at Boston, is already to the fore with its Spiritual Temple, where services of the 'Spiritual Science Church' have recently been commenced. Surely then, after more than half a century of communion with those who have passed to the inner realm of life, the Spiritualists of England should now be quickened to establish the religion of reason, right, and humanity: a *reality*—as that is the measure of belief in truth and its God. The outer structure for it should of course include adequate apartments where healing, if not other mediumship, under efficient supervision could be manifested, if a few mediums did not eventually find a home there.

No doubt 'Quæstor Vitæ' will endorse the main idea intended by 'Nicholas Christian' (*vide* 'LIGHT,' January 21st), by others, and by myself. But, subject of course to a sufficiently enlightened desire being further manifested for a living philosophy, the external structure and work require the best aid of those who have thousands of pounds to spare and who would so devote them to diffusing that truth on which the regeneration of the world depends.

If it be known that the human soul-nature—the man or woman—is an intellectual being, true, unselfish, and eternal as its source, it is, of course, the supreme duty of Spiritualists to avow this truth of truths, and to do their best to uphold accordant principles of life. How is it that the cardinal law so divinely inculcated by Jesus Christ—*be reciprocal*—is practically and generally made such an appalling mockery of by people who deem themselves Christians? If, as is well known, the state of people essentially depends upon their life-conditions—organic, intellectual, and material—is it not mainly because man's anti-social system of existence remains based upon his animal spirit, which naturally relies on *might* force? Is it less certain that whilst that dastardly spirit of might over right prevails, nations must die as does the physical body, by which they are so fatally deluded? Human rights and duties are inseparable principles, because the very existence of the former depends upon the combined (spiritually based) mutuality of the latter; and is it less true—as the horrible slavery, destitution, callous vices, and vanities everywhere evince—that the longer the brutal might spirit is maintained by nations the sooner must their degeneracy happen?

Many a dauntless soul has preferred an agonising death, by crucifixion or in the flames, for truth and humanity's sake, and should there not now be at least a sufficiently enlightened number here to exemplify true principles of life, and so, whilst unintentionally most serving themselves, do their fellow beings and the world the greatest possible service? It was not a mere easier physical life that the martyrs pleaded for, nor is it such that any seer now desires, but the working honestly and thoroughly towards a living Spiritualism, the head and heart of which must be righteousness, as human actions are more or less a hollow sham and an infamy without it. They who reverence God's truth, and who see that it can only be known to them through their own *reason*, may see as surely, through a simple knowledge of the chief laws of life, a self-elucidating principle for personal and social guidance!

What a heaven would gradually open to the world by the union, energy, and growing light and numbers of a few who intelligently realise the profound import of life, and that, for and by them to others, good or evil characters are being moulded for the weal or woe of the spirit world!

If equal to it, English Spiritualists will now formulate a living system of philosophy from what they *know* of man's nature, and the laws relating to it, rather than remain 'fluid' (any further than science requires), and continue to ignore the logical sequence and essential purport of the momentous truths they have been entrusted with. ONWARD.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT, 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.

SATURDAY, MARCH 25th, 1899.

EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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THE WELLSPRING OF ALL RELIGIONS.

From the wellspring of the human soul, obedient and responsive to the laws of spirit-life, have all religions sprung; and by that wellspring all religions will in time be purified, for, in truth, that is the well of water, in the Christ-nature shared by all, which springeth up to everlasting life.

Such was the thought which came to us, like a broad beam of light, as we read 'The Open Court's' translation of Victor Charbonnel's rousing but touching explanation of a proposal for holding 'A Universal Religious Congress' in Paris, next year. We are afraid the project has partly broken down, but there are indications that it may be revived in an even better form. The original design was a Congress of representatives of the various religions of the world, but this, though a heroic ideal, had its dangers. A Congress of free spirits of all faiths, bent on trying to find the common link which binds all together, or on discovering the truth hidden in all forms of faith, may lead to larger and finer results.

The original declaration contained the following reference to the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893; 'The Parliament of Religions which was held in Chicago in 1893 on the fourth centennial of the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus will be judged in the future as one of the most important events in the religious and moral history of humanity. The solemn assembly of one hundred and seventy representatives of the principal religions of the world proclaimed the modern aspiration of the soul after tolerance and religious peace, for a fraternal union of all men of good will. That was, in the general order of civilisation, a great and salutary advance.'

It was hoped, by many ardent souls, that the work so well begun in Chicago might be consummated in Paris by a still clearer and stronger affirmation of the dream of unity and peace. But the theologians have been so far stronger than the humanitarians. The leaders of the Churches have either held aloof or have expressly objected to the suggestion that representatives of various religions could meet on equal terms. In other words, the theologians in charge of the various Churches cannot surrender the old notion that they and they alone have found the truth. 'The project of a congress of religions, that is to say, of a congress in which churches and religious confessions would be represented by official delegates, has therefore been given up.'

But difficulties are created in order to be overcome: or, at all events, so thinks M. Victor Charbonnel. He says:—

However, the idea of a great religious manifestation in 1900 on the border line of the two centuries could not be abandoned without regret. If it is necessary to give up the idea of a representation regularly established by the religious societies, could not men of different religious beliefs have a reunion in which, in conditions of personal independence which should leave intact all rights and all confessional pretensions, they might study the many problems of the modern conscience? Priests or laity, all those who are interested in the social and religious future of humanity, could be admitted to this reunion.

Their persons and their words would only represent themselves and not their religious confessions. They would be representatives in their moral influence without being in any degree official and responsible representatives. It would be a congress of religious men and not a congress of religions or of religious forms.

We are very much inclined to think that this is an altogether fresher and more hopeful suggestion. Official representatives would naturally be constrained and formal, and would probably bring with them the atmosphere of their camp, with perhaps all the camp tendencies to attack and defend, whereas a Congress of human beings, hungry and thirsty for human kindness, would naturally attract the atmosphere and spirit of the Brotherhood. If this project be carried forward, we hope to be somehow in it; and we rejoice to note that certain 'believers and religious thinkers' have resolved to take the initiative in calling such a Congress next year, either at Paris or Versailles.

