

# Light:

## *A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe

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

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### CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way .....	109	No Messages of Importance! .....	114
Conference of Spiritualists .....	110	The "Cyprian Priestess" .....	115
Theosophy and Spiritualism .....	111	A Séance with Mrs. Tittford .....	116
Is there any Truth in Astrology? .....	112	Letters to the Editor .....	110-9
Mrs. Newton Crosland .....	113	Society Work .....	120

### NOTES BY THE WAY.

Colonel Olcott, in "The Arya Bala Bodhini," is going to do a wholesome bit of work, if we may judge future numbers by the first, which has just reached us. It is published by the Hindu Boys' Association in Madras. In this magazine, the Colonel seems to thoroughly identify himself with Hinduism, and appears anxious to cause it and Theosophy to blend. The special wholesomeness to which we refer we find in his vigorous testimony against conceited scepticism and grinning vice. Not a day too soon, if the picture of young India here presented is truly drawn. But the Colonel has not a light hand. Here is a specimen:—

How many times have Hindu fathers wept when telling me of the disrespect shown by their educated sons! How many cases have come to my knowledge of high-caste young men, who secretly break every caste rule in giving themselves up to habits of gluttony, intemperance and debauchery! Why, I can put my finger on twenty such cases. I can name personal friends and colleagues, working with me in the Theosophical Society, men of eminent position, men of influence and wealth, whose sons are a disgrace to them and fill their lives with wretchedness. What a sneering tone, too, prevails among the pupils and undergraduates of our Indian schools and colleges, as regards the "superstitious prejudices" of their people; and how these wretched little intellectual pigmies vaunt themselves upon their own superior enlightenment and intellectual grandeur! These dwarfs, who are not worthy to take the dust from the feet of a real Hindu, vapour and boast and would have the world think them superior to all of their race who had gone before.

Colonel Olcott says that a great change has occurred of late; and he attributes it to the Theosophical Society which, in 1879, "planted its flag on Indian soil." He notes "the entire change of tone among the people with respect to Hindu religions and philosophies and spiritual science," and says:—

Is it not remarkable; is it not almost miraculous? Truly it seems as if the Rishi guardians of Aryavarta had stood behind this handful of foreigners in the Society, and, using them as instruments ready to hand, had imparted new life into the long inert body of Religion. Already a great wave of spiritual aspiration has swept over the Great Peninsula, the national literature is reviving, and the recorded words of the ancient sages are being read with reverence and pondered upon with startled delight. That matchless scripture, the Bhagavad Gita, that box of jewels, that perennial spring of the waters of religious life, is being read by thousands upon thousands of Hindus previously ignorant of its merits, and by other multitudes in distant lands. New translations, new editions, new commentaries upon the Shastras are appearing in India almost weekly. The number of sneerers and sceptics, though still great, is far smaller than before; a healthy and self-respecting public opinion is growing up among our Indian youth.

We are glad to hear it. The main thing is to get the good work done, and it matters not much whether a

Theosophically inspired Hinduism, or a Hindu inspired Theosophy, or the missionaries, do it.

"A counterblast to 'Spookland'" comes to us from Australia. As the title indicates, it is a presentation of the other side, in Mrs. Mellon's favour. But it is a wearisome and depressing business, like trudging along miles of dry, loose sand. Still, we are bound to say that, out of it, comes not a little in Mrs. Mellon's favour. A chapter, entitled "The Spirit Theory discussed by an Anti-Spiritualist," is rather good. The facts are admitted; the Spiritualist's inference is denied. The "anti-Spiritualist" says that just as the mind can set up vibrations which convey thoughts and pictures to other minds, so it can set up vibrations which shall result in raps, movements of solid objects, &c. We do not care to dispute it. Given the facts, the explanation of them will clear itself as time goes on. Only we cannot quite comprehend the almost painful desire to keep out the inference that there are other orders of beings who act and know.

Father Congreve gives, in "The Cowley Evangelist," a brilliantly-lurid account of one of the principal Hindu festivals, held only once in twelve years. From seven hundred thousand to a million persons from every part of India "gather at the river" (the Ganges, where it meets the Jumna). It is a gathering of fanatics and of, perhaps, the filthiest saints on this planet; but, with all its folly and filth, it is, as Father Congreve says, a gathering of deeply-moved human beings, urged on by the desire of man to find his God.

One very prominent part of the proceedings is the procession of the Fakeers—a thousand of them—begrimed with the sacred white ash of burnt cow-dung, with hair uncut from the day of their dedication, some naked, some with nothing but a steel chain round the waist, but all filthy, tormented, useless—and almost adored—the multitude pressing on their track as they pass, and greedily rubbing their faces with the dirt on which the "saints" had trodden.

