

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT !" — Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The Editor of 'The New York Herald,' G. H. Hepworth, continues his beautiful little unspoken sermons in that widely read paper. In a sense, it is the most influential pulpit in America, and every Sermon, so far as we have seen them, might have been written for 'LIGHT.' Here is one on 'God's revelation.' The writer very deftly joins on the conventional theory concerning the Bible to the present-day faith in God as the brooding Spirit, the comforter and inspirer of living men; and extracts from that his idea of 'Revelation.' He says; 'When I say that God speaks to me, the Bible is believable, for, if I know that God speaks to me now, it does not tax me to believe that He has spoken to others and given a message which the world must accept as the basis of present duty and future hope.'

Very reasonable and logical, and very reverential, too, is the following passage:—

What I assert, therefore, is a plain truth—namely, that God did not speak once and forever after remain silent. He has a present interest in His world, and is making communications all the time which most of us do not or will not hear. I believe in a God which pervades each human life and has personal relations with every human being. It is unthinkable that this should not be so. If He is close enough to you to hear your prayer He must be close enough for you to hear His answer, provided you have ears to hear. God's voice has always been in the air, and it is our own dulness that makes us deaf. The finite can come into touch with the Infinite. The presence of the Infinite, the sympathy and the pity of God, can be as truly felt as the sympathy and pity of a friend who sits at our right hand. Why do we thrust all this aside, and why do we miss the blessed and encouraging intimacy with the spirit of the universe, like a man who puts his fingers in his ears when some one plays the harp and declares that he cannot hear its music?

There are far-reaching issues hidden in that passage, but what unprejudiced, free and devout spirit could deny its truth? Is it not, indeed, the expression of the deepest trust of the spiritual believer in a real God? We are entirely with Mr. Hepworth in this precious faith, and do not wonder at his conclusion, when he says:—

I believe there are men and women on earth who are in such spiritual condition that angelic influences are practical factors in their lives; men and women who are just as conscious that strength and wisdom are received from above as you and I are when some one leads us through a dark place while we lean on him for support.

That is the real Bible doctrine, the old-fashioned doctrine of the Church of Christ. It is not new, but it comes to us from past ages, when souls were freer from the trammels of materialism than they are to-day, and I would like to lead you back to their faith and their religion.

We are so submerged in what we call a practical life that these truths assume the shape of legends. We believe in

railroads and telegraphs, but we do not believe in souls. We are so absorbed in what the brain can do that we almost ignore the spirit. This is not strange, because cunning hands have achieved greater miracles than the magic of Aladdin's lamp, and we are in a state of constant and delighted astonishment. The soul is veiled by the grandeur which successive inventions have imparted, just as the glorious sun is sometimes veiled by a small cloud. But the soul is the sun, after all, and nothing can obscure it for long.

It may be true that 'to the pure all things are pure,' but it by no means follows that a mass of impurity should every morning or evening be, through the newspaper, put before the pure. The evil is not so bad but that it might be worse, but it is so bad that it might be a great deal better. People sometimes say 'Stop the paper,' because they do not agree with an opinion. It might be a thousand times more useful and reasonable if they would vote in that way against the growing vicious sensationalism of the day.

Mr. B. F. Underwood, writing in America of American newspapers, flashes hotly out against the unclean thing. There is perhaps less need of his lightning here, but there is some need for it. He says:—

There are some newspapers, so-called, which are not newspapers, in fact, but merely purveyors of filth. They do not attempt to give the news. They select from the reports whatever is sensational, suggestive and salacious, whatever appeals to criminal or to coarse and corrupt minds, and amplify and colour it to gain the attention of the indecent element which forms a part of all the larger and of most of the smaller communities.

Reports of doings which the respectable press omits entirely or uses very guardedly, giving only a paragraph carefully edited, these filth purveyors print in full, with all the details which to healthy minds are loathsome and revolting, but over which perverted and prurient minds linger and gloat with guilty pleasure.

The news of the day, events in the industrial, social and political world, which are of importance to serious minds, receive only incidental or subordinate consideration in such papers. . . . Such papers are a disgrace to journalism and their existence is deplored, not only by the profession, but by all right-minded men and women. But so long as there is a demand for them there will be men who, for the pleasure and profit they derive from it, will furnish the needed supply and at the same time increase the demand for such pernicious reading matter.

Self-respecting people cannot be indifferent to that low kind of journalism which constantly panders to prurient tastes and to the minds of those who revel in reports of all kinds of indecencies. Such newspapers should never be allowed to enter a respectable home.

We have just had to tell an urgent correspondent that we don't care a brass button for his argument based upon the world's vast majority against us. If there were only half-a-dozen of us at 110, St. Martin's-lane, judging from history the chances would be even that we might be right and the world wrong. We commend to his attention a passage in 'The Secret Doctrine' (Vol. II., p. 156):—

The majority rarely, if ever, turns out to be right in the long run. Harvey stood alone for many years. The advocates for crossing the Atlantic with steamers were in danger of ending their days in a lunatic asylum. Mesmer is classed to this day (in the Encyclopædias), along with Cagliostro and St. Germain, as a charlatan and impostor. And now that Messrs. Charcot and Richet have vindicated Mesmer's

claims, and that 'Mesmerism' under its new name 'Hypnotism' is accepted by science, it does not strengthen one's respect for that majority when one sees the ease and unconcern with which its members treat of 'hypnotism,' 'telepathic impacts,' and its other phenomena. They speak of it, in short, as if they had believed in it since the days of Solomon, and had never called its votaries, only a few years ago, lunatics and impostors.

A good deal of the prevailing doubt in the world is not actual unbelief, still less antagonism to that which is doubted. What has happened is that the knowing world, sitting in the strong draught of a great inrush of knowledge, has 'caught a chill.' Isaac Taylor, in his day, must have noted something of the kind when he talked of doubt and scepticism as, not so much unbelief, as 'an influence of abatement, an unadjusted surmise.' What the poor world wants is exercise and internal heat. It needs to come back to the primal confidences, the normal hopes of the human race. Strange to say, the new knowledge has rather dwarfed us. We want a renewed contact with 'the everlasting hills.'

'A Short Way Out of Materialism,' by Hubert Handley, M.A. (London: Rivingtons), is very short indeed—too short. It all turns upon the now well-known fact that what we call 'external nature' is but the pictured report produced by our senses. The external entity is—we know not what; all we know is that such senses as we have report such pictures as we see. The little book consists of about a dozen pages occupied by very large type. It is ingenious, but a mere suggestion.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LIMITED.

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

MR. E. W. WALLIS (OF MANCHESTER)

Will give an Address on

'SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA—OBSERVATIONS AND DEDUCTIONS.'

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

FULFILMENT OF DREAMS.

'Experience teaches' is a widely accepted axiom, and conviction is never more forcibly brought home than by its application. I fully realise this by the fulfilment of three dreams for the accuracy of which I can vouch.

1. Just before waking one morning (whether in a dream or vision I know not), a manly figure which I could not identify appeared to me, and said: 'If you can write another song as good as the—(mentioning a previous lyrical composition), I will sing it and we will make it a success.' All day the words forced themselves upon me. I could not think of a suitable subject, but the third day, passing down Coventry-street, a well-known vocalist stopped me and repeated the exact words I had heard in my dream. It was the same man I had seen! We talked the matter over, and I undertook the work without saying a word about my premonition. The result was a song, the effective music of which is written by a prominent composer.

2. An elderly gentleman and intimate friend died not long ago. After his decease a valuable heirloom diamond ring was missing. The family were anxious, and my wife was asked to join in the search. Though not quite to her liking, she consented. After more fruitless search she had a dream in which the exact spot of concealment, behind some books on the top shelf of a book-case, was revealed to her, where it was found next day.

3. I missed an article of no intrinsic worth but some sentimental value, only a few days ago. As I had it in the afternoon its sudden disappearance was curious, and I could not help thinking about it a good deal. In a dream a certain pocket was indicated, where I found it, the lining of the pocket having become worn.

Facts are stubborn things!

K. S.

'LONGFELLOW AS SEER AND SPIRITUALIST.'

SUMMARY OF A SERMON BY THE REV. H. R. HAWEIS.

On Sunday evening, March 19th, at St. James's Church, Westmorland-street, the REV. H. R. HAWEIS delivered a sermon on 'Longfellow as Seer and Spiritualist.'

In the course of his preliminary observations, MR. HAWEIS said that he thought the sphere of the pulpit ought to be enlarged. He did not think they got from it enough of facts, information, biography, and history. All these things were needed in these days in order to clothe upon the religious life, and bring the religious life up to date. Jesus Christ and his apostles made a very great use of the facts of contemporary history, and if religion was to be made a living and real thing, the pulpit should take a wider aspect, a larger sphere, especially by dealing with the lives of great men, which (as the poet they would consider that evening had said) 'remind us, we may make *our* lives sublime.'

It was hardly possible to enter upon the biography of Longfellow, because the poet virtually had none. Longfellow was one of those beautiful, quiet, refined spirits who move in a circle of beautiful and refined people. He filled a very important academic niche in American University life as Professor of Modern Languages and Literature at Harvard University, and after he had conquered two worlds—for his poetry had become popular in this country almost before it had become so in America—in 1869 he came to England, and at Cambridge received the degree of LL.D. His reception in England was not at all comparable in point of enthusiasm to that of Oliver Wendell Holmes, who had a high degree of sociability and geniality that made him extremely popular; whereas Longfellow was more slow and meditative, with none of Holmes's mercurial temperament. Holmes delighted in popularity; Longfellow shrank from it.

There was no American literature before the time of Washington Irving, and then there sprang up a little band of heroes, of whom Longfellow was one, who stood for culture, literature, art, and the elevation of the masses through the higher life. This little band, which included Emerson, Bryant, Washington Irving, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, created American literature.

In this connection Mr. Haweis narrated an anecdote concerning Emerson and Longfellow, which had been told to him by Dr. Holmes when he visited this country.