What has such a Congress to do with us? Is an answer necessary? If so, perhaps the quotation of the three 'moral ends' sought by the Congress will do all that is needed. They are these:—

1. To affirm the natural legitimacy and perpetual nature of the religious sentiment, the educative virtue and the social power of religion in the progressive realisation of the human ideal.
2. To proclaim religious liberty, the sacred right of every man to tolerance and respect, and to protest against all fanaticism of race, of religion or of irreligion.
3. To seek, in the absence of doctrinal unity, a fraternal union of all men established upon the single fact that they are religious, and to elevate in different religions the things which unite above those which divide, the sentiment of religious fraternity above differences of creed.

If that is not pure Spiritualism on its philosophical and religious side, we have still to learn what Spiritualism means. This is a religious ideal which disregards all our sectional and merely conventional distinctions, passes beyond all creedal and ceremonial limitations, rises above all the barrier walls of solid organisations, and finds the living root of all religions in the permanent longings and affections of the human soul. That is why we call it pure Spiritualism. The enlightened promoters of this generous scheme do not mention Spiritualism, and probably have scarcely thought of it, but they constantly hover on the confines of it. Thus, in indicating the rules of the Congress, they say:—

All criticism, disputation, and polemic doctrinal or personal, will be interdicted. Each speaker will be expected to speak in a positive sense, in an affirmative exposition of his faith or his thought, and never in a negative sense by talks against the faith or thought of others.

The congress, in short, will be directed in a spirit of large tolerance and mutual respect according to the rules of parliamentary equality. This equality will not imply the philosophic and moral equality of different religious doctrines nor indifference in the matter of faith, for the reason that it is not founded upon the value of religions but upon the respect due to the human soul.

The proposed programme still further yields the same spiritual result. Three subjects are prominently named: 'The natural legitimacy and ineradicable nature of the religious sentiment,' 'Religious liberty,' and 'The religious fraternity of all men.' All these sentiments are summed up and irradiated in an altogether delightful paragraph:—

The congress will declare that religion is, and ought to be, among men a principle of love and peace, and not a principle of hatred and war, a bond and not a cause of discord; that humanity may, and ought to, find the sentiment of

its moral unity in a common aspiration which lifts all hearts toward God, in a common seeking after that God who is nowhere left without a witness: and finally that there is a religious fraternity by which the idea of the brotherhood of man is completed and confirmed in the notion of the fatherhood of God.

We devoutly hope that this profoundly important scheme will be carried out, and that the Congress, amid a thousand objects of interest at the forthcoming Exhibition, will shine as a glorious beacon light.

‘PSYCHE’:

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF SPIRITISM AND KINDRED SUBJECTS.

This is another monthly journal dedicated to Spiritism, &c., and is, we observe, in its sixth year. The Germans must be much more interested in Spiritism than are our own countrymen, seeing that they support no fewer than three monthly journals, all apparently flourishing, as well as a weekly paper, the ‘*Neue Spiritualistische Blätter*,’ all published in Berlin.

‘*Psyche*,’ which is the organ of the Spiritist Society called ‘*Psyche zur Wahrheit*,’ is a modest little publication on a smaller scale than either the ‘*Uebersinnliche Welt*’ or ‘*Psychische Studien*,’ and while the latter journals publish long and learned essays, which sometimes run through several numbers, ‘*Psyche*’ contains only short articles complete in themselves.

In the March number, besides brief notices and one or two little poems, the principal contents are an essay by the Countess Bülow von Dénnewitz, on ‘The Possibility of the Immortality of Animals’; an account of the clairvoyant predictions of the poet, Nicholas Lenau; and a description of a séance with the medium, Frau Rothe, which was held on Sunday, January 15th of this year.

This séance took place in bright lamplight, the gentleman who gives the account having previously well examined the room and furniture. It lasted two and a half hours, and the conditions seem to have been very harmonious. A special feature was the apport of fruits and flowers, the latter in large quantities, and apparently freshly gathered, which the entranced medium seemed to snatch from the air; besides which there were other phenomena of a very convincing nature, as well as trance addresses through the medium, and clairvoyant descriptions.

When the séance was concluded, and the company were seated round the supper table, it suddenly rose up at the end at which the medium was sitting, without anything upon it being spilt or disturbed; and, later on, on two ladies of the company saying that they had received no presents, and that they would, therefore, take some of the flowers lying on the table, two apples rose from a glass dish, flew first to the medium, and then one went directly to the hand of Frau L., and the other fell down before Frau H.

This attractive little paper is printed in the German character, and is published at the moderate price of three and a half marks yearly.

The *Psyche* Society hold weekly meetings, to which visitors are usually admitted, and at which addresses on subjects mostly connected with Spiritism are given.

‘*MOLLIE FANCHER*.’—In response to the appeal of ‘*Quæstor Vitæ*,’ on behalf of Miss Mollie Fancher, we have received contributions of 2s. 6d. from Miss Boswell Stone, 10s. 6d. from Mr. H. Chapman, and £2 from Mr. A. W. Lafone, M.P. We shall be pleased to take charge of further donations, and to remit the amounts direct to Miss Fancher.

ASLEEP FOR A YEAR, BUT TEMPER STILL BAD.—A Dalziel despatch from New York gives publicity to a San Francisco story to the effect that a young lady named Elida Wilbur had so violent a quarrel with her lover thirteen months ago that she fainted, and has lain in a comatose condition ever since. The doctors endeavoured to restore her to consciousness, but without success, and were much puzzled by the peculiar nature of the case. They managed, however, to feed her sufficiently to keep her alive. A few days since she showed signs of awakening, and her lover was hastily sent for. Upon regaining her senses she saw him standing by the bedside, and she immediately began the quarrel where she had left it off over a year ago.

IN REPLY TO DR. HODGSON.

I do not consider that I am called upon to dispose of my time in investigating charges which should preferably have been sifted by Dr. Hodgson himself before accepting them as evidence and quoting them as such; all the more so in the face of the fact that Dr. Hodgson actually suggests, by indirect implication, that the legal document I handed to the Editor of ‘*LIGHT*’ may be spurious, and that *before obtaining evidence with regard to it*. I have suggested to Miss Bangs to reply through her attorney, if she sees fit.

It is not the personal element that is of importance in this case, but the principle involved, and it is on that level that I intend to deal with it.

I must express surprise at Dr. Hodgson’s persistence in taking steps which tend to destroy the reputation of mediums through whom some of the most interesting phenomena obtainable at the present day are presented, which fact he evades but cannot obliterate. Yet that is the question at issue. Dr. Hodgson seeks to annul these phenomena (and consequently to banish the mediums through whom they are produced), because, as ‘*the Sisters Bangs have been unmasked, the phenomena in question must be considered as trickery*.’ It is the principle involved in this attitude that is the question at issue.