It is pitiable, indeed; but the theory underlying the practice is more pitiable still. And what is that theory? Simply this, that self-mortification is meritorious, which, when carried to ghastly excess, mounts up to saintliness. We pity them; but let us mingle thought with pity. Who is it that believes in the Book of Ezekiel (including chapter IV.) as the word of God? Who is it that regards the mutilation and murder of Jesus as an atonement for sin? Who is it that crowns with the halo of saintliness Europe's hardly less foul ascetics of bygone days? Christians all!

Is there a moral? Surely; and it is this,—that there is no finality in Religion, that we must "try the spirits," and that there is no safety outside of civilisation and sense. This is one of our cherished testimonies; and it will be, indeed, a curious turning of the tables, if the world should find that the Modern Spiritualist is, after all, the explainer and cleanser of the Temple.



The "Blackwood" story, "The Closed Cabinet," is said to be by a daughter of Lord Salisbury, Lady Gwendolen Cecil. It is romantic, weird, and a trifle stagey, but it is an excellent sign of the times. It is saturated with Spiritualism, strong and undiluted, and is as awesome a ghost story as one could find anywhere. But the core of spiritual thought in it is really impressive. A much-wronged and very wretched woman murders her brute of a husband and then commits suicide. For a few hundreds of years, the horror and the curse of it haunt the old Grange where it happened. Then a pure and thoughtful girl, deeply touched with the gospel of endurance and pity and the overcoming of evil, sleeps, or tries to sleep, in the room where the deed was done. The long-imprisoned woman, using this girl as her medium, goes over the old horror of the murder, but, mingling with her bitter thoughts and awful purpose, the medium's higher feelings assert themselves and at last conquer. For the first time, the deed is not repeated. The evil is conquered. "God, fight for me!" "The victory of the Cross is ours!" The knife is shut. The spell is broken.

Its chief interest is the fresh indication it gives that this subject is tightening its hold upon Society. But we wish Society would take it in a saner way.

"The Monist" for last quarter contains valuable matter concerning the resemblances between Buddhism and Christianity. The Editor, Dr. Carus, has evidently gone vigorously into the subject; and he seems strongly inclined to recognise and press their relationship. He sees a kind of Christianity before Christ, and bids us come out of our limitations and shake hands with a true Buddhist, as a brother. He thinks that the religions of both "solve the problems of life in a similar spirit." A human universalism which shall greet "the heathen" and welcome science,—that seems the happy haven to which we are going. We devoutly hope so.

A Salford magistrate has rather improved on the Mansion House magistrate. He also had a wicked palmer before him, guilty of amusing two women by telling their fortunes by hand lines. They paid a shilling each, and probably got a fair shilling's worth of fun out of the transaction. The magistrate wisely used our own illustration (we do not say *borrowed*), and said that it was quite as lawful to read characters by the lines of the hand as by the bumps of the head: but he scented crime in fortune-telling, and convicted the palmer, fining him 10s. as against the Mansion House £25. But what nonsense it is, not only to have these unequal judgments, but to use the steam hammer of the law to crack such a ridiculously tiny nut!

#### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

On Monday evening last, at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, the Rev. J. Page Hopps gave an interesting address on "A Spiritual View of God's Kingdom upon the Earth," of which we shall give some further notice next week.

On Monday evening, the 18th inst., Mrs. Hardinge Britten will speak on "Magicians and Mediums," and will answer questions at the close of her discourse. There is sure to be a very full attendance on the occasion. Inquirers will, as usual, be welcome, but as the accommodation is limited, members of the Alliance will have the prior right of admission.

**THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.**—We have printed, in a convenient form, suitable for enclosure in letters or for distribution at public meetings, "M.A. (Oxon.'s)" "Advice to Inquirers, for the Conduct of Circles." We shall be pleased to supply copies *free* to all friends who will undertake to make good use of them. The only charge will be for postage—25, ½d.; 50, 1d.; 100, 2d.; 200, 3d.; 400, 4½d.; 600, 6d., &c.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS.

The following programme of arrangements for the Conference to be held in London in May next has just been issued:—

#### RELIGIOUS SERVICE.

A Religious Service will be held on Sunday Evening, May 12th, in St. Andrew's Hall, Newman-street, Oxford-street, conducted by the Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS.

Subject of the Discourse:—

"SPIRITUALISM, THE KEY THAT UNLOCKS ALL DOORS."

Service to commence at seven o'clock.

A collection will be made in aid of the expenses.

#### PUBLIC MEETINGS.

Public Meetings will be held on the Afternoons and Evenings of Monday and Tuesday, May 13th and 14th, in the Portman Rooms (entrance in Dorset-street; near Baker-street Station).

SUBJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION.

**MONDAY AFTERNOON**—Chairman, MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS, President of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and Editor of "LIGHT."

At 3 o'clock. Public Exhibitions of Spiritual Phenomena. Introduced by MR. JAMES ROBERTSON (Glasgow).