At the time of Longfellow's death Emerson's mental powers had begun to fail, as the result of advancing years; he lost his memory, but none of his fine intuitive perception. He and Longfellow had been intimate friends, and when the poet was lying dead in Cambridge Chapel, Dr. Holmes took Emerson (whose mental decline was then very pronounced) to the chapel to see Longfellow for the last time. Emerson stood for some time by the body of his friend, looking at the placid face in silence, and then turning to Holmes, he said, 'That is the face of a very amiable gentleman, but I don't know who he is.' His memory was gone, and he could not recognise the features of his oldest and dearest friend. But although his memory was gone, although his intellectual powers had waned, his fine perception of mental and spiritual qualities remained, and when he said that the face of the poet was that of an amiable gentleman he expressed what they all felt with regard to the poems of that beautiful and lucid writer—that they are the work of a refined, gentle, morally elevated gentleman.

Longfellow was not a Spiritualist in the phenomenal sense. That word 'Spiritualist,' indeed, was rather a vague one. What he (the preacher) meant by a Spiritualist was a man who believed, first, that the dead are alive, and second, that the dead in many ways had the power of communion with, and sympathy with, those who live in this world, and that under some circumstances they can manifest their presence objectively, and by finding some intermediate sphere between their own state and ours could send Marconi-like messages to us. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was a Spiritualist; all the great prophets were Spiritualists. The Old and New Testaments were full of Spiritualism; heathen Rome, Greece, Egypt, and Syria were full of it. It was true that there had always been a certain amount of imposture associated with it, but the golden thread that underlay it was this—that the dead were present with us and could manifest themselves to some people in such a

manner that there could be no possibility of doubt in the minds of such people that the so-called dead really live.

In that sense Longfellow was a Spiritualist, and the enormous advantage of being a Spiritualist, even in this large and general acceptance of the term, was that it changed a belief in immortality out of vague hope, out of pious belief, into something like moral certainty.

Longfellow's words, in which he declared that--

‘This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian
Whose portal we call Death,’

were in themselves sufficient warrant of the statement that he was a Spiritualist. Signs of this were to be found all through his poems. Whenever he chose the subject of death he manifested his conviction. Death in the pages of Longfellow was taken in every degree, from the paralysing shock of separation, from the mournful realms of the tomb, up to the moment when death seemed no more than when a man walked out of one room into another, out of the shadow into the blessed sunlight of God.

Of his intense sympathy with the universal shock and pain of separation caused by death, perhaps the poem of ‘Evangeline’ gave the finest illustration—it depicted the shock of death apart from Spiritualism. They all knew the story, how Evangeline, becoming separated from her lover, wandered over the earth as a Sister of Charity, nursing the sick in hospitals, always thinking that she might one day come upon the track of her beloved one. And so her life passed until streaks of grey appeared on the head of the fair girl. Finally, amongst the plague-stricken patients in a hospital, she comes upon an old man stretched on a pallet, dying, and recognises in him the lover whom she had lost. The poem goes on to tell how the lovers, united at last in death,

‘are sleeping
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard ;
In the heart of the city they lie, unknown and unnoticed.
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,
Thousands of throbbing hearts where theirs are at rest and
for ever.’

That was the pathetic side of death. The wider and more spiritual aspect of it was found in many other of Longfellow's poems. It crept in, as it were, and was not obtrusively thrust upon the reader. In ‘Resignation’ they had death linked with the first germ of spiritual consolation.

‘There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there :
There is no fireside, howso'er defended,
But has one vacant chair.

‘We see but dimly through the mists and vapours ;
Amid these earthly damps,
What seem to us but sad funereal tapers,
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death ! what seems so is transition ;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call Death.’

The dominant note that ran through Longfellow's poetry was the note of Spiritualism in one form or another. In ‘Footsteps of Angels,’ one of the very best known, because one of the earliest of his poems, the lines were absolutely saturated with the persistent thought of the dead manifesting themselves, subjectively if not objectively.

Mr. Haweis then read the well-known poem (‘Footsteps of Angels’), commencing :—

‘When the hours of day are numbered,
And the voices of the night
Wake the better soul that slumbered,
To a holy, calm delight.’

They must not suppose that Longfellow shrank from getting into the full mid-current of ghost-lore. Forty years ago nobody believed in haunted houses and nobody believed in ghosts. An immense change had passed over modern society in that respect. Of course the average man of the world told you he did not believe in ghosts, but it often appeared that he was very much afraid of them. That represented the average state of mind about the supernatural ; but now science was coming to our assistance, and it was being shown that apparitions were not the mental

delusions of half insane people, but that they had a basis of reality.

Longfellow was, of course, always susceptible to these things, and he had written lines which were saturated with ghost-lore. When half-a-dozen people got together and became on fairly confidential terms, it would generally be found that each of them had a ghost story of one sort or another. There was hardly a place in England where they could not find a well-accredited ghost story. This ‘gives to reflect,’ as the French say, and when they had made every allowance for imagination, hallucination, and imposture, there would still remain a number of cases not to be accounted for on any known laws. Longfellow's poem on ‘Haunted Houses’ was one which most correctly reflected the beliefs of ordinary people on this point.

Mr. Haweis then read the poem, the opening stanza of which runs as follows :—

‘All houses wherein men have lived and died
Are haunted houses. Through the open doors
The harmless phantoms on their errands glide
With feet that make no sound upon the floors.’

This poem well indicated what was meant by Longfellow's Spiritualism. It was not obtrusive, but the whole poem was permeated with the belief in the nearness of the spheres, with the conviction that it was but a thin veil that separated the two worlds, a veil that might at times be torn asunder so that we might be brought into the presence of celestial beings. The spirituality and delicacy of Longfellow's mind was shown in the fact that in many of his poems where no direct Spiritualism was taught there was a kind of suspended Spiritualism, that moved, as it were, midway between heaven and earth.

The sermon concluded with a reading of ‘Palingenesis,’ which Mr. Haweis described as a poem very little known, but certainly the most marvellous piece of meditative eloquence which Longfellow ever achieved. It was a poem in which the spiritual and the earthly mingled, as we saw sometimes the sky bending down to meet the sea, so that it was hard to tell where the sea began and the sky ended. It was not exactly pure poetry, nor was it pure religion. It belonged to the middle region. Mr. Haweis then read the verses in which the poet, renouncing all vain regrets for the departed friends and scenes of his youth, determines to go on his way

‘like one who looks before,
And turns to weep no more.’

‘Into what land of harvests, what plantations
Bright with autumnal foliage and the glow
Of sunsets burning low ;
Beneath what midnight skies, whose constellations
Light up the spacious avenues between
This world and the unseen !

‘I do not know ; nor will I vainly question
Those pages of the mystic book which hold
The story still untold,
But without rash conjecture or suggestion
Turn its last leaves in reverence and good heed,
Until “The End” I read.’

OBITUARY.

We regret to have to record the decease of a warm friend of our cause, Mr. James Mylne, of Beheea, Bengal, who passed away on March 20th, aged eighty-four years. Mr. Mylne was a regular subscriber to ‘LIGHT’ and a generous contributor to our ‘Sustentation Fund,’ and he gave generous help last year towards the expenses of the International Congress. Spiritualism was to him the source of great comfort and delight, and he was always ready to show his faith by his works.

‘LIGHT’ SUSTENTATION FUND.—The Treasurer acknowledges with thanks a contribution of £5 to this fund, by Mr. W. Tebb.

MRS. D'ESPERANCE.—Mr. Geo. Redway is publishing a new book from the pen of Mrs. d'Esperance ; it is entitled ‘Northern Lights.’ We have been favoured with an advance copy, and can cordially recommend it. It comprises ten short, deeply-interesting stories, descriptive of some strange physical experiences which have occurred to Mrs. d'Esperance herself and some personal friends and acquaintances ; and these, though given in the form of stories, are not fiction, but facts.

SPIRITUALISM AND ITS GREAT REVELMENTS.

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

(*Continued from page 136.*)

It may strike some to whom this thought of spirit return, capable of demonstration, is new, to ask: 'Why have I walked through life all these years and never met the evidences in my daily journeyings?' You forget that there have been many new things, strange and wonderful, which have come to the knowledge of humanity of late years, but which had always an existence in this world of ours. No new force came when we recognised the potent might of the electric fluid—we simply had not the wit to read the oracle before. Coal and iron were ever prophetic of steam engines and steam ships. Many things pointed, and many minds speculated, before Darwin's mind had ripened to take the high flight to evolution. But the world walked on for centuries without the vision to see them. The spirit world, all down the pages of history, has been seeking to make its impress on this world of ours, but we shut our eyes and would have none of it. The dæmon of Socrates, the voices of Joan of Arc, the revealments of Swedenborg, the witchcraft epidemic, the life of the poet-painter Blake, and thousands of other instances, might have given a hint of something beyond the earthly life and experience. When a thing, though very real, was inexplicable or foreign to what we were familiar with, we talked about misconceptions, or Satan, or madness. All the assertions which seers made as to what they saw were set down to diseases of the nervous system. It is only in this age that we are ready to believe the report, and test these experiences, as we would the discovery of some new chemical action. Each day someone is beginning to find that he possesses powers of which he had hitherto been ignorant. Mr. W. T. Stead had made his name in journalism before he found out that his own hand could be used to give out the thoughts of people from the other side of life. Observant as he was of many things, he had failed to observe this fact before. The power was put into action when he was ripe enough to recognise the actuality of a spirit world. There is nothing new under the sun, but there are thousands of things we only need the new eye to see them with. Spiritualists and mesmerists have recognised these fifty years that there is a faculty called clairvoyance, that is, some persons can see other than with the physical eye, and are able to look through dense substances, and to tell what is transpiring at a distance. Very many learned people said this was pure nonsense, and in my own city of Glasgow a learned medical professor, Dr. Sir Wm. Gardner, said clairvoyance belonged to the diseased faculty of wonder—whatever he might mean by that. Now physical science, which is so perpetually denying an unseen world, and perpetually revealing it, has given us the Röntgen rays, which penetrate opaque substances, as the vision of our clairvoyants does. Perhaps, if we only gave science time, they might find their way to the spirit world by their own methods. When we want, however, to reach the Pacific Ocean, we don't go by the North-West Passage, which, though real enough, is continually embedded in ice. There are many new truths waiting to be revealed to man—truths in science, in morals, in politics, in religion. Some have arrived not long ago upon this planet, and amongst the greatest of these is that we can here and now enter into communication with people in the unseen, can come into actual touch with friends gone on, can listen to their voices, be cheered by their presence, and assured by every faculty of our being that light on this question of questions has reached the world in somewhat clear fashion at last.