If the society Dr. Hodgson officially represents were established for the purposes of psychical inhibition, his zeal in this direction would be logical. But surely it does not contribute to the validity of psychical research to seek to obliterate highly interesting phenomena because there may, or may not, have been some irregularities associated with the past of the mediums through whom they are produced.

But I must here ask Dr. Hodgson whether, according to the standards of his society, he is justified in using second-hand statements as evidence (especially statements such as those coming from the ‘*Chicago Herald*,’ and ‘*Chicago Sunday Star*,’ *i.e.*, from sources which must be recognised as biased from the fact that we know that such papers would be only too glad to produce sensational articles against Spiritualism) without having thoroughly probed and sifted their validity himself.

I myself have only recently joined that society and am not experienced in its procedure. I was under the impression, however, that second-hand evidence was not considered satisfactory testimony. If that is so, then the whole of Dr. Hodgson’s accusations against the Bangs Sisters must be considered as invalid; as would also be the case with regard to those advanced by Mr. Myers, on January 14th, against Mrs. d’Esperance. As it is self-evident that there cannot be separate criterions as to the validity of evidence, applicable according to whether the society wishes to support or to invalidate a case, I must conclude that my conception with regard to the standard of evidence adopted by the S.P.R. is erroneous.

I find myself compelled to deal with other considerations which I avoided in my previous communication. The account given of the phenomena in question was supported by the testimony of a wideawake financial broker and of an attorney. Professor Barrett (I can only quote from memory, being away from home and from all references, consequently) spontaneously presented a complimentary criticism of the report, and suggested the desirability of inviting the mediums to England. Dr. Hodgson, however, saw fit to intervene, and affirmed that the phenomena in question must be considered as having been produced by trickery, because the mediums in question had been accused of fraud. He thereby assumes the position that no *bonâ fide* phenomena can occur through a medium after accusations of fraud (which he does not claim to have probed) have been advanced against her. I must reply that Dr. Hodgson will find himself compelled to withdraw from that position, which is in flagrant contradiction with evidence.

Further, I ask him by virtue of what right or quality he assumes to invalidate the above testimony. The accusations revived by Dr. Hodgson refer to events supposed to have occurred in 1888, 1890, and 1891. The phenomena I described were obtained through the Bangs Sisters in 1895 and 1898. Unquestionably Dr. Hodgson has acted from a sense of duty, but I submit that such relentless tracking and persecution of mediums, through whom veridical phenomena are attested

by numerous witnesses to occur daily, is as uncharitable as it is unnecessary from the point of view of obtaining pure phenomena. I say that it is unworthy of a society dealing with psychical matters, and which may consequently be expected not to be devoid of charity in its methods, if even an unusually high ethical standard is not to be expected. I say that it is unnecessary from the point of view of psychical research, because the real and sole guarantee of the validity of phenomena consists in the exercise of careful conditions of verification, together with the recognition and observance of the responsibility inherent in the laws of mental suggestion. Which of us is free from faults? I claim charity for my own shortcomings, and hope that my future may not be condemned because of my failings in the past. Mediums who have to serve as missionaries to the public are subject to all sorts of impure influences brought by investigators. Miss Freer's criticism of them, which I am glad to see Dr. Hodgson condemns, was a gross exhibition of bad taste, yet probably reveals an under-current in which she stands not alone. Because of their function, mediums are subject to temptations which do not assail ordinary people; but they are also subject to threats, to blackmail, to false accusations, to conspiracies. Dr. Paul Gibier, head of the Pasteur Institute here, tells me of a case of a materialising medium who has come under his observation, who accepted any reasonable condition of verification, being bound, fastened, locked up, her dress nailed, &c., and who received threatening letters from other mediums who could not, or would not, submit to similar control. Because a medium may have failed in the past, she must not necessarily be permanently banished and ostracised.

No one can deplore more deeply than myself the loose methods of investigation followed by many Spiritualists, especially here in America, and I had hoped to use my energy in efforts to support greater care in experimentation, but find my time has to be devoted to protests against an assumed monopolisation in the recognition of psychic phenomena.

I fully appreciate the efforts of the S.P.R. to purify the atmosphere surrounding public mediumship, but that would be more effectively attained by the study (and subsequent spreading of the knowledge) of the conditions most favourable to the production of phenomena, including their verification, than by condemning and ostracising mediums.

Ochorowicz pointed out that it was the 'detective *promoteur* methods' adopted at Cambridge that generated the failure there of Eusapia Paladino, through whom other investigators 'better acquainted with the laws of suggestion,' have, both before and since, obtained most instructive results. If the matter had rested with the S.P.R., these phenomena would have been inhibited and the psychical field sterilised to that extent. But other investigators, who more justly realise the necessary conditions, have forced the Cambridge investigators to recognise their failure and admit the validity of those phenomena. Similarly will they have to admit the validity of the phenomena produced through the Misses Bangs and Mrs. d'Esperance.

Now again we see a further extension of these detective methods in the effort to prohibit the phenomena produced through the Bangs Sisters. Mr. Fidler produces another instance with regard to the medium through whom Aksakoff has obtained such striking phenomena. Is this psychical research, I ask, or is it the sterilisation of psychical research?

I must repeat here what I stated in more detail on p. 615, (1898) and in my letter on 'Mental Suggestion,' that accusations of fraud require even more careful and expert sifting than evidence in support of phenomena, because they may be rashly advanced by incompetent people ignorant of the reactive or re-percussive effects entailed in exteriorisation, as well as by persons imbued with hostility or acting from interested motives. I venture to affirm that it is not purposeful 'spooking,' the study of conjuring tricks, or detective policing that constitute the best qualifications and present the best conditions for experimentation in psychical phenomena. On the contrary, such influences present the conditions for their debasement or inhibition. A more reverent spirit is the pre-condition of satisfactory results being obtained.

I submit that there is another side to these questions, and which has been left out of consideration by the S.P.R. so far,

and that is the possible estimate of these questions as seen from the point of view of the operators.

