the message correctly, it was through telepathy from the subconsciousness of this hypothetical person. Or, again, the letter, though sealed, might be read "clairvoyantly." Some such power is often alleged, and there is a good deal of evidence in its support. Further, is it not too much to expect that a spirit will remember what the letter contains? Sir Oliver Lodge has not prepared such a letter, for he is quite sure that he would forget what he had written. Probably most people will feel similar doubts about their *post-mortem* recollection of such matters.

The sealed-letter test, then, is given up as unsatisfactory. What shall we turn to next?

It was thought by Mr. Myers and Prof. Sidgwick that it would be rather good evidence if the same message could be obtained from the same spirit through two or more mediums. Some experiments in this direction were made, apparently but without much success. After the death of these two leaders in the research, it was natural to expect that they would themselves try something of the kind from "the other side," in order to give us evidence of their continued existence. And, as a matter of fact, this seems to have happened. The same message, almost word for word, was received from a Sidgwick-control through Mrs. Thompson, in London (sitter, Mr. Piddington, Hon. Sec. of the Society for Psychical Research), and Miss Rawson, in the South of France. But the telepathic difficulty again arises. The two messages were not exactly simultaneous. Is it not possible that Miss Rawson's subconsciousness made up the message (it was one giving some instructions to Mrs. Sidgwick about the preparation of her husband's "Life"), and then telepathed it to Mrs. Thompson? It is of course necessary to suppose also, that the subconsciousnesses of the two mediums were in league to represent the message as coming from Dr. Sidgwick. But if the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, there is no knowing to what depth of sin these newly-discovered "subliminals" may descend. We must hold them guilty until we have proved them innocent. In this case, once more, then, telepathy is not excluded.

At this point the ingenuity of the earthly investigators seemed to come to a stand. There seemed no way of getting round this omniscient and omnipotent telepathy. It seemed impossible to devise any experiment which should shut out with reasonable certitude the agency of minds still in the body. Just about this time, however, a curious thing happened.

For some years after Mr. Myers's death in 1901, automatic writing had been regularly produced by several people of social and educational standing—not professional mediums, or even spiritualists—who were more or less in touch with the Society for Psychical

Research, and whose script purported to emanate partly from the surviving mind of F. W. H. Myers. Chief among these automatists is Mrs. Verrall, Classical Lecturer at Newnham; others are Mrs. Holland (an Anglo-Indian lady, who did not know Mr. Myers) and Mrs. Forbes, the widow of a well-known judge. These scripts contained much evidential matter, but it was usually open to the telepathic explanation, though some of it admittedly strained that explanation rather severely. Still, telepathy was *possibly* the true theory. But, in 1906, it was discovered by Miss Johnson (the Research Officer of the Society for Psychical Research) that there were curious concordances in these scripts, concordances which apparently had been going on for some time. It was found that one script, say Mrs. Verrall's, would contain a piece of writing which was apparently meaningless, and which was so treated by the automatist, while another script, say Mrs. Holland's, written about the same date, would contain a message equally meaningless in itself, but which, when compared with the similar one in Mrs. Verrall's script, produced the most startlingly good sense. Here, then, apparently, was found evidence of initiative "on the other side," for none of the living investigators had thought of this plan of splitting a communication up and giving it piecemeal through different automatists. (*See Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vols. XXI and XXII).

These remarkable phenomena are, however, still not quite conclusive. Perhaps the ingenious and sportive subliminals of the automatists concerned have arranged an elaborate system of impersonation, telepathing these message-fragments to each other, while the normal consciousnesses remain ignorant of all this below-decks cross-firing. The hypothesis cannot be entirely put aside; though it seems very improbable to those who have made a careful study of the whole mass of evidence. As Sir Oliver Lodge has said, it is too early to formulate dogmas, or even to express opinions (on the spiritualistic question) except in hesitating and tentative fashion. But the evidence now certainly seems sufficient to justify the holding of at least a working hypothesis that in these experiments the minds of "dead" persons are really playing a part.