It is the old story, however. The world does not receive kindly its best benefactors, oftentimes taking them for the opposite of what they are. Socrates, profound and noble, Jesus, gentle and spiritual, were put to death; Bruno and Servetus were ushered into the higher life by fire; Galileo, the man who discovered the telescope, was paid with a dungeon; Copernicus got his promotion to the better kingdom just when persecution was about to begin;

Birmingham might have murdered her scientific Priestley, but he managed to escape to free America; Lloyd Garrison escaped with his life, it is true, but the burden of sorrow he bore for years was great. It is ever the same. Men and women with new ideas, like Spiritualism, can hardly look for a kindly welcome, even now, with all our boasted toleration. They seem to speak in an unknown tongue to some; their language is strange, they look revolutionary, and as men who are going to pull down ancient walls. Few recognise as yet that their great object is to rear a nobler temple, from which no more will be heard about an angry God and a lake of fire, but from which will be preached and proven the absolute love and goodness of the Father and Mother God. The old Spiritualism has prevented many from giving the least thought to the new, because of the absurd claims, which were made for the old, that it had no relation to law and order, but was the capricious work of the Most High, who had opened the sea to let a nation through, and poured the waters back on the advancing foe, and caused the sun to stand still that these same precious people might butcher their enemies. When these absurdities were called a spiritual religion, it is not to be wondered at that those who only saw a constant mode of operation in the universe, cast them away, and would have nothing to do with Modern Spiritualism, hating the word spiritual from a fear that, if established, it would be found intruding on the natural world, introducing an element which would interfere with the certainty of all experiments; and thus Huxley glibly said that if Spiritualism was true it did not interest him. A man of thought, research, and experiment, a giant intellect who had made a study of the science of life, a man who had lifted guesses into feasible hypotheses, missed what after all was the greatest discovery of the century. Not that he really felt it did not interest him, but he had settled in his own mind that a future life could not be proved, that it was absurd, and that if spiritual phenomena were true they must be a violation of natural law, and this was incredible. 'Out of imperfect knowledge,' Ruskin says, 'spring terror, dissension, danger, and disdain.' Men with such a bias could only think that the evidence was the subjective product of credulous and superstitious brains; that illusion and hallucination would account for it. All this is so like the story related of Sidney Smith, who, when adversely criticising some book, was asked by a friend, 'But have you read the volume?' 'Not likely,' he said. 'Do you think I am going to bias my criticism in that fashion?'—even as the 'Edinburgh Review' of a later day, when Darwin's 'Origin of Species' was published, talked about his (Darwin's) defective information, that he was vague and incomplete, and had simply left the question where he found it. Spiritual phenomena are ignored because they are traditionally supposed to be a violation of natural law, and we all know that natural law is never violated, forgetting that until phenomena which may appear strange are weighed and sifted, we cannot tell whether they are violations of natural law or not.

It is a hard matter for many to get at spiritual facts. We are met from one school with the words 'Unknowable,' or 'Divinely closed—trespassers, beware of the devil!' This school maintain that revelation concerning the spiritual is contained in a set of men called the Church, or a set of books called the Bible, who alone teach absolute truth on these matters, and all other so-called revelations are absolutely untrustworthy. And thus every new truth which would bless the world, and might give new light to the old, binds a burden on those who first accept them, causes friction, demands of them to lay aside old comforts, accept a hard name, and feel at times the iron of the world. There is ever, however, the consolation that the man who is on the side of truth has the Infinite for his ally. Bryant, the American poet, jocularly said: 'Truth gets well if it is run over by a locomotive, while error dies of lockjaw if she scratches her finger.' Why, at times it seemed as if the jibes and sneers of the Press would blot out Spiritualism for ever, but in spite of being written down and howled down, it holds on its way, making permanent converts all the time. Carlyle said some harsh things against Spiritualism, but he uttered a profound truth when he said: 'The weak thing, weaker than a child, becomes strong one day if it be a true thing.' There is not force enough in the human race to

annihilate a single truth, though one man of the earth had it, and all the rest had it not. It is because Spiritualism is true, has facts for its foundation, and not myth or tradition, that it has gained so many adherents from every school of thought. Nothing has done so much to weaken the secular school of thought as our facts. Never, with reference to any religion, has more evidence been tabulated than for this.

It would take pages to record the names of eminent men and women who have vouched for the reality of the phenomena, men and women who were antagonistic to the very idea of a future life. But the facts beat them, and forced acknowledgment. Starting from the point of what are called physical phenomena, and entering into the realm of trance and inspiration, they have caught a light which has solved many enigmas. We can now understand something of the origin of all religions. We know what the inspiration called infallible means; can believe that thoughts and ideas from another realm of being were breathed into Hebrew prophets and seers of old, and not the prophets and seers of that race alone, but into the minds of Grecian sages, the prophets and poets of all peoples. What of the inspiration of a Herschel, a Lyall, a Darwin—those great illuminators of Nature? Who that could get free from bias but would be forced to say that the men of our own time, the Carlyles and Parkers and Emersons and Ruskins and Tennysons, were as much the recipients of lofty inspirings as the Moses or Ezekiels or Jeremiahs of old? Why there is scarcely a modern poet of note but has seen in Spiritualism a key to his inspirings. We might take some of them as singers of the spirit's thought and exponents of the new spiritual truths because they knew of the reality of spirit communion. It is not poetic metaphors but facts we find in their writings. When Longfellow says that the forms of the departed enter at the open door and take the vacant chair, he speaks of something which was within his own knowledge, as he does also in these lines: 'We meet them at the doorway, on the stair, impalpable impressions on the air, a sense of moving to and fro.' The spirit world was not speculation to Tennyson. He said to his son once: 'There are moments when the flesh is nothing to me, when I feel and know the flesh to be the vision, God and the spiritual the only real and true.' And a learned professor says of him: 'We went on to talk of Spiritualism, in which he was much interested, and told more stories than one of spirit manifestations as authentic emanations from the unknown, and as a proof that out of the darkness light could reach us.' But the clearest of evidence is found in his poems:—

'So word by word and line by line,
The dead man touched me from the past;
And all at once it seemed at last,
The living soul was flashed on mine.'

Thirty years ago a spiritual medium inspired by Jean Jacques Rousseau uttered these words:

'Of late, I spent a long midsummer day
With Tennyson. He almost felt my hands
Upon his brow, and sensed my spirit breath.
Wordsworth was with me, that calm, subtle mind.
We sowed within that gentle poet's brain
Sweet thoughts, as fragrant as the new-mown hay.
He knew not that the infidel Rousseau
Bent over him, and wove a coronet
Of truth, flowers for his intellectual brow.'

Are not these words in complete harmony with Tennyson's own writing? Why should we enjoy Spiritualism when it is given as poetic fancy, and shun it when it is brought into the realm of sober fact? How clear is Gerald Massey in the preface to his poems, 'The Spiritualist who has plumbed the void of death as I have and touched the solid ground of fact, has established a faith that can neither be undermined nor overthrown.' Victor Hugo, whom Swinburne calls the greatest of lyric poets, 'the name that is above every name in lyric song,' recognised the actuality and nearness of a spirit world, attended séances, and shed tears of gladness because he had been privileged to hold converse with a loved son gone. Elizabeth Barrett Browning wondered how the world should have such an antipathy to the subject, while it needed so much the consolation which it could give. You may say poets are dreamers, imaginative people, but after all they are oftentimes the clear seers. But it is not poets only who vouch for the reality and beauty of spirit com-

munion; the scientific Lord Brougham, after a few sittings with a medium, was prophetic enough to see its far-reaching import, for he said, 'Amid the cloudless skies of scepticism, I can see a rain cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is Modern Spiritualism.' The enlightened man whom the scientific world selected the other month as their best representative, years ago became satisfied as to the reality of the phenomena, and had to undergo many petty persecutions for his courage. He had set down the fact that he had seen spirit hands writing; that he had witnessed intelligent movements of the most varied kind, which gave evidence of minds apart from the sitters; that spirit people had built up for themselves bodies, which he looked upon, felt their solidity, and eventually photographed, and that he held converse with them regarding their past lives. With the weight of this heresy upon him, in an audience which perhaps hoped he would ignore the hateful subject, he was bold enough to utter the ringing words, 'I elect to speak; I have nothing to retract.' His researches into the phenomena of Spiritualism were there. It was no crude theory he had put forth, but the result of prolonged research and reflection. He was still satisfied with all the tests he had made. Spiritualism must have within it something more than what the world at present admits, or it could not have gained the adherence of such a man.