The S.P.R. has investigated these matters as if the medium were the only factor to be dealt with. They have probed and dissected and detected the realm of effects, as if the cause could be discovered therein. In fact, their attitude in this respect has been parallel with that of materialistic science, which in experimentation with matter postulates that it is dealing with cause as well as effect. It would be as rational to pursue the study of hypnotism by the examination and tracking of the subject, apart from any consideration of the operator.

And in this respect, I submit, does anyone think of condemning hypnotism because some subjects are known to have 'acted' and cheated; or because some experimenters are known to have carelessly spoken of the effects they expected to obtain in the hearing of their subjects? Or does anyone think of condemning psycho-therapeutics because some hypnotic subjects lead loose lives? Would any sane person think of throwing the responsibility of such conduct on the part of the subjects on to Dr. Durand de Gros, Dr. Liébeault, Dr. Bernheim, and the psycho-physiologists generally? Neither, I affirm, are the invisible spiritual operators to be held responsible for the faults of *their* subjects, or mediums. Neither is Spiritualism to be condemned or blamed for similar reasons.

But neither can psychical phenomena ever be understood by the study of mediums and phenomena solely, apart from research with regard to the operators whose suggestions determine the phenomena through the subjects.

With this consideration in mind, I determined to consult the 'controls' of Miss Bangs as to their opinion regarding the position assumed by Dr. Hodgson. With that intent I inclosed Dr. Hodgson's letter, with my questions bearing thereon given below, in an envelope, bearing the address of the hotel where I was staying. I inclosed therewith five blank sheets of the hotel letter paper, each sheet bearing the picture of the 'Auditorium' Hotel engraved thereon. I marked each of these sheets consecutively with the Hebrew letters of the word 'Jehoshua,' in an inconspicuous manner within the engraved portion. I then put the closed gummed envelope in my pocket and went to Miss Bangs. I did not inform her of the contents, or of my intention in this respect in any shape or manner, but conversed with her during the whole time of the séance. The séance took place at 1 p.m., and was of a similar character as that described in September, and as that described by Mr. Hewitt below. The envelope was inclosed within two slates which were fastened by bands transversely. They were laid on the table, I keeping my fingers on them all the time, Miss Bangs sitting opposite at a distance of two feet or so from the table. Unfortunately I could not wait long enough for the reply to be finished, for, having an appointment in New York, I had to leave before the reply was completed. I took the envelope with me, and, at the suggestion of the controls, I sent the envelope by post to Mr. Francis, Editor of the 'Progressive Thinker,' who handed it to Mr. Hewitt, a Unitarian minister, who undertook to take it up to Miss Bangs again, and allow the reply to be finished. This he kindly carried out, sending the envelope on to me in New York, unopened. Herewith is his account of what took place, as per his own letter, which I forward to the Editor for inspection:—

498, W. Madison-street, Chicago.
February 15th, 1899.

TO QUÆSTOR VITÆ.

DEAR SIR,—Renewing our brief acquaintance, I write to inform you of my 'sittings' yesterday with the 'Bangs Sisters.' At your request as communicated to me by Mr. Francis, of the 'Progressive Thinker,' I went to their house yesterday afternoon, taking with me the two sealed letters enclosed. Precisely at 4 p.m. the sitting began, and the first sitting was finished at 5.30 p.m. It was in the same little room where we sat that afternoon with you and Mr. Francis, and, as then, there was nothing in the room but the table and chairs. At the suggestion of Miss Bangs only one letter was attempted (the one having the imprint of the Auditorium Hotel). I first examined the table (though seemingly useless), then took two slates, and putting the letter, *sealed*, between them, strapped them securely, then placed them on the centre of the table, and, placing a blot of ink on another little slip of paper, I put it *on the slates* (also at Miss Bangs'

suggestion, I took one of my own cards, and wrote on it a brief request, placing it upon the slates close to the paper having the ink blot). During all this time Miss Bangs *did not in any way touch the letter, card or ink blot*, and I then took another slate and placed it upon the two that I had secured by straps. Then I took hold of the slates, and Miss Bangs laid her hands on mine, and asked; '*Friends, is this satisfactory?*' Immediately three distinct raps were heard upon the slates. Miss Bangs then moved her chair back, entirely away from the table, and did not touch it until the sitting was done, as announced by raps on the slate, at 5.30 p.m. I, however, kept my seat at the table, with one or both my hands upon the slates. When the writing (if there is writing) was done, I removed the upper slate, and found that my card was not there. *If it is found in the letter when you open it you will please return it to me by mail, will you not?* Unstrapping the slates, I took out your sealed letter, and put it in my coat pocket and returned home, making arrangements, however, for another sitting in the evening. In the evening I again sat with *both the sisters*, in the same room, and by the same table. The sitting began at 8 o'clock and the work was pronounced *done* at 8.55 p.m. The letter was the one having the imprint of 'The Windsor.' I prepared it in the same way that I had previously done, only I did not place my own card on the slate. The gas was burning brightly, and the Bangs Sisters (nor anyone else but myself) did not even touch the letter; nor did they touch the slates; only as in the p.m. when they laid their hands on mine, and asked if 'all was ready,' being answered as in the p.m. by three raps on the slate. Nor did they touch anything pertaining to letter or slates, until I had removed the letter from the slates, and put it in my coat pocket at the close of the sitting. I am sure of this and I hope it will prove satisfactory to you.—I am, respectfully yours,

(REV.) J. O. M. HEWITT,
Unitarian Minister.

On receipt of the papers from Mr. Hewitt I cut open the 'Auditorium' envelope, in which I had enclosed the papers. I found Mr. Hewitt's card inserted into the very centre of the contents. It was surrounded firstly by Dr. Hodgson's article; secondly by my list of questions; and then by the five sheets of 'Auditorium' letter paper which I had inserted blank in the envelope, but which were covered with writing in ink when I took them out of the envelope. The back of Mr. Hewitt's card was also written upon. At his request I returned it to him as a memento, after copying the message on to another card of his which I had.

The second envelope to which Mr. Hewitt refers in his letter as bearing the impress of the Windsor Hotel, included questions of a personal bearing, which I had written at the Windsor Hotel, New York, before posting the packet to Mr. Francis to hand to Mr. Hewitt. Two blank sheets of paper enclosed therein were, I found on opening the envelope, also covered with writing in ink, but as these refer to private matters I retain them. All the other original papers (and the envelope) referring to the dispute raised by Dr. Hodgson, I forward to the Editor for inspection by any persons, they may interest.

