

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

THE SCEPTICAL SPIRIT.

Mr. Hannen Swaffer's observation, in a recent address on his experiences in Spiritualism, that a sceptical and critical spirit had grown up in the world and that "there was altogether too much analysing" awoke a responsive note in many minds. This excess of the analytic process—the disposition to disbelieve, to carp and to cavil—is doubtless the result of the tendency in the average man to fly from one extreme to another. A man, let us say, obtains some real evidence of survival, but later encounters a cheat or a failure and immediately everything goes overboard—the false thing invalidates all the genuine ones! We have seen it many times in psychic inquiry. Indeed, we should have no particular quarrel with the sceptical and analytic spirit if it were accompanied by some degree of discrimination. Some of it seems to be in the nature of analysis gone mad, because it is often fiercely turned on things which cannot possibly be analysed away. They are facts and remain facts, however much they are attacked. The truth suffers nothing, but the sceptic suffers because of his perversity—he loses the benefit of the knowledge he might have gained. Dickens once observed of the suspicious and incredulous type of minds that they go through life in a suit of armour which, while it protects them from certain evils, shields them also from much good.

THE SCHOOL OF EXPERIENCE.

In the current *Quest* appears an excellent article, "Clairvoyance and Mental Imagery," by Miss L. M. Bazett, who, as a clairvoyante of some distinction, is able to discourse on the subject from first-hand experience. She notes the marked change which has taken place in the attitude of scholastic psychology and psychical research towards phenomena, and expresses the hope that the subject will shortly receive "the critical and impartial investigation for which the world of science stands." That is certainly much to be hoped, although the facts are there whether they receive the official seal of approval or not. Miss Bazett's position is that such an investigation would benefit the mediums and psychics by removing the feeling of isolation from which many of them suffer on account of their unusual powers. That is a position with which we can cordially sympathise. Mediums have been made to suffer far too much, both from public

ignorance and from the ignorance of those who, having claims to high mental capacity, were ignorant simply because they did not choose to learn. The article, by the way, throws so much light on mental processes in clairvoyance that it becomes instructive on the question of the workings of the mind in general. We have heard scientists, who have been humble enough to learn, say how greatly a study of mediumship and clairvoyance illuminated some of their problems in other branches of study. That was, after all, only natural. There is a unity in all phenomena, whether of life or of mind, and the solution of one problem, may, by the same fact, provide the key to others. There is no school like the school of experience in these matters.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

We lately referred to an article on Capital Punishment by Mr. E. P. Hewitt, K.C., in *Pearson's Weekly* of January 14th. The article is presented as giving the views of one who is a Spiritualist as well as a lawyer, and incidentally it serves to illustrate what we have several times said, namely, that Spiritualists, while they are united on the main question of human survival, number people who hold every variety of opinion on other subjects. We believe the main body of Spiritualists to be strongly opposed to capital punishment. Mr. Hewitt does not agree that the time has come for its abolition, and he claims that communications from the more advanced and enlightened spirits support the view that in the conditions in which we live on earth to-day, capital punishment for the most serious offences must, for the protection of the community, be retained. Mr. Hewitt refers to one argument frequently used against capital punishment, namely, that when a criminal is executed, he passes over with revenge in his heart and returns to earth as a spirit to work mischief. We cannot say that we were ever much impressed by that argument, it being so evident that a man of evil mind is more of a menace to society while in the flesh than when out of it, especially in view of the difficulties which a spirit encounters in renewing his contact with earth-existence. Apart from this, as we have frequently said, it seems reasonable to believe that the next world, being a world in which law and order obtains to a higher degree than is the case here, the activities of malignant spirits are efficiently restrained. All the same, the death-penalty is one that offends the moral sense of the best members of the community, and will doubtless be removed from the penal code with the advance of civilisation.

A poor man, served by thee, shall make thee rich;
A sick man, helped by thee, shall make thee strong;
Thou shalt be served thyself by every sense
Of service which thou renderest.

— ELIZABETH BROWNING.

"THE REAL PRESENCE": THE PSYCHIC FACTOR.

BY HENRY COLLETT.

(Author of "Little Gidding and its Founder," etc.)

The recent controversy on the Rite of Remembrance and of Communion, which, in the beautiful phraseology of the Vale Owen Scripts, "The Christ initiated that His followers might be able from time to time perpetually to intensify their contact with Him, and so draw from Him that Life of which Himself is the reservoir," must have deeply stirred those Spiritualists who are yet devout members of *Ecclesia Anglicana*, and retain affection for their traditional Mother Church.

As the Roman doctrine of the Eucharist, Transubstantiation, and the Anglican belief in the Real Presence (of Christ in the Eucharist) have been the subject of contention, it would be apposite briefly to explain the different aspects of this Divine Mystery as presented by the rival churches.

In the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the Catholic Church adopts what their authorities term "the manifest literal sense" of Christ's words. The Council of Trent declared "that by the consecration of the bread and wine the whole substance of the bread is changed into the substance of the Body of Christ, and the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His Blood, which change is properly and fitly called Transubstantiation." That is to say, the "accidents" (unessential properties) of the bread and wine which are perceived by the senses, conceal the Body and Blood of Christ, and not the substances (essential parts) of bread and wine. The Council further declared "that under each species" (i.e., of bread and wine), "and under each particle of each species, Christ is contained whole and entire"; the *totus Christus* being His Flesh and Blood, Body and Soul, Humanity and Divinity. Thus, what is termed the corporeal or physical carnal Presence is involved in this doctrine of Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of bread and wine), a doctrine which the Reformers of the sixteenth century condemned as "repugnant to the plain words of Scripture" (Article XXVIII).

Transubstantiation, then, implies a Real Presence, though belief in the Real Presence does not necessarily involve a belief in Transubstantiation. The Lutheran view of the Eucharist is called Consubstantiation, and admits a Real Presence without a change of substance; and this may be said to receive acceptance by the largest section of the Anglican Communion, whose acquiescence, however, does not presume a definition of the manner of It. The difference, therefore, is the "Real" (and the Spiritual only is real) as opposed to the "Real"-cum-"Objective" Presence in the consecrated elements.

Two questions of the profoundest importance now arise: Can proof be obtained to substantiate the faith of the Christian devotee that the Christ is present in the elements? And if so, what is the nature of His Presence?

Among the many letters arising out of the Sacraments controversy appeared one in the *Morning Post* from the Vicar of a Hampshire parish that contained matter of the greatest significance. This clergyman mentioned that at one period in his life he had a consciousness of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, though in latter years this faculty had become less reliable, and he gave one notable instance which occurred when he was an undergraduate. One day he wandered into a Cambridgeshire church, and meeting the Vicar, then a stranger, he remarked that the Sacrament was evidently reserved, for he could feel Its Presence. The Vicar would hardly believe him,

but admitted that It was reserved, almost surreptitiously, with no external indication, in an aumbry in the chancel. (It may be added that in those days the Bishops frowned heavily on Reservation.) That there are persons who can apprehend some change in the elements after consecration was noticed in an article by Mr. Ernest Raymond in the *Sunday Times*, October 23rd, 1927. In one of these cases, the percipient was subjected to "scientific experiment," and was found never to be wrong in his sensing, whether or not the Reserved Sacrament was present in a church. That most saintly Augustinian nun, Anne Catherine Emmerich (1774-1824), who bore the stigmata, and healed the sick through spiritual agency, and whose zeal and strange power puzzled and annoyed the tepid sisters of her convent, was forced to undergo somewhat similar tests by a commission which included scientists and doctors, and in every case she immediately knew whether or not the bread had been consecrated.