It was indeed a march forward from the obscure rappings at Hydesville in 1848 to the British Association meeting at Bristol in 1898. What will another fifty years give to the world on this subject? For we do not make the claim that has been made by all other religious systems, that our knowledge is perfect and complete. While we believe that great men and great truths exist, we also believe that there may arise greater men and larger truths. What has not the world lost by the belief that the Golden Age was behind, and not in front of us—the assumption that the age of inspiration was past, that the Bible was closed! We want the living thought, to use Emerson's words, 'that God is, not was, that He *speaketh*, not spake.' We are not born in the dotage and decay of the world; the sun shines as bright, the flowers blossom with as much beauty, the intelligence and affection of mankind are as great as in any age that has gone. We know that Spiritualism is but a tiny babe yet, and that day by day and year by year there will be unfoldments which have not come across our vision as yet. We feel that we are only at the beginning of our hopes, though already we have been taught many helpful lessons. The present avenues will open wide, and full and free communion between the two worlds become a familiar reality of our daily life. Many will come after us; some new Champollions who will enter into our labours will better interpret some of our hieroglyphs, will climb by our ladder, and go further than we had the time or power to go. Spiritualism is here for a Divine purpose, to enlarge and ennoble us. It has come when the world was ripe for its advent. Great discoveries ever follow great needs, and never in the world's history was there greater need than now for relating man to the spiritual world and its people. For the stricken heart there has come a balm; for the despairing has come peace; for the blinded, light has been shed. Spiritualism is the transcendent fact in all the marvels of this wonderful century. In the words of John Page Hopps, 'To miss it is a loss; to disdain it is a folly; to fight against it is a crime.' Those who can catch hold of its facts will feel like Gerald Massey, who said: 'It has been for me such a lifting of the mental horizon and letting in of the heavens, such a formation of faith into facts, that I can only compare life without it to sailing on board ship with hatches battened down, and being kept a prisoner, living by the light of a candle; and then suddenly, on some splendid starry night, allowed to go on deck for the first time, to see the stupendous mechanism of the heavens, all aglow with the glory of God.' It has roused similar sentiments in many who had long walked in darkness, and found here a satisfaction full and complete. After years of advocacy of the subject I can see at last, gleaming over the hill-tops of time, the dawning of a brighter and a better day, when immortality and present communion will not be incredible; when death shall no longer be looked upon as a dark mystery; when the wranglings about creeds and dogmas will cease, for we shall be continually baptised by the denizens of the higher spheres, feel the Holy Spirit of truth and goodness entering into our life, and have the real presence of the holiest and the highest perpetually in our midst. The peace which passeth understanding, about which we have prated so long, will be actually felt in our daily life, and the world have cause to thank God for Modern Spiritualism and all it has brought us.

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EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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THE RESURRECTION, CONSIDERED AS PROMOTION INTO THE UNSEEN.

There is scarcely anything in this world which, at the present time, presents so many indications of transformation or disappearance as the area occupied by opinions in matters pertaining to religion. The whole scene has changed during the past thirty years, and he would be a bold or a flippant man who would undertake now to picture the scene as it will appear in thirty years hence. The reason for this is probably that what has been called 'religion' has been, for the most part, identified with questionable metaphysics or scholastic artificialities.

But there is one subject which retains undiminished interest, and which, if possible, increases in practical value and importance. We refer to the resurrection of Jesus. The story in the Gospels bears upon it not a few marks of a variation between two explanations; and perhaps it actually is the blending of two explanations, the result being a problem which has never ceased to puzzle truth-loving readers of the New Testament. Did the physical body of Jesus rise from the grave? If we reply in the affirmative, we shall be hard put to it to account for several features in the narrative. If we reply in the negative, we shall hardly escape the charge that we contradict parts of the story, and just where it seems plainest.

And yet all Christendom agrees that the resurrection of Jesus is, in some way, vitally connected with our own, either as a symbol, a pledge, a proof of his kingly power, or, as some of us think, a specimen of what is always happening to the children of earth and time. It is therefore of the very highest importance that we should understand the true significance of the narrative if we can; and, as we have said, the reason is obvious why this subject retains its interest, and why it even increases in practical value and importance.

This increase in practical value and importance, however, is quite modern, and it is perhaps almost entirely due to the noticeable tendency to go back to the Gospels for Jesus; and, as a result, to identify him more closely with ourselves. For, whatever theological views may be held, it is simply an historical fact that the theologians and the priests between them have, during many centuries, spirited away the Jesus of the Gospels, and substituted a dogmatic or ecclesiastical Christ of their own: and it is certain that if we really succeed in getting back to the Jesus of the Gospels many important results will follow: and the result so far as the resurrection is concerned will be unspeakably precious.

The Gospels, as we have said, are somewhat confused,

but if we consent to hold over certain touches, and steadily press on along the main road of the story, there is enough of unity in it to warrant us in drawing certain conclusions; and this conclusion above all,—that it was as a being who intensely loved God and trusted Him that he 'rose from the dead,'—or, shall we say, went out of the body into Paradise with his rescued brother, the crucified thief: for that is as essential as it an astonishing part of the story. So that the real question is; 'And what is the significance of the resurrection of Jesus *for us*?' It seems plain that death was, for him, promotion into the unseen. Will it be the same for us? What happened to his physical body we do not know, and it really does not matter: but we do know what will happen to ours. The vital question is whether we can trust his own saying that as he lived so shall we. That he appeared, after his crucifixion, to those who loved him, is now not so very wonderful, as a fact otherwise unknown. A poet once asked;

Why come not spirits from the realms of glory,
To visit earth, as in those days of old,—
The times of ancient writ and sacred story?—
Is heaven more distant, or has earth grown cold?

But that is mere assumption. One said to William Howitt; 'Why do they not come back?' He replied, 'You should first be sure that they go.' All we can be sure of is that God's laws seem ever to work for progress, and we have no reason whatever for supposing that the laws which determine what we call 'death' are any exception to the rule. In fact, it is a kind of impiety to suggest that they are or will be.

We hold therefore that there is a possibility of advantage to every one in 'death,' which is not a catastrophe but an orderly part of the great unfolding of everlasting and advancing life: and, from many thoughts, we select three as strongly suggesting this.

We always think that much help may be found in the reflection that the convincings that will come in the unseen will be of enormous value to the spirit. So far from death being a darkening, it will in reality be a demonstration. That demonstration may, indeed, bring much misery, but it will carry with it the possibility of vast knowledge and the disillusionings which will sooner or later be emancipations. And it is just here we can understand the saying that 'there are last who will be first.' There are probably multitudes of atheists, for instance, who are ~~atheists~~ out of a pure desire to be loyal to themselves. They are mistaken but they are honest. They deny God but they are obeying Him in their very unbelief,—for the first command of God is that a man shall be true to his sense of what is truth. What splendid theists these will make when they find out the truth! And we have every right to believe that for multitudes of others the convincings of the new life on the other side will be a veritable salvation from many an error, wilfulness and sin.

And what of the deliverances that will come with the shuffling off of 'this mortal coil,' and the burying or burning of the 'muddy vesture of decay'? The very brain itself can be as much of an obstruction as a help; and the dull senses often hide much more than they reveal. That mighty master of music, Beethoven, who had long fought with cruel deafness, said, when near the end, 'I shall hear!' Not very long ago, a poor creature at an asylum had to be constantly treated for melancholy and most distressing delusions. He had to be kept alive by food mechanically forced upon him. But, three or four hours before his death, he 'came to himself,' became calm and kindly, expressed regret that he had given so much trouble, and went away sweet and sane. What a suggestion as to the probable liberations that will come with death!

Then, may not the word 'promotion' be fitly used when we think of the helps we are likely to find in the unseen? If there is the slightest truth in what we say

about it, is not the very first inference this—that there is a great army of teachers and saviours there, ‘a multitude that no man can number,’ wise and strong with the added knowledge and training of heaven? And surely it is inconceivable that this force of wisdom and goodness can be wasted. No; but it will all be utilised in the helping of those who ‘creep through death’s dark portal,’ day by day and hour by hour, ignorant, blind, naked, unclean, frightened, diseased. They wrong the blessed ones who think they, in their sweet heaven, will be unmindful of these; and no one is fit for heaven who is not willing to go and serve in hell.

AN INVESTIGATOR’S EXPERIENCES.*

ADDRESS BY MR. J. W. BOULDING.

On Friday, 24th ult., in the French Drawing Room, St. James’s Hall, MR. J. W. BOULDING addressed the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, taking for his subject some of his experiences in the investigation of Spiritualism.

MR. H. WITHALL, the Treasurer of the Alliance, took the chair, and in the course of his opening remarks explained that the absence of Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, the President, was due to a generally-expressed wish on the part of his friends that his work, which of late, owing to the growth of the Alliance, had been very arduous, should be lightened, particularly as regarded attendances at the evening meetings of the Alliance, with the accompanying risks of exposure to night air.

MR. BOULDING then delivered the address of the evening, descriptive of some of his experiences in the investigation of Spiritualism, and the conclusions which he had drawn therefrom. His introduction to Spiritualism had arisen out of his perusal in a daily paper of a notice of the well-known volume dealing with ‘The Clairvoyance of Bessie Williams’ (Mrs. Russell-Davies). At this time he was engaged on a historical work which treated of the life of Anne Boleyn, one of the Queens of Henry VIII., and this no doubt explained the fact that his first experiences in spiritual phenomena took the shape of communications from, and descriptions of, this ill-starred lady, given through and by various mediums, including Mrs. Russell-Davies herself, Miss Constance and Mr. Vango.

Mr. Boulding narrated some striking instances as tending to show the reality of these experiences, not only in virtue of the impossibility of collusion between the various mediums he visited and from whom he received the descriptions and communications, but also in relation to his own mediumship as confirming and supplementing the statements of other mediums.

Even more remarkable, evidentially, were the examples related by Mr. Boulding of communications received from departed friends, whereby information, even to the extent of dates and figures, was furnished to him on matters of which he himself was wholly ignorant, but all of which was afterwards verified to the letter.

The lecture was not only interesting in regard to the striking experiences recorded, but was also pleasantly noteworthy for its high literary quality, and the dramatic power with which it was delivered. To the distinctive note of scholarship were added the earnestness and enthusiasm of strong conviction and realised truth. Mr. Boulding is one of those privileged investigators who escape the failures and perplexities that so plentifully beset the path of the average inquirer into Spiritualism. Test followed test, each characterised by such precision and completeness that conviction followed as a natural sequence. Very remarkable was one phase of Mr. Boulding’s experiences, namely, the receiving of actual physical assistance from the unseen. In one instance he stated that for a period extending over some weeks he was relieved of the mechanical labour involved in re-copying the manuscript of one of his books by the kindly offices of one of his unseen helpers. Instances of similar phenomena have certainly been duplicated in the experience of other mediums, but, we believe, not to the same extent.

Some discussion followed, in which Mrs. Russell-Davies, Miss Minchin, and others took part, and the proceedings concluded with the usual vote of thanks to the speaker.

