

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT !"—Goethe.

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

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

'LIGHT' AND THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

We beg to remind the Subscribers to 'Light,' and the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, who have not already renewed their Subscriptions for 1899, which are payable *in advance*, that they should forward remittances at once to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. Their kind attention to this matter will save much trouble in sending out accounts, booking, postage, &c.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

We receive some strange communications. Something like these:—

"'LIGHT' is too learned."

"'LIGHT' is far too simple, and sadly needs depth."

"'LIGHT' is really soon exhausted. I glance through it and feel no more interested in it."

"'LIGHT' is one of the mainstays of my life. It is a joy to look forward to its coming, and a red-letter day when it arrives. I don't know what I should do without its sunny and consoling thoughts."

"'LIGHT' is getting orthodox, and not advanced enough for me."

"'LIGHT' is getting far too advanced for me. I occasionally hardly like to send it to my friends."

"'LIGHT' is making a mistake in so persistently identifying Spiritualism with Christianity."

"'LIGHT' seems to take every opportunity for undermining the great verities of the Christian religion."

"'LIGHT' ought to give us more about phenomena."

"'LIGHT' is particularly acceptable to me because it avoids the stories of the séance room which we all know, and deals with great principles and fine spiritual truths."

The reader can go on compiling such mutually destructive communications for himself. All we can say is that, notwithstanding such curiously contradictory opinions, we are confident we command the general and a growing approval; and that, in avoiding extremes either way, we are pursuing not only the path of safety but the path of real influence and success.

We are often asked how it is that communicating spirits fail to remember particulars which, as we say, 'must be perfectly well-known to them.' Two explanations seem to lie on the surface. The first is that the new life and its immense new interests may possibly rapidly dim the old, and more rapidly with some than with others. A homely

plodding being may be, in a sense, earth-bound, though not unhappily so, while another may eagerly press on to 'fresh woods and pastures new.' The first may linger with the old scenes and their associations, and remember well all that pertains to them: the second may be almost literally 'born again.'

The second explanation is that as, in communicating, the spirit has, in some way, to enter into earthly conditions and use earthly instruments, the difficulties may be enormous, something akin to wading through cross currents, or plunging into a fog, or, possibly, like trying to spell out a message through a type-writer in the dark. This is very strongly suggested in scores of places in Dr. Hodgson's very instructive report of the séances with Mrs. Piper.

One of our complaints against our critics is that they are so miserably lacking in imagination. Even though they are Christians, they appear to see such a little way beyond the orange peel on the pavement. This is unpardonable in scientific men who depend upon the visioning power of the imagination in all high-class progressive work. Faraday, though he so ridiculously failed in applying it all round, was entirely right in his enlightened challenge to his brethren:—

Let us encourage ourselves by a little more imagination, prior to experiment.

Letters that come to us, even from enlightened Spiritualists, often suggest the reflection: 'We wonder, after all, whether there is not a lurking danger within this constant insistence upon "culture." Culture, of course, is good. Heaven forbid we should suggest a thought against it! But what if culture makes us impatient of home-spun simplicity, if it leads us to depreciate evidences flowing through the mediumship of the uneducated, or even the vulgar? What if it acts as æstheticism acted, when it was all the rage—almost creating a new vulgarity, of affectation and selfish shrinking from common things and even common duties?

It was a high authority that said—'Call nothing common and unclean,' or that affronted the proud world by saying that God chose the so-called base things of the world to pull down the strongholds of the mighty. Better than culture is sympathy or responsiveness or gracious kindness. That clear thinker, J. T. Munger, well said:—

Let us have all the self-culture we can get, but let it not be without the law of service. There is no form of selfishness so repulsive, so hard, so cold and desperate, as that found along with self-culture when it does not open into and become one with benevolence. There is a good deal of it abroad, and its arctic chill is not infrequently encountered. Better ignorance, better untaught instinct, than self-culture when it ends with self.

Judging from the newspapers, and drawing conclusions from the wonderful statements of 'the man in the street,' we think Mazzini's saying was never more needed: 'You are not guilty because you are ignorant; but you are guilty when you resign yourself to ignorance': and we are sorry to say that this applies to people who are or who ought to

be on a higher plane than the average newspaper paragraph writer and 'the man in the street.' We do not say that it is possible for everyone to get full personal satisfaction in relation to our subject, even after earnest inquiry, but we do say that a very little frank and serious attention would convince any reasonable being that the claims of Spiritualists merit at least respectful consideration. The flippancy of ignorance in relation to this subject is indeed almost a crime.

That is assuredly a fine saying of George A. Gordon's: 'Another path to the Eternal is the truth of the ideal and man's answering capacity. We do not discover our ideals: they discover us.' That deserves pondering for five quiet minutes.

In the same way we might reverse many of our notions. Thus we say, 'These are the views I hold': but it would nearly always be better to say, 'These are the views that hold me.' And, as for our prayers to God: are not the best and truest of them God's prayers to us? We are anxious about salvation, as though there were risks, and as though it all somehow depended upon us. Perhaps it does, in a way: but the deepest truth is, as Frances Power Cobbe put it, that we are 'doomed to be saved.' O blessed doom! Truly, we are in the hands of the higher powers: and what is needed is the reverse of what we imagine. We cry to them to save us. What if the problem is, not *will* they? but *how can they?*

Just a few words more in regard to Mr. Maskelyne and Mr. T. P. O'Connor. We cannot read all the comic papers, and if we could we should not feel bound to notice everything which the comedians say of us in them. But special attention has been drawn to another of Mr. Maskelyne's signals of distress advertisements, and to a further instalment of Mr. T. P. O'Connor's nonsense concerning a subject which he does not trouble himself to understand.

In his journal, as we have already mentioned, he prints a paper by Mr. Maskelyne on himself, and draws special attention to it, in a notice which contains the following:—

What a strange world it is that Mr. Maskelyne has revealed for us! England, in his boyhood, went mad over the crude Spiritualism of those gifted impostors, the Davenport Brothers, and it remained for a lad hardly out of his teens to restore the nation to common-sense—not to say sanity. It was this which proved the turning point in his life. 'Seek not thy lot in life,' said Sadi; 'thy lot in life is seeking for thee.' Mr. Maskelyne has ever since devoted his life to natural magic, with the results that all the world knows. Nor has he ceased to keep a lynx-eye on the spiritualistic impostors who have arisen since his first *exposé*—as friends of Eusapia Paladino have reason to remember.

Of course one cannot expect exactness from the clown in the ring or Cheap Jack in the market-place, but facts are facts when all is said and done: and the facts are distorted out of all recognition in these harum-scarum sentences.

England did not go mad over the Davenport Brothers. A certain mild sensation was created by them, and, as usual, some were convinced of their genuineness, and some doubted or derided. As for Mr. Maskelyne's great services to the nation, we do not remember them; though, of course, we are well aware of his elaborate conjuring tricks. His services in the matter of Eusapia Paladino we do remember, and, as the matter stands to-day, it is Mr. Maskelyne who is made to look ridiculous. If 'Tay Pay' does not know this, he ought to: if he does, his suppression of it is not a credit to him.

At the close of Mr. Maskelyne's absurdly boastful references to his 'exposures' of Spiritualism, he makes a remark which itself pricks the bubble he blows. He says:—

Exposures of this kind used to provide matter of great interest to the public. But, for the past eight or ten years, the public has taken practically no interest in the subject. People regard it all as exploded humbug, and will have none of it.

Now, Mr. Maskelyne, you *must* know that this is mere gas. During the past eight or ten years Spiritualists have made enormous advances, and the leading spirits of Psychical Research have had to admit the main contentions of Spiritualism. This last remark of Mr. Maskelyne puts him on a par with 'Tay Pay' himself. 'Exposures of Spiritualism' have ceased to pay the conjurer partly because the public can see the difference between a séance in one's own home without apparatus and a show on a stage elaborately prepared and at enormous cost; and partly because the feeling that 'there is something in it after all is now very general.

And yet Mr. Maskelyne says that we are angry with him 'because I have so frequently sought out the truth!' We are not angry with him: and, if we were, it would be for anything but that.

OBSESSION AND NECROMANCY IN BENGAL.

In reply to the question raised by 'K. P. G.' in 'LIGHT' of April 15th, permit me to say that the procedure of the necromancers he describes were apparently made to assist in affecting the imagination of the obsessing spirit, though they may also have comprised a magical ceremonial intended to assist in concentrating his own mental force, which is the fundamental reality in magic. The principle is the same as that of concentration on a mental image and projection of thought force to the inner principle of the person thought of, but is assisted by outer symbolism which affects the imagination of the obsessing spirit, frightens him, and thereby weakens his hold and facilitates the reaction of the necromancer's mental suggestion in him. The magical oil no doubt served a similar purpose, the real force in action being mental.

As 'K. P. G.' says, the girl must have been in a negative, receptive state for the obsessor to take hold of her. The disturbing agency was mental, and the equilibrating force must also be so. Whether the force is exerted from without by a magnetiser, or a hypnotiser, or from within by concentration by a magician, a mental scientist, &c., the force in action is the same.

Recently at Mr. Kiddle's one of the discarnate patients brought to the medium for curative treatment was insane. Her head felt like a boiling cauldron, she said, and burst into explosive storms intermittently. I commanded her to be still, telling her that she had been brought to a practitioner who had studied these things as a speciality (which is true in a sense, but was stated to affect her mind and prepare it). I made some movements over her head to affect her imagination, and then 'thought' inwardly to her, appealing to the Divine energy in which I rest inwardly, the Divine Immanence, to project light and love to her mind. At once she changed and calmed to a restful attitude, saying that peace and light had come to her. That preparative treatment sufficed, and she was taken away to be further acted upon by higher operators.

This illustrates the force of mental curative action. Dr. Voisin (recently deceased) cured many cases of mania by suggestion at the Salpêtrière. Passivity must be induced, as it is the condition of receptivity. This may be effected by acting on the imagination in various ways. Introducing patients into a room where they see others sleeping may suffice. Magical ceremonial is another method of inducing a similar state. Braidic concentration is another. Monoideistic concentration is similar. The imagination may be acted upon from without, or from within; it is the same principle of passive psyche that is reached.