In the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists are to be found many instances of this sensing the Real and Essential Presence of our Lord in the consecrated elements, and in the treatise, "De Virtutibus et Miraculis Henrici VI," written by the Carthusian monk, John Blakman, it is related that this devout King was not only conscious of the Real Presence, but could sense the absence of the Host from the pyx, even when riding past a sacred edifice. Significantly, that unfortunate monarch (whose name may yet be enrolled in the canon of saints) was probably the most psychical that ever sat on the throne of England, possessing in a marked degree the faculties of clairvoyance, clairaudience, healing, and prophecy.

The examples quoted above, and no doubt numerous others could be mentioned, may be presupposed to denote an unusual degree of sanctity. As the hagiographer said of the most pious King Henry, "... non incongrue Videtur, quod cœlestibus sacramentis fuisset sæpius illustratus, et in suis tribulationibus consolatus." ("It seems fitting that he should often have received heavenly revelations, and been consoled thereby in his severe afflictions!")

The ancient and cherished belief, then, in the Presence of Christ in the elements after consecration, however occult the manner of happening has been adjudged to be, thus receives confirmation. The foregoing instances of subjective impressions of Its reality are, at least to the Christian Spiritualist, sufficient testimony. Evidence that is judicially valid cannot be demanded in spiritual matters; the existence of the Deity Himself cannot be "proved."

There remains now to reveal the nature of It, and the process by which this blessed consummation is effected. It is of little avail to appeal to those who might reasonably be thought to be able to shed light on this most sacred matter. One of the prelates recently affirmed that It is a Mystery which is beyond verbal definition, and must be accepted by Faith; and explanations attempted by theologians are so involved and abstruse as to be incomprehensible to ordinary laymen. But as that great seer, Andrew Jackson Davis, once said, "Truth is always simple," and to those who have developed an inner consciousness of the immanence of Spirit, fortified by objective evidence of its manifestations, the esoteric factor in the Rite of the Sacrament does not present that obscurity with which it has been hedged around by theological writers. Happily, for

our edification, the nature and method of the change which takes place at the Eucharist have been revealed from high spiritual sources, and the revelation is to be found in that section entitled "The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Christ" in the Rev. George Vale Owen's *The Ministry of Heaven*, and is further elucidated in *The Priesthood of the Laity* by the same author. It may be summarised as follows: On the elements of bread and wine, at the time of consecration, is poured the Life Stream of God—a stream of vital power proceeding from the Father—flowing through and tintured by the Personality of the Christ. Thus the two common things of earthly origin, the bread and wine, become interpenetrated with the Life of Him, and come to be, as He said, His Body and His Blood. The prayer used at the Consecration is more than an invocation; it is also the assent of those assembled, for without such spiritual desire no blessing is ever thrust upon men. The descent of the Christ-stream is the response of the Christ to those who worship Him in Spirit and in Truth; and so the material elements become vehicles of grace to those who receive them with responsive hearts. There are always angel ministrants present whose duty it is to see that the process is carried out orderly and effectually. They are the channels on the spirit-side, as the priest is on this side, through whom is poured the stream of Christly power upon the bread and wine. These angel attendants were constantly seen by clairvoyant members of Mr. Vale Owen's congregation, and doubtless they could be observed in other places of worship at Holy Communion by those who have the spiritual gift of "discernment of spirits," to use the Pauline phrase. Incidentally, the Catholic Church postulates the presence of angels round the altar during Holy Mass.

Finally, it has been affirmed that this mystic-religious factor of the Real Presence, whatever the nature of the process, is a proof of the "validity" of Anglican orders. We submit, however, that the question of validity is in no way concerned. Priesthood, as Mr. Vale Owen points out, is more than an order; it is a power, a faculty, which is awakened in the ordinand, who thus becomes a medium, or mediator, between the spiritual and material spheres, on behalf of the community, in those qualities which pertain to this particular aspect of mediumship. But this faculty can be awakened in others by methods with which Spiritualists are conversant. Christ does not confine the manifestation of His Power to certain "orders" of men, however historic these orders may be. And so not only a Free Church minister, but any layman, who devoutly decided that it was right for him to celebrate the Holy Communion could effect a real Consecration whereby the sacred elements become infused with the Christly power. It is gratifying to observe that Dr. Temple, Bishop of Manchester, recently supported this view at the 25th session of the Southwark Diocesan Conference.

WHEN I said once that spirit communicators are never able to give a direct and entirely independent expression of themselves, that was held to be a damaging admission. It was not an admission—it was an affirmation, for the same consideration will apply to all of us, although in a less degree. Not the strongest mind is wholly free from the influence of circumstance and environment. It may easily be influenced by much weaker minds—as in the case of the wise man who is annoyed by the fool.

LUCIUS.

To be afraid to die, or wish for death,
Are words and passions of despairing breath;
Who doth the first the day doth faintly yield,
And who the second, basely flies the field.

—F. QUARLES.

IF THE WORLD TURNED SPIRITUALIST.

By "OBSERVATEUR."

If the whole world could, in the space of twenty-four hours, become convinced of the truths which are perceived by the Spiritualists, what differences we should see! At first the alteration would probably be more real than apparent. There would be no startling change in our habits, and activities to begin with. The world would still go about its daily tasks and pleasures, although there would be a new note, a fresh understanding, a wider comprehension of Life.

Probably the first to feel the effects of the change, from a purely mundane point of view, would be the undertakers and others concerned with the removal, disposal or preservation of the fleshly garment discarded at death. Elaborate funerals, costly marble tombstones, all the expensive trappings of woe would gradually tend to vanish; indeed, they have already gone far in that direction.

A new and vitalising spirit would characterise the churches. The dull and listless services would take on a new significance. Whether theological discords would continue is a difficult point on which to pronounce. Most probably not. So far as one can observe the churches have in the past always quarrelled among themselves upon "live" subjects, matters of, presumably, vital moment. The fact that the tendency to split off into separate sects has died down may be due to a more reasonable and united attitude. Or it may be due to apathy and the lack of any fresh material over which to argue.

Spiritualism, if accepted by the churches, might at first stir up the old ecclesiastical fighting spirit. But not for long, for Spiritualism is, in essence and rightly understood, the greatest force for unity in the whole world to-day.

Possibly the most deep-seated change that we should see in the newly-enlightened world would be the elimination of fear, that canker which gnaws at the minds of so many—the fear of death. Perhaps of all destructive and corroding forces which can attack the mind, fear is the worst.