IN REPLY TO DR. HODGSON.

I enclose herewith a statement made by Mr. F. L. Stobbs, attorney for Miss Bangs, which, impartial observers will not fail to recognise, exposes the utter shallowness of the charges to which Dr. Hodgson has not hesitated to give European publicity; basing thereon his statement that they had been ‘unmasked,’ and consequently twisting these into evidences of guilt, upon which foundation he even sought to disqualify the phenomena produced through them subsequently, and consequently to banish these mediums from the field of research, entailing their possible ruin.

Mr. Stobbs’ statement carries implicit proof that Dr. Hodgson had not taken the trouble to investigate these charges (while not hesitating to throw this trouble on to others) before publicly condemning these mediums. In the same manner he raises imputations of possible imposition in his letter in ‘LIGHT,’ January 28th, with regard to the extract of the judgment of acquittal by the court submitted by the Sisters Bangs; and that before investigating its source.

Had he investigated the charges he advanced, he would have found that his main witness, Colonel Bundy, recognised that part of the phenomena produced through the Bangs are genuine, and even ‘he could not affirm that Miss May Bangs was not a medium for form materialisation.’ And this witness acknowledges that he ‘did not institute tests.’

If this is ‘acumen,’ it most certainly is not impartial, and most people will probably consider that valid research in psychical phenomena cannot be pursued apart from impartiality.

I am glad to see that Dr. Hodgson defends Mrs. Piper, who, he tells us, ‘was indignant at Miss Freer’s remarks. Mrs. Piper is apparently the only medium whose feelings are worthy of consideration, according to Dr. Hodgson.

But he himself has given even greater cause for indignation to the Bangs Sisters; and, according to Ochowicz and De Rochas, Eusapia Paladino has also had reason to feel indignant; while no doubt Mrs. d’Espérance equally feels indignant with the S.P.R. for condemning her on second-hand accusations, while failing to consider similar evidence as sufficiently satisfactory when advanced in support of phenomena.

The position assumed by Dr. Hodgson—that phenomena produced through a medium who has been accused of fraud must be taken as trickery—is unworthy of the cause he represents, and is untenable. He will be obliged to withdraw from that position, which practically implies that careful conditions of experimentation are valueless as contrasted with second-hand reputation.

I see from ‘LIGHT,’ February 4th, that Dr. Hodgson stands alone in maintaining that position, Sir William Crookes, Professor Richet, Professor Lodge, and Mr. Myers having agreed that fraud is not a valid scientific reason for dropping a medium.

Permit me to say that we want to see more impartiality displayed in psychical research. We want to see the whole matter raised to a higher level than that of *dilettante* conjuring and detecting qualifications. While acumen is necessary, yet we want to see a ‘deeper, bolder, more strenuous, more reverent attitude’ adopted towards these expressions of forces set in action by operators* occupying higher states than that represented by human acumen even in its highest development.

QUÆSTOR VITÆ.

LETTER FROM MR. FRANK L. STOBBS, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, TO ‘QUÆSTOR VITÆ.’

DEAR SIR,—From interviews had with persons who were here at the times referred to, and from what is on record here, it is my opinion that the charges made were without foundation in fact. All of those matters seemed to have emanated from the same source, and from my acquaintance with the facts of the particular cases as have come to me, I would accept the simple denials of the mediums in preference to believing the accusers.

I have had many sittings with Lizzie Bangs for slate-writing and pictures, and have always endeavoured to have the sittings held under conditions which I could testify to if necessary, and I assure you I have not desired to be deceived, and I know of my own personal knowledge that

* I do not here refer to the immediate source of the messages suggested through trance mediums, which is conditioned by the human researchers and may be degraded to their own level, but to the higher invisible operators who do not appear in the phenomena of which they are the cause.

she has mediumistic power of the very highest order ; and while I have never had sittings with her sister for slate-writings, I have yet to hear of her powers being questioned. There are many who have tried to assail them from the standpoint of personal prejudice, but even such as they are forced to admit that these sisters are possessed of unusual and remarkable mediumistic gifts. On the other hand, they have, I might say, dozens of friends to each enemy, who can and will testify to the remarkable manifestation of spirit phenomena through their mediumship. It is quite strange to me that one of Mr. Hodgson's standing should unhesitatingly accept those newspaper accounts as basis for the denouncing of these sisters without having made a personal investigation of the facts, and without first having given them the chance to prove to him that they do possess the powers claimed, and without his seeking other evidence that is just as good as that upon which he bases his opinion, and which can be had here in plenty. He has seen fit to express an opinion and pass judgment upon them, questioning the genuineness of their mediumship, yet he cannot say he ever had a sitting with them, or, for that matter, that he ever met them. He accepts without question the two or three sensational newspaper articles, all emanating from the same source, at once as charge and conviction, in spite of the fact that they have been cleared in court of the first charge made, and vindicated by the persons directly concerned in relation to the second charge, and the third charge made in a newspaper devoted to publishing sensational articles chiefly, and which, while it made a charge which, if substantiated in court, would have been serious indeed, was never even brought to court by the individuals making it, as it was their law-imposed duty to do if a crime had been committed. There can be found any number of people in this country who are as sincere as Mr. Bundy claimed to be, and as Mr. Hodgson is, who are willing to give evidence in relation to the mediumistic powers of these sisters.

The court records here show that the Bangs Sisters were arrested at the instance of Mr. Trefrey. Examination was waived by them in justice court, and they gave bonds to appear before the Criminal Court of Cook County, Illinois. Mr. Trefrey and Mr. Bundy were the witnesses before the grand jury at the May Term, 1888, of said court. Said grand jury returned a 'No Bill' in each case, certified copies of which 'LIGHT' has. These copies were certified by the clerk of said court, and under the seal of said court, it being a court of record, which said certified copies, *while possibly no evidence to Mr. Hodgson, are competent evidence in any court in the United States.* You will see that the articles in the 'Chicago Herald' referred to in his letter, and said charges made by Trefrey and Bundy, *were all prior in date to the returning of the verdict or 'No Bill' of the grand jury.*

In this country the law always presumes anyone charged with crime as innocent until *proved* guilty. In the above case those charged with crime were released by the grand jury and exonerated, where only the witnesses of the prosecution were heard and where no witnesses were heard on the part of the defence.

I was informed at the Chicago Public Library that said library did not contain copies of the 'Religio-Philosophical Journal' or the 'Chicago Sunday Star.' My recollection is that the 'Star,' which now shineth not, was a very sensational paper, and of little standing here. However, I did find the 'Herald' of date referred to, which contains an interview with Mr. Bundy, and wherein he is quoted as expressing his own belief, and the belief of others in whom he had confidence, in the genuineness of the slate-writing mediumship of these sisters, and he seems to have sought to sustain that phenomenon while attempting to assail that of materialisation of forms through their mediumship.

Referring to the claimed *exposé* of April 2nd, he says : 'I had intended to institute test conditions after I witnessed the exhibition long enough to see what was necessary. I *did not carry out that intention*—yet knowing of my own knowledge, obtained from experiments with another medium under conditions that no fair-minded scientist would undertake to impeach, that spirits can project an image identical in appearance with that of a person when in the flesh, and believing the sisters to be mediums I could not affirm that May Bangs was not a medium for form materialisation ; hence I was slow to advise strategic measures to confirm my *convictions*, as to which we were taking so much trouble and inconvenience to attend.'

I will leave it for you to decide the scientific worth of evidence of a witness who went to a séance with *convictions*, at great inconvenience and trouble to himself, and who could not affirm that the medium was not a medium for form materialisation, and who did not place the medium under test conditions, and did not examine the cabinet or room when requested by the medium, as stated in the 'Herald' article. It was the duty of those present on that occasion to have thoroughly examined the room and cabinet, and the duty of the ladies present to have examined the clothing of the mediums. It should have been done in justice to the

mediums, especially so when the request came from them, as such examination would have of itself been their exoneration. At the time of the alleged *exposé* the mediums charged the individuals interested in making it, with bringing the paraphernalia, and with attempting to ruin their reputations as mediums. The further fact is mentioned in the 'Herald' that the other people at the séance in question took sides with the mediums, and were exceedingly indignant at the interruption of the same. The 'Herald' of April 3rd, 1888, further says : 'In the court-room a crowd of curious people gathered yesterday morning. Many were firm believers and came to prove their faith in "George," and the other spooks could not be destroyed by any device of the enemy, either in the camp of Lyman Lewis, or in the camp of the "Religio-Philosophical Journal."' So evidently there was another side of the story which was not accorded a place in the papers.

Surely the men whom the 'Herald' speaks of as men 'who have always laboured with relentless vigour to expose fraud' (in referring to Mr. B. and Mr. T.), told to the grand jury all they knew concerning the alleged misdeeds of the Bangs Sisters, and the fact that the grand jury returned an acquittal is sufficient answer to the charge that they had done anything that was wrong or against the law.

I am informed that the Hon. A. B. Richmond, of Meadville, Pennsylvania, has heretofore answered concerning the affair of 1890, and I will refer you to him. Bangs Sisters have retractions voluntarily given them by one who on that occasion was chief accuser, who retracts all utterances made on prior occasions by him and against them. Copies are enclosed, and you can judge the worth of the evidence of such a witness.

I searched carefully the copies of the 'Inter-Ocean' from June 5th, 1891, to June 10th, 1891, and found therein no reference to the matter referred to as having been published in the 'Star' of June 7th, 1891. The 'Chicago Inter-Ocean' is one of Chicago's most 'newsy' papers, and back numbers can all be found in the splendid library here ; and my opinion is that, had the managers of that newspaper considered the story as having had any foundation in fact, they would have given full particulars to the world.