A man who cultivates concentrated introspection develops his psychic powers. The obsessor being a psychic spirit (of the inner earth plane) would perceive the necromancer on that level, and not physically, as Mollie Fancher sees her visitors. Consequently he would see that the healer had great psychic energy, and he would be afraid accordingly.

Q. V.

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

CLAIRVOYANCE IN TIME.

BY MR. C. W. LEADBEATER, IN THE 'THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW.'

(Continued from page 188.)

METHODS OF DEVELOPMENT.

When a man becomes convinced of the reality of the valuable power of clairvoyance, his first question usually is, 'How can I develop in my own case this faculty which is said to be latent in everyone?' Now the fact is that there are many methods by which it may be developed, but only one which can be at all safely recommended for general use. Among the less advanced nations of the world the clairvoyant state has been produced in various objectionable ways; among some of the non-Aryan tribes of India, by the use of intoxicating drugs or the inhaling of stupefying fumes; among the dervishes, by whirling in a mad dance of religious fervour until vertigo and insensibility supervene; among the followers of the abominable practices of the Voodoo cult, by frightful sacrifices and loathsome rites of black magic. Methods such as these are happily not in vogue in our own race, yet even among us large numbers of dabblers in this ancient art adopt some plan of self-hypnotisation, such as the gazing at a bright spot or the repetition of some formula until a condition of semi-stupefaction is produced; while yet another school among them would endeavour to arrive at similar results by the use of some of the Indian systems of regulation of the breath.

All these methods are unequivocally to be condemned as quite unsafe for the practice of the ordinary man who has no idea of what he is doing—who is simply making vague experiments in an unknown world. Even the method of obtaining clairvoyance by allowing oneself to be mesmerised by another person is one from which I should myself shrink with the most decided distaste; and assuredly it should never be attempted except under conditions of absolute trust and affection between the magnetiser and the magnetised, and a perfection of purity in heart and soul, in mind and intention, such as is rarely to be seen among any but the greatest of saints.

Experiments in connection with the mesmeric trance are of the deepest interest, as offering (among other things) a possibility of proof of the fact of clairvoyance to the sceptic, yet except under such conditions as I have just mentioned—conditions, I quite admit, almost impossible to realise—I should never counsel anyone to submit himself as a subject for them.

Curative mesmerism (in which, without putting the patient into the trance state at all, an effort is made to relieve his pain, to remove his disease, or to pour vitality into him by magnetic passes) stands on an entirely different footing; and if the mesmeriser, even though quite untrained, is himself in good health and animated by pure intentions, no harm is likely to be done to the subject. In so extreme a case as that of a surgical operation, a man might reasonably submit himself even to the mesmeric trance, but it is certainly not a condition with which one ought lightly to experiment. Indeed, I should most strongly advise anyone who did me the honour to ask for my opinion on the subject, not to attempt any kind of experimental investigation into what are still to him the abnormal forces of Nature, until he has first of all read carefully everything that has been written on the subject, or—which is by far the best of all—until he is under the guidance of a qualified teacher.

The only absolutely safe way of developing clairvoyance is to enter with all one's energy upon the path of moral and mental evolution, at one stage of which this and other of the higher faculties will spontaneously begin to show themselves. There is one practice which, if adopted carefully and reverently, can do no harm to any human being, yet from which a very pure type of clairvoyance has sometimes been developed; and that is the practice of meditation.

Let a man choose a certain time every day—a time when he can rely upon being quiet and undisturbed, though preferably in the daytime rather than at night—and set himself at that time to keep his mind for a few minutes entirely free from all earthly thoughts of any kind whatever, and when that is achieved to direct the whole force of his being towards

the highest spiritual ideal that he happens to know. He will find that to gain such perfect control of thought is enormously more difficult than he supposes, but when he attains it it cannot but be in every way most beneficial to him, and as he grows more and more able to elevate and concentrate his thought he may gradually find that new worlds are opening before his sight.

Yet after all if those who so earnestly desire clairvoyance could possess it temporarily for a day, or even an hour, it is far from certain that they would choose to retain the gift. True, it opens before them new worlds of study, new powers of usefulness, and for this latter reason most of us feel it worth while; but it should be remembered that for one whose duty still calls him to live in the world it is by no means an unmixed blessing. Upon one in whom that vision is opened the sorrow and the misery, the evil and the greed, of the world press as an ever-present burden, until, in the earlier days of his knowledge, he often feels inclined . . . to cry, 'Give me back my blindness, the happy darkness of my senses; take back thy dreadful gift!' But this, of course, is a feeling which passes, for the higher sight soon shows the pupil something beyond the sorrow—soon bears in upon his soul the overwhelming certainty that, whatever appearances down here may seem to indicate, all things are without shadow of doubt working together for the eventual good of all. He reflects that the sin and the suffering are there, whether he is able to perceive them or not, and that when he can see them he is after all better able to give efficient help than he would be if he were working in the dark; and so by degrees he learns to bear his share of the heavy karma of the world.

Some misguided mortals there are who, having the good fortune to possess some slight touch of this higher power, are nevertheless so absolutely destitute of all right feeling in connection with it as to use it for the most sordid ends—actually even to advertise themselves as 'test and business clairvoyants'! Needless to say, such use of the faculty is a mere prostitution and degradation of it, showing that its unfortunate possessor has somehow got hold of it before the moral side of his nature has been sufficiently developed to stand the strain which it imposes. A perception of the amount of evil karma that may be generated by such action in a very short time changes one's disgust into pity for the unhappy perpetrator of that sacrilegious folly.

It is sometimes objected that the possession of clairvoyance destroys all privacy, and confers a limitless ability to explore the secrets of others. No doubt it does confer such an *ability*, but nevertheless the suggestion is an amusing one to anyone who knows anything practically about the matter. Such an objection may possibly be well-founded as regards the very limited powers of the 'test and business clairvoyant,' but the man who brings it forward against those who have had the faculty opened for them in the course of their instruction, and consequently possess it fully, is forgetting . . . that full instructions are always given to every pupil, as soon as he develops any sign of the faculty, as to the limitations which are placed upon its use. Put briefly, these restrictions are that there shall be no prying, no selfish use of the power, and no displaying of phenomena. That is to say, that the same considerations which would govern the actions of a man of right feeling upon the physical plane are expected to apply upon the astral and devachanic planes also; that the pupil is never under any circumstances to use the power which his additional knowledge gives to him in order to promote his own worldly advantage, or indeed in connection with gain in any way; and that he is never to give what is called in spiritualistic circles 'a test'—that is, to do anything which will incontrovertibly prove to sceptics on the physical plane that he possesses what to them would appear to be an abnormal power.

With regard to this latter proviso people often say, 'But why should he not? it would be so easy to confute and convince your sceptic, and it would do him good!' Such critics lose sight of the fact that, in the first place, none of those who know anything *want* to confute or convince sceptics, or trouble themselves in the slightest degree about the sceptic's attitude one way or the other; and in the second, they fail to understand how much better it is for that sceptic that he should gradually grow into an intel-

lectual appreciation of the facts of nature, instead of being suddenly introduced to them by a knock-down blow, as it were. But the subject was fully considered many years ago in Mr. Sinnett's 'Occult World,' and it is needless to repeat again the arguments there adduced.

It is very hard for some of our friends to realise that the silly gossip and idle curiosity which so entirely fill the lives of the brainless majority on earth can have no place in the more real life of the disciple ; and so they sometimes inquire whether, even without any special wish to see, a clairvoyant might not casually observe some secret which another person was trying to keep, in the same way as one's glance might casually fall upon a sentence in someone else's letter which happened to be lying open upon the table. Of course he might, but what if he did? The man of honour would at once avert his eyes, in one case as in the other, and it would be as though he had not seen. If objectors could but grasp the idea that no pupil *cares* about other people's business, except when it comes within his province to try to help them, and that he has always a world of work of his own to attend to, they would not be so hopelessly far from understanding the facts of the wider life of the trained clairvoyant. . . .

How different a place will this old world be when humanity as a whole possesses the higher clairvoyance! Think what the difference will be to history when all can read the records ; to science, when all the processes about which now men theorise can be watched through all their course ; to medicine, when doctor and patient alike can see clearly and exactly all that is being done ; to philosophy, when there is no longer any possibility of discussion as to its basis, because all alike can see a wider aspect of the truth ; to labour, when all work will be joy, because man will be put only to that which he can do best ; to education, when the minds and hearts of the children are open to the teacher who is trying to form their character ; to religion, when there is no longer any possibility of dispute as to its broad dogmas, since the truth about the states after death, and the Great Law that governs the world, will be patent to all eyes.

THEOSOPHY IN NEW YORK.

A general convention of Theosophists has been convened in New York for the discussion of problems relative to Theosophy, and the advisability of forming a new and independent Theosophical Society. In a printed letter, written by John M. Pryse, which has been sent to many persons interested in Theosophy, Mr. Pryse says that it is the opinion of many earnest and sincere Theosophists that it is now time to form a new Theosophical Society in order that the real work of the Master may be carried out. He then states why the movement was started. Several of the oldest workers of the society, he says, have, without trial, been recently expelled from the organisation called 'Universal Brotherhood,' and a large number of members in greater New York have resigned from it. Not only do personal motives in the main rule the so-called 'Universal Brotherhood,' he further says, but the present methods employed are clearly designed for the destruction of the theosophical cause and the liberty of conviction among members. 'Let us strive earnestly,' he pleads, 'to sink all personal differences in the cause which is so much greater than any of us. Nearly all of those who would take part in such a Convention would be those who are weary of the many attempts in the past at priestly control.'

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.—To put a murderer to death is not merely to chop down a crooked tree in a forest or to amputate a diseased limb from the body of society. We are immortal entities. We can no more rid ourselves of the wickedness of a criminal by killing his body than we can lose the good influence of a saint when he attains to the ripeness of the change called death. That 'the body is the prison-house of the soul' is more vitally true of the ignorant and vicious than of any other class of persons. To become depraved in mind and deed is literally to bind one's self in chains. Yet it is the policy of most advanced Governments to grant a total release to such individuals—and thus augment their powers and opportunities for evil—at just the moment when their bitterness towards the race is most acute.—'Mind.'