The grosser forms of selfishness would in a large measure tend to die down. Not entirely perhaps. I do not suggest that in Spiritualism the world would find a magic and all-powerful antidote for evil, capable of turning the weak and sinful human being into a kind of plaster saint. But that kind of deliberate self-indulgence, the cultivated hedonism, based on the assumption that death ends all, would certainly grow less. "Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die," is the unspoken philosophy of thousands at the present time.

Cruelty, too, would lessen; not perhaps the thoughtless cruelty of the unheeding, but detached and callous cruelty having its origin in purely materialistic conceptions, which we see all around us to-day.

Grief at the parting by death would, in a large measure, be assuaged. There would, as is natural, be the sorrow of parting. But with it would come the comfort of a certainty of reunion, not based on faith but on the solid foundation of tested knowledge.

The world would indeed be a new world, and a better. There would be more love and laughter, more happy faces, greater understanding between man and man, and a saner, healthier, fresher outlook.

The change has not yet come; but at the appointed time it will arrive.

THE SCATCHERD MEMORIAL FUND.—We have to acknowledge with thanks the following donation: Mrs. Ellis Powell, 10s.; making the total amount received to date £188 5s. 6d.

DIRECT HEALING FROM BEYOND.

By "DOC SAN."

In dealing with cases of this description it is occasionally a difficult matter not only to place facts accurately but also to make them convincing to hearers or readers. In the instance which follows, however, everything is authentic and there are also four witnesses to prove veracity.

The health condition of a certain Dr. R. had been giving not only himself, but his friends and medical advisers, much anxiety; a strong, healthy man with a good practice and nothing to worry about, he had suffered severely from insomnia, lack of appetite, loss of weight—over fifty lbs. within five months, which was very rapid—and a general run-down feeling.

Specialist after specialist had been consulted without result; there was no organic or nervous mischief to be remedied, and naturally the doctor-patient grew despondent at such an unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Calling one evening last autumn, I found him in bed, a roaring fire in the room, though the temperature outside was not low; he informed me that his condition had been so bad of late that he was considering the advisability of "selling out" and trying a fresh climate.

In the room were his wife, little son and daughter, to say nothing of his faithful Alsatian hound, Mahomet, and whilst chatting generally, we noticed that the dog grew uneasy and restless, whining gently and looking up at each one in turn, in an enquiring fashion. Then, very rapidly, the room grew colder, the atmosphere becoming almost Arctic in its iciness, so much so that the ladies retired to don outer woollen garments; I replaced my overcoat and was glad to do so.

What then occurred can best be given by the patient himself: "As you are aware, 'San,' I do not profess to be a Spiritualist, but I must admit that many things have happened in my experience as a doctor which I don't even pretend to understand.

"One night recently, having gone to bed early, the atmosphere of the room suddenly chilled, as you have felt it to-night.

"As I lay trying to sleep, a peculiar sensation which might be likened to a current, or ray, started at the base of the spine, travelling upwards to the crown of the head. It was a rather uncomfortable experience I may tell you, but not in the least painful; then suddenly it ceased. This was followed by a warm, soothing current which pervaded the whole body, and during its action I fell sound asleep—the first complete repose for months. Next morning I felt ever so much better, and, at night while in bed, I went through the same experience again.

"I can't tell you anything more about it, but you can see for yourself where a powerful stimulus has evidently been applied to the spine."

Needless to say, I believed every word he had said; and sure enough the skin of the back had all the appearance of having undergone a powerful stimulation.

To-day Dr. R. has recovered his health completely and is even more active than ever, if that is possible.

This is only one of many such cases which have come under my notice, satisfying me and mine that our dear ones who have passed over before us are helping and caring for us as far as they can.

I would add that the experience of my wife and myself in the matter of seances has always been unsatisfactory—in fact, after the last one we attended, a voice told us not to bother with them as we did not need them. Our dear ones on the other side of life are never far away from us, however; we feel and hear them; we have been told by advanced Spiritualists that we are exceptionally psychic.

(Continued at foot of next column.)

SOME SPECULATIONS AND A PARABLE.

By E. HARVEY.

What is called free-thought consisted, in its earlier days, of a monotonous ridicule of the miracles and selected portions of the Bible and the Creeds. It was very popular, and when the truth of Evolution became known the doubter had something solid under him. He had been hungering and thirsting after positive proof of his animal condition and fate, and here it was! The Mind caused him some uneasiness, but a scientist stated that "the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile," and the last doubt went. Everything we see merely *happened*—like Topsy, "just growed"; there was, then no Person to hate or to adore, for one could not quarrel with electrons, or have a grievance against a rate of vibration! Many have, however, continued to believe in something superior to themselves and call it variously First Cause, Supreme Arbiter, Great Architect, the Being spoken of by the Hebrews as "The Ancient of Days." This Being knew our earth when it was fiery mist and can see it now with clairvoyant eye as what it will be—a lifeless, uninhabitable rock. He provided the germs of a fauna suitable for its youth, knowing perfectly well that nearly all of it would perish later from unadaptability, and when conditions changed He could either inform fresh plasm with life that should be more appropriate, or he could allow the expiring fauna slowly to modify into something more adapted to the new stage. Obviously, One who could start Eozoic life once could do it at any other time.

I have thought how droll it would be if the fishes reckoned their descent reversely to our way, as thus:—

The Codfish: "Yes, dear, I have always understood that we rose from those poor earth-crawlers, but it was a long time ago. You have noticed they have a backbone—only thirty-three vertebræ!—and a paltry couple of dozen ribs as compared, say, with our friend the Herring, who has nearer ten to the inch; but still, the lowly germ of our origin is there. I have heard that specimens of these earth-bipeds have been seen with traces of gill-slits below their ears. Presumably they belong to a type that failed to develop and so lost for ever the chance to disport themselves like us on the limitless waste of the ocean. Why, the poor creatures can't keep their heads under this lovely water two minutes and live!"

THEORY AND PRACTICE.

There is a story of a man who gave long and earnest study to manuals on swimming, and eventually, by mastering all the exercises, became an accomplished swimmer on dry land. When later a boating accident plunged him into the water, he would have been drowned but for the good offices of a man who knew all the practice and none of the theory of swimming. But that is not to say that theory is useless. It is really invaluable when based on practice. The man who passes into the next life with some theory about it, based on a little practical acquaintance with Spiritualism, is in a much better position than those who have theory without knowledge or knowledge without theory.

G.

(Continued from previous column.)

I cannot express any opinion upon that point, however, but I do know that many a worry and difficulty has been solved for us *sans* any human assistance whatever.

This leads one to the question: Would it not be much more to the point if seekers after knowledge would study and try to develop their own spiritual side? Judging by our experiences (which I have given from time to time in LIGHT) they would soon be amply rewarded.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

"OUTSIDE THE DOOR!"

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

THE BAYLIS CASE.