This, however, is a very different thing from an acceptance of "spiritualism," with all its crudenesses and follies. The spiritualists—or most of them—accept any sort of trance-ravings or automatic scrawlings, as genuine "messages" from "the beyond." Psychical research, on the other hand, critically examines the content of the messages, applying the most drastic tests before even admitting other than known causes. If the communications contain nothing that is not known to the medium, psychical researchers dismiss them as

of no interest; unless, indeed, there is a cross-correspondence involved—i. e., the same message, or a related one, being given through another medium. If the medium's own knowledge is undeniably insufficient to account for the facts, then telepathy is invoked, and is stretched to a fearsome extent, amid the violent diatribes of the spiritualistic press, which stigmatizes the Society for Psychical Research as a Society for Suppressing Knowledge. If telepathy begins to seem insufficient, some few bolder spirits of the Society (incarnate ones) venture on the tentative hypothesis of "telepathy from the dead;" but with careful hesitancy, leaving the door open behind them in order that they may flee back to the safety of former and more orthodox views, if further investigation should render the new tentative hypothesis untenable. This perhaps undignified but certainly wise position is that which is at present occupied by Mrs. Sidgwick (the ex-president of the Society), Sir Oliver Lodge, and other leading members of the Society for Psychical Research. The present writer, who is also a member of the Society in question, adopts a similar attitude. Personal investigation has convinced him of the truth of Hamlet's well-worn remark to Horatio, and he is even inclined to think that some of the evidence justifies us in thinking that (to be Shakespearian once more) not only can we call spirits from the vasty deep, but that sometimes they will *come* (though of their own free will) when we do call for them.

It is a difficult subject, not suitable for everyone. Emotional and unbalanced people should be warned off. Even religious people are doubtfully desirable: the investigation should be carried on, as far as possible, in the pure dry light of science, as it has been in the past, by men like Sidgwick, Gurney, Myers, and Hodgson. We want no recurrence of witchcraft and superstition, of which, perhaps—after the materialistic extremes of nineteenth century science—there is some danger, the pendulum of popular opinion being apt to swing from one side to the other. But, this said, we may follow up our researches with an easy mind. We are certainly on the track of something, whether (in Prof. Barrett's phrase) it be a "new world" of being, or not. Careful and honest and patient investigation will no doubt yield its reward; but no sudden revelation is to be expected or desired. It may require the labors of many generations to unfold the full significance of the discoveries which are now being made. For it is not only in the (possibly) spiritistic direction that our pioneers are making progress; we are also finding out much concerning the unsuspected powers of the human mind (telepathy, clairvoyance, and so on) while it is still manifesting itself through a material brain in the ordinary earthly life.

The Monasteries of Palestine

Historic Buildings, Rich in Legend-Lore

By Harold J. Shepstone

ONE of the most striking features of Palestine is its numerous monasteries and convents belonging to various religious sects. Many of them are remarkable edifices, built on lonely and isolated sites, famed for their connection or supposed connection with sacred history. As the result of this we have wonderful structures on mountain tops, on the edge of steep precipices, in deep ravines, on the banks of streams and in the heart of the desert and wilderness. When you behold them you marvel at the daring of their architect and builder, for their erection must have demanded no small amount of engineering skill. The transportation of the heavy building stones of which they are constructed to some of the more inaccessible sites must have been in itself a formidable task. Then came the erection of this mass of material into position—feats which must have frequently taxed the resources of their builders, more particularly when we remember that they represent the work of the ancients, the edifices in some cases dating back to the early centuries. Then they were built for defence, strong enough to withstand lengthy sieges and even to-day, in the more out-of-the-way parts of the country, the monasteries are still liable to attack from hostile tribes.

Perhaps none has had such a checkered career as the Convent of Mar Saba, belonging to the Greek Church, clinging to the sides of a precipitous gorge in the very heart of the wilderness. It lies ten miles south-east of Jerusalem and is reached from the Holy City by horseback, the road being too steep and rugged for a carriage. It is certainly a desolate and dreary spot—the last place where one would expect to find a habitable dwelling. The convent occupies a site on the western side of a great canyon. It is reached, not as in most other cases by ascending to it from below, but by descending to it from above. One cannot enter without

the written permission of the Greek Patriarch at Jerusalem, and on no account are visitors admitted after sunset. Then the monastery is rigidly closed to the fair sex. At the entrance, however, there is the Women's Tower, where female pilgrims may lodge.

Descending two flights of steep steps one comes into a little courtyard where St. Saba, the founder of the convent, is buried. Near by is the Chapel of St. Nicholas, hewn out of the solid rock, as are also the cells of the monks. Behind gratings in the recesses are heaps of skulls and bones, gruesome reminders of the stormy days when the monastery was frequently attacked and the monks put to death. The monastery church is a very attractive and pretty little chamber, behind which lie the cells of the monks. Then there is the lion's grotto, reached by a rock-hewn passage which leads into a cavern. The legend runs that one day the saint found his cave occupied by a lion, but nevertheless began fearlessly to repeat his prayers and then fell asleep. The lion dragged him out of the cave twice, but the saint assigned him a corner of the cavern, after which they lived peaceably together.