THE GENESIS OF CRYSTAL VISION.

An interesting article entitled 'An Experimental Study of Visions,' by Dr. Morton Prince, physician for diseases of the nervous system, Boston City Hospital, appears in 'Brain,' a quarterly journal of Neurology, published by Macmillan and Co. The Doctor speaks of it as a well-known fact that some people have the faculty of being able to create visions at will by intently gazing at an object ; but he regards the visions as entirely subjective, that is to say, having their genesis in the mind of the seer, and he supports this view by the record of a series of experiments which he has been enabled to carry out with a lady patient. This lady was susceptible to hypnotism, and when in this state it was possible to obtain two additional and distinct personalities, three in all, each with a distinct memory. A search could thus be made of the hidden depths of her consciousness and information obtained of facts long forgotten by the normal personality. Further, it was possible to experimentally study the relation of the sub-conscious personality to, and its influence upon, the production of visions. The characters of the three personalities were very distinct, No. 1 (the patient herself in ordinary life) is reserved, morbidly conscientious, self-contained, serious and dignified. No. 2 (in the first stage of hypnosis) is sad and serious, and gives the impression of weariness and suffering. No. 3 (at a deeper stage) is flippant, jovial, free from all physical infirmities, full of fun, reckless, and contemptuous of No. 1, whom she stigmatises as silly, stupid and dull, and in an apparently heartless way enjoys every trouble that comes to her. No. 3 always speaks of No. 1 as 'She,' and insists that they are different persons. She speaks of No. 2 as 'Miss—asleep.'

The Doctor made a great many experiments with Miss —, using, in lieu of a crystal, the glass globe of an incandescent electric light held freely in the hand, and not connected in any way with the electric circuit. Space will not permit of my giving them in detail. I select one at random. 'Miss —, looking intently at the globe, saw a young woman in a low-necked dress, blonde hair, about twenty-three, sitting in a chair near what was apparently a chimney-piece, in a strange room. She was laughing. Standing in front of her was an elderly man with a dark beard tinged with grey. He was scolding her, but the young woman was laughing.'

Upon being interrogated Miss — could give no explanation of the scene. She could not remember ever having seen the man, or the girl, or the place before. The Doctor insisted that the vision must have been a part of her past experience, but she could not recall anything like it to memory. He then hypnotised her, and No. 2, the second personality, appeared. No. 2 also said she could not remember having seen either of the characters or the room before. She was then placed in deeper hypnosis, and the third personality, No. 3, appeared. No. 3 immediately, as soon as present, began to smile, then burst out laughing, and at once said she recollected the whole incident. It was at San Antonio, Texas, about seven years ago. 'She' was sixteen years old. They had left the dinner table, she said, and were going upstairs to their room, and on the way passed by an open door of a room. In the room were this young woman and man, and he was scolding away and she did not seem to mind it. They were strangers, and 'She' only saw them once afterwards, driving in a carriage. No. 3 was highly amused at the recollection and the experiment. Miss —, upon being awakened and informed that she had seen these people at San Antonio, still failed to recollect the incident. The next day, however, in an interview with the Doctor, she told him that after going home she had gone over in her mind her experiences in San Antonio, and by tracing successively the different events that had occurred there, she had succeeded in bringing back into her memory the whole incident of the crystal vision. This experiment strikingly illustrates the preservation in sub-consciousness of impressions that have long since passed out of the normal or everyday consciousness. The mind would seem to have depths comparable to those of the ocean. Nothing is lost, it is only submerged. Impressions and experiences are stored up and deposited, as it were, in layers deep beneath the surface of conscious mentality until

such time as an upheaval, either spontaneous or induced, shall again bring them to the surface. This emergence would seem to follow no particular law, a trivial experience being just as likely to present itself as an important one. From one of the experiments it would seem that even in the delirium of fever there is yet at back a healthy personality, a mind unchanged, which is observing everything done, thought, and said, and capable, under certain conditions, of recalling and presenting to the normal consciousness all that occurred. This is a startling idea, and it is to be hoped that further research in this direction may be possible, as it may lead to a better understanding and treatment of that most distressing of all nervous troubles, hallucinations.

The Doctor shows as the result of his experiments that crystal visions can be divided into three groups :—

(a) Those which are revivals of past visual experiences, either conscious or unconscious.

(b) Those which were not revivals, but largely newly-created visual representations of a past experience other than visual.

(c) Those which were neither revivals nor representations of any past experience (visual or other) so far as was known.

Naturally some visions partook more or less of the characteristics of two or more groups, being partly revivals and partly new creations; nevertheless, all could be placed in one or other of the groups, according to the chief characteristic.

The subject is a most fascinating one, and the Doctor's investigations have done much towards bringing the somewhat capricious and isolated manifestations of crystal vision into line with psychic research generally. In such a paper it was not to be expected that the question of foretelling the future by means of the crystal would be dealt with. The Doctor confines himself to showing that in his experiments there is generally some connection between the past experience of the seer, conscious or unconscious, and the context of the vision. It seems to me, however, that granted a subliminal consciousness, an extension of its powers, even to the embracing of futurity, would not be unwarrantable.

ARTHUR BUTCHER.

[We shall be glad to hear from any of our readers who have had experiences in Crystal Vision as to how far their observations coincide with, or differ from, the experiments and deductions of Dr. Morton Prince.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

THE SPIRITUALISM OF TO-DAY.

BY MRS. CORA L. V. RICHMOND, IN 'THE ARENA.'

The scope of the influence of Spiritualism is measureless. Its manifestations extend into every department of human thought; its presence in the world has changed the entire attitude of thoughtful minds concerning the problem of death and the after-life, and their relations to human states, at the same time opening up for investigation a vast inner realm, including the latent possibilities of the human spirit while in the earthly environment.

It has reached the man of science in his laboratory, or study, and within its rare alembic has rewrought the demonstration of immortality.

It has walked into the churches of all denominations, religions, and tongues; has stood beside the clergyman, or priest, or ministrant, and has whispered the message of immortal life, saying: 'Are they not all ministering spirits?'

It has proved itself a solvent of all religions and philosophies, by correcting erroneous ideas born of imperfect human interpretations concerning a future life, and substituting knowledge.

It has restored 'spiritual gifts' and made them a portion of the recognised possessions of the human race.

It has made thousands and hundreds of thousands to acknowledge it by name within and without the churches, within and without established schools of philosophy, within and without the walks of science, by knowledge alone; and thousands of others to accept its evidence in the form of belief based upon the testimony of others.

Its sources of inspiration are the invisible hosts.

Its teachers and messengers are the great, the wise, and the loved ones who have passed on.

It has in many instances opened a 'royal' or inner way

to knowledge for those who are its chosen instruments, by touching child minds with facts and data, with scientific and philosophical knowledge, with wisdom far beyond their years, and with eloquence unknown to mortal art.

It has not only created a literature of its own, in hundreds of volumes of experience and philosophy, and scores of periodicals publishing its demonstrations and advocating its propositions, but it has pervaded the best literature of the age, touching and illumining such writers as Lytton, Dickens, Thackeray, Longfellow, Phelps, and scores of others with its living presence.

Its uplifting influence is felt on every life that accepts its truths, and in the whole world, by making the aims of life here consistent with a continued existence, as primary steps in the eternal pathway, and by making the basis of life *spiritual*, not material.

To a materialistic and unbelieving age, it has demonstrated the existence of the human spirit beyond the change called death.

To those who had 'hope' and 'faith' through any form of religious belief in a future life it has added knowledge; and to both has opened the gateways that had not even been left 'ajar' between the spiritual and material realms.

It has removed the fear of death and of what might come to the spirit after the dissolution of the body, by a knowledge of the states and conditions of those who have passed beyond that change, as declared by the testimony of disembodied spirits, who must be in the very nature of the case the only authentic sources of information upon subjects pertaining to that future existence.

It has bridged the chasm, spanned the stygian stream, between the two states of existence by the iris archway of love.

Immortal messengers have brought the knowledge of their states of existence, and have announced in unmistakable ways the nearness of that so-called 'undiscovered country.'

Invisible hands have rekindled the fires upon the altars of inspiration that had long been desolate.

Angels and ministering spirits have anew attuned the voices of mortals to immortal songs. And they have 'rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre' of thousands of human hearts who thought their dead did not live.

Its authority is truth wherever found; its sacred books the inspirations of every age; its oracles and priests, those whom truth anoints and inspiration calls; its creed the unwritten law of knowledge, wisdom, truth, and love; its ceremonials the service of noble lives; its communion is with kindred spirits, and its fellowship with all; its altars, the human spirit; its temples, living souls.

It is the open door, the present light, the demonstration, philosophy, and religion of the immortal soul.

Calm-browed and unafraid, this mild-eyed, open-visioned presence views the heretofore and the hereafter, the present and the future, with equal interest and courage, born of perfect truth. The 'well-springs of eternal life' are hers, and she bids mortals drink fearlessly at their living fountains. The 'bread of life' is hers, and she bids all spirits partake freely from the all-bountiful store. From the vintage of the spirit the wine of her everlasting kingdom is distilled in streams of living inspiration.

Sages gather from its open treasure-house the wisdom of the skies. Seers and prophets, inspired anew, reveal again the forever old, forever new, immortal theme. The mourner forgets her grief, and dries her tears while listening to the messages of love. The weary find rest in its all-reposeful and eternal ways. The weak find strength in its unhindered helpfulness. Crime, sin, and all human imperfection, and shadows, fade gradually, yet surely, before its all-potent light.

Peaceable will be the conquest of this truth in the years to come. Its methods are of thought and spiritual force; its greatest victories are within human hearts; it seeks to build for itself no vast earthly temples; few institutions has it founded, or will it found, except within the hearts and lives of those whom it blesses; its charities are ever present beneficence; its schools, all avenues of knowledge; it will mould and govern those who rule in the affairs of nations by its just and fraternal principles; it will pervade religions by the true interpretation of the spirit, and to such as have no outward shrine it will be the incense of hallowed truth upon the altar of the heart.