The questions written out by me for the control to answer were as follow:—

Auditorium Hotel, Chicago.
February 7th, 1899.

TO THE INTELLIGENCES WHO WRITE THROUGH MISS BANGS.

Please read enclosed letter of Mr. Hodgson about your medium, and oblige me by replying to it as it appears from your side.

You are probably aware that I have published accounts of two sésances with her, and that Mr. H. claims that those sésances 'must be taken as trickery,' because your mediums have been exposed as cheating. It would be interesting to have your reply to this.

It is unfortunately too true that mediums do cheat sometimes.

Pray inform us why operators from your side continue to use mediums who have so acted.

Why do you not discard mediums who *knowingly* have cheated?

It is stated that operators from your side co-operate in cheating sometimes. What do you say to that?

I have myself been most rudely, offensively, treated by the control of a physical medium who had himself invited me to come to a sésance of his medium, yet I was perfectly courteous myself.—Yours truly,

QUESTOR VITÆ.

The reply is as follows:—

MY FRIEND OF EARTH.—In reply to your inquiry of to-day, would suggest the following:—

Mr. Hodgson suggests the insinuation that the papers vindicating the Bangs Sisters might be bogus.

Mr. Hodgson hardly pursues the legal or scientific method in this matter. A judge in court would be liable to impeachment who should condemn the accused without evidence, or on newspaper evidence, or in any manner create a prejudice against the accused that might defeat the ends of justice. A scientist would be considered very unscientific who should, in advance of *his own* investigation, decide that any phenomena in nature were false, or falsely presented, until he had thoroughly investigated. Mr. Hodgson is a scientist, and brings scientific methods to bear in the investigation of Spiritualism. This is correct, provided the methods include spiritual facts, spiritual conditions. Has Dr. Hodgson positive evidence that these spiritual conditions were all duly considered and present at the time the original trouble occurred, in regard to which the court papers which he intimates in advance as doubtful, were issued?

This simple rule is suggested: Let Dr. Hodgson first carefully examine the court records of the particular cases of which he refers, and seek scientific investigations of the phenomena as presented through these medial avenues, before even suggesting fraud or misrepresentation. Not having ascertained that they are not what is represented before the suggestion is carelessly made, can have no other effect than to create prejudice against those interested.

• THE GUIDE, G.W.S.

The law of evolution extends to all worlds, to the planets, to the great spirit world. There are undeveloped spirits on earth, so there are in the lower realms of spirit life. As they have the power on earth, notwithstanding all the united forces of good that are at times brought to counteract their influence, to deceive their fellows, so, for reasons inherent in the laws of evolution and development, they exercise the same power in the lower realms of the spirit world.

The answer to this question is substantially given in the answer to the first. The same question may be asked in regard to events in any departments of life. Why did the spirit of the founder of Christianity permit John Calvin to burn Servetus at the stake? Why did the spirits interested in the development of science permit Bruno to suffer a similar fate? Why has all the deception, falsehood, and money that has cursed the world been permitted to obstruct the world's development? These are mysteries too deep for men or the angels to solve—for many spheres in advance of earth.

This question has been substantially answered in the two preceding answers.

The medium and guides were evidently two of a kind. If the higher spirits had the power to prevent, which is doubtful, they refused to exercise it for your own good. They probably desired to stimulate investigation in your own mind and to broaden your views, to convince you that, though dirt is mixed with the gold as you find it in nature, the gold is none the less precious on this account, to teach you in a most convincing manner that the laws of evolution are the same in all worlds, that time, study, patience, endurance, and hard work are necessary to final salvation.—Kindly,

THE GUIDE,
GEO. W. STEVENS.

It is evident from these answers that this avenue of communication that has been opened between the two worlds is, as I have myself previously suggested, subject to the laws conditioning the expressions of self-consciousness on this plane, *i.e.*, it is available both through so-called good and evil channels. As I have suggested, the quality of the medium conditions the communion. There must be consonance in quality between the receiver and the invisible transmitter. The quality of the operator may to some extent be estimated by that of the instrument, consequently.

The fact that this process of suggestion, or thought-transference, is in operation entails that it applies both with regard to persons of high moral endeavour and to the converse. In fact, it is not the moral standard of the instrument that constitutes mediumship at all, any more so than in the case of hypnotic subjects. Experimentation with mesmeric subjects shows that mediumship is constituted by a peculiarity, a hyper-sensitiveness, in the nervous energy and system of the subject, while physical mediumship appears to be accompanied by a facility of exteriorisation in this energy. Further, modern research in experimental psychology demonstrates that mediumship is a quality or faculty pertaining to the sub-consciousness, and not to the normal self-consciousness. The volition and reasoning faculty pertain to the self-consciousness; ethical standards, moral achievement, &c., must also be associated therewith. Now,

in most mediums, the active, volitional, reasoning self-consciousness is inhibited during mediumistic suggestioning, as also occurs in hypnotic subjects. Consequently entranced mediums are not responsible moral agents; they are not responsible for the suggestions transmitted through them while in that state, and realised in phenomena. The responsibility pertains to the suggestioners, including, as Dr. P. Joire has shown, the assisting investigators.

After considerable training or development of a medium, the operators are able to transmit suggestions through her sub-consciousness, without entirely inhibiting her normal self-consciousness, which functions simultaneously; yet this is generally influenced to some extent, and such mediums confess to feeling dreamy, sleepy, during the transmission. Such mediums correspond to the hypnotic subjects in whom Professor Janet induced simultaneous dual functioning of the normal self-consciousness and the sub-consciousness; but the functioning induced by the invisible operators is of a higher order than that obtained by Professor Janet, who only achieved this phenomenon in post-hypnotic realisation.

It is not the medium's self-consciousness that suggests the phenomena through her own sub-consciousness, as is shown from the fact that her self-consciousness was occupied in other directions. I purposely held her in conversation to demonstrate this fact. The psycho-physiologists can no longer maintain that such phenomena are produced by auto-suggestion, in the face of this evidence, including the case of slate writing through Mr. Evans. The suggestions must consequently have emanated from an invisible operator, who is able to act through the medium's sub-consciousness and exteriorised psychic or neuric energy; inducing motricity at a distance through solid objects (as has been achieved in minor degree through mesmeric sensitives). Dr. P. Joire has shown that the assistant investigators may also suggestion the subject or medium. This is affirmed also in another and exaggerated form by members of the S.P.R., who assert that a trance medium's communications are constituted by telepathy from the investigator. It is evident, consequently, that the responsibility for the deterioration of phenomena through an entranced medium, devolves partly on investigators who are imbued with strongly positive scepticism; or with the firm intention to detect fraud, or with strong hostility, &c. This law cannot be denied by the S.P.R., and will have to be admitted by them as applying to physical mediums equally as well as to trance mediums.