At 4.15. An Ideal Religious Service for Spiritualists and Inquirers. Introduced by MR. E. W. WALLIS (Manchester), Editor of "THE TWO WORLDS."

**MONDAY EVENING**—Chairman, the Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS.

At 7 o'clock. A Popular Misconception of the Relation between Science and Spiritualism. Introduced by MR. THOS. SHORTER (London).

At 8.30. Are Spirit Photographs necessarily the Photographs of Spirits? Introduced by MR. TRAILL TAYLOR (London).

**TUESDAY AFTERNOON**—Chairman, MR. W. T. STEAD, Editor of "Borderland" and the "Review of Reviews."

At 3 o'clock. The Duty of Spiritualists to Young People. Introduced by MR. A. KITSON (Hanging Heaton), Secretary of the Lyceum Union.

At 4.15. Organisation for Combined Action and Work. Introduced by MR. S. S. CHISWELL (Liverpool), President of the National Spiritualists' Federation.

**TUESDAY EVENING**—Chairman, MR. JOHN LAMONT (Liverpool).

At 7 o'clock. Our Duty with regard to acting upon Information given, Advice offered, or Requests made, in Spirit Messages. Introduced by MR. J. J. MORSE (London), Editor of "THE LYCEUM BANNER."

At 8.30. Answers to written questions from the audience on Spiritualism, Religion, and Reform. By MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN (London).

#### CONVERSAZIONE.

A Conversazione will be held in the Portman Rooms (entrance in Baker-street; near Baker-street Station) on Wednesday Evening, May 15th.

MUSIC, REFRESHMENTS, SOCIAL INTERCOURSE, OBJECTS OF INTEREST TO SPIRITUALISTS AND INQUIRERS, AND SHORT ADDRESSES.

Doors open at seven o'clock.

Admission by tickets, to be obtained from the Secretary, Office of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, London, W.C.; or at the Monday and Tuesday Meetings. The tickets will be free, but those applicants will have the preference who are members of Spiritualist Societies, or who are contributors to the Conference Expenses Fund, or who are otherwise known as active promoters of the Cause.

#### CONFERENCE EXPENSES FUND.

Contributions to the fund for defraying the expenses of the Conference are earnestly solicited, and may be forwarded to the Treasurer, MR. H. WITHELL, London Spiritualist Alliance, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, London, W.C.

Copies of the above announcement, in a form suitable for distribution, will be supplied to Secretaries of Societies, on application to the Secretary of the London Spiritualist Alliance.



## THEOSOPHY AND SPIRITUALISM.

BY QUÆSTOR VITÆ.

(Continued from page 105.)

Theosophy thus confesses from internal evidence that, beyond its human occultists or "Masters," it can bring forward no higher authority in ultimate support of its teachings than mere psychical spirits—i.e., spirits emanating from the same sphere as that of the "controls" of Spiritualistic circles.

Now this fact throws a curious light on the condemnation by Theosophy of the séance room and spiritual circles. It opens the door to the inference that these psychical Nirmanakayas and their human adept representatives, in applying the methods, must have been guided by identical motives as those which actuated the ecclesiastics of the past; that is to say that, in branding all other available psychical sources of information as misleading and damaging, they sought to restrict to themselves the spiritual communion of mortals; even as the priests of old endeavoured to retain the instruction of the people in their own hands and to limit this to what they might choose to convey, so that they might thereby retain power over them, with concomitant self-glorification.

What other motive could have dictated such procedure but effort towards self-aggrandisement, such, indeed, as we see expressed in their extraordinary claims to be liberators and saviours of mankind? Neither did they allow themselves to be deterred by the consideration that their instructions in this respect would prevent what assistance towards the evolution of unprogressed disembodied human beings, may be rendered in the conditions presented in séances, as referred to on p. 509.

Mr. Harte informs us that it is whispered that Bavaji lost his identity for some weeks, during which he gave out the teachings of a Mahatma to Mr. Sinnett. If so, that would be but such a case of "control" by a living person as I have referred to as occurring to a simple-minded sensitive, i.e., the receiving by a sensitive of a telepathic current (which may be propelled either from, or through, an embodied or a disembodied spirit; the psychical principle in action being identical), the thought-content or quality of which is converted into words. Colonel Olcott refers to similar incidents as occurring in connection with H. P. B.'s writing of her occult works, during which she assumed successively multiple personalities. One of these is referred to as a dead Platonist; the other operators are supposed to have been living occultists.

It appears now to be recognised as beyond dispute that H. P. B. was a strong natural psychic. Your summary of the position in this respect, on page 87, is most fair and impartial. I have previously stated, on p. 226, that there can be no such thing as occult powers apart from natural psychic gifts; but granting that she was a natural psychic, it follows that while some of the phenomena that she displayed may have been psychological, or conjuring tricks, or even frauds, it does not follow that all were necessarily fraudulent, as it is now inferred. Undoubtedly some will have been *bond fide*. She is far from being the first real medium who has resorted to tricks to astound the vulgar sensation seekers.