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SATURDAY, MAY 13th, 1899.

EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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ARE WE SUPERSTITIOUS?

We are often accused of being superstitious. But now what is 'superstition'? Surely it is not belief in the Unseen or belief in Spirit. If it were, then all who believe in the heavenly land are superstitious; nay, worse than ever, all who believe in God are superstitious; for are we not told on the highest authority that God is Spirit?

Nothing in the world would be easier than to carry the war into the enemy's camp, if the enemy is in any camp labelled 'Religion.' We need not go farther than the universal act of prayer—universal, we mean, among those who classify themselves as believers in Religion: for, however churches may differ, and however Christians may quarrel, they all believe in prayer. What, then, is the essential act in prayer?—bowing before and speaking to some one who is not visibly present. If we were not so used to it, we should think it one of the most absurd things imaginable: and yet the absurdity would be heightened if we discovered that millions in all parts of the world were praying at the same moment, all of whom believed they were speaking to the same Being. We do not say this to disparage prayer: on the contrary, we intensely believe in it: but we do say it to rebuke and silence those who object to us as superstitious.

We return, then, to our question; What *is* superstition? Superstition is not in what we believe, but in the place we make it occupy,—in exaggeration, in baseless reliance. Superstition, in a word, is over-emphasis.

Matrons who toss the cup and see
The grounds of Fate in grounds of tea

may very easily be very superstitious: so may those who seriously take notice of spilt salt, the presence of thirteen at table, the crossing of a knife and fork, and the thousand other fiddle faddles of fussy divination. But what about the Folkestone priest who put outside of his church this announcement: 'After evensong, a procession will be made to the shore, for the purpose of invoking the divine blessing on the fisheries'? Now surely it would be as difficult to connect a priest's blessing with a good catch of mackerel, as the lay of the tea leaves with good luck for a washing day or a wedding.

Superstition is incongruity,—reliance on the wrong thing, or over reliance on the right thing. Thus, a church bell may have its uses (we do not at all think so; however, let us grant it), but it is surely superstition to believe that it will drive away the hovering demons; though that might be arguable if the demons had good taste or were sensitive. The jarring jangling of bells would be much more likely to drive away the angels. But if the demons had any sort of go in them, it is simply foolish to think that bell ringing

would keep them away. The wrong emphasis is here a good case of superstition: for, observe, the superstition is not in believing in demons or in liking bells, but in an absurd reliance upon the one to affect the other.

Precisely the same line of thought will reveal the superstition in the belief that the holy wafer will help the soul by conveying a portion of the Deity. There is no necessary superstition in believing in the presence of God and in His power to spiritually bless the receptive soul, but superstition at once comes in when that blessing is connected with a wafer which is supposed to physically convey Him. The wrong emphasis and the wrong reliance are of the very essence of superstition.

So with the 'washing away of sins in the water of Baptism.' It may be an open question whether a baby has any sins to wash away, but it ought not to be a question whether water can perform the needed ablution. The wrong emphasis here would certainly be superstition. The child may have, in brain and blood, most subtle taints of evil, but no water can reach them. Only care and training and patient striving and good examples can avail here.

This is the only path by which we can see the essential superstition of connecting salvation with belief in a creed. Here, again, the emphasis is all wrong. What connection can there possibly be between doctrinal statements and personal salvation? The doctrinal statements may all be correct, and there may not be a taint of superstition in believing them: but what vital connection can there possibly be between the whole Thirty-nine Articles and the love and grace of God towards a poor struggling and baffled man?

So, then, it would really seem that superstition resides in quite another quarter than ours. The Spiritualist, as a rule, has got rid of all these artificial or inadequate reliances. Even the very 'head and front' of his supposed superstition is based upon what he regards as proved facts. While the doctrinal man is trusting to antiquity, or authority, or a ritual, or a supposed revelation, the Spiritualist is at all events trying hard to get at the facts; and, as a rule, he goes no farther than the facts carry him: and, as a rule too, he declines all the fanciful and arbitrary beliefs. It is a mistake to suppose that he surrenders himself to the spirits. Where that is so, it is quite exceptional. As a matter of fact, the Spiritualist is a breezy rationalist, and is the very reverse of superstitious.

But what of the scientific camp from which the cry of 'Superstition' comes? Why truly, if our definition is correct, there is a good deal more of incipient superstition there than here. The genuine materialist is perhaps the most superstitious person in the world. His over-emphasis and wrong reliance are truly wonderful. He cannot rightly express the commonest phenomena of mind in terms borrowed from the phenomena of matter, and yet to matter he refers all things, making the less include the greater, with a vengeance! And, in order to get in the crowd of facts, he has to play fast and loose with his vocabulary or take refuge in stubborn agnosticism. The Spiritualist is at least open to ask for the thing that is,—whatever it may be.

On the whole, we are strongly inclined to come to the unexpected conclusion that, looking round upon the competing claimants, the Spiritualist is the least superstitious of them all.

EXPECTED VISIT BY AN AMERICAN MEDIUM.—We learn that Mrs. Dearborn, one of the good trance and test mediums of New York, intends to visit London for a short time during July. Mrs. Dearborn comes from a good American family. Her psychic gifts were developed when quite a child, and are hereditary through two generations. She claims to have had the satisfaction of bringing convincing evidence to many of the clergy. A little article about her appeared in 'Werner's Magazine' a short time ago.

'QUÆSTOR VITÆ' AND THE BANGS SISTERS.

BY DR. RICHARD HODGSON.

In 'LIGHT' for March 25th and April 1st, 1899, 'Quæstor Vitæ' has offered some statements in reply to my letter published in 'LIGHT' for January 28th, 1899, concerning the trickery of the Bangs Sisters. 'Quæstor Vitæ' has now imported other questions into the discussion, and although I shall deal with the more important of these, I shall begin by drawing the reader's attention to the main point. I need hardly say that for the opinions which I express I am alone responsible, and that I am not to be regarded in any way as speaking on behalf of the S.P.R.

I. (a) 'Quæstor Vitæ,' in his communication to 'LIGHT' for December 17th, 1898, quoted from a statement which I had made to Dr. Dariex in 1896, that the Bangs Sisters had been exposed; and he replied by offering a statement from Miss Bangs that 'the only accusation ever publicly made against her consisted in the charge of fraud advanced by Colonel Bundy, but in which he had lost his case. She offered to procure a legal copy of the judgment of acquittal, and did so, sending it to me shortly afterwards.'

I shall have more to say directly concerning this document. What I desire to emphasise now is the fact that in my letter in 'LIGHT' for January 28th, I specified *three separate cases* where charges of fraud had been publicly brought against the Bangs Sisters. It seems to me clear that 'Quæstor Vitæ,' in 'LIGHT' of December 17th, gives his readers to understand, on the authority of Miss Bangs, that *only once* had any public charge of producing phenomena fraudulently been brought against her, that this charge had been brought by Colonel Bundy, and that he had failed to substantiate this charge. My reply to this in effect was that the statement made by Miss Bangs was distinctly false, inasmuch as *three* public charges of producing phenomena fraudulently had been brought against her. 'Quæstor Vitæ,' in what he has to say later, carefully ignores this point. I asked him to 'refer to these incidents in detail, and explain how they are covered by the statement made to him by Miss Bangs, and the certificate which she sent to him.' He makes no attempt to do this, but raises other questions. It is nevertheless clear from 'Quæstor Vitæ's' communications to 'LIGHT' for March 25th and April 1st, that the *three charges* to which I referred were admittedly made against the Bangs Sisters. It must, then, be plain to the reader that the statement made by Miss Bangs to 'Quæstor Vitæ,' and apparently adopted by him as a reliable statement, is a falsehood.

(b) I pass now to consider the 'legal copy of the judgment of acquittal' to which 'Quæstor Vitæ' refers in 'LIGHT' for December 17th. In my letter to 'LIGHT' for January 28th, I said: 'I am making inquiries concerning the origin and significance of this document.' It was evidently intended that the readers of 'Quæstor Vitæ's' article should infer that the document in question was a proof that the Bangs Sisters were acquitted of producing supernormal phenomena fraudulently, in the ordinary meaning of the words. I was unable at once to turn up all my references to the Bangs Sisters. I was, however, familiar with the whole matter at the time of the various Bangs exposures, and felt sure, on reading 'Quæstor Vitæ's' account, that the use made of the document in question was unjustified. The following statement by Colonel Bundy in the 'Religio-Philosophical Journal' for June 16th, 1888, makes the point clear:—

'LATEST TRICK OF THE BANGS SISTERS.'

'The following card from the Bangs Sisters appeared in last Sunday's "Tribune," and a similar one in other papers:—

"Chicago, June 9th.

["Editor of 'The Tribune.']

"A few months ago, when a cowardly raid was made on us at one of our parlour séances, at our own home in this city, a number of sensational articles appeared in the columns of the Press, to the great detriment of our reputation. We then requested the public to withhold judgment until a court of justice had thoroughly investigated the matter. The grand jury of Cook County, after having heard the statement of the witnesses for the State, has discharged us, although not a single one of our witnesses was or could be heard by them, thus deciding,

after hearing the testimony of our persecutors, and without a single word of defence, that the charges were baseless. The object of this card, which we ask a generous Press to circulate as freely as it did the articles to our injury, is to inform the public of the final result of this effort to degrade and humiliate us.

"BANGS SISTERS."

'On the face of it the above statement is all very nice and touching. The facts behind it are discreditable to the Bangs family and a disgrace to Spiritualism. On the evening of April 1st, Lizzie and May Bangs, aided and abetted by their mother, held an alleged materialisation séance; during the performance, May was captured and a varied assortment of ghostly toggery found on her person and in the cabinet. The trick in the construction of the cabinet was discovered. No more complete exposure was ever made, as the readers of the "Journal" already know. At the trial in the police-court these women, by advice of their attorney, waived examination on the State charge of obtaining money under false pretences, and were held under bail to await the action of the grand jury. The case came up last month. All the facts as heretofore published in the "Journal" were clearly established, the paraphernalia was shown and the trick cabinet explained to the jury. The grand jury concluded that the Bangs Sisters were running a show, one that was to amuse and entertain the public like any other show; that the claim of materialised spirits appearing was on its face untrue and so preposterous that no one would be expected to believe it. Hence, that they were not guilty of obtaining money by deceit, because everybody ought to know the pretences were false. This, in substance, was the logic which loosened the bonds for the Bangses. Ignorance of Spiritualism and its phenomena on the part of the jury saved these women from indictment. This is all there is of it, and if the Bangs Sisters can further hoodwink the public with such cards as that published in the Sunday papers they are welcome to do so.