And, as I have said before, no attempt was made to bring the matter before a justice or before the grand jury, although the charges were such as would have required those having knowledge, had such facts any reality or existence, to have done so. I am informed by one of the persons who was present on the occasion last above referred to, that, as before, the invitation was extended, and request made to thoroughly search the premises before the séance was begun, which those participating therein refused to do. As before, they were charged by the mediums with having brought the paraphernalia with them. And which should be believed—the ones who frankly extended the honest, yet unaccepted invitation, that the premises be thoroughly searched that all concerned might be satisfied that there was no trickery or deception, or the ones who, from sinister motives or otherwise, refused so to do, especially where those who went would have the world believe their version of the matter, regardless of what others might say ? For myself, I would rather believe the mediums, and, in the first case above referred to, the grand jury evidently did.

There are any number of people of good, sound common-sense and judgment who, though not professed scientists, are convinced beyond all doubt of the immortality of the human soul, and of the truth of spirit return and of the reality of spirit phenomena manifested through the psychic powers of mediums. Such people can be found everywhere, if their evidence is desired. It is just as reasonable to accept the truth that spirits can manifest their presence through physical phenomena such as type-writing, and upon slates and canvas and in other ways, as through the powers of a trance medium. Some day scientists will awaken to the fact, which the common people of the world already know, that a medium fills the same position between this and the spirit world as does the telegraph or telephone instrument between mortals. Men of earth can and do receive messages, through the powers of mediums, from those on the other side of life. From whom ? Well, that depends very much upon the person receiving, upon what and who he is, upon his mental and spiritual condition, &c. The Good Book tells us to try the spirits whether they be of good or evil. Man is usually prone to blame others rather than himself for what is in reality his own fault, hence an unsatisfactory message, or perhaps a message received from an unreliable person on the other side, though received through genuine mediumistic powers and independent of the medium, causes him to throw blame upon the medium for the unsatisfactory result. Instead of seeking the true source of the trouble, he is satisfied to cast reflection upon the medium and leave the matter in that condition with the burden of proof upon the medium, to clear himself or herself of the charges preferred. Yet a good medium has no more control over a message given independently upon the slates through his or her mediumistic powers than has a telegraph or telephone instrument

over the message that is sent or received through the electric forces conveying. The medium has no control of the personality of the receiver of the message, or the individuality of the person on the other side whom the sitter has seen fit to seek his message from. Where mediumship is genuine the message speaks for itself, and it is the duty of the person seeking to see that such reasonable conditions are imposed always as would satisfy him or her of the genuineness of the result, and unless it is done and reasonable conditions always imposed, the evidence of the person attacking same should not be received. I have witnessed what I firmly believe to have been genuine materialisation through the mediumship of the Bangs Sisters. It seems to me that it would be best for such people of England as are interested in spirit phenomena to see the Bangs Sisters, and after placing them under such test conditions as are reasonable and right, judge for themselves from results whether or not they are possessed of mediumistic powers, and they should not be deprived of answering in person and for themselves the charges preferred, as they are, at long range, and by one who has not personally investigated for himself. I feel quite confident that they will be able to answer in a very satisfactory manner. The people who have made personal investigation of the matter would not question the fact that they are possessed of mediumistic powers, both unusual and wonderful. They have always solicited reasonable conditions in sitting for manifestation, and have convinced hundreds of people of the truth of spirit return.

If Professor Hodgson had been present at the type-writing séance on December 4th, 1895, I am of opinion that he would be of different mind as to the genuineness of the Bangs Sisters' mediumistic powers.—Respectfully,
FRANK L. STOBBS.

COLONEL BUNDY.

(Extract from article in 'Chicago Herald' of April 3rd, 1888, entitled, 'History of Bangs Family, by Colonel Bundy' (p. 5). From quoted interview with Colonel Bundy.)

'During these years an experienced Spiritualist and warm friend of the family made a series of experiments with the girls to see if materialised spirits' hands could be shown. From the statements this gentleman has made to me it would seem that they were successful and obtained results *under conditions of very satisfactory nature*. I fully believe the man is sincere in his convictions and I cannot see how he could be deceived. *On the whole I am inclined to accept his testimony.*

'Prior to two years ago I did not allow the names of the Bangs Sisters to appear on the mediums' directory which I furnish investigators, nor did I mention them in the "Religio-Philosophical Journal," to the best of my recollection.'

'Some time after the formation of the Psychical Research Society in the city the girls called on me, and offered to submit their claims as mediums for independent slate-writing to the investigation of the society's committee on physical phenomena. They appeared ingenuous and anxious to obtain a standing in the journal and with the society.'

'Their deportment in this matter, together with reports coming to this office, led me to recognise them, to permit the insertion of their advertisement, and to assiduously seek to personally test their claim as slate-writing mediums. After eight sittings, seven of which were total failures, and one unsatisfactory, I deemed it a waste of time for me to pursue the matter further, especially as each attempt cost three hours of valuable time.'

'However, I want to emphasise right here my belief that a part of the slate-writing done in the presence of these young women is genuine, the work of incarnate spirits. But I think a large proportion of the genuine is done by the familiar spirits of the mediums rather than by the friends from whom the messages purport to come. Yet I could, if at liberty, give the "Herald" some startling and most convincing evidences of the identity of a number who have communicated with their friends on earth through the mediumship of these sisters.'

He then says that he sent for them and said, 'I had prevented two attempts at exposure, and asked if they were willing to give me a series of experimental séances, I to select a company mostly of Spiritualists, and no one who should be objectionable to be there. *To this proposition they readily assented.* Six séances were held under this agreement. I had intended to institute test conditions after I witnessed the exhibition long enough to see what was necessary. I did not carry out this intention for I became fully satisfied that we were sitting before a trick cabinet' (then why did he not examine same to make sure of it, when invited?) 'and that the display was deliberate premeditated deception, yet knowing of my own knowledge, obtained from experiments with another medium under conditions that no fair-minded scientist would undertake to impeach, that spirits can project an image identical in

appearance with that of a person when in the flesh, and believing the sisters to be mediums, I could not affirm that May Bangs was not a medium for form materialisation. Hence I was slow to advise strategic measures to confirm my convictions as to the show which we were taking so much trouble and inconvenience to attend.'

'Mr. Trefrey . . . had repeatedly and persistently warned them of the risks they ran, and tried to persuade them to confine themselves to their slate-writing, *in which he has confidence.*'

RETRACTATION.

'COPY'

C. K. Offield } Law Offices of Offield and Towle,
H. S. Towle } 185, Dearborn-street,
C. C. Linthicum } Chicago.
Counsellors, &c., in February 4th, 1890.
Patent and Trade Mark Causes.

This is to certify that I of my own free will and accord do hereby retract any and all utterances I may have made against Lizzie Bangs or Bangs Sisters either in relation to their character, morality, or the genuineness of their mediumistic powers.

This is done to do them justice as anything I may have said was said in anger, and is given in lieu of any damages she or they might see fit to claim.

(Signed) HENRY H. GRAHAM.

Witness :—C. C. Linthicum.

On this 4th day of February, 1890, personally appeared before me Henry H. Graham, whose signature appears above and acknowledged that he signed the foregoing for the uses and purposes set forth.

(Signed) FREDERICK C. GOODWIN,
Notary Public.

[Seal, Notary Public, Frederick
C. Goodwin, Cook County,
Illinois.]

THE GERMAN PSYCHICAL JOURNALS.

The Editor of the 'Uebersinnliche Welt' has kept his promise to give his readers an account of Mrs. Corner's séances with the members of the Sphinx Society.

The séance described in the number before us is, however, the same of which an account was given by Herr Snitzer, the Editor of the 'Berliner Börsen Courier,' and of which a translation appeared in a recent number of 'LIGHT.' Accounts of the other séances are to follow. This one is preceded by some remarks by the Editor, Herr Max Rahn, who expresses himself fully convinced of the medium's *bona-fides*. At the first of these séances no phenomena whatever occurred, but at all the others the manifestations were very good. The Editor says: 'In every succeeding séance, taking into consideration the strong test conditions to which the medium was subjected, phenomena took place which must have convinced thoughtful spectators of the action of some supernatural force.'

An excellent photogravure of Mrs. Corner (Florence Cook) is given with this number of the journal, with the medium's autograph: 'To my friend, Mr. Rahn.—Florence Cook.' Herr Rahn likewise thanks the medium for the willingness with which she obliged the society by submitting to the strict searching of her person before the séances, as well as to the irksome bondage to which she was subjected.

The other articles are an essay by Dr. Carl du Prel, on 'The Odic Individuality of Man,' and continuations of several serial essays.

There is nothing in 'Psychische Studien' this month which calls for special notice. It gives continuations of several papers and the commencement of a new one by Herr Knopstock-Rowel, entitled 'An Interview on the Highest Psychological Problems.' Among the short notices is one referring to Mrs. Corner's séances, at which the Editor regrets he was not present, his application for a seat having been refused by Herr Rahn on the ground that all the places at the sittings were already appropriated. He merely, therefore, gives the short *résumé* of them which appeared in the 'Uebersinnliche Welt' of last month.

'ARS VIVENDI.'—Mr. Arthur Lovell's two volumes, already published in his 'Ars Vivendi' series, have been so well received that he contemplates the issue of another volume, at an early date, probably in May. The subject of the third volume will be 'Imagination.'

THOUGHTS ON HELL.*

This book, like 'Evil and Evolution,' is a restatement and vindication of some dogmas of the Church which are losing their hold on the mind of the day. It is interesting from the earnestness and sincerity of the writer, who has himself experienced doubts of the doctrine he defends. Mr. Morton throws no new light on his subject, the arguments advanced being those with which we are familiar. The book opens with a strenuous statement of his views, and an attempt is made to show their reasonableness. He suggests more than once that the difficulties that stand in the way of a belief in the orthodox hell may disappear when we attain to fuller knowledge; but the fact that the difficulties in the way of those who hold a contrary view may disappear from a like cause is ignored.