The various buildings rest on small areas formed by the aid of massive buttressing walls built up from below, terrace above terrace—certainly a clever and skilful piece of engineering work. There are grottoes and tiny gardens of flowers and fruit trees. At the present time the monastery is occupied by fifty monks who lead an ascetic life, eating little else than vegetables and fasting frequently. Their principal occupation, besides the care of a few lunatics and refractory monks who are imprisoned there, is the feeding of the wild birds of the surrounding wilderness. The huge black ravens that dwell there are so tame that they will eat out of the fathers' hands.

The monastery is one of the oldest institutions of its

kind in the world, having been founded so far back as the fifth century. In the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries it sustained murderous assaults by different Arab tribes. In 614 it was plundered by the Persian hordes of Chosroes, who killed all the monks, destroyed their church and burnt their manuscripts. Hostile tribes have lain siege to it for months at a time, hoping to starve out its inmates. It was after one of these sieges, just when the principal was about to open the door and make the best terms possible with his enemies that he espied a relief force coming to his rescue. For six months the monks had lived on a handful of millet and a cup of water a day. But even now the monastery is not free from attack. In 1834 it was pillaged by a band of roving Bedouins.

Those visiting the monastery should endeavor to spend a night here, for it is an experience not easily forgotten. The accommodation is rather poor and the only provisions obtainable are bread, fruit and wine, but in the kitchens provided one can cook his own food. Like all other institutions of this description in the East no payment is asked, but custom has established a tacit understanding that a suitable money recompense be made. When darkness has fallen one should take a walk on the terrace and look down into the valley. If it is a moonlight night you are overawed at the convent's singularly desolate situation. The rock falls away perpendicularly to a depth of 590 feet and all is wild, barren, and bare. Nothing disturbs the silence except the occasional laughing of the hyena.

In the wild gorge of the Der Wadi el Kelt, at no great distance from Jericho, stands the Greek convent of St. George, said to mark the spot where the ravens brought food to Elijah. This monastery was formed by walling up a cavern in the rocks, one of the many which abound in this locality, where, in olden times, anchorites lived.

Photograph by American Colony, Jerusalem

Greek Convent at Mar Saba

This cavern, with the others near by, formed in the fourth century the "Laura" of John of Couziba. In the sixth century a monastery stood here which fell into decay and was restored in the time of the Crusaders. The interest in the locality grows out of the doubtful tradition that this gorge was that of the Cherith where Elijah was nourished by the water of the brook and the ravens that brought him food. It is commonly called the Cherith and water flows in the bed of the stream below the monastery for the greater part of the year.

A most unique and interesting convent is the one belonging to the Greek Church, which is perched, like an eagle's eyrie, high up on the perpendicular face of the Mount of Temptation, lying a short distance to the west of the site of ancient Jericho. There are still traces of twelfth century frescoes representing Christ tempted by Satan. In the time of the Crusaders the convent was occupied by the Brothers of the Quarantine, that is to say, the forty days. It was then controlled by the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre. Later it fell into decay. Since 1874 it has been occupied by Greek Church monks and is one of the shrines visited by Greek Church pilgrims. It is a stiff climb up to the convent and the transportation of the heavy stones of which it is built up the steep precipice was certainly no easy feat. Passing through the convent one can make his way to the top of the mountain where are some Roman ruins. This eastern face of the mountain has many caves which were occupied in the early centuries by hermits. The weird and desolate aspect of the entire locality certainly lends force to St. Mark's graphic description of the temptation of Christ when he says that He was with the wild beasts. From the convent, but more especially from the top of the mountain, there is an inspiring view of the entire Jordan valley in its lower stretches.

A short distance from the west bank of the Jordan stands the Convent of St. John, also belonging to the Greek Church. It is a massive pile of white buildings capable of affording accommodation to three or four thousand people and is a place of great activity during the Epiphany services. It was restored in the twelfth century by the Crusaders. Remains of frescoes and mosaic work can be seen in the crypt of the modern building, which rose on the site of the former structure in 1882. The night before the Epiphany great numbers of pilgrims, mostly Russian peasants, come to the convent. Clad in white shrouds they dip themselves into the waters of the Jordan. The shrouds are then taken home and preserved for the burial of the owner.

On the banks of that dreary expanse of water—the Dead Sea—stands the Convent of St. Jerasimus. It is called by the natives Der Hadjla, the modern form of the ancient name of Beth Hogla mentioned in Joshua. The present building is a modern structure built on the site of an older edifice. There can be seen traces of frescoes and mosaics from the time of the Crusaders. About a mile from the monastery is a lukewarm spring, around which the monks have planted a garden.