'The "Journal" declares that they were caught in the act, and stands prepared to support these charges in the State Courts. Instead of printing lying accounts of how they have been persecuted, let the Bangs Sisters prosecute the editor and publisher of the "Journal" for libel; then they will get a judicial certificate which, while it may not be pleasing to one side or the other, the "Journal" is willing to abide by.'

By those who knew Colonel Bundy, no confirmation of the above statement is needed. But as 'Quæstor Vitæ' has offered a recent letter from an attorney-at-law, Mr. F. L. Stobbs, which may produce an erroneous impression, I may add a statement also made recently to Mr. Marshall Wait (Associate A.B.S.P.R.), of Chicago, by the Hon. J. M. Longenecker, who was States Attorney in 1888. Judge Longenecker kindly permits the use of his name as authority for the statement that there was no 'vindication' or 'acquittal' of the Bang Sisters after the exposure of April, 1888, the case being thrown out by the grand jury on the technical point that there was no obtaining of money under false pretences, an actual deceit being necessary as well as the intent. The only persons who were willing to prosecute were compelled to admit that they went to the séances knowing their fraudulent character.

The document in question, then, so far from proving—as it was wrongfully adduced by Miss Bangs to prove—that the alleged supernormal manifestations of the Bangs Sisters were genuine, affords further evidence that they were fraudulent; and the use made of the 'No Bill' by Mr. Stobbs is simply an attempt to throw dust in the eyes of his readers.

II. 'Quæstor Vitæ,' carefully ignoring the above additional proof of the untrustworthiness of Miss Bangs, apparently charges me with not having taken the trouble to investigate the charges made against the Bangs Sisters. In 'LIGHT' for March 25th, he says: 'I do not consider that I am called upon to dispose of my time in investigating charges which should preferably have been sifted by Dr. Hodgson himself before accepting them as evidence and quoting them as such.' It may, of course, well be that the evidence which produced in myself the conviction that the Bangs Sisters were fraudulent might not appeal to 'Quæstor Vitæ.' It seems obvious that only a portion of this evidence could have been known to him when he adopted, at the end of 1898, the statement of Miss Bangs that only one charge of fraud had ever been made against her. It would seem, however, that three years earlier, 'Quæstor Vitæ' himself was satisfied that the Bangs Sisters had been guilty of fraud. Dr. Dariex, in *Annales des Sciences Psychiques* (Septembre—

Octobre, 1896, p. 313), states that 'Quæstor Vitæ,' 'à qui nous avons fait part de l'opinion de M. Hodgson, nous a répondu qu'il savait, avant d'expérimenter [1895], que les sœurs Bangs avaient été convaincues de fraude.' How 'Quæstor Vitæ' knew that the Bangs Sisters had been convicted of fraud does not appear. It is to be inferred that when he wrote his article in 'LIGHT' for December 17th, he was unaware of any sufficient evidence that the Bangs Sisters had tricked, and that he was unaware of any public charges that had been brought against them except the single charge mentioned by Miss Bangs. It is also to be inferred that he regarded the certificate produced by Miss Bangs as a complete reply to that charge. What, then, was the origin of 'Quæstor Vitæ's' knowledge, in 1895, that the Bangs Sisters had been convicted of fraud—a knowledge which he apparently still retained a year later? and what is the origin of his present ignorance? Perhaps 'Quæstor Vitæ' will furnish to the readers of 'LIGHT' the evidence on which he relied in 1895 and 1896. I do not, however, bring forward the 'Quæstor Vitæ' of 1895 and 1896 as my warrant for believing that the Bangs Sisters have been fraudulent. I refer the reader to articles in the 'Religio-Philosophical Journal,' owned and edited at the time by Colonel Bundy. These I can scarcely ask the Editor of 'LIGHT' to reproduce in full. I suppose, however, that the back numbers of the 'Religio-Philosophical Journal' are on file at the office of 'LIGHT,' and I give the important references below, and quote merely some extracts. It is unnecessary for me here to say anything in detail concerning the absolute sincerity of Colonel Bundy and his devotion to the cause of Spiritualism. He was, further, one of my intimate friends; I saw much of him personally, and maintained a constant correspondence with him for years, and we conducted one systematic investigation together. He frequently spoke to me of the Bangs Sisters, and made me cognisant at the time of additional details of the evidence upon which he founded his charges against them, and I had and have no doubt that his charges were fully justified. It is difficult indeed for me to suppose that any intelligent person can read through the articles to which I refer, and still think that the Bangs Sisters have not been guilty of trickery.

(1.) 'Religio-Philosophical Journal' for April 7th, 1888. Two articles, pp. 4 and 5. One article contains a general account of the exposure of the Bangs Sisters described in the 'Chicago Herald' for April 2nd, 1888, and the other is a reproduction of the interview with Colonel Bundy which appeared in the 'Chicago Herald' for April 3rd, 1888. Some extracts are quoted from this last article in the 'Chicago Herald' by Mr. Stobbs for the purpose apparently of showing that Colonel Bundy and others believed that some of the Bangs Sisters' manifestations were genuine. This does not concern me now, our present question being whether the Bangs Sisters were guilty of fraud. Mr. Stobbs carefully omits quoting the special statements used by Colonel Bundy concerning the exposure in question, and he actually has the audacity to misquote in his own letter one of the very extracts afterwards given from Colonel Bundy's interview. Thus he states in his letter that '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,' but he does not quote the following statement made by Colonel Bundy in the 'Herald' interview article:—

'It is the height of absurdity for those guilty people to assert that the police supplied the paraphernalia. Everything taken last night, wigs, bangled dress and all, will be recognised by sitters as familiar objects. Their assertion is only an echo of that uttered by J. Matthew Shea, whose detection was brought about by Mr. Trefry several years ago, and who, after swearing the outfit was brought in by the officers, had the effrontery on leaving town to go to the police-station, claim, and take it away.'

'How complete do you regard the exposé?'

'It could not be more complete. There is nothing left to be asked for in the way of thorough exposure.'

Again, Mr. Stobbs in his letter ('LIGHT,' for April 1st, p. 152) misquotes from Colonel Bundy as follows: '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."

Mr. Stobbs then proceeds: '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 so happens that on the next page (p. 153) of 'LIGHT,' the words of Colonel Bundy are quoted with a greater approach to accuracy, and the passage appears which Mr. Stobbs has carefully excluded from the quotation in his letter, and which I here italicise. What Colonel Bundy said was: 'I had intended to institute test conditions after I had 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 in front of a trick cabinet, and that the display was deliberate, premeditated deception. Yet, knowing of my own knowledge, &c.'

The reader will observe that the point of the comments made by Mr. Stobbs depends upon the exclusion of this italicised passage.

There are other assertions in the letter of Mr. Stobbs which are equally either negligent or dishonest with the instance just cited, which is enough in itself to condemn the whole statement of Mr. Stobbs as unreliable.

Mr. D. F. Trefry made the following statement concerning the exposure, which I quote from the 'Religio-Philosophical Journal,' for April 7th, 1888:—

'Having secured the assistance of two policemen and several friends, I proceeded with them to the Bangs Sisters, 22½, Walnut-street, on Sunday evening last, to attend a séance. There were about thirty persons present. I sat in the front row, where I had an opportunity to carefully inspect the proceedings. The two policemen were seated in the third row, and the friends accompanying me were compelled to stand back of them, there being no seats for them.'

'May Bangs occupied one apartment of the cabinet, being locked therein, there being a thin cloth partition between the medium and the apartment where the spirits were supposed to materialise. Five or six figures appeared purporting to be materialisations, some of which were recognised as spirit friends by the gullible people present. Then Belle, one of the principal cabinet spirits, came, dressed in white, with white pearl buttons, and stood in the cabinet with the door partially open. Then one or two more forms appeared, after which the celebrated Russian Princess came and stood in the partially-opened door of the cabinet, dressed in white, trimmed with what was stated by Mrs. Bangs, the mother of the mediums, to be precious diamonds. She wore a white head-dress bespangled like the dress. There was a signal agreed upon by me and my friends, which I gave when the auspicious moment arrived for making the exposure, and at the same time I made a sudden spring and caught the Princess just before she got the door closed, and I did not release my hold until she was taken before those present, some thirty ladies and gentlemen, with her toggery still upon her, and held by me and my assistants; and when this was torn off of her, the medium, May Bangs, was revealed, dressed the same as she was when she first entered the cabinet. She had in her possession a bundle of paraphernalia consisting of robes, scarfs, false beards, &c. The mother, fighting to release her, grabbed the bundle, and tried to carry it off, but was intercepted by one of the policemen, who took it from her. The friends of the mediums were so pugnacious that the policemen were compelled to flourish their revolvers in order to maintain order. After, however, the mediums were arrested, their paraphernalia exposed, and the condition of the cabinet shown to be such that fraud could be easily practised, those who were loudest in denunciations of their arrest were glad that it had occurred.'

It was this exposure which led to the charge of obtaining money under false pretences. *Vide supra*, I. (b).

(2.) 'Religio-Philosophical Journal' for May 24th and June 14th, 1890, and February 14th, 1891.

Colonel Bundy in the first of these articles charged the

Bangs Sisters with fraud in slate-writing, and printed the confession of their confederate, a man named Graham. The supposed test had been given to the Hon. A. B. Richmond. Concerning this, Mr. Stobbs says that the Bangs Sisters were 'vindicated by the persons directly concerned,' and later on in his letter he says: '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.'