Mr. Morton is not happy in the manner in which he deals with his quotations. The following is from the writings of Mr. St. George Mivart:—

Now any being to whom has been given that wonderful power, will, with all the consequent responsibilities of a state of probation, must be able to fail as well as to succeed—the very term 'probation' implies a risk of failure. What are we to deem probable as to the consequences of such failure? Reason unaided can tell us very little of the soul after death. Certainly we have no evidence that it will then be able to undo what it has done during life, but rather the contrary. The doctrine of the persistence of force does not favour such a view, and there is nothing which contradicts the Church's assertion that the state in which the soul finds itself at the close of life's trial cannot be reversed. If so, the man who dies in a state of aversion from the highest light and the supreme good must remain in such a state, with all its inevitable consequences.

Those familiar with St. George Mivart's writings are aware that he consigns to hell all who do not attain to 'The Beatific Vision.' Among the number, he holds, there must be many who have led honest, pure, and honourable lives, and to these he would assign at least as great a measure of happiness and advancement as is attainable here below. This amounts to a direct denial of the orthodox hell. If any doubt of this is possible, it is met by the fact that St. George Mivart's writings on this subject were placed in the Index Expurgatorius by the Censor of the Sacred College. Father Clarke, the opponent of St. George Mivart, is also cited in favour of the author's view.

The same criticism applies to the author's quotations on the subject of Spiritualism. He quotes this from Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace:—

The stupendous difficulty—that if these phenomena and these tests are all to be attributed to the 'second self' of living persons, then that second self is almost always a deceiving and a lying self, however moral and truthful the visible and tangible first self may be—has, so far as I know, never been rationally explained; yet this cumbrous and unintelligible hypothesis finds great favour with those who have always been accustomed to regard the belief in a spirit-world, and more particularly a belief that the spirits of our dead friends can, and do, sometimes communicate with us, as unscientific, unphilosophical, and superstitious.

Dr. Alfred R. Wallace is here speaking of one aspect of the question only, the theory of the second self, yet Mr. Morton extends his utterance to cover the whole plane of spiritual phenomena, in order to press his view that all phenomena of Spiritualism have an evil origin, which sooner or later betrays itself.

Mr. Morton devotes twenty-four pages to the subject of Spiritualism. His study of the subject has been far from cursory. He shows considerable knowledge of the question. Speaking of the credibility of the phenomena, he says: 'Indeed, so exceptionally strong is the evidence in favour of their occurrence, that to refuse credence can no longer be regarded as a sign of superior intellectual strength, but of being very imperfectly informed.'

His interest in the matter begins and ends with the fact that he holds that Modern Spiritualism affords uncontrovertible evidence of the existence of 'a transcendental evil world.' He ignores all testimony given by spirits that they are happy, that they have progressed, and apparently doubts any expression of their good will. As to the evil origin of the phenomena, Mr. Morton says:—

'Still it is admitted by those really best informed on the subject, that the phenomena, so far as they have now been studied, are attended by one very peculiar and persistent characteristic: *They are almost always evil in their aim and tendency.*'* It has been found quite impossible to ignore this transparent fact.'

Again:—

'It is utterly useless to deny all this. The evidence is too clear and abundant to be resisted, and it is increasing day by day.'

Mr. Morton does not tell us to what Christian communion he belongs, but as of the twenty-four writers cited by him, twelve or more are Roman Catholics, we should not probably be wrong in concluding that he is of that faith. If this be so, perhaps the publication of this work, in defence of a belief in the orthodox hell, is a sign that that dogma of the Church is not so universally held by its members as in former days.

OPEN LETTERS TO THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

BY CHARLES DAWBARN.

No. V.

It is suggested that in this letter we make a rather careful investigation of the instrument through whom we propose to make friends with the invisible.

The ideal instrument is, of course, one's own self. But unless progress has been made before birth, a lifetime will hardly suffice for such development. The Hindu thinks half a lifetime well spent if he achieve a personal consciousness of the power of his own Ego to leave its mortal dwelling for a brief outing. But after all, to our more practical minds, he seems to achieve little of real importance. For almost all that he has to offer we can well afford to wait, provided we have accepted human immortality as a proved fact. Just now, and working from the standpoint of the Society for Psychical Research, we would like proof that the spirit world can offer us an intelligence not inferior to our own. And the sole object of these 'Open Letters' is to stimulate your search for such proof. If it should, perchance, prove superior, so much the better. But most assuredly the Society for Psychical Research will not care to spend much time in the realm of nambypambyisms and unprovable assertions which have to a large extent dominated the platform and séance chamber of Modern Spiritualism.

I repeat that the ideal instrument for spirit intercourse is one's own self, provided the self has the qualifications demanded. But the self can bring none of the evidence of witnesses so dear to the heart of the Society for Psychical Research. Recognising that fact, such a 'self,' if one be found, must continue his lonely way, seeking practical results which will need no evidence of their value to the mortal. We need not dwell further on the needed qualities of this ideal instrument. Such men and women are, I believe, to-day climbing to a higher manhood, each in their own way, a way utterly unknown to the sceptic.

So the instrument most of us must perforce use is some mortal, born with a possibility of hearing, seeing, or sensing vibrations that would pass us by and leave no record. Such an instrument is of untold value, and without it the Society for Psychical Research would presently find itself in a *cul-de-sac*. Such instruments are not quite so rare as public silence would seem to prove. But ignorance, superstition, and bigotry have too often murdered this supernal sensitiveness. The writer has known several cases of children punished because they declared they had a playfellow well known by the parents to have died out of its mortal body weeks or months before. Many cases of murder are almost excusable if we take into account the unlovely character of the party of the second part. But these murders of a higher manhood are woes to outlast all earth history, and for which repentance can never atone. So our instruments of to-day are, for the most part, the few rare specimens overlooked by ecclesiastical Herods. We call them 'sensitives,' but seldom take into account that they are just as sensitive to us as to anything else. They cannot be normal

* 'Thoughts on Hell.' A Study in Eschatology. By VICTOR MORTON. London: Sands and Company, 12, Burleigh-street, Strand, W.C., 1899.

* Italics are the author's.

and abnormal at the same time, yet we surround them with our own normal vibrations in both conversation and thought, and then are vexed if their abnormal cannot be distinguished from our own normal. The man, for instance, who has just taken a bad half crown, and is thinking profane language, would so change the vibrations of a true sensitive that she would give ready access to the most undesirable class of 'spirit return,' unless, sensing the danger, she should leave the room. I am not now writing or thinking of public instruments, but of wives, daughters, sons, in our own family circles, through whom we are seeking Society for Psychical Research evidence of human immortality. That, it seems to me, should be the very first lesson for an investigator, for if he realise his own influence on the medium he may be saved from many painful experiences.

The general experience of investigators is that their earth normalism showered on the medium does not stop manifestations. But it seems to cause vibrations amid which the threshold spirit is at all times ready for 'a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.' The mere singing of pious hymns and songs can have no beneficial effect. Your own scientific attitude of earnest, careful investigation must be the best possible, provided your daily life be manly and pure. Your sensitive, whether such sensitiveness be educed by self-suggestion, mortal hypnotism, or invisible influence, has become a conductor of thought currents. If your thoughts are unclean the intelligence that may appear will, most likely, be on the same level. You have been casting filth on the only highway by which you yourself can hope to interchange thought with an intelligence not inferior to your own. And that highway is the sensitive, perhaps your own wife, or daughter, or son. So if your expected spirit visitor retires, because unable to express his thought amid vibrations that chiefly respond to tobacco, stimulants, and the animal appetites, or are active with anger and suspicion, yours must be the loss. No sneer at 'spirit return' can alter the effect of thought upon the vibrations of the mortal brain. And if it be that there are inherited tendencies in the brain of your sensitive that welcome such influence, it may be that you are calling them into activity, and perhaps tainting the future of an innocent instrument for the exchange of thought between the two spheres of existence. I believe that many a poor sensitive has been thus beclouded and besmeared by thought impurities until his, or her, self-respect has been utterly destroyed. So even a member of the Society for Psychical Research must perforce prepare himself right carefully for the journey on which he hopes to meet a spirit brother. Just a natural, manly life is demanded, nothing mystic or impossible.

Apparently nothing would be gained by keeping the sensitive in a glass case, free from the dust of earth life. The child who has a spirit playmate and repeats its childish prattle needs only the harmonious surroundings of home life to presently become the mouthpiece of the spirits we wish to welcome. If we keep ourselves at our own highest and best the instrument we use will be none the worse for household cares, or an honourable business life. Our sensitives should be men and women of to-day, living, so far as may be, at their own highest and best, in the harmonies of home life. So much seems within reach of mortal aspiration and effort.

In this brief discussion of the consequences of the law governing Multiple Personality I have not deemed it necessary to make any special examinations of 'doubles,' or as you have termed them, 'Apparitions of the Living.' They are evidently under the same law, exhibiting a like mental confusion and loss of memory, and are but rarely able to utter any tone whatever. They seem to indicate that the spirit form is already in existence during earth life, as a personality of its own. Perhaps the tones of such an instrument may be nearer those of to-day than when death has severed the last link. But if the law as presented in these articles be indeed a verity, such apparitions must be different and distinct personalities, though dominated by the same Ego.

We will now turn once again, and very briefly, to your 'Proceedings' with Mrs. Piper, and again for a moment watch your investigator plunging into a pool of doubt and uncertainty, and discovering an occasional fact floating on the scum.

The spirit who claimed old acquaintance with the professor was not a fool in earth life. He could then have expressed himself as an educated, intelligent young man, on a mental level with his friend. You have accepted the 'spirit return' as fairly proved. Whence, then, the confusion when he attempted to prove his identity? This appears to be the reply.

(a) There is either imperfect control of his own brain by the spirit, or

(b) He has failed in his attempted control of the medium; or

(c) The whole affair was a telepathic manifestation; or

(d) A, B and C are blended by the causes I have pointed out.

That the last reply is correct I venture to maintain.

Gentlemen of the Society for Psychical Research, I believe I have now justified my claim that the scientific discovery of vibratory matter not merely explains the confusion you have encountered, but can be used as a lever to remove many of the difficulties that have beset your investigations. I have now only to tender you my gratitude for your patient investigations in the realm of psychic research. As I write these words the last midnight bell of 1898 is proclaiming my bedtime, but I take advantage of its echoes to outbreathe to you a New Year's greeting, and a hearty wish that you may all enjoy an active life so long as there is a single psychic problem remaining unsolved.