It is now recognised that in the psychical field communion is governed by the degree of responsiveness unfolded in the recipient instrument; while attraction is governed by affinity. H. P. B.'s character, as revealed to us now, constitutes the criterion by which we may estimate her psychical surroundings or "controls." Her self-assertiveness and love of notoriety must have attracted similar influences around her.\* We have already noticed similar traits in her Nirmanakayas. We have only to infer that some of these self-exalting spirits became her familiar controls, to assume that they may have brought her into relation with other psychics, self-styled adepts or Mahatmas, who also similarly served them as instruments. Then, granting the possibility of telepathic communion and astral projection as previously described, and the fact that these "adepts" were prepared to use their psychical knowledge for their own mutual advantage, and to assist and use H. P. B. accordingly, and while not losing sight of the probability of Mr. E. Coleman's suggested "editing," we may then surmise how the whole extraordinary superstructure of Theosophy was

raised. While we recognise the wonderful ability displayed in the construction of its philosophical system, which has acted for good on large numbers of people, yet we must also recognise it as an abortive effort to establish the glorification of a few self-styled adepts and their familiar spirits, to the detraction of the One Omniscient Reality to which solely is all glory due and apart from which there is no man or spirit.

Instead of becoming the instrument of pure angels who recognise the will of the Supreme Determiner as acting in and directing all the evolution of the Universe, as the manifesting of the divine accomplishing, she fell apparently into the control of a band of spirits claiming self-power and self-exaltation, at the expense, by implication, of the obliteration of the Supreme; claiming the function of saviours and liberators of mankind. Liberators from what, pray, unless from errors made by Absolute Consciousness, by Universal Life, and which errors have apparently to wait the advent of these self-appointed psychical-saviours for redressment; while absolute cognition is by implication made to be unconscious apparently of the results of its own becoming; of its unfolding into explicit distinction in included temporality. The fractions set themselves up in anarchical pretension to govern the inclusive whole from which they issue as included factors.

I do not hesitate to say that all systems which glorify the personality and exalt self-will and therein by implication make the Universal subservient to the personal, or included relative factors, are inversive, prove themselves to originate with dark adepts, and must crumble.

If the wisdom of the Theosophic Masters is of transcendent degree as has been claimed, how is it, allow me to ask, that they come to use as one of their human chiefs a man who is now requested to resign his post, by his fellow-members, because of the odium he has brought upon the society by his actions? How did their wisdom not foresee this? Granting the most lenient view suggested by Mrs. Besant, that Mr. Judge is a psychic and received these messages as such and only failed in his duty in causing it to be inferred that they came directly from the Masters and not indirectly through his mediacy; then what are we to think of Masters of Wisdom who support such procedure, repeated time after time, by which members are misled under false pretences?

If we are to judge them by the puerilities contained in their messages *via* Judge, these Masters of Wisdom compare but poorly even with the much abused controls of the séance room.

There is an occult maxim to the effect that whatever the quality-content of a life current may be, that quality will manifest through every plane it traverses. The converse of this would imply that manifestation is always the expression of subjective quality. And this is actually a philosophic truth. The quality of the current may consequently be estimated by its expression. The imperfection in the expression through the mediacy of Mr. Judge, in which we see the craving for power and self-assertion, at all costs, confirms what I said previously as to the origin of the current which evidently flows from a non-equilibrated source, from which the generous and softening influence of love is absent. The constant self-assertion and self-glorification which appear in the messages *via* Judge is recognised by leading Theosophists such as Mr. B. Keightly, who has issued a circular calling attention thereto. But he forgets that Mrs. Besant has stated that she believes the gist of the messages *via* Judge were received by him psychically from Masters. She continues to style them "Lords of Compassion" and to attribute to them ideal qualities of perfection which would rather appear from above to exist more among the students of Theosophy than among its Masters. Verily it looks as if Theosophists were psychologised. The determination of the all-conscious Universal Life disappears from view. The world is presented as a field in which black and white adepts play with the fate of men (though these are determinations of the Universal) as with pawns.

In looking back on the great popular success achieved by Theosophy, one cannot fail to be surprised that so many people have preferred to seek for information concerning the hereafter from a school which announced itself as representing the teachings of embodied occultists, rather than directly from the disembodied inhabitants of those inner spheres. Now, no human adept can transcend the laws governing perception. I have shown previously (p. 321) that the experiences pertaining to the inner strata of embodied consciousness during intro-mission, in relation with inner states, in coming out into

\* It is to be regretted that Mr. A. Lillie should have suggested, p. 76, that H.P.B. was controlled by "spooks." What, pray, are spooks? The term is as objectionable from a non-Theosophist, as from a Theosophist.



our normal consciousness are conditioned by our sense categories and assume appearances pertaining to time and space conditions or to this superficial mode of being. Embodied consciousness cannot see the inner planes of being, therefore, as they are seen by their disembodied inhabitants. Further, all such intromission can only be temporary and transient. All occult cognition of these internal planes must, therefore, necessarily be most limited and inevitably subject to error and misinterpretation.