To the charge made by Colonel Bundy in the 'Religio-Philosophical Journal' for May 24th, Mr. Richmond replied by a letter which was published by Colonel Bundy in the 'Religio-Philosophical Journal' for June 14th, together with further statements on the matter. Mr. Richmond replied to this by a statement published in 'The Progressive Thinker' for August 16th, 1890, in the course of which he produced the 'retraction' made by Graham and quoted by Mr. Stobbs in 'LIGHT.' Colonel Bundy returned to the subject in the 'Religio-Philosophical Journal' for February 14th, 1891, there giving supplementary evidence in support of his position that the slate-writing test in question was fraudulent.

The reader of the 'retraction' quoted by Mr. Stobbs should notice that Graham did not assert therein that the statements he had made against the Bangs Sisters were untrue. He merely retracted them. But it is more important that the reader should notice the date of this retraction, *February 4th, 1890*. It is true that the first statements made by Graham to Colonel Bundy were made orally in January, 1890, but Graham furnished a written detailed account of his preparation of the slate in question in *March, 1890*, which is quoted by Colonel Bundy in the 'Religio-Philosophical Journal' for May 24th, 1890. Further, Graham made a sworn statement on *June 7th, 1890*, describing his own preparation of the slate and other incidents connected with it. This was published by Colonel Bundy in the 'Religio-Philosophical Journal' for June 14th, 1890. I need scarcely say that I am not referring to these facts for the purpose of proving that the slate-writing test in question was fraudulent, but for the purpose of showing the ignorance—if, indeed, it is no worse—of Mr. Stobbs. The details of the case can be investigated by the reader for himself in the articles to which I have referred. I shall here quote merely a portion of the supplementary evidence published by Colonel Bundy in the 'Religio-Philosophical Journal' for February 14th, 1891:—

'No one will deny that in maintaining his account of the phenomena of the slate-writing, the burden of proof rests on Mr. Richmond. Now when May Bangs, one of the mediums who took part in the affair, states over her own signature that it was a trick, and that Graham's account of the affair is correct; and furthermore when four or more credible witnesses stand ready to testify in court that she acknowledged the trick in their presence, and did this prior to the appearance of the "Arena" account, in what sort of a predicament does this put Mr. Richmond? The names of the witnesses who heard May Bangs confirm Graham are on file in the "Journal" office. In August last, the editor of the "Journal," while at Nantucket, received a letter, forwarded, through his office, from May Bangs. It was written for publication, but a request accompanied it that it should be withheld for the present. Immediately after getting back to Chicago, about September 1st, the editor was requested to return the letter to the writer. It would appear, so far as can be learned, that Lizzie Bangs owed her sister 100dol., which she either could not or would not pay, and that after sending the letter for publication, May threatened, unless the debt was paid, she would remove the restriction on the letter and permit its publication. In this emergency it is said that the poor old father of these women, desiring to avoid further public scandal, went to a friend with whom he had 100dol. on deposit, withdrew the money, and paid it over to May, whereupon she requested the return of the letter. The request was complied with, but a photo-electrotype copy was first taken. All except that portion of it relating to the séance recorded by Mr. Richmond is here suppressed but the photo-electrotype copy of the entire letter is in the vault of the "Journal" office, to be produced if need be:—

"Chicago, August 4th, 1890.

' . . . In justice to all, I wish to state (notwith-

standing I have for her[Lizzie's] sake said to the contrary) that all Mr. H. H. Graham has said about the Richmond slate-writing is true, except it was Lizzie Bangs, not I, who gave the sitting to Mr. Richmond, as he well knows and is no doubt willing to state. The trick was done by her exchanging his slates for the ones Mr. Graham prepared.

'(Signed) MARY E. GRAHAM,
'née MAY E. BANGS.'

The full significance of the above will more completely appear further along. The following letter would seem to fit in here. It is from a dressmaker often employed by the Bangs Sisters. The letter opens with statements as to Lizzie Bangs, irrelevant to the question of her mediumship, and continues thus:—

' . . . While in her (Lizzie's) employ, she sent me to her closet for dress trimmings. I found instead a black bag containing wigs, grey whiskers, curls, lace of various colours, beaded dress of the "Princess," and the soldier uniform and cap of the spirit control, "George." At another time I saw her cleaning part of the brass work of "George's" uniform; that same evening I witnessed the same brass work at her séance, on the human spirit "George." I have frequently admitted to her house her confederate, who would frequently come through the alley and pretend he was a collector, a grocery man, carpenter, &c. He is well known to me and his identity I can prove. I have also heard May Bangs discuss the Richmond slate-writing; and heard her acknowledge that her husband, Mr. Graham, did compose the rhyme and did draw the picture on that slate. . .

'(Signed) KATE MEAGHER.'

To those who have carefully studied the testimony on both sides and who will turn back and analyse Mr. Richmond's 'Arena' account of the séance after reading the following letter, there may come fresh light. That a criminal lawyer of local celebrity at least, should be made to testify against himself over his own signature may be hard on the Pennsylvania bar, but nevertheless it will help to clarify the case under consideration:—

'Meadville, Pa., May 29th, 1890.

'MRS. MARY GRAHAM.

'DEAR FRIEND,—Yours received. I have written a long article contradicting the Bundy libel for the "Banner of Light," also will for the ——. I will give Bundy all he needs.

'I believe you are right, that it was Lizzie, not you—yet you were both in the room, were you not?

'Do not make any written statement to anyone until I send you one to sign.

'I hope to see you and Lizzie at Lily Dale this summer.

'Your friend,
(Signed) 'A. B. RICHMOND.'

'As the authenticity of the above letter might be questioned in some quarters, the precaution has been taken to reproduce it by the photo-electrotype process, and a facsimile will be found on p. 607.'

This, then, is the second charge to which I referred in my letter to 'LIGHT,' for January 28th, about which Mr. Stobbs states that the Bangs Sisters were 'vindicated by the persons directly concerned'!

(To be continued.)

MISS MAGGIE GAULE.

Since writing the article which appeared in 'LIGHT' of April 29th, on the proposed Psychical Institute, in which I had occasion to mention Miss Maggie Gaule, I have had the advantage of meeting that lady in private, when she gave me a variety of most interesting 'tests,' with regard to both living people and 'spirits.' She is not entranced, but communications and visualisations are presented to her, she knows not whence or by whom. Thus she saw my home in England, the house, garden, the children's study, and described the latter and their mental characteristics most correctly. A relative who has died during my absence from England was described, and the incidents of his death. The former owner of the watch I possess, and whom I never met, gave correct descriptions of some alterations I have had made in its case. Miss Gaule is a very good psychometrist.

'Q.V.'

'SCIENTIFIC PALMISTRY.'—'Cassandra,' late of 32, York-place, Portman-square, W., desires to state that, having relinquished her palmistry column in 'The Ladies' Field,' owing to the demands for private interviews, she receives daily at 23, Granville-place, Portman-square, W. Hours, twelve to six.

DR. J. M. PEEBLES TO THE REV. D. L. MOODY.

Dr. Peebles, in contemplation of a fourth journey round the world, recently published, in the 'San Diego Vidette,' an invitation to the 'Evangelist,' the Rev. D. L. Moody, to accompany him on his pilgrimage, 'teaching, preaching the gospel, and singing the good news of the soul's immortality, and the present ministry of angels on earth.' The 'Vidette,' of April 11th devoted nearly a page of close type to a renewal of the invitation. Of course this is too long for quotation in 'LIGHT,' but some extracts will be read with interest:—

The Second Epistle of Dr. Peebles, the Pilgrim, to Rev. Moody, the Evangelist.

Rev. Dwight L. Moody,
Brother in Christ.

Peebles, a physician and an apostle of the truth, 'not of man, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and of God the father,' to use Paul's language to the Galatians, comes to you again in all sincerity by way of epistolary correspondence.

Though you were labouring in Los Angeles, and later in San Francisco, you did not reply to my previous letter relating to accompanying me on my fourth journey around the world. . . . No matter. Forgiving your neglect, and remembering the apostolic command, 'to continue in well-doing,' I write you again. I am the more impressed to do so because in your last sermon in our city you said: 'Pray for me, brethren; follow me, all of you, with your prayers.'

When I address you as brother in Christ, I have no especial reference to the 'man Christ Jesus.' . . . Christ is a title signifying anointed, spiritually enlightened, divinely illumined. Every man should become a Christ, living a Christ-like life. Paul, in writing to the Colossians, speaks of 'Christ in you'—mark the phrase—'Christ IN you, the hope of glory.' When he wrote 'Christ in you,' he meant the Christ-spirit of love and peace and charity, and that gentle spiritual tenderness that has characterised the great illumined souls of all the ages. . . . Talk to us, preach to us, about the living issues of the day. The poor are at our doors, how can they be fed? Orphans, hungry and half-naked, how can they be clothed? Widows in want; how can their needs be supplied? Inebriates in the slums; how can they be reformed? There were in the Kansas penitentiary in 1895-6, 343 Methodists, 41 Presbyterians, 61 Campbellites, 182 Baptists, 23 Lutherans, 9 Adventists, &c. Neither Spiritualists nor Unitarians were represented in this penitentiary institution of Kansas. Spiritualism and Unitarianism are both unpopular in penitentiaries, idiotic asylums, and among the ignorant. This is both wise and well.

But the question is, how can these professed Christians clad in prison stripes be reached and made good citizens, when they have respectively served their penal terms of imprisonment? These, Brother Moody, are as living as they are pressingly painful problems. How shall we solve them? True, you occasionally preach to these imprisoned Christians. This is well, but would it not be better to so preach and teach and educate them, that they will not have to be thrust into prisons? Starting up Moody revivals, here and there over the country, will not do it; for I hear upon the very best authority (Y. M. C. A.) that there was not one sound solid conversion made during your San Diego series of meetings.

The call is for men afire with the genius of reform, men soul-inspired with sympathy and progress, and love for the unfortunate, the oppressed, and the fallen. This nineteenth century pleads for a clothe-the-naked gospel, a bread-and-butter gospel, an educate-the-orphan gospel, a daily-towel-and-sunbath gospel, a healthy-food-and-drink gospel, a clean-the-streets gospel, a plant-trees-by-the-wayside gospel, a practical, heaven-inspired gospel that sings, and trusts, and works for human good in every department of life. Such a gospel will receive the approval of God, and the blessings of the angels that do the will of God. Will you join me, dear brother, in bearing this gospel of glad tidings around the world? It is surely needed from 'Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand.'