San Leandro, Cal., U.S.A.

AN EARLY COUNTERPARTAL EXPERIENCE.

The 'Review of Reviews' for March contains a lengthy notice of 'The Life of Father Hecker,' by the Rev. Walter Elliot, the second edition of which was issued by the Columbus Press, New York, in 1894. This remarkable man, after many changes of thought, joined the Roman Church at the age of twenty-five, on August 1st, 1844. As might have been expected in the case of a man who dared to think, he experienced much persecution in his adopted Church; and now, a decade after his decease, the Pope has at once condemned and advertised his 'Life,' in a manner which the Reviewer irreverently calls 'sitting on the fence.'

The Reviewer records a remarkable vision, which the context shows to have occurred between the ages of twenty-two and twenty-four. He writes:—

'During his stay at Brook Farm he met a young woman to whom he felt some degree of attraction, and had it been with him as with most men they might have married, and the Order of Paulists would have had to be founded by some other man. But he was withheld from matrimony by a curious vision which he thus describes:—

"About ten months ago, perhaps only seven or eight, I saw (I cannot say I dreamed; it was quite different from dreaming; I was seated on the side of my bed) a beautiful angelic being, and myself standing alongside of her, feeling a most heavenly pure joy. It was as if our bodies were luminous, and gave forth a moon-like light which sprang from the joy we experienced. I felt as if we had always lived together, and that our motions, actions, feelings and thoughts came from one centre. When I looked towards her I saw no bold outline of form, but an angelic something I cannot describe, though in angelic shape and image. It was this picture that has left such an indelible impression on my mind. For some time afterward I continued to feel the same influence, and do now so often that the actual around me has lost its hold. In my state previous to this vision I should have been married ere this, for there are those I have since seen who would have met the demands of my mind. But now this vision continually hovers over me and prevents me, by its beauty, from accepting anyone else; for I am charmed by its influence, and conscious that, should I accept any other, I should lose the life which would be the only one wherein I could say I live."

The Reviewer proceeds to say:—

'One of the things which most charmed him in the Catholic faith was the doctrine which it shares with Modern Spiritualism. He says, "I found that in the Church there was no impassable barrier dividing the living from the departed. That was an intense delight to me."

Yet if the Church of Rome has preserved this teaching which so many other Christian sects have obscured or even obliterated, the complete surrendering of free thought and the right of private judgment is a heavy price to pay for it. Had Hecker, the earnest student of Jacob Böhme, but

preserved himself from soul-bondage for ten more years, he might have read his own experiences duplicated and enlarged in Mr. T. L. Harris's exquisite poem, 'A Lyric of the Morning Land.' There he would have found that it was his own counterpart who appeared to him; not his 'higher soul,' as one section of Theosophists calls the counterpart, for he saw himself as a distinct being from her; still less an evil elemental, as another section of Theosophists avers; but his 'twin-soul.' In the 'Gospel of the New Life' he would have found both light and liberty; and he would have begun to realise the words of Jesus, originally recorded in the Gospel of the Egyptians, and afterwards wickedly omitted from the canon: 'For the Lord Himself, having been asked by one when His Kingdom would come, said, When the two [not "two" as sometimes erroneously translated, but "the two," i.e., the two eternal counterparts] shall be one, and the outward as the inward, and the male with the female, neither male nor female.'

I am informed that in the Oxyrhynchus papyri some fragments of the Gospel of the Egyptians have been discovered, and will be published in this year's volume. This Gospel was stated to have contained the Esoteric teachings of Jesus. There is a heavy reckoning in store for the Church of Christendom for having excluded and concealed these teachings.

48, Sussex-gardens,
Hyde Park, W.

E. W. BERRIDGE, M.D.

Since the above was in type I have been informed by an American friend who knows, that though the Roman Church admits theoretically the communion of the living with the (so-called) dead, Spiritualism and clairvoyance are forbidden to its members; and that in Canada many have been excommunicated for disobedience to this injunction. But to be persecuted by priestcraft is an honour!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.

Conduct of Private Circles.

SIR,—It gives me much pleasure to answer the questions of your correspondent, Mrs. Holden, to the best of my ability. Our circle consisted of two ladies and three gentlemen, and we used to sit regularly twice a week, for about two hours each time—from half-past eight to half-past ten. We always sat in the same order round the table, the room having previously been made quite dark. We adopted the signals of one rap to express 'no,' two 'yes,' and three 'uncertainty.' One of the first questions we asked was, whether the spirit could write through any of us if one of us were to hold a pencil and give up his or her mind as far as possible. Receiving two knocks for an answer, we tried; and the spirit wrote her name through one of the gentlemen. He, of course, had absolutely no knowledge of what was about to be written. The messages were at first limited to one or two words, but as we continued they became longer and better written. One curious fact we noticed was, that although the writing was all done through the same medium, each spirit had his or her distinct handwriting. I do not know if your correspondent has tried to obtain writing in this way, but if any members of the circle have mediumistic gifts I see no reason why, with a little patience, they should not obtain good writing. We have found it better for one person to act as spokesman, and the questions should be put in as clear a manner as possible. Patience is, of course, absolutely necessary. We, who were fortunate enough to have a particularly strong medium among us, did not get anything sent to us until we had sat at least thirty times. All the manifestations were weak at first, but grew stronger as we continued. Another experiment we tried successfully was putting on the table a piece of paper on which I had previously written certain questions, which *nobody* had seen except myself. The paper was dematerialised and the questions were answered through the medium at our next séance in the order they were asked. All of the sitters felt spirit touches varying in force; and to prove that they were not imaginary, the medium was one day hit so hard by a bad spirit, who caused us much trouble, as to make a bruise. I cannot tell what the 'dark mist' referred to by your correspondent may be, but should she succeed in obtaining automatic writing she will be able to ask and find out in that way. The circle is, I think, rather small—six to eight sitters being usually considered the best number. I have asked a spirit, who constantly writes for us, to be present at your correspondent's séances, and if possible help her to obtain good results. I shall have much pleasure in answering, to the best of my ability, any other questions your correspondent may wish to ask, and I much hope that she may obtain better results in the future.

VIA LUCIS.

Mrs. Graddon.

SIR,—I shall feel very grateful if you will kindly insert the following in your next issue. Most of your readers and many of my friends will remember the account you published in 'LIGHT' of January, 1897, of an invention communicated to me by my late husband. From that time until January, 1898, I succeeded in doing well with it. The business was then about to be formed into a limited company for the purpose of working the British and foreign patents. Previous to signing the documents, to my utter dismay, a clerical error in a deed registered at the Patent Office was discovered. The solicitor whose work it was, was then, and still is, unfortunately in a bad state of health. With great trouble and hard work I have had all rectified, and have kept the fees paid and business going. Through a second misfortune I had to leave my late residence, an action being brought against me by my landlady for an alleged breach of covenant, and I was unable to get another house for nearly three months. I am now in very straitened circumstances, and am obliged to make an appeal to all persons interested in Spiritualism, not only on my own account, but to help the friends on the other side in their work for the benefit of those in this sphere of existence.

The manufacturer is making and carrying on the business in England to a limited degree, upon very reasonable terms, which leaves me free to deal in any way I can with the patents generally. There still is the necessity of finding the means for working them in foreign countries, and through your valuable paper I ask for the co-operation of all who have the facilities for giving it.

Through orders, testimonials, and Press notices, the article (a domestic chopping machine) has proved to be of great commercial value, and I sincerely trust that having laid the matter as clearly as I can before your readers in this way, some friends will be disposed to give the help and assistance necessary.

E. GRADDON.

52, Adelaide-road, London, N.W.

Mrs. Corner in Berlin.

SIR,—May I ask you to insert a few lines from me to corroborate Mr. Rahn's remarks on 'barbaric' tying? I was treated in the kindest manner. As to the marks on my wrists, I very easily get bruised, and very often am restless and so get a strain on my wrists. I was taken the greatest care of while in Berlin, and wish to express my sincere thanks for the consideration shown me by all my friends. The management of my séances was perfection, and I can safely recommend any medium to go to Berlin if they get a chance.

FLORENCE CORNER.

Mrs. Paul.

SIR,—Allow me to express a word of sympathy towards Mrs. Paul. 'Hostess,' in 'LIGHT' of March 25th, remarks that 'Observer' expressed his *belief* that the medium is, or has been, genuine. Few persons have had better evidence than myself that twenty years ago, when about sixteen years of age, she was probably the best materialising medium that ever gave séances (never for remuneration) at the house of her mother, wife of General Showers. That very objectionable system of tying was resorted to; wire has been passed through her ears, and the ends fixed outside the cabinet; the wrists were constantly blistered with carelessly-applied sealing-wax, &c. I can also furnish evidence on more than one occasion, personally, that she is now a powerful medium, even, I believe, at any distance. But a few nights ago, after having written to her, I felt the bed-clothes being dragged off me, and a sensation of cold in consequence. This was a spiritual phenomenon by 'Peter.' When I came down in the morning I found a letter from 'Lenore,' from whom I had not heard for twenty years—not written direct as formerly, when I received thirteen, one of which she was seen writing by several persons, including Mr. Harrison, editor of 'The Spiritualist,' who wrote informing me—but through the hand of Mrs. Paul, whom she had unknowingly entranced for the purpose. The two phenomena coming so unexpectedly are very significant in their connection. I could send a copy of the letter should you wish it.

C. E. ISHAM.

Horsham.

[This must close the correspondence in regard to the mediumship of Mrs. Paul. We may, however, remind Sir Charles Isham that the real point at issue has been, not whether she is a medium, but whether her manifestations have been always genuine.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

'MOLLIE FANCHER.'—We are glad to acknowledge the receipt of the following additional contributions in response to the appeal on behalf of Miss Fancher, made by 'Quæstor Vitæ,' in 'LIGHT' of March 18th: A Sympathiser, 1s.; Mrs. W. P. Browne, £1.