Further, when an investigator goes to a test medium, he brings with him a sphere of invisible influences, as is demonstrated by the communications transmitted from these sources to him through the medium. The same law inevitably applies when he goes to a physical medium. It is but another aspect of the law of affinity referred to above with regard to mediums, and governing the character of their controls. Consequently, when a hostile sceptic goes to a physical medium intending to expose fraud, to 'grab,' if necessary, &c., he takes with him invisible spirits of similar characteristics. Such spirits will probably delight in the opportunity afforded them of making mischief, and undoubtedly may suggest fraudulent phenomena, for which ignorant investigators will hold the medium responsible. There are beings in the discarnate earth-sphere who are hostile to spiritual communion between the two worlds, as there are in the incarnate earth-sphere.

It is evident, consequently, that it is not necessarily the medium who is responsible for the frauds that occur; it may be the sitter. If Eusapia cheated at Cambridge while entranced, and in an involuntary state consequently, the investigators must take their share in the responsibility. As M. de Rochas has said, if many investigators in varied places have obtained satisfactory phenomena through a medium, and a few experimenters on one occasion fail to do so, the responsibility probably rests with the latter. If unsatisfactory phenomena occurred at Newcastle through Mrs. d'Esperance, considering what Mr. Fidler told us about her at the London Congress; considering the very striking phenomena produced through her and described by Aksakoff; considering her own transparently-truthful account of her life given us in 'Shadowland,' it is most probable that some over-zealous sitter, ignorant of psychical laws, was responsible therefor. Impartial fairness and justice would have demonstrated that the S. P. R. should

have thoroughly sifted such evidence before allowing it to weigh in their decisions.

It is, of course, notorious that some mediums cheat self-consciously, volitionally. English Spiritualists are not familiar with the extent to which this is practised here in America. I appreciate the desire of the S.P.R. to condemn such procedure; but it is not by accepting second-hand evidence against mediums, without verification, and ostracising them on such evidence, that they will attain the end they seek. Ochorowicz stated that the procedure at Cambridge demonstrated that the experimenters were not sufficiently familiar with the laws of suggestion. Professor Boirac has said that it is rather by the study of actual experimentation than by their present methods of classifying spontaneously occurring phenomena, that the S.P.R. will achieve the results they seek to attain.

I urge these criticisms upon the attention of the S.P.R., and submit that it is rather by the study of the conditions under which suggestion phenomena, whether hypnotic, mesmeric, or mediumistic, or telepathic, are induced most favourably, and by the study of the distinction dividing all such phenomena induced through passive subjects, from other phenomena actively produced, and then by the dissemination of the knowledge acquired by experimentation, that the purification of Spiritualism will be obtained.

New York.

QUÆSTOR VITÆ.

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.

Mrs. Hardinge Britten.

SIR,—On behalf of my sick and suffering sister, Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, I ask you to print in your popular paper the reasons why she is unable to answer personally, or fails to comply with, the numerous requests that are poured in upon her by letters, from this and other countries, to continue the course of services in the form of lectures and personal work, which she has been incessantly rendering for the last forty years towards the promulgation of the most beloved and progressive cause of Spiritualism.

Being utterly unable to wield her pen, or write herself, or to comply (at least at present) with the influx of the demands poured in upon her for her accustomed good service, she asks me (her sister, with whom she resides) to give the following reasons for her inability to continue her service of travelling, lecturing, &c., as has been her custom for the past forty years, in advocacy of the noble cause of Spiritualism.

For now nearly ten months, Mrs. Britten has been very ill—unable hardly to write, walk, travel, or above all to stand on a platform and become a spiritual instrument for teaching, as during her past busy life and indefatigable work.

Some of the medical attendants whom we have called in attribute her helpless condition to break-down from over work. Good and wise spirit advisers insist that the trouble comes from inflammatory rheumatism, to which my sister has ever been subject, and as she is utterly unable (at least at the present time) to travel, or go into public as a speaker, she delegates to me the sorrowful task of answering the numerous appeals for her accustomed good service, by the words—'Not yet,' 'Not yet.'

My sister desires, above all other points, to express her deep regret that her helpless rheumatic condition leaves her no hope of attending the 31st of this month's gatherings in honour of the fifty-first year of the grand spiritual movement. Emma Hardinge Britten was the first and earliest friend and associate of the Fox Sisters, and so continued up to the date of each one's death.

Though she is thus unfortunately prevented from taking any present part in the celebrations, designed to commemorate the wonderful movement of which they were the first opening workers, she desires me to add in conclusion, that they will *all* be spiritually present at every celebration on March 31st of this year, and aid our good and faithful Spiritualist fellow-workers in this, as in every future good work, designed to celebrate the opening of the gates of

Eternity to humanity, by the angels who knocked at the door of earth, craving for admission, some fifty-one years ago.

With my sister 'Emma Hardinge Britten's' kindest wishes and most loving remembrances to all her friends and well-wishers,

(MRS.) MARGARET WILKINSON.

2, Winfield-terrace, Chester-road,
Old Trafford, Manchester.

We all recognise with gratitude the value of Mrs. Hardinge Britten's long years of service to our cause, and cordially sympathise with her in her ill-health, which for the present prevents her from continuing the work that she loves so well and has discharged so efficiently.—ED.
'LIGHT.']

Brain Waves.

SIR,—I should be very sorry to throw a damper upon the enthusiasm with which Mr. William Lynd's lecture on 'Wireless Telegraphy' was received, as on this branch of his subject he appears to have given a very lucid and masterly exposition, but when he began to discourse on 'telepathy' and 'brain waves' I fancy that he wandered out of his province and intruded into a region which, I fear, he has not carefully studied.

In my elaborate examination of the phenomena of clairvoyance, I was never able to trace the direct influence of brain waves beyond the limits of the atmosphere of the person from whom the brain waves emanated; but I was able triumphantly to establish the fact that ministering spirits and guardian angels are capable of conveying thoughts, impressions, and wishes from one mind to another through any distance of space; that at public assemblies the attendance of spirits is vastly greater than that of the bodily congregation; and that these spirits are actively occupied in influencing the souls of the persons present at such gatherings.