Halfway between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, on the

saddle of a hill, stands the Monastery of Mar Elias, one of the best known, perhaps, of these institutions. From the terrace a fine prospect view of Bethlehem is obtained from the south end of Jerusalem on the north. It is thought to have been founded by the Emperor Horachius. It was restored in the twelfth century during the Crusaders' régime. It was, however, at a later date that tradition connected the site with circumstances in the life of Elijah when he fled from the wrath of Jezebel. On the side of the road opposite the convent is shown a rock with a depression in its surface said to have been caused by Elijah when he lay down to sleep, from which the angel awoke him to strengthen him with food for the journey to Horeb.

In and around Jerusalem there are a number of monasteries, the two most interesting being the Latin Convent of the Dominican Fathers and the famous Greek Convent facing the entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The first named is located in the midst of spacious grounds on the east side of the Nablous road a short distance north of the Damascus gate. About thirty years ago traces of old ruins were found on these grounds which were soon after acquired by the Dominicans. Excavations disclosed what were thought to be the remains of a great basilica built in the middle of the fifth century by the Empress Eudoxia in honor of St. Stephen, who is believed to have suffered martyrdom on this spot. The Empress was buried here. It was in ruins in the time of the Crusaders, who, however, rebuilt it, but themselves again destroyed it on the approach of Saladin.

The present church was built on the ruins of the ancient edifice, the plan of which was followed to a large extent. They also built the fine convent adjoining the church. There is in the convent one of the finest libraries in Jerusalem and an interesting museum. The aim of the Dominicans in taking up their abode in Jerusalem is to study the Bible in its own land and language. There are among them some of the first of archaeological scholars. In the winter months there are free weekly lectures which anyone can attend, giving him an opportunity to hear great specialists. The Greek convent, which faces the entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, is one of the smaller of the several Greek monasteries to be found in the Holy City. The open space above the ground floor affords a good place from which to view the Easter ceremonies in the church quadrangle. It is an abode of Greek monks.

No description of these Eastern institutions would be complete without a reference to the Carmelite Monastery, belonging to the Latins, on Mount Carmel. It is often referred to as the "Mother Convent" and is conspicuously situated on the promontory in which the ridge of Carmel terminates and overlooks the town of Haifa and the bay on the opposite side of which Acre can be descried. It is reached by a half hour's carriage ride from Haifa, the road winding by long sweeps up the mountain side. Many hermits lived in the caves in this neighborhood in the time of the Crusaders and

a monastery stood here which was destroyed in 1821 after the Greek revolt by the Pasha of Acre. The fine large new buildings erected on the ruins of the old accommodate about twenty Latin monks of the Carmelite brotherhood. Large hospitality is extended to the numerous pilgrims who visit the place. They are accommodated on the spacious ground floor, while the monks have their quarters on the floor above. It is interesting to walk through the roomy corridors, the walls of which are hung with a great number of religious prints and paintings. From the terraces above a splendid view of sea and mountain and plain opens up to one's gaze. A short distance from the convent a large cave called the School of the Prophets can be inspected. Traditions says the Holy Family found shelter here on their return from Egypt.

The Telephone in Japan

THE telephone was inaugurated in Japan twenty-one years ago; prior to that time it was not regarded as useful, but it is now looked upon as one of the necessary means of communication. It is installed at many local points besides the representative prefectural cities. At the time of the inauguration of the telephone, the Government authorities did their best to obtain as many subscribers as possible, but they had to open with 155 subscribers in Tokio and 45 in Yokohama. Calls at that time were only about one thousand daily. A few years later the public began to appreciate the usefulness of the telephone and it became increasingly popular. Consequently the Government extended the system in 1896 and again in 1907, in order to meet the general demand. About thirty million yen (\$14,000,000) have hitherto been expended on the telephone system; telephone wires now connect over 1,600 cities, towns and villages; there are over 700 exchanges with about 126,000 subscribers. The wires extend over 440,000 miles, and calls per annum exceed 400,000,000 the annual revenue reaching 10,000,000 yen.

The growth of the telephone system is undoubtedly a source of satisfaction to Japan; but compared with that in Europe and America it is still far behind in popularity and the extent of its use. The number of applications for telephone connection is far in excess of the number of installations which the authorities can undertake with the fund at their disposal. With each application 15 yens must be deposited. The Government's project is to install 61,230 stations by 1912, with an estimated outlay of 18,200,000 yen. The excess of demand over supply has given rise to the telephone brokerage business. At one time the transfer of the privilege of installation commanded the price of as high as 800 yen or more. In the summer of 1909 the authorities undertook the installation of 300 connections in Tokio, for those who offered 200 yen, and this had the effect of pushing down the "market-price" of the transfer to about that figure. The yearly charge for telephone connection varies between 60 and 40 yen, according to location.—*Japan Magazine*.

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THE GREEK CONVENT OF ST. GEORGE, PALESTINE.—[See page 35.]