Mr. Alex L. Dribbel writes, in reference to Mr. Bradley's article in LIGHT of January 7th:—

I trust you will allow me to point out to Mr. H. Dennis Bradley that I do not admit as evidence the unrecognised apparition of my "father." . . . The sentence: "If you only knew, old boy!" may not be regarded as evidence by Mr. Dennis Bradley, but may certainly be regarded as such by the relatives of the manifesting spirit who know the way in which he expressed himself when incarnate. I do not consider the excerpt of my report which you published the most evidential part, and it suits Mr. H. Dennis Bradley's purpose to ridicule one sentence taken out of its context. The reason which Mr. Dennis Bradley gives for not holding on to the fingers which he asserts were those of the medium, is feeble and unconvincing. If these fingers were actually the medium's he could have caught Mrs. Baylis *en flagrant délit*, and any subsequent discovery would have been made superfluous.

ALARMIST PROPHECIES.

Sir,—I would not venture to return to this subject were it not for the fact that many people both within the ranks of Spiritualism and without have allowed their fear of "approaching calamities" to warp their judgment and seriously disturb their minds.

From time immemorial certain religious sects have made a special point of instilling the "fear of Hell" into the minds of their followers, apparently in an attempt to turn men's thoughts towards the love of God!

In modern days revivalists are not so crude in their methods of endeavouring to persuade people to "forsake their evil ways"; nevertheless the action of Fear still seems to be considered the best weapon for bringing converts to the fold.

As an example, one might refer to the several quasi-religious organisations whose very existence to-day appears to be based on an attempt to utilise Great Pyramid symbolism for preaching the advent of fresh wars and world calamities. The leaders of such organisations seem to have no conception of the dangers run by sowing seeds of fear and unrest in the minds of men. Whilst the world is still reeling from the tragic effects of the Great War of 1914-18, can anything be more wicked than preaching under the guise of Religion the inevitability of another world-war?

Unfortunately "psychic revelation" is being used with the same end in view. We are told of high spiritual guides who communicate detailed information concerning the destructive forces which are stated to be preparing to destroy modern civilization and the works of man. If we are to believe such messages it would seem that the destructive agency of Fear rather than the constructive power of Love is still considered to be the best means for turning men's thought toward the spiritual realities of life.

It is an undoubted fact that a large measure of unrest and uncertainty permeates life in that border-land state of consciousness from which these "messages" are received. There is reason to believe that cosmic processes of a far-reaching and purifying character are at work in the universe and that the first effect of these processes is to arouse dismay and even fear in the minds of many people on both sides of the veil. Unfounded fear may prove to be one of the underlying causes resulting in this widespread dissemination of alarmist prophecy.

Might I emphasise the importance of diverting our energies into more constructive channels, otherwise, "that which we greatly fear may come upon us?" Surely the main object of Spiritualism and kindred movements is to turn men's minds to the spiritual realities of life rather than to encourage this uncertain wandering in psychic by-ways?

In any case, let us be very sure of our facts before incurring the grave responsibility of giving credence and publicity to alarmist messages, often received from very doubtful sources.

Yours, etc.,
W. TUDOR POLE.

61, St. James's Street, S.W. 1.

My introduction to the phenomenal aspects of Spiritualism was of the most (apparently) trivial nature. Curiosity alone caused me, one evening, to agree to sit at a round table with my two sisters. Upon placing our hands on the table and linking them together—we were sitting in full light—I was surprised to see it tip over to me. One of my sisters said, "Ask a question." I said, jocularly, "Where's my mother?" By the usual code the sentence was spelt out: "Outside the door." I didn't trouble to inquire further, but abruptly got up and went to the door—to find my mother hurrying away along the landing!

Now, I had left my mother a few minutes before in the kitchen, preparing supper. Her anxiety to try and find out how we were getting on overcame her repugnance to "eaves-dropping"—a species of bad behaviour she had brought us all up specially to abhor—and had prompted her to leave her household duties, come up two flights of stairs, and listen outside the door of our room. From that little incident sprang my life-long interest in Spiritualism.

L. H.

AN IMPROMPTU SEANCE.

There were seven of us seated round the fire on Christmas evening, when the sensitive of the party was suddenly controlled and the guide—a North American Indian—said, "Four mothers of your party have come with me—Emma, Emily, Susan, and Lavinia. Susan and Emily were both pleased to see the flowers you have placed near their photos at home." (We had assembled at a friend's house at Hastings for the holiday.) This little incident regarding the flowers had not been spoken of until the guide referred to it, so that it was a pleasing proof of the nearness of the two mothers concerned. Several other little matters were referred to which also indicated post-mortem knowledge of the conditions and circumstances of the sitters, and then the guide gave a message to our hostess from her companion, who had passed away a few months previously, the wording of which conveyed much internal evidence of identity. Another control then spoke and ended this informal seance by conveying the good wishes of other-side friends, in the course of which he cleverly included a "play" upon the Christian names of all present.

Whilst it is manifest that there is nothing startling in this little record, it is here given as a further evidence of the naturalness of spirit communications, where no inhibiting conditions are imposed—a point which the writer thinks is well worthy of the attention of inquirers. "Fraud-proof" conditions are most important and necessary in experimental psychical research, but they are not "the be all and end all" of the conditions of the spirit circle at which full expression of communicators' sentiments and messages is sought for.

C. A.

THE FREED MIND.

I live not in myself, but I become
 Portion of that around me; and to me
 High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
 Of human cities torture; I can see
 Nothing to loathe in Nature, save to be
 A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
 Class'd among creatures, when the soul can flee;
 And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
 Of ocean or the stars mingle, and not in vain.

And when at length, the mind shall be all free
 From what it hates in this degraded form,
 Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
 Existent happier in the fly and worm—
 When elements to elements conform,
 And dust is as it should be, shall I not
 Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
 The bodiless thought? the spirit of each spot?
 Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot?

—BYRON.

LIGHT.

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MEDIUMS AND SEANCES.

SOME WORDS IN SEASON.

He would be a rash man who would undertake to decide the question of a disputed seance, not having been present at that seance. In the Law Courts, when there is a conflict of testimony amongst the witnesses in a case, the Judge has to look to the balance of probabilities and decide accordingly. But a disputed experiment in psychic phenomena brings in a number of issues that lie outside the ordinary course of human affairs. That should operate as a check on hasty criticism and ill-considered judgments. Usually it does *not*, and generally the most positive statements proceed from those with the least experience.

Some of us have been familiar with this question for many years. We are acquainted with psychic phenomena in all its branches—the genuine, the spurious, and that hybrid variety that is neither one thing nor the other, but a baffling mixture of both. We have learned some facts concerning mediumship and its manifestations. Let us set down a few of them here, even at the risk of repetition, for there are some things which, being insufficiently known, cannot be too often repeated.

(1) The control of a medium by a spirit is of a hypnotic nature, and the full expression of the spirit-control's character and purpose is dependent on the degree of *rapport* between the two. This may be considerably affected by the sitters—whose influence on the medium may be favourable or the reverse. There is a very subtle psychic chemistry at work, altogether too subtle for those who pursue rule-of-thumb methods. Conditions so delicate are quite easily upset.

(2) The production of physical phenomena involves a mixture of the conditions of the mental or spiritual world and the material world, and where the balance is disturbed the result is what has been described as an "unholy mess"—it usually ends in the production of that hybrid variety of phenomena to which we have referred. The manifestations are chaotic and confused, and the medium, the centre of a vortex of conflicting currents, behaves accordingly, and may even be caught in trickery or apparent trickery. Where the medium is a person of ill-balanced mind, lacking in firmness of will and stability of character, these misadventures are common, especially where any of the circle are unsympathetic, suspicious or domineering. It is also the fact that a sitter, even if easy-going or credulous, may introduce some element unfavourable to mediumship.