Mr. Lynd quotes the very common incident of a mother dreaming that her son in Canada was drowned at the very time the catastrophe happened; and he cites the circumstance as proving 'the truth of telepathy.' But I believe the simple explanation to be that the released spirit of the child visited his mother in her sleep and revealed his fate to her sympathetic soul. Frequently on these occasions the actual spirit of the deceased person is distinctly seen and identified.

In a separate work I have treated this subject as exhaustively as my experience permitted, but as I am not desirous of cribbing an advertisement, I abstain from further reference to the argument. All I can say is that I was assisted in my researches by one who was, at that time, the most luminous clairvoyante the world has probably ever known.

Scientific men appear to me to be engaged in an artful endeavour to appropriate Spiritualism for their own materialistic purposes. They seem desirous of accepting 'Spiritualism without the spirits,' and very intent upon establishing this erroneous doctrine. We must take care that this trick is not successful.

NEWTON CROSLAND.

Spiritualism at Felixstowe.

SIR,—Mrs. Brenchley's first week with us is over, but its memory will never leave us. Following the general séance, of which I sent you a report, we had two others, as well as private sittings. Words fail me to describe the marvellous results; no one who witnessed the impersonations and messages through this gifted medium could fail to be convinced that if we will open our hearts to the spirit-world we shall get such light and knowledge and comfort as we never dreamed to be possible. I will not enter into details of each séance, but just give a few leading points.

Mrs. Brenchley, in her normal condition, gave most interesting and lucid explanations of what Spiritualism teaches and is able to do: and 'Sam' (one of her guides) having controlled her, charmed us with inspiring addresses in his quaint broken English. I must tell you that we love 'Sam' now as a real, personal friend. Then followed the wonderful impersonations; during the last séance there were no less than *eight* of them, and also clairvoyant descriptions afterwards, all fully recognised.

One dear old man, who was well known and respected

by everyone in this place, and a leading Salvationist, came with his unmistakable manner and voice, greeting his daughter-in-law and two granddaughters just in his old familiar way. He told them how surprised he was at what he found on the 'other side,' quite 'different' from what he expected. 'No tambourines here, Liz,' he said, but he seemed very contented, and most happy to be able to speak again to those he had left behind. Two very striking instances were men who had been killed here in accidents; one in making the new railway line, and the other in excavating for sewer-pipes. They were painfully realistic. In the case of the man killed instantaneously by the caving in of earth, he told us that he had only 'just awoke'—he didn't know that he was dead till that night! Thank God, we have been able to say words of comfort and cheer to several poor spirits. One young fellow came to ask forgiveness for a wrong done to one in our circle, and earnestly do we pray that we may help to lead him into the light.

Personally I can say that those of us who had the happiness of living in the same house with Mrs. Brenchley that week felt how *thin* the 'veil' is between us and those 'gone before'; we did, indeed, walk, 'hand in hand with angels.' Since she left us we have been going on in a more humble way; we have had surprising and convincing tests with the table and 'Ouija,' helped by a lady who is a good physical medium. I must tell you an amusing little incident with regard to the table. Some of our sceptical male friends asserted that we had had 'a table made on purpose,' so we offered to let them *bring their own table*; however, they didn't seem inclined to take that trouble, and after having *carefully* examined ours they obligingly admitted that there was no trickery in it!

Now we are looking forward to Easter, when Mr. and Mrs. Brenchley hope to come to hold a public mission here. We have taken a hall to hold our meetings in for both Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Are there any friends of the cause living in our neighbourhood (or who are coming to Felixstowe for the Easter holidays) who will help us? The announcement which appears in your paper this week will give notice of our arrangements, and if any friends will kindly volunteer to speak or otherwise assist us, we will welcome them gladly, and would suggest that as soon as possible they will send their names to Mrs. Brenchley, 111, St. Thomas's-road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

M.S.

More Helping Hands Wanted.

SIR,—I want 1,000 to inaugurate and sustain my endeavour to spread the truths of Spiritualism, by a tract mission, throughout the British Isles.

Many have already 'fallen in line' and expressed willingness. I shall call the movement the 'Midland Spiritual Tract Enterprise,' and ask all who are willing to lend a hand in this service to be at the expense of a post card, writing on it (all that is necessary) '*I am ready*,' with name and address.

BEVAN HARRIS.

Radcliffe-on-Trent.

Reply to 'G. V.'

SIR,—I must apologise to 'G. V.' for not making my explanation clearer. I certainly did not intend to say that I believed mediums to be generally hypnotised before a séance. I meant that in hypnotism one saw the flesh and blood operator, while the trance condition was produced by an operator in the unseen discarnate state.

BIDSTON.

The Word 'Death.'

SIR,—I think there is an unnecessary objection to the use among Spiritualists of the word 'death.' Everybody knows that when we say 'Mrs. Smith is dead' we mean that her body is dead, and not that her spirit is dead; which would be absurd to every person who believes in a continuation of the life of the spirit. If a materialist said, 'Mrs. Smith is dead,' he would mean that the *whole* of her was gone—which to him would be true.

The hymn beginning 'There is no death in this wide world,' is simply a fancy and not a fact, because we know there *is* a death in this wide world. When we talk about 'death' we mean the 'departure of life from the body'—

which is a fact. Does not the word *pass-over*, which has been suggested, look pedantic? All ordinary people know what we mean by 'death,' and whatever word you substitute, you will have to explain Spiritualism to him who does not understand it.

Suppose a man sees me at the funeral of my mother and says, 'So your mother is dead at last.' What would he think if I said, 'No, she is not dead'? He would answer, 'Have you buried her alive?' See how absurd the whole affair would seem to this common-sense inquirer, if I said, 'My mother is not dead, she has passed over.' He would ask, 'Has her body been translated like Elijah's? What has it passed over?' I submit that the objection to the word *death* is rather foolish.

J. CLAYTON.

59, Manchester-road, Bradford.

The Rope Trick.