On the other hand, beings in these inner planes can propel telepathic currents to the equivalent or correlated strata (when developed) in man, the thought-content of which will be transmitted outwards to his normal consciousness. This process is not subject to the same error and misconception as is entailed in intromission. Here then is a mode by which direct instruction may be imparted by beings themselves dwelling in these inner spheres, and who can instruct, not from theory, but from direct knowledge, *i.e.*, experience. The latter implies growth from the centre outwards, in accordance with universal law of growth. The former implies an effort to break into the interior from the exterior. We shall see which of these systems will survive the other.

I would not wish it to be inferred from the above criticisms that I attack Theosophy as a whole. On the contrary, I acknowledge considerable indebtedness to it for instruction I have received, and I confine my criticism to certain aspects of it which appear to me to be inconsistent and contradictory; wherever they may have been taken from and whether they may be of ancient or modern origin, and I would request Theosophists to believe that while attacking what appear to me as falsities, I remain in sympathy with them as truth-seekers. And in spite of all the war which is waged around H.P.B.'s enigmatical personality, I agree with Mr. Stead, "that she has done more than any one else in recent times to awaken an intelligent interest in the invisible universe and a reasoned belief in a future state."

### IS THERE ANY TRUTH IN ASTROLOGY?

BY A RESIDENT IN BURMAH, NOW IN ENGLAND.

One of the correspondents of "LIGHT" recently stated in very emphatic language that he had "no belief in the stars as story-tellers." Perhaps the writer's scepticism is well-founded; but, at the same time, it is interesting to bear in mind that not so very long ago some of the greatest intellects in the Western world accepted astrology as a genuine science, and that in some other parts of the world the belief is still very prevalent. I know something of the Burmese, and should like to tell you how the matter is regarded amongst them.

The Burmese, like their neighbours the Chinese, the Siamese, and most Eastern nations, are extremely superstitious, while astrology is to them the very guide and rule of their life and fortune.

Dozens of astrologers with their low tables and slates, upon which are drawn the Signs of the Zodiac, may be found sitting round the pagodas in Rangoon, and more or less in all towns and villages throughout the country. I know of no greater calamity that could befall the Burmese, in their own estimation, than the loss of their *Be-din-sayas* (astrologers). The wise-heads must be consulted on almost every item of the least importance. No speculation or journey must be entered upon without reference to them. A young woman in the matrimonial market who would accept a suitor, or a young man who would attempt to woo a girl, without first ascertaining that the planets under which they were born were favourable, or who would marry a person whose nativity they knew to be under a planet unfavourable to their own, would be considered mad. For example, a person born on a Tuesday, or any day of the week, would not marry a person born on the same day of the week, but would select a partner whose nativity was upon some other day of the week. Friday (Venus) is considered the best match for Tuesday. A lady requiring servants or wishing to invite friends, would satisfy herself as to the day on which they were born, and nothing would induce her to receive into her house a person the influence of whose planet or star would be likely to disturb the harmony of the family circle.

The Burman astrologer differs much from his Brahmin fellow. The latter pockets a good fee *in advance*, from the simple-minded (which, however, he would not attempt on all), on the promise of calling down great blessings, exorcising evil influences, or curing mania or incurable disease by incantations to his gods. The

Burman astrologer, on the other hand, is sincere, unassuming, and apparently cares not a jot what remuneration he may receive. He asks no questions beyond the birth-date unless it be that at the close of the interview he asks if the interviewer is satisfied with the information in regard to the past.

Such is the faith of the people in the influence of the planets upon our lives and fortunes that they will do or give almost anything to get a person to reside with their own family (or to enable them to reside themselves with such people) whose horoscope is good and likely to bring them good influence and prosperity. My own personal horoscope is considered a most fortunate one and I know that people have consulted more than one astrologer about me. I have been invited, together with my wife, to go and live, free of charge, with people, and many people have offered to give us their services in return for their food and lodging only. One young lad who came thus to us I adopted, and he is now in my home at Burmah, being brought up as one of my family.

The Burmese believe that there is in every man's life a period of seven years of misfortune, which they call his *Ya-u*, during which time it is considered unwise to speculate or trade in any way. I know personally a respectable man, a European, who was told that his *Ya-u* had set in. He at once returned home and informed his family that every one of them would have to shift for himself, as he had done all he could for them and intended to do nothing during his *Ya-u*, *i.e.*, for seven years. True to his word, he loafed on one or another of his children for that time. Seven years later I found him one day on a racecourse presiding over a wheel of fortune, which was the first intimation I had received that his *Ya-u* had terminated. If Anglo-Burmans are so thoroughly led by the teachings of the astrologers, the blind maniacal belief of the natives, especially the lower classes, in planetary influences over their lives and fortunes may be better imagined than described.