(3) In physical manifestations (with few exceptions) the psychic or etheric body of the medium is employed by the spirit-operators. It may be compared to a connecting-rod or to a fulcrum; it is the link between the psychic region and the physical world, and the *only* link; for it is human beings in the flesh that alone supply the elements of both. Did not Raymond tell his father (Sir Oliver Lodge) that spirits cannot affect matter except by the aid of some power or substance taken from persons living in this world? And as we are still in the experimental stage it is not wonderful—and certainly not tragic—that things occasionally go wrong. There are bunglers on both sides of the "Veil," and even the best of us are arrant fumlbers, and have to learn chiefly by our failures.

(4) Success in psychic experiments lies mainly along the study of seance-conditions rather than the study of mediums. The medium is, of course, indispensable; but it must be noted that the best mediumship may fail where the seance-conditions are adverse, while, on the other hand, the most mediocre medium may yield excellent results where the quality of the sitters provides the needed support. The ideal circle is a composite of forces, lending point to the aphorism, "United we stand, divided we fall."

(5) Scientific experiments should be scientific through and through, if the results, whether good or bad, are to be of any value. The medium should know that he (or she) is being tested and prepared to cooperate with the investigators. The medium should be tough and seasoned, with gifts well-developed and fitted to stand an ordeal which is destructive to the over-sensitive and immature mediumistic types, who in such conditions, may go "like sheep to the slaughter."

These are but a few out of many considerations which we could offer on this question; but they must serve for the present. There is a laudable disposition on the part of some of our investigators to root out the tares, but there is always a danger of their uprooting the wheat also. Where a case for genuine mediumship is put forward it should, for scientific purposes, be proved up to the hilt; there must be no doubts, no loopholes, no grounds for reasonable criticism (some critics are unreasonable and their objections "frivolous and vexatious"). A case of mediumistic fraud must be proved with the same rigour. And in neither case is the evidence of any value unless test-conditions admitting of no doubt are imposed throughout the seance.

FATE AND FREEWILL.

If we were asked to what extent a man is the subject of Fate or has the gift of freewill, we should say that it depends altogether on the man. We have been told that man is really the puppet of Destiny. That is really a contradiction in terms, for a puppet is not a man. Those who have studied life intelligently eventually come to the conclusion that in the course of evolving manhood, Fate and Destiny recede more and more into the background. In its lower grades humanity is very much under the dominion of Fate, but as it ascends, the power of the will and the conscious direction of life come slowly into play. As the man rises in the scale of life he ascends gradually out of the power of all forces lower than himself. His life, like a swelling river, breaks through and washes over all those banks and boundaries that formerly held it in check. One may see the thing illustrated in the difference between those who have abundant animal vitality, and those who have but little. But that we should class rather as Energy than as Life. Because Life is a directive power; it governs and regulates the energy and decides its direction. So that in a sense it might be said that Life is really Fate and Freewill in one, and that the man who has the most life is the man who best can control his own fate and exercise his freewill.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

By way of reply to the allegation that Spiritualism is inimical to Christianity—an utterly unfounded charge—the Rev G. Vale Owen, in an address to the Spiritual Society of Maidstone, emphasised the fact that he was still a full member of the priesthood of the Church of England, and that his Church was now dearer to him than ever before. The *South Eastern Gazette* goes on with its report of Mr. Owen's address:—

After 30 years' ministry, the priesthood and the sacraments had a more intense meaning, and Christ had assumed a majesty which he had not dreamed of. That had principally come about through his study and practice of Spiritualism. The Bible was the finest text-book on the new psychic science that he knew. Although thousands of years old, it was not out of date. There was not one psychic fact in the Bible which could not to-day be proved scientifically as absolutely correct—that could be said of no other scientific text-book in the world.

* * * *

The following paragraph is from the *Yorkshire Observer*:—

There are more Spiritualists in Bradford, I was rather surprised to learn yesterday, than in any other city in the country. According to my informant, the number is growing, and land has been obtained at Bankfoot for a new church, which it is hoped to build in the not very distant future.

* * * *

The *Eastbourne Gazette* reports a lecture at the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Literary Society's New Year's meeting, by Professor Fearon Halliday, on "Savage and Civilised Mentality." In the course of his lecture Professor Halliday said:—

Remember that primitive man is surrounded by terrors from the cradle to the grave—there is little of the "Hail, Smiling Morn," in the natural scenery of the "primitive." The savage will eat the flesh of a brave man—but not of a rabbit. "You see, if the vegetarians think that they are going to become 'animal' because they eat animal food, then they are descending to the level of the primitive."

* * * *

Recently we noticed the case of the "haunted" caravan at Iverley, as reported by the *County Express*. The same newspaper returns to the subject and says:—

Since the matter was mentioned in the *County Express* curiosity has taken many visitors to the van, but all have found insoluble the problem of the rappings, which commence at any time during the day or night, and without any clue as to their origin. The visitors to the caravan have included a gipsy woman, whose dictum, as an expert, is that the only remedy is to burn the van. The situation, she says, is not unique, and destruction by fire is the recognised gipsy way of dealing with it.

The *Croydon Advertiser* gives an account of an address at the Spiritualist Church, Katherine Street, Croydon, by Mr. A. J. Howard, of Brighton, his subject being, "Jesus, the Psychic, the Way, the Truth and the Life." The *Advertiser's* notice concludes:—

He (Mr. Howard) showed Jesus as a master of psychic laws with a "battery" of power in the Twelve, who were chosen not for their virtues but for their inherent psycho-physical support in healing and other "mighty works"—the clairvoyance at the Samaritan well and concerning the ass seen at Bethany seven miles away, the materialisation known as the Transfiguration, with the textual evidences of the physical mediumship of Peter contributing thereto and equally in the levitation of Jesus over water. These and other recorded instances the speaker analysed in the light of modern psychic science which, he claimed, revealed perfectly natural universal laws always in operation.

MR. F. T. MUNNINGS.

Before Mr. Justice Avory, in the King's Bench Division, on Thursday last, reports the *Daily Sketch* of the 20th inst., application was made by Mr. S. J. Duncan on behalf of Mr. Frederick Tansley Munnings, of St. Philip's Road, Surbiton, praying that the libel action brought by Mr. Munnings against the *Daily Sketch* should be postponed until an order made by the Master had been complied with. The order was that the action could be discontinued upon payment by Mr. Munnings of the agreed or taxed costs of the action and upon Mr. Munnings giving an undertaking not to bring any action against the paper on the matters complained of in the action.

The application was opposed by Mr. Norman Birkett, K.C., who described Mr. Munnings as "a fraudulent medium in the Spiritualistic world."