SIR,—As the 'Hostess' referred to in Mrs. Paul's letter of March 4th, I now feel it necessary to say a word in defence of the treatment she received at my house on the occasion under dispute; and first of all I would draw attention to the fact that in his first letter, 'Observer' expressed his belief that Mrs. Paul 'is or has been a genuine medium.' The only point under discussion is, as to whether genuine mediumship was displayed at the séance in question. We knew Mrs. Paul had been ill, suffering (as we were told) from the shock of losing an old and valued friend, and consequently we were prepared for small results, and full of kind sympathy for a 'sensitive.' On Mrs. Paul's arrival at four o'clock one glance sufficed to show me that something was seriously wrong. I was distressed at her appearance and incoherent talk, but accepted Mr. Paul's statement that this was entirely due to the 'shock.' Tea was waiting in a room apart from my friends, in order that Mrs. Paul might rest while enjoying some refreshment, but Mrs. Paul said the only thing she could take was a glass of ale, and some bottled beer was accordingly ordered up. At 4.30 p.m. we adjourned to the séance room, Mrs. Paul needing the steadying hand of her husband as she went upstairs. I told Mr. Paul I did not consider his wife had recovered sufficiently to come out, and he replied that she had insisted on doing so. The séance proceeded. No writing was found on the slate, only some scratches such as some people think could be produced by a pencil held in the mouth (at Mrs. Paul's house I have seen *good* writing obtained while her hands were *securely* fastened behind her back). Removal of the rings on her fingers occurred later on, but this turned entirely on the tying of the hands to the chair rail. It is true that my husband eventually released the rope from the *chair*, and then 'Observer' came forward to examine the fastening of the *wrists*. He said quite politely, 'May I ask you to uncross your hands?' 'I can't,' said Mrs. Paul, less politely. 'Pardon me,' continued 'Observer,' 'but I think you can.' 'Then I tell you I can't,' said Mrs. Paul, becoming angry and calling names. Then 'Observer' turned to my friends and said, 'This is a fraud; the hands are not tied at all, and Mrs. Paul could easily do herself all that we have seen.' 'Then if I could, I didn't,' was the retort, and her temper being as she confesses 'lost,' a violent scene appeared imminent. There was a little moving about and confusion in the room, and the next thing I noticed was the rope being flung away by Mrs. Paul, who challenged 'Observer' to do the trick himself. (He subsequently did so.) My pressing anxiety at this juncture was to get Mrs. Paul to leave the room *quietly*. With her husband's help I persuaded her to go downstairs and put on her things. Mr. Paul did not utter *one word* of complaint to me, but kept on expressing his regret at his wife's behaviour, calling upon her to be quiet, and remember where she was. I cannot believe that he will fail to corroborate me in this, and to acknowledge that there can be no better way to disarm suspicion than by consenting to do as asked by the one who suspects. If therefore Mrs. Paul *could not* release her hands by the uncrossing of them, why did she not allow 'Observer' to try and do so? He was both polite and gentle, and would have recognised with deep interest the evidence of a new force. In justice to my guest I can say no less. It is a poor explanation to say, 'I lost my temper, so did not.' The victory would have been with Mrs. Paul had 'Observer'

tried to uncross her hands but failed, and I should have rejoiced over the failure, instead of feeling very seriously disconcerted at the turn of events.

HOSTESS.

SIR,—I am the 'person' (as the title of 'gentleman' is denied me) who exposed Mrs. Paul's rope trick a few weeks ago. As I have not previously addressed you, you may, imagine my amusement at having 'Observer's' letters fathered on me, for no other reason than that I and my wife happened to be the only persons present who were *rash* enough to admit being merely seekers after truth, instead of confirmed Spiritualists.

Permit me, therefore, as a professional man, whose vocation in life has been the close observation and application of physical facts and forces, to state that on all material points 'Observer' has been, if anything, too lenient in describing the childish frivolities and maudlin drivel with which Mrs. Paul sought to impress us.

For the benefit of those who may have been misled by Mrs. Paul's suggestion of a 'cat's cradle,' I offer you a description of the way in which any of your readers may exactly reproduce the knots, and, needless to say, the phenomena also.

In the middle of a couple of yards of rope, tie a loop of about twelve to fourteen inches circumference. Straddle the loose ends of the rope over the back of a chair with the loop uppermost. Tie additional knots with the loose ends of rope *ad lib.* to secure same to chair.

Sit sideways on chair with left shoulder towards the back and pass both hands in the same direction through the loop from left to right, the left hand being undermost.

Now rotate the right hand horizontally till the fingers approach the left forearm, and if the loop is not then twisted up tight enough, another complete rotation of the right hand can be made by sufficiently raising the elbow.

The twist in the loop looks much like a knot, especially as it is nearly out of sight between the superposed wrists.

This will afford an accurate reproduction of the position and security of Mrs. Paul's hands at the séance, and I solemnly state that her declared inability to uncross her hands was a mere pretence for the purpose of staving off exposure.

It will be within the recollection of all present that Mrs. Paul practically admitted the insecurity of the knot by disclaiming all responsibility for the defective manner in which 'Peter' had tied it.

PERCY J. NEATE.

Belsize, Watts'-avenue, Rochester.

PSYCHISM.*

Dr. Paul Gibier, the head of the Pasteur Institute in New York, whose works, 'Spiritisme' and 'L'Analyse des Choses,' stand in high repute in Paris, is about to publish an English edition of the latter work, under the title of 'Psychism—or, Analysis of Things Existing.'

The synopsis shows that he traces evolution up from the basic energy behind 'things.' Man is presented as a cell in the Great Being; hence his relations as a microcosm with the macrocosm are considered. Dr. Gibier supports the thesis of Dr. Durand de Gros in this respect and treats the cells in man's body as individuals. As a student under Charcot and Luys, Dr. Gibier has acquired special qualifications for dealing with man's nervous system, and the relations of hypnotism and of psychism therewith. The exteriorisation of nervous force by will is also dealt with. Spiritualism, materialism, &c., the requisite conditions of verification, &c., are considered in two chapters. Dr. Gibier has retained his old relations with the French psychologists and shows the bearing of their experiments on phenomenal psychology, in several chapters dealing with the psychical constitution of man.

MISS ROWAN VINCENT.—An esteemed Glasgow correspondent sends us the following appreciative notice of Miss Vincent's visit to that city: 'We have had an excellent time with Miss Vincent. We have had no one for a long time who has made such an excellent impression. We have all been delighted with her clear, rational speech and her most pointed clairvoyance.'

* Published at the Pasteur Institute, 313, West 23rd Street, New York. Price 4s.