On this proposed evangelising missionary journey, I should suggest that you use less hyperboles, tell a less number of exciting stories, and not talk so flippantly about God; as, for instance, in this Press-reported passage: 'When Adam fell in Eden,' you say, 'he ought to have gone up and down saying, "My God, where are you?"' But instead, he went down and hid in the bushes, and God had to go and seek him.' How long it took God to hunt him up Brother Moody did not inform us.

And then again, I should not wish my evangelising co-worker to interpret the Bible, and especially Solomon's Songs, Esther, and Jonah, too literally, as it would give us trouble among the Jainists, Buddhists, and the Brahmins, many of whom are scholars, critics, and metaphysicians. You

publicly declared, Brother Moody, in one of your sermons, that the Book of Jonah was 'literal history,' that you believed the 'whale swallowed Jonah,' that those who believed and preached differently were 'doing the devil's work'; and you emphatically added: 'If any deny the story of Jonah and the whale, they must deny the resurrection of Jesus Christ.'

Yes; both the Church and physical scientists are spiritually helpless. They are in doubt. They shrink from the casket and the clod. They cannot demonstrate a future existence. Only clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, trance, and other spiritual communications can. Why, then, do you oppose them, Brother Moody? Why persist in sawing off the evergreen limb upon which the victors sit? I pray you to no longer fight against God, who, as Jesus said, is Spirit, and who in Spirit continually communicates with humanity. Why do you fight against the spiritual gifts enumerated by Paul? And why do you fight against the spiritual phenomena of to-day, when as crucial investigations prove that they are from God through angels and spirits in various stages of development? How dare you, while preaching, attempt to close the gates ajar? Patmos John, when 'in the spirit,' i.e., entranced, said: 'I looked and saw a door opened in heaven.' How dare you slam the door in the face of God's ministering spirits, who come white-robed to bring to our materialistic world the glad news of identity and immortality? Your infidelity, sir, is only excelled by your audacity.

In your closing sermon, you urged us all to 'follow you with our prayers.' Prayer, helpful to us, does not change God. The praying of chaplains in contending armies, on blood-crimsoned battlefields, each praying for his own side, is akin to blasphemy. Prayer does not consist in the bended knee, nor lip service, nor sepulchral tones, nor the ugly solemn-visaged face, nor in suggesting or in reminding God, what ought to be done.

True prayer is an aspiration, and consists more in deeds than in words. The sectarist prays God to send rain, while the scientist prays by irrigating the fields. The Christian bigot prays God to feed the poor, while the philanthropist prays by carrying supplies to their very doors. The Churchman, counting his bonds and deeds, piously prays God to clothe the naked and comfort the widow and fatherless, and expects thereby to gain the special favours of heaven. Up from your knees, ye hypocrites! and instead of asking God to comfort the widow and feed the poor, feed them yourselves. Do, I repeat, DO your prayers, instead of so solemnly mouthing them.

As Mr. Moody asked his hearers to follow him with their prayers, Dr. Peebles offers a prayer accordingly; and here are some extracts from his petition:—

We lift the affections of our hearts and the divinest aspirations of our souls to Thee, the infinite Life and Light and Love of the universe, in thanksgiving and gratitude.

Humbly raising our thoughts to Thee, oh God, we desire not to change Thy laws nor Thy will, but rather to change ourselves, knowing that we grow to be like what we think of and aspire to become. And we aspire to attain the better life, the more perfect character, here and now. We are grateful for the revolution of the seasons, for day and night, for sunshine and flowers, for friends and friendships, and all life's joys, and sorrows, too, considering the latter disciplinary, redounding (in ways often unfathomable to us) to our spiritual good.

The heavens declare Thy glory. And as Thy prophet of old said, 'Thou art good unto all, and Thy tender mercies are over all Thy works.' And being unchangeable, Thou wilt be good unto all in the future world, and throughout all time. And our faith in Thee, oh infinite Father, is so great that we would vastly prefer to trust our eternal destiny in Thy hands, rather than in Brother Moody's, how-muchsoever he may yearn for our soul's salvation.

May the day soon dawn when Brother Moody, smitten like Saul of Tarsus, and conscious of his night of moral darkness, shall see the light of heaven, shall feel the uplifting power of the Holy Spirit, hear the musical voices of angels, recognise the presence of God's ministering spirits, and realise that humiliation, self-abnegation, self-consecration, and self-conversion naturally precede the conversion of others. Only the saved can be instrumental in saving others, as only the learned can teach. May his feet be taken out of the mire and the clay of superstition, and, shod with the sandals of self-forgetfulness, be placed upon the rock of ages. May the heathen dogma of damnation die away from his lips, and may he sing the new song of evolution, and preach the good tidings of eternal progression. May he no longer go about as the hired machine-sectarist, and a hypnotic revivalist, alarming children, and causing hysterical women to weep; but may he go about, as did the good shepherd Jesus, comforting the mourner, healing the sick, and casting

out the demons of depravity, Pharisaic bigotry, and Church selfishness, thereby proving that he is a *bonâ fide* believer in Christ—the Living Christ of God!

We pray that the spirit of truth may be a lamp to his journeyings and a light to his path. May his spiritual nature be speedily quickened, his capacity for truth enlarged, and his moral nature so kindled with the inspirational fires of divine love and self-sacrifice that he may speak with tongues, and prophesy, and see visions, and become endowed with such other spiritual gifts as shall convict hypocrites, startle conscience-benumbed sectarists, and arouse lazy Christians to a newness of life and to a more intense activity.

May he be so illumined, so spiritually enlightened, and so baptised into the Christ-spirit of benevolence and devotion to human brotherhood, that he will voluntarily open his hoarded treasure-stores for distribution among the poor, giving one or more of his several coats to him who hath none, thereby enabling him to the more surely read his 'title clear to mansions in the skies.' Help him to cast aside all vain repetitions, all false doctrines, all nursery story-telling, all pride, all uncharitableness, all worldiness, and to daily walk more in the spirit of meekness and humility, thus becoming more and more worthy of the high vocation whereunto he has been called.

Deliver us all from evil, sanctify us through the truth, help us to perfect ourselves through character, and enable us to so live the Christian life and so run the Christian race, pressing forward toward the prize, that when earth is fading, our evening sun setting, and the resurrection angel, masked as death, lifts the curtain from our lying eyes, we may behold the shining faces of angels, and hear the lute-like voices of our loved ones gone before, welcoming us to those evergreen shores of beatific beauty and blessedness. Thou knowest, oh God, whether thy servant Moody is worthy and well-qualified to become a co-worker with us in our future pilgrimages. If he so be, impress him to join us in circumnavigating the globe, in sounding the trumpet of salvation, proclaiming deliverance to creed-bound captives, evangelising, healing, prophesying, and curing all manner of diseases as we go. Whatsoever we have prayed aright, that, oh Father, grant: and wherein we have asked amiss, that forgive. Amen.

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.

The Writings of Thomas Lake Harris.

SIR,—In reply to 'Coningsby,' the most important of these works are privately printed for the 'Brotherhood of the New Life,' and many of the earlier publications are out of print. Some of these latter, including two reprints, can be obtained from John Thomson and Co., Mollinsburn, Airdrie, Scotland. The later series of 1891 are sold by E. W. Allen, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London. 'Respiro' has issued six pamphlets up to date, containing an epitome of Mr. Harris's teaching on various subjects, and quoting largely from the private writings. In my opinion, Nos. 5 and 6, 'T. L. Harris, the Man,' and 'T. L. Harris, the Seer,' are the most suitable for a commencement: they clear the way for the better understanding of Nos. 1-4, which treat of deeper matters. They are 1s. each, with the exception of 'T. L. Harris, the Seer,' which is 2s. I will send copies to any inquirer on receipt of price. I have no pecuniary interest in the pamphlets, and only mention this because all I receive for them is paid into the printing fund, without any deduction for trade discount or commission. The publisher of the pamphlets is E. W. Allen.

48, Sussex-gardens,
Hyde Park, W.

E. W. BERRIDGE, M.D.

The Tying of Mediums.

SIR,—I was extremely pleased to read the letter of friend Young in 'LIGHT' of April 29th. I am a student of occultism, and in no way a believer in Spiritualism—that is, in the sense in which the term Spiritualism is understood; and yet to me it has always seemed very foolish, and I might say childish, to see men and women, meeting together under the pretext of searching for truth, openly declaring that each suspects the other of fraud. How shall we ever be able to learn of those Divine mysteries concerning the universe of which we men and women are mere atoms or forms of expression, if we continue to perpetually doubt each other and fancy to ourselves that we are the sole embodiment of truth and honesty, and every other Ego is only a mass of corruption, ever trying to deceive the people it comes in contact with? The best thing, in my opinion, for mediums to do is to refuse flatly to submit to the ignorant and childish methods of being tied in any shape or form. If investigators

are of a doubtful or suspecting nature they have no right to sit with mediums at all. Whilst doubting the honesty of others, these would-be investigators become unfitted to be true and impartial critics or judges. In conclusion, I would say to the majority of so-called Spiritualists: 'Go, friends, and examine your own hearts and minds before attempting to unravel the mysteries of Nature; let each first learn the value of the old injunction, "Man, know thyself." Our own hearts can, if we will let them, teach us a thousand times better than all the spiritual phenomena ever produced.

LOOKER-ON.

The Psychical Faculties of Children.

SIR,—Would you kindly permit, through the medium of your correspondence column, the opinions of your readers as to the advisability of encouraging children to 'sit' for the development of their psychical faculties?

Two points in particular upon which I should like information are:—

1. Children not being developed either physically or mentally, is it not probable they would be unable to guard against undesirable controls?

2. By allowing them to 'sit' for development of psychic faculties, would it be forcing the said gifts prematurely, to the detriment of their physical well-being?

'INTERESTED.'

Mr. J. N. Maskelyne.

SIR,—In your issue of April 29th I note a letter signed 'Fiat Justitia,' with the spirit of which I am in the fullest sympathy.