The *Daily Sketch* had exposed him in their newspaper, and had set out the facts of his convictions for fraud in various places. Says the *Daily Sketch*:—

The particulars of the defence set out that in April, 1919, at Portsmouth, Munnings was found by local Spiritualists to have secreted a pair of rubber gloves in his clothing in order that he might produce the soft touch which was declared by mediums to be characteristic of spirits. He was publicly denounced by the Spiritualists of Portsmouth and requested to leave the town.

He then moved to Hastings, where he continued to practise as a medium under the assumed name of Gaulton. In April, 1921, he was adjudicated a bankrupt at Bournemouth. On September 5th, 1921, he was charged at the Thames Police Court with obtaining money by false pretences, and was bound over for twelve months.

Munnings had been described as a man of cold-blooded and deliberate artifice, and as the most notorious of trumpet mediums who had been publicly denounced by Spiritualists themselves.

Mr. Justice Avory said he would make no order and would let the action take its ordinary course.

Reference was made, at the trial of the action, next day, to the letter signed by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Dr. Abraham Wallace, Mr. H. Saunders, and Mr. H. Dennis Bradley, published in *LIGHT*, saying: "We know of cases where the psychic result has been beyond suspicion, and we know of others where he has been exposed in obvious fraud with the tools of deception in his possession." Mr. Duncan (for Munnings) said his client, who was in hospital all last summer, would not be attending the court.

Judgment for the defendants, with costs, was entered.

AUTOMATIC AND IMPRESSIONAL SCRIPTS.

By F. H. HAINES.

The article by Mr. Horace Leaf, on the above subject, which appeared in *LIGHT* on December 31st, 1927, may have some effect in checking the "flood of so-called automatic script" which swamps criticism and genuine "spirit writing." But to me, at any rate, it is negative in value. As a victim of this type of mediumship, I need no repression, no polite warnings as to the possibility of my "dream-consciousness" becoming "mixed up with the automatist's waking mind." The elimination of self is sufficiently difficult without friendly exaggeration of innate tendencies. "The medium" must of necessity be present, whatever the type of phenomena; and the possibility of personal intrusion cannot be entirely eliminated even in "automatic" writing. What we need is convincing evidence of spirit control. Once this is established, the rest is a matter of training.

Let me approach the subject from a new angle. The scribble which purports to be "spirit-writing" in its elementary stages should not be rejected as "mere scribble." One has to learn "how to write" under quite new conditions. And there is the possibility always of the spirit-world using one for some spiritual work. Of course, if you are that type of mind which arrogantly eliminates spirit-control and finds no interest in writings of a religious and philosophical nature, it would be more profitable for you to abandon this phase of the subject and turn to something more evidential. But should you be happy in your faith that spirit friends are a very present "cloud of witnesses," then you will hope for guidance from them, and you will scan "the scribble" for a message. Why not? "The writing" is as fascinating as "the pictures," and no more harmful even though you do not realise all your hopes. But should there be some "dramatisation"—as Mr. Leaf would call it—some pretence of personality made in "the scribble," you will, I contend, be entitled to your access of faith and hope.

Doubtless, the "automatic" method of writing, as compared with the "impressional," is less subject to the intrusion of self; and if it can be cultivated by the medium it should be preferred. But there are few persons able to eliminate self-consciousness to such an extent as to liberate the muscles of the hand from personal thought or control. I have done this, but found great difficulty in sustaining the pose of unconsciousness. The mind engaged elsewhere nevertheless reached out to follow the writing. Nor was the result as good as when I permitted consciousness to "follow the pen." Co-operation with our spirit visitor ensures better results.

In my own case I have developed a cross between inspirational and automatic writing. The sequence of words and ideas comes spontaneously to the mind simultaneously with the movement of the pen to record them. There is no continuity of thought unless the pen goes on. Further, the writing is a script totally unlike my own—far better than my scrawl, regular where mine is irregular. I endeavour to make the mind blank during the sitting. Of course, I have not a shred of an idea in my mind as to the subject of the writing until it begins to come through. But I have to use my mind and to reject any inelegancy of language, or even to help the spirit when there is a momentary "hold-up" for a suitable word. But in the subject-matter of the writing there is much of which I have no knowledge, and words and phrases which I never use. Personally I am above all scepticism regarding the presence of the spirit friends and rejoice in my gift. But how to convince the hysterical lady of self-deception who feels "the urge" to let the pen go, and whose "output" is non-inspiring to other than herself, is not so easy as to convince oneself of truth.

Yet is there not an easy test available to any person within reach of a clairvoyant medium? Your script

fascinates you. You begin to think there is something in it. You are hypnotised by the unexpected quality of some sentence which has sprung into existence almost unawares. And your spirit friend stages a drama of personification in your mind which becomes reality to you. But you are, as I was, very much concerned as to the possibility of sub-conscious cerebration. Well, put it all to the test by a visit to a clairvoyant. If your spirit visitor is worthy of his name, you will hear something from him, or something of him, through the clairvoyant. Your real need of evidence is never ignored. If what you hear does not convince you of the reality of your spirit visitor, try again with another medium, if possible. Personally I put the spirit world to the severest of tests by visiting a number of mediums, and I was not convinced of the impossibility of fraud on my part until I had received from all these sources startling confirmation of what I had ascertained already in my own mediumship.

To conclude: I feel that Mr. Leaf's article, although severely practical, is calculated to dishearten many readers who gain consolation from the practice of automatic or impressional writing. Also that, inasmuch as I know that there is a wave of spiritual energy coursing through the world from the spirit realms in an effort to elevate mankind above the rut of pleasure-seeking materialism which inhibits spiritual development, I am impressed to say that nothing should be said that may defeat the good intentions of our spirit friends who desire to open up many more channels of communication from them to us.

When all is said and done, the final test of all "writing," automatic or inspirational, or even mere literature, is the message, the teaching, the thought. I pray God send us all great thoughts to elevate our small minds, every one of us, in whatsoever way He deems best.

EUSAPIA PALADINO.

By E. W. DUXBURY.

Rarely has any mediumship been subjected to more stringent and intensive investigation than that of the late Eusapia Paladino, the Neapolitan peasant woman. During a long course of years various distinguished men of science on the Continent endeavoured to pluck out the heart of its mystery, and the usual acute controversy prevailed, largely participated in by many who possessed no qualification to adjudicate.

In the year 1895 Eusapia Paladino paid a visit to this country and her mediumship was investigated at Cambridge by a committee of the Society for Psychical Research, which published an adverse report thereon, and regarded fraud as the most probable explanation. This conclusion was dissented from by several distinguished members of the Society for Psychical Research, and the work of the committee was, in turn, subjected to severe and hostile criticism, as regards methods and conclusions, by the Continental investigators, who had made a more exhaustive study of the mediumship in question. The latter had avoided one of the besetting sins of certain psychical researchers—that of substituting hasty and sweeping generalisations for the patient and discriminating analysis which the study of psychic phenomena pre-eminently requires.

Doubtless in consequence of this adverse criticism and of the counter-evidence adduced, the S.P.R. sent a commission to Italy in the year 1909 for the purpose of making a further investigation of the mediumship of Eusapia Paladino. It was composed of three of the most prominent members of the Society, and two of them were skilful amateur conjurers. In due course they reported unanimously in favour of the definitely supernormal character of many of the phenomena which they had witnessed, thus reversed the conclusions of the earlier committee.