The astrologers are generally pretty correct in regard to past and present events, and their predictions are also very frequently realised. Perhaps this is the result of intuitive prevision and natural clairvoyance, for these men, as also the Buddha priests (who take no reward whatever), are well acquainted with magnetism and clairvoyance. Be that as it may, their success has created in the Burmese an ineradicable belief in fatality. But fatality it cannot be called, as there is often a way to obviate the impending danger or calamity, such as the avoidance of certain persons, places, or things, and separating oneself from certain planetary influences, or placing oneself under others. I have myself consulted both Brahmin and Burman astrologers, and also Buddha priests. One of these Buddha priests told my servant, who was walking with him on the way to my house, that a child had been "taken (died) from the house of the Son of Mars," to which he was going, though he could not have known of the death of my child. This was evidently direct clairvoyance or telepathy. I was told much that was correct concerning the past, and much that has since proved correct about the future; but the great name, the fame, and the good fortune predicted for me are still below the horizon.

### RECEIVED.

- "The Idler," March. (London: Chatto and Windus, Piccadilly, W. 6d.)
- "The Lyceum Banner," March. (London: J. J. Morse, 26, Osnaburgh-street, N.W. 1d.)
- "The Magnetic and Botanic Journal," March. (London: 280, Mare-street, Hackney, N.E. 1d.)
- "The New Age," February. (Edinburgh: Alex. Duguid, 25, Springwell-place, Dalry-road. 4d.)

"Go to BODMIN."—A Correspondent of "Notes and Queries" asks whether the following story can be vouched for as *bonâ fide*:—A Cornish gentleman was awakened three times one morning by a voice saying, "Get up, and go to Bodmin." Having dressed, he found that his horse was already at the door, the groom saying, "I got your order, sir." (His master had, of course, sent no order.) At the turnpike he found the gate open, and at the ferry the boat waiting, the men in each instance saying, "I got your message, sir, and have been waiting for you." Arrived at Bodmin, he found that a trial for murder was going on, and, owing to an apparently trivial incident which had taken place on the night of the murder, known only to himself and the prisoner, he was able to prove the man's innocence completely. When the gentleman entered the court the judge was about to pass sentence of death.



## MRS. NEWTON CROSLAND.

SPIRITUALISM FORTY YEARS AGO.

It is more than probable that not more than one out of every hundred Spiritualists, who read the notice of Mrs. Newton Crosland's departure, is in the least aware how much the spread of Spiritualism is due to the lady who has just passed to the higher life.

More than forty years ago Mrs. Crosland, who possessed little or no mediumistic powers, had, together with her husband, become thoroughly convinced of the truth of Spiritual communication. A young lady friend, who possessed most remarkable mediumistic powers, was a constant guest at Mrs. Crosland's. A circle consisting of five or six, used to meet twice or three times a week, mainly for the purpose of testing the manifestations, receiving communications, and learning the laws by which these manifestations could be produced. During one day per week the circle was limited to the same five or six sitters, and it was then that the most remarkable phenomena occurred. A large dining-table would be raised a foot or more from the ground, and swayed about as though it weighed no more than a sheet of paper; objects from distant parts of the room would be placed on the table, and the table itself, when the party had all left it, and no one was within four yards of it, frequently came with a sort of lurch, as though raised by a wave of the sea, and placed itself beside those who had assembled at the opposite end of the room.

That, however, which was of the deepest interest to the regular sitters, was the explanations (usually given by raps) of the means by which the power was obtained by which these manifestations were produced. The young lady, the medium, was also a seeress, and could see how the power was being used to produce the results.

During more than three years these researches and investigations were continued, usually twice and sometimes three times a week. Tests of every kind were suggested and given, and it is not too much to say that no circle in the present day has adopted more rigid precautions to prevent delusion or imposition, than were adopted at these meetings. As, however, the tests were usually of such a nature as to render delusion or imposition impossible, and as every manifestation occurred either in broad daylight, or with two large lamps in the room, a person of clear intelligence could not easily be deceived.

Mrs. Crosland being an authoress had several literary friends, who were curious to witness these wonders. Before inviting these friends, it was usual to ask the communicating agents whether it would be any use for them to come, and if so to name a date. In a few cases we were told it was useless, that it was mere curiosity that induced a wish to witness the phenomena, and that no amount of evidence would alter their preconceived opinions. In those days there were very few Spiritualists in England, and those few found it wiser to be silent on the subject. Any person who admitted that he had seen phenomena which could not be accounted for by known laws, was assailed with such terms as madman, fool, liar, or impostor; his facts and statements were received with ridicule or laughter, and the more ignorant the listeners, the more convinced were they of their profound acuteness. There yet remain some specimens of this style of man.