A few months since, observing some disparaging remarks in a 'Morning Leader Special,' concerning the Davenports, in which the writer asserted that after duplicating all their tricks Mr. Maskelyne, the conjurer, drove the impostors out of the country, I took the opportunity of pointing out that Mr. Fowler, of Liverpool, offered £1,000 to anyone who would produce the same results as the Davenports under the same conditions, and also that Mr. Joy offered, in the 'Daily Telegraph,' the same amount to Mr. Maskelyne with a similar condition.

This I believed, and still believe, to be a perfectly correct statement of facts. Mr. Maskelyne, however, replied, absolutely denying ever having received any challenge in connection with the so-called spiritualistic phenomena, the Davenport performances included, which he did not accept.

Having, through your kindness, seen a copy of the correspondence between Messrs. Joy and Maskelyne with reference to the challenge, in which the latter plainly refused to be subjected to the same conditions as the mediums, I at once wrote to the paper substantiating my contentions, but this letter, with the usual 'fairness' of the Press, was absolutely refused insertion.

Now it appears to me, as matters stand at present, that Mr. Maskelyne, or any other conjurer, is perfectly safe in making assertions of the character under discussion, more especially as the Press declines to grant us a fair hearing. This state of affairs must be very prejudicial to the cause of Spiritualism, as, in the absence of any proof to the contrary, many persons who would, in all probability, have been inclined to investigate the subject, refrain from doing so, excusably presuming it to be all due to trickery.

Surely, therefore, some medium could be found through whom phenomena, under test conditions, could be obtained even in the presence of Mr. Maskelyne, thus silencing once for all his pretensions.

If, as in the case of the Davenports, he declined to accede to the same conditions under which phenomena occurred through the medium, it would be acknowledging his incompetency to produce like results, and clearly illustrate the distinction between the phenomena due to spirit agency and those effected by what are commonly termed natural means.

I have lately noticed contributions from the pen of 'Quæstor Vitæ' in which he testifies to the genuineness of several mediums, notably Mr. Evans. Now, if Mr. Evans, in the absence of any suitable medium here, could be prevailed upon to come to England, he would perhaps be the means of settling this matter. A. T.

A Comparison and a Contrast.

SIR,—Readers of 'LIGHT' have been greatly interested in the accounts telling of the wonderful way in which Spiritualism has come to the fore in Felixstowe recently. Springing as it did from a small beginning, but followed up with perseverance and enthusiasm, it has evidently met with the success it so well deserved. If all towns in England, where a few earnest Spiritualists are gathered together, would emulate the efforts of those in Felixstowe, what a grand step it would be towards making Spiritualism the universal belief of the future, which it will, let us hope, some day become.

One sad and apparently insurmountable obstacle is the way in which some Spiritualists keep their Spiritualism to themselves, holding séances with their family or immediate friends only, and not spreading the glorious truth amongst strangers.

Felixstowe is a small town compared with Southsea and Portsmouth, which embrace a much larger area; yet one hears of nothing being done in the good cause at either of these places. I take these two towns as an example, being an inhabitant; and I would ask of any who are willing to join me in making a beginning in the right direction in Southsea, to communicate with me. Mediums occasionally visit other more fortunate towns, where meetings are held regularly.

Why should they not come here?

If this appeal meets with ready response, would mediums let me know under what conditions they would visit us? They being, by the blessing of God, the pioneers of the Cause, could do so much more to help us than we can do unassisted.

H. B.

Malvern Villa, Malvern-road, Southsea.

'Conditions.'

SIR,—As an earnest investigator of Spiritualism, I have often been interested, and, probably owing to my inexperience, amused, at the readiness with which most sitters attribute failures at séances to the 'conditions' prevailing. The word has become so elastic in the hands of Spiritualists that I have received most conflicting replies to my query: What are the essential conditions for earnest investigation?

If bad conditions result in a bad sitting, it is only logical to suppose that good conditions should be productive of much good. But what constitutes good conditions? If, as I am told, we are to sit ready to accept anything we may see or hear, and that no feelings of doubt should be allowed to cross our minds, where, I ask, is the honest investigation that is absolutely necessary to convince one? Yet I understand this is essential to good results. On the other hand, I have noticed many failures and bad influences attributed, certainly in some cases without explanation, to the presence of doubting yet honest sitters seeking for the truth.

I think, sir, if some of our more experienced mediums would kindly define the word 'conditions' as they use it, it would be most helpful to themselves and useful to earnest investigators.

C. J. G.

A STRANGE DREAM.

Miss Violet Lloyd writes as follows in 'The Era Almanack' concerning 'a strange dream' and its fulfilment:—

A very extraordinary thing occurred in connection with the accident (the falling of a chandelier) that befell me at the Comedy Theatre in September last, a few nights after the production of the 'Topsy Turvy Hotel,' in my part of Flora, when by the narrowest of chances my life was spared. Previous to the mishap a friend dreamt that I had met with some misadventure—some accident—that my face was hurt and that I had received two marks over the eyebrows. This friend spoke of the matter to a mutual acquaintance, who was afraid to tell me; but my friend called round the next morning to see if anything had happened, being nervous and apprehensive. The accident had occurred, and my head was damaged, and I had two cuts across the forehead over the left eye. Can anyone account for my friend's dream? Can anyone account for any dreams, except on the basis and theory of sympathy—in such a case as this, of affectionate sympathy between two friends? It has puzzled me greatly; but it has in no wise frightened me, as I am no more superstitious than most theatrical folk—not half so much, I think. . . . But was it not strange that my friend should dream that I was injured in exactly the same place—over the eyebrows—as I was injured, and as for some time the marks on my brow openly testified? Hamlet's observations on philosophy bear curiously on the question.

THERE can be little question that the higher self; one's real self, dwells perpetually in the unseen and in a more direct communion with the Divine forces. To the degree in which we can realise this higher self, establish an identity with it, to that degree can it manifest its powers on this physical plane of life. To live constantly the life of the spirit instead of the life of the senses, is to live in receptivity to this higher self and its remarkable powers. So to live is richness of life; so to live is to find perpetual joy, peace and love; it is to radiate happiness.—MISS LILIAN WHITING.

SOCIETY WORK.

BRISTOL, 24; UPPER MAUDLIN-STREET.—Last Sunday week we had an address from Mr. E. W. Oaten, and on Sunday last a paper was read by Mr. G. H. Allen. The regular attendance of friends interested in our cause will greatly assist.—W. WEBBER.

HENLEY HALL, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—On Sunday last we had the pleasure of listening to an excellent address by Mr. King on 'The Astral Body.' Mr. King plainly showed the important part this body plays in this and in future stages of our lives. The subject for next Sunday will be, 'Be your own Medium.'—W. J. T.

4, MERRINGTON-ROAD, ST. OSWALD'S-ROAD, WEST BROMPTON.—Last Sunday Mr. Peters was with us and spoke on 'Materialisation,' being a question given by one of the friends in the audience, followed by clairvoyance. In many instances names were given and recognised. During the evening Miss Corner favoured us with a solo, which was rendered very sweetly.—S.

GROVE-LANE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—On Sunday last Mrs. Holgate delivered an interesting address, entitled, 'Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good,' followed by clairvoyance. Little Miss Renny sang a solo, which won the hearts of the hearers. At the after-circle clairvoyance was given by Mr. Lovett and several of the members.—H. E. BROWN.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—Last Sunday evening Mr. J. A. White devoted the greater part of his address to inquirers, giving some valuable information to strangers in the phenomena of Spiritualism. After defining clairvoyance, Mr. White described several spirit-forms, many of which were recognised. Next Sunday, at 11.30 a.m., open-air meeting in Victoria Park; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Graddon. On Wednesday, at 8 p.m., members' circle, at 233, High-road, Clapton.—O. H.

THE CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—Those who think that Spiritualism is on the decline would do well to attend one of our meetings, when their opinion would soon be altered, as they would be bound to confess their surprise at the good attendances and the interest that is shown by those who attend. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 3 p.m., children's Sunday-school; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long, 'The Wake of the Dead'; at 8 p.m., members' circle; library as usual. 'LIGHT' always on sale at our bookstall.—VERAX.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST CONFERENCE.—On Sunday last we held an open-air meeting at The Grove, Broadway, Stratford, at which Mr. Knowles presided. In the afternoon, at Martin-street, a committee was appointed to carry out the arrangements of the excursion to Epping Forest that will take place on Sunday, July 2nd, and a committee was formed to assist the secretary to carry out the arrangements for future conferences. At the evening meeting Mr. Clegg presided; Messrs. Gwynn, Drake, and Davis spoke with good effect.—M. CLEGG.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD (Near Alexandra Theatre).—An interesting meeting was held last Sunday, when Miss MacCreadie occupied our platform. 'Sunshine' gave twenty-four descriptions, twenty-two of which were recognised. We had many strangers present. Next Sunday 'Evangel' will lecture on 'Evolution and Christianity.' A general meeting of members and associates will be held after this meeting for the purpose of hearing a report from the present committee and the election of officers for the ensuing year. Monday, at 8 p.m., circle at 51, Bouverie-road; Thursday, at 8 p.m., at 59, Barratt's-grove.—A. C.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—We wish that full justice could be done to the inspirers of Mr. J. J. Morse, and to that noble worker himself, by a full report of the exceptionally able discourse delivered at these rooms on Sunday last. Certain it is that whilst the teachings of Spiritualism are placed before the public as they were in this lecture, scorn, prejudice, ignorance, and clerical arrogance can have no power to prevent the trending of people's minds towards such ennobling teachings, and the ultimate recognition of the principles involved therein. The subject of the discourse, 'The Question of Evil,' opened up avenues of thought which were traversed by the lecturer, who effectively showed how by the very nature of things good must eventually eliminate that which is called evil. However, in availing ourselves of the privilege of recording this meeting we will not venture to attempt anything further than the above account of a lecture which the large audience intensely appreciated, note also being made of the excellent singing of Miss Florence Morse, who rendered the solo, 'A Dream of Peace,' most effectively, and of a poem entitled 'Live it Down,' read by Mr. Morse. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Miss MacCreadie, clairvoyance. Doors open at 6.30 p.m.—L. H.