Much of the difficulty encountered in the study of physical mediumship is due to the lack of appreciation

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of the psychological factors involved. The "bizarre" effects sometimes obtained in the case of mental mediumship, which are attributable to the subconsciousness of the medium, have their analogy in physical mediumship also. The experienced investigator learns to expect and to discount such manifestations, at the same time seeking to isolate phenomena which can be classed as definitely supernormal in character.

For a brief summary of the mediumship of Eusapia Paladino the reader is referred to Appendix C. of the late Sir William Barrett's work, *On the Threshold of the Unseen*, published in 1917.

The following passage relative to Eusapia Paladino is quoted from *Further Reminiscences, Occult and Social*, by Roma Lister, recently published:—

In modern days his (Home's) only emulator was Eusapia of Naples. This extraordinary woman I met in the 'nineties in Rome, and had the chance of seeing her at her best. She was the personification of a Neapolitan woman of the lower class—quite illiterate; but she had a certain natural shrewdness. When a child, by the carelessness of those who looked after her, she had sustained a bad fall, and her head in consequence had an opening in the skull. From this opening issued always a strong, icy current. This is certain, for Eusapia often asked her friends to test it, and during a seance this rush of air was strong enough to put out the flame of a match.

She was very good-natured, but people called her grasping. It must be considered that she maintained her family, and that it consisted of sister and cousins, in all, ten or twelve people. Four or five of her relations came to Rome with her. I was much touched by her evident affection for two little nephews, and the proud way she told me that she was determined they should have a good education, for she intended the boys to be "signori." She dressed very badly, like a woman of the lower classes, yet her money was given generously to any of her friends and neighbours who needed it. Not a soldo of the large sums she gained was invested when I knew her. Of her friends she never asked heavy sums, and was delighted to use her powers on their behalf. These powers were very variable in quality. The success of a seance depended on whether she had been worn out by too many sittings beforehand. After three heavy sittings no one with sense could believe that a fourth sitting would be a success. It generally was not. Then came the possibility of trickery.

I was present one Sunday at a sitting that was full of wonders. We saw a form lift itself up from the flooring in wreaths and wisps of mist, then stand before us, a human being complete, and recognised by some of the company as a relative. At the same time human arms drew me lovingly towards the curtain that covered the wall behind me, and through this curtain I traced the features of two dear faces well known to me and lost through death. While this was going on, in the whole room we could hear clear voices speaking in English on matters only the spirit of the dead could know. All this took place in full electric light. To get the best results Eusapia needed a sympathetic audience. For some months after the Cambridge fiasco her best powers were in abeyance, from exhaustion and from shock.

In all scientific tests there must be a healthy doubt, but English scientists should remember that you cannot deal with a human being as if it were a machine, and that the tests can be carefully applied, without bordering on experiments in psychic vivisection. Latin scientists understand this better by nature; they have more mercy on the woman nature, and thus get better results all round.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

A letter from a very scholarly correspondent utters a warning against the impostures of the Spiritualistic doctrine. Let me tell him very frankly that there are few impostures greater than the artificialities of scholasticism. They disguise the realities of existence, but fortunately they do not impose on the plain man who knows life at first hand, and has no fine-spun theories about it.

* * * *

It has sometimes been said that as both the Church and Spiritualism agree that there is a life after death, it is strange that they should quarrel. But, of course, the dispute turns mainly on the question of the nature of the future life. Spiritualism teaches that it is human, natural, evolutionary, and, by consequence, in exact sequence to this life. The Church holds that it is miraculous. That is the difference—rather a wide one, however we look at it. But the break is gradually closing by the discovery that the Universe is not divided into two departments—one natural and one supernatural. In short if the future life is miraculous, then so is the present one.

* * * *

A member of the Bar, who has long been collecting the evidences for a future life, once showed me a message from a spirit who on earth had been a famous lawyer, and who had disbelieved in any hereafter. His message reduced to a few words amounted to this: "I never supposed there was another world. Evidently there is, for I find myself living in it. So it must be perfectly natural." A very sensible conclusion, and one which suggests that the lawyer, like many others, disbelieved in any future existence while on earth, chiefly because it was presented to him as something miraculous and supernatural.

* * * *

But as to the question of mystery, no one really knows how much there is of mystery in the study of man—for that is what Spiritualism amounts to in essence—as those who have given patient thought and study to the subject. But the mystery is not one that baffles or appals us. We gather a few truths, and then we are presented with the sight of an illimitable treasury of other things to be discovered and achieved. We then wonder how we could ever have thought any of the marvels to be impossible things, in the face of a host of other things even more marvellous. Once we thought the proof of individual survival of death a great thing. So it is; but when later we found ourselves faced with even greater mysteries, the first marvel became less. It was included in, and a part of, the greater one.

* * * *

Some people find themselves bewildered by the discovery of a new world of human life—more people to know, more things to learn. It seems to them almost oppressive; it is more than they can take in. But the question settles itself in time. They discover that a future life of endless extent naturally involves the prospect of an unending amount of things to be learned and experiences to be gained. And they discover, too, that amongst the countless hosts of human beings in the unseen only a relatively small group are their natural friends and compeers. Each has his own group or coterie, bound to him by ties of sympathy and "elective affinity." The laws of life settle that problem for us, just as they do here.

D. G.

MR. GEORGE PEARSON YOUNG.

In our last issue we recorded the transition of Mr. G. P. Young. We now learn that he had been living in Vancouver for some time and that death took place from heart-failure.

At an early age, Mr. Young, who was of Scottish parentage, moved from Edinburgh to the Midlands. His family were Presbyterians and he had a strict religious training. Later, becoming convinced of spirit return, he joined the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists and became a member of its committee, afterwards serving as President for many years. His distinguished services resulted in his being nominated for a position on the National Council, and he held the post of President of that body for two years from 1908. In 1912 his health began to fail, and early in that year he sailed for Canada, afterwards migrating to Vancouver, where he found a wider scope for his activities in the teaching profession.

During the War, although over age, Mr. Young served with the Canadian R.A.M.C. in France and Flanders.

The loss of Mr. Young's bodily presence is a serious one; but we are glad to think that from higher realms he will still guide and serve the cause he loved so well.

SIR FRANK BENSON AT ÆOLIAN HALL.

Sir Frank Benson, speaking at Æolian Hall before members and friends of the Marylebone Spiritualist Association, on Sunday last, said that he did not stand before his audience as a great preacher—his life had not been good enough. Nor could he bear testimony as a scientist to the truths of Spiritualism. But he could speak as an ordinary man to whom the evidence for the continuity of life had been satisfying and convincing. Science had had much to say on the subject of Spiritualism, and it compelled attention when we found eminent men of science in the ranks of Spiritualists. For, surely, if that old axiom of Science that matter is indestructible be true, how much less destructible is that animating force which manifests itself through matter? The more the dynamics of Thought were studied the more it was found that Thought was the most vital and real of all forces.