Among one of the first of Mrs. Crosland's friends who came to examine and criticise was the late Mr. Robert Chambers. This was in February, 1857. After two meetings Robert Chambers announced that it was a hard trial to have to give up the teaching of forty years, after four hours of examination of facts, but he would have to do it. He fought hard against conviction, but, true philosopher as he was, he accepted facts, and gave up his theories, instead of clinging blindly to his theories and closing his eyes to facts.

During the same month (February, 1857) Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall came to investigate. Both were under the belief that Mrs. Crosland and her friends were under some strange delusion. In less than two hours such manifestations had occurred, and such tests and proofs had been given, that both Mr. and Mrs. Hall stated that a new world had been opened to them. During the remainder of their lives both Mr. and Mrs. Hall were earnest workers for the promulgation of the great truth which had been revealed to them.

About the same time William and Mary Howitt came to investigate at Mrs. Crosland's. Both were very hard to con-

vince; test after test, correctly answered, did not bring conviction; but after a few weeks such proofs were given that no one but a mental imbecile could reject or undervalue the facts. William Howitt, with his bold independence of character, was no sooner convinced than he became an active agent in the promulgation of that which he knew, and a formidable critic of those who, utterly ignorant of the facts or the subject, yet presumed to write about, and attempt to explain, all the phenomena by some ridiculous and childish speculations of their own.

It was to Mrs. Crosland's that Mr. Faraday was invited, in order to prove to him that unconscious muscular action would not account for what occurred, and that his theory did not cover the facts. Mr. Faraday declined to come, but sent Mr. John Tyndall. It would be kind to the memory of a man who, in one branch of experimental science, had followed well the teaching of his senior (Faraday) to omit all reference to his proceedings and system of investigation at this meeting; but as Mr. Tyndall in his "Fragment of Science" wrote *his* account of this meeting, a few remarks from one who was present may not be out of place. Mr. Tyndall's account of the meeting bore, to the actual facts which occurred, about the same amount of accuracy which the Chinaman's report of cricket in England bore to the real game. He came fully convinced that everyone present except himself was a fool or impostor. He would not investigate or wait for phenomena to occur, and then reason on these, but he commenced by asserting and dictating, and in less than half-an-hour claimed that he had proved that it was all delusion.

To those who had the privilege of attending Mrs. Crosland's circle, and receiving the grand teaching of those who were able to manifest themselves through the mediumship of her young lady friend, there is a feeling of melancholy and disappointment, when we find that there are persons who, after some half-dozen sances with a strange medium, through whom only one class of manifestation occurs, attempt, with unbounded confidence, to theorise on the whole of the phenomena which have occurred, but which they have not witnessed. It is equally as melancholy, though somewhat amusing, when we find that some new investigator, having had satisfactory proof of the truth of spirit communication, announces to the world that, hitherto, all those who have had these communications were quite ignorant of the method of investigating scientifically, but that now a grand dawn of light will come, as he is going to examine on a purely scientific basis, and will soon reveal to everybody that which he alone has discovered.

The lady whose name heads this article probably knew more of the laws which govern spiritual communications and manifestations than all the writers on the subject of the present day; whilst the lady through whose powers these teachings came, stands almost alone as the great prophetess of the present age.

ONE OF THE INNER CIRCLE.

## THE LATE MR. JAMES BURNS.

A memorial service in memory of Mr. James Burns, late Editor of the "Medium and Daybreak," will be held at the Holborn Town Hall on Sunday evening next. Doors open at 6 o'clock; service at 7. Admission free.

The order of service will be as follows: Organ voluntary, Mr. E. A. Johnston; hymn, "Tell me not in mournful numbers," by the congregation; invocation, Mr. W. E. Long; solo, "Voices of the Angels" (Lane Wilson), Mrs. Lucas; correspondence from absent friends, Chairman; Chairman's address, Mr. J. J. Morse; solo, Miss Jessie Dixon; address, Miss A. Rowan Vincent; address, Mr. Thos. Shorter; solo, "Ye that are Weary" (Leonard Kane), Miss Florence Morse; address, Mr. W. E. Long; organ voluntary and collection; solo, "Light in Darkness" (Cowen), Miss Jessie Dixon; address, Mrs. B. Russell-Davies; address, Mr. Paul Preyss; solo, "Homeland," Mrs. Lucas; address, Mr. D. Younger; spontaneous remarks from the congregation; hymn, "Be Firm and be Faithful," by the congregation; closing organ voluntary.

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OFFICE OF "LIGHT," 2, DUKE STREET, ADELPHI.  
LONDON, W.C.  
SATURDAY, MARCH 9th, 1895.