Yet he would warn those who sought for Truth to keep their feet firmly planted on the ground, so that their investigations into the Spiritual should have a sound basis. Let all earnest Spiritualists cherish the memory of those who died in the Great War; let them also direct their thoughts and energies to bringing about a state of affairs that would prevent a repetition of that madness and waste of life. The men in the trenches heard, above the roar of the guns, the singing of birds, and they saw, too, the dancing of the daffodils; they knew that the singing and the dancing were permanent and that the hideous destruction was but a passing phase. So, too, we know that Love is stronger than Death.

As a Shakespearean student, he knew that Shakespeare was a clairvoyant and if not indeed a Spiritualist, yet was he divinely spiritual. Sir Frank quoted several passages in support of this and asked: Why leave out of count what has been believed for so many ages—the belief in the presence of ministering angels? He, for his part, had had his proofs and looked forward with comfort to the ever-growing, ever-spreading truths of survival, influencing our lives for greater joy and peace.

Mrs. Annie Johnson gave many descriptions which were recognised.

T. G.

SPIRITUALIST COMMUNITY SERVICES.

In the course of an address given at Grotrian Hall on Sunday morning last, Mr. H. Ernest Hunt referred to the vision that Scipio had of his dead father and the ensuing conversation with him in 180 B.C. When asked if the so-called dead were still alive the spirit's answer was emphatically in the affirmative.

Mr. Hunt said that in reality they are infinitely more alive than we are; they have escaped from the fetters of the body as from a prison. Mr. Hunt then proved from ensuing quotations from this remarkable clairaudient experience that the tenets given 180 years before the Christian era are the same as we teach to-day: Man is not a body, but a living moving spirit; life, lived rightly, in this world is meant to aid the growth of the soul.

In the evening Mr. Scholey's address was listened to with much interest, and many spirit descriptions given by Mr. Austin were recognised.

M. J. C.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"From Worlds Unseen." By "M.A." (Rider, 2s. net.)

Automatic messages vary in quality. The bulk of them are of small account. Those given here, however, are of value. They were obtained by an English gentleman living in Italy, who possesses degrees in medicine and arts, during a series of some hundred-and-seventy seances—more than half of which, it should be noted, were unsuccessful.

The communicators—themselves, we are told, persons of good education who were able to speak at least two languages when dwelling on this side of the veil—began with assurances of the continuance of life after death: "The dead are more alive than when on earth; life only begins after death." Descriptions—necessarily somewhat vague—are given of the life on the "other side," and these largely confirm the statements of other spirit communicators on record: there is no infirmity or old age there; after passing over, the new-comer undergoes a period of repose, which may last some years; there are houses, much like those on earth, clothes, furniture,—in short, the next world is in a large measure a counterpart of this one.

The messages are well and forcibly expressed.

Sir Oliver Lodge, in a foreword, says of the messages: "I am sure that they were genuinely received, in the right spirit, and I hope that they may be helpful to people in search of truth about the future state and other matters."

H. A.

NEW BOOKS RECEIVED.

"THE IMPATIENCE OF THE PEOPLE." By Mark Proctor. (Cecil Palmer, 2s. net.)

"THE GREAT PROBLEM AND THE EVIDENCE OF ITS SOLUTION." By George Lindsay Johnson, M.A., M.D., B.S., F.R.C.S. With a Foreword by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. 10 illustrations. (Hutchinson, 18s. net.)

GABRIEL DELANNE.—A life of Gabriel Delanne is now in course of preparation by Messieurs Paul Bodier and Henri Regnault, and the authors will be grateful for any information, letters or documents dealing with Delanne's life and work. M. Paul Bodier will be pleased to receive communications at 21, Rue Saint-Jacques, Paris, Ve.

THE BROMLEY CIRCLE OF PSYCHIC STUDY has accepted an invitation from Canon Knight, M.A., to engage in a debate upon Spiritualism in the parish room, Shortlands, Kent, on February 16th, at 8.15 p.m. It is hoped that the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, a member of the Bromley Circle, will take part in the discussion. Dr. B. W. Gonin, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., will state the case against Spiritualism. There will be an impartial Chairman.

THE GUILD OF SPIRITUAL HEALING have established a new branch—their fifth—at Stamford Lodge, Park Road, Watford, for the free treatment of the sick by spiritual means. Mrs. Oakley, of Nightingale Lodge, Rickmansworth, is the honorary secretary. The branch, which was formally opened by the Rev. G. Vale Owen on January 11th, will be dependent upon voluntary support.

TEMPLE OF LIGHT.—The branch temple at Golders Green was formally opened on Monday, January 16th, in the presence of a crowded Assembly. Addresses were delivered by Miss Estelle Stead and Mr. Harold Speer. The new branch temple consists of a small, ivy-covered building, formerly the chapel of a girls' school, and its appearance and situation are particularly pleasing, and worthy of the cause to which it is dedicated.

THE LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION,
13 PEMBRIDGE PLACE, BAYSWATER, W.

Sunday, January 29th, 11 a.m. Mr. T. W. ELLA
" " " 6.30 p.m. Mr. MAURICE BARBANELL
Wednesday Services at 7.30 p.m.

SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—January 29th, 11.15, open circle; 2.45 Lyceum; 6.30, Mrs. Podmore. February 1st, 8, Mr. H. J. Osborn.

Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High Street.—January 29th, 11, service; 6.30, Mrs. A. Boddington. Wednesday, 7.30, public circle at 55, Station Road.

Peckham.—Lausanne Road.—January 29th, 7, Mrs. Vidal Diehl. Thursday, 8.15, Mr. T. W. Ella.

Richmond Spiritualist Church, Ormond Road.—January 29th, 7.30, Mr. H. Carpenter, address. February 1st, 7.30, Mr. W. Melton, address and clairvoyance.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—January 29th, 3, Lyceum; 6.30, Mr. T. W. Ella.

Fulham.—12, Lettice Street (near Parsons Green Station).—January 29th, 11.30, circle; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mr. G. Prior. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Maunders.

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GROUP CLAIRVOYANCE.	
Tues., Jan. 31st, at 4 p.m. ...	MR. T. AUSTIN
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Fri., Jan. 27th, at 8 p.m. ...	MRS. BRITAIN
Fri., Feb. 3rd, at 8 p.m. ...	MISS EVA CLARK

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" 3 p.m., Instruction Class ... MR. W. E. FOSTER
Subject: February 2nd, "Earth Spirits."
" 6 p.m. Devotional Group, Absent Healing ... MISS STEAD
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Thursday, 2nd April, at 7.30, Clairvoyance ... MRS. CANNOCK

Seances for Trance and Normal Clairvoyance.
Monday, at 7.30 ... MRS. CANNOCK
Wednesday, 1st April, at 3 p.m. ... MRS. S. D. KENT

Seance for Trance and Direct Control.
Thursday, 2nd April, at 7.30 ... MRS. A. ROBERTS

Seances for Physical Phenomena and Materialisation
Tuesday, 31st, at 7.30 ... MRS. HENDERSON
Friday, 3rd April, at 7.30 ...

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Feb. 5th, 11 a.m., Rev. J. Lamond, D.D. 6.30 p.m., Mr. Dimsdale Stocker.

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