EDITOR ... .. E. DAWSON ROGERS  
Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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## Light.

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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### NO MESSAGES OF IMPORTANCE!

In a brief Note, we referred last week to Mr. Walter Besant's very crude and very random statements concerning spirit-messages. We return, and more seriously, to the subject, with the honest desire to interest him and many like him in a subject which they do not seem at all to understand. To be quite frank, we may even say that the strange want of knowledge shown by Mr. Besant is partly accounted for by the very bitter and masterful tone of his article in "The Queen." If he had a touch of the calm truthseeker's temper, in relation to this subject, he might soon find out how little he knows about it.

It may be as well to remind our readers—and, may we hint, to remind Mr. Besant?—what was really said. It was not at all a question of the authenticity of spirit-messages, but of their seriousness and interest, and the importance of their subject matter; and Mr. Besant's amazing statement was that no message "of the slightest importance" had ever come. It would be no explanation to say that "importance" turns upon entire novelty or entire genuineness and authenticity; because the assertion, practically, was that nothing that had been received mattered. We ventured to ask whether it would be an important message, which appeared to prove that a "dead" child or sister was, as Tennyson said, "not dead but alive." We also informed Mr. Besant that books were at his service which would show how interesting, novel, profound and beautiful many spirit-messages were; and we still hope to hear from him.

But now, as a beginning, let us take the very first thing of the kind at hand; and the latest as well as the nearest. In the current number of "Borderland" we have a selection from the messages of "Julia," given through the hand of Mr. Stead, and these messages all profess to do the very thing Mr. Besant says he wants doing;—they tell us something about life in the unseen. Mr. Besant, reading thus far, may laugh. For all we know, he regards "Julia" as a rather hard-pushed joke; and Mr. Stead as a sorry jester or a hopeless fraud. But that, as a friend of Mr. Besant would tell him, "is another story." His point is that he does not believe in these spirits because they do not tell us anything important about the life beyond. Well, but if they did tell us anything important? If we cared to hunt up the information for him, we could show him scores of cases, hundreds of instances, laden with important information affecting the lives and fortunes of patient inquirers,—“important,” that is to say, in what is probably his sense of the word,—telling us something very useful which we did not know.

Well, let us take that test. For our own part, we do not very greatly value these messages of "Julia's" concern-

ing life in the unseen. But that is the subject Mr. Besant wants light upon; and, besides, as we have said, these messages are the latest and the nearest at hand. Now let us bear in mind what is usually—or, let us say, what is conventionally—believed concerning death and the unseen. Need we repeat it? But perhaps the words *Heaven, Hell, and Salvation* will suffice. Now, Mr. Walter Besant! listen to this. We are only putting together a few of "Julia's" statements:—The change you call "death" was, to me, perfectly painless. There is no reason to regard it with so much alarm. The preliminaries of decease are often painful; the actual severance, although sometimes accompanied by a sense of wrench, is of small account. I awoke, standing by my dead body, thinking I was still alive. Then the thought of nakedness came to me, and the desire for clothing, and the creative idea somehow gave me what I needed. A messenger of mercy meets all when they die, but all do not see him. Love is light, and heaven is love; and the loving see best. But God is good to all, and loves best those who need Him most, and the loveless are cared for as much as the loving, though the loveless do not see and do not understand, but they can be very miserable. Do we grieve about our beloved ones whom we leave behind, when they come to want, and know much trouble? In one way, yes, but we see beyond, we see the exceedingly transitory nature of all earthly things, and we see the extent to which poverty and misery minister to the creation of character, the development of love.

Now, in all this, there is nothing as novel as a description of, say, the inhabitants of Saturn would be; but we say it is what Mr. Besant asked for; and we further say that it is so "important" as to make it revolutionary. If it were believed it would knock on the head the dominant creeds of Christendom as regards the three tremendous words that sum up so much,—*Heaven, Hell, Salvation*. Mr. Besant does not know that messages such as these are the Spiritualist's commonplaces; and we write that word deliberately, quite prepared for the sneer, that they are commonplaces indeed. It is the fashion to say so; but we are not ashamed to confess that such "revelations" as these are more vitally interesting to us than descriptions of the flora of Venus, or the canals of Mars, or the men of Jupiter, or the composition of the sun. We are as much interested in science as Mr. Besant or Mr. Huxley, but we are a million times more interested in the question: Where are Socrates and Jesus and Shakspeare and Erasmus and Wesley and Tennyson, and the "dead" baby of the poor woman in the house across the street? And yet Mr. Besant says the messages are not "of the slightest importance."

We should very much like to know what Mr. Besant would consider important. Would he like a description of the latest fashions in Neptune, or how the spirit becomes clothed by willing it? But the one he would not credit, and the other he would not understand. We are all limited creatures, and it would puzzle even Mr. Besant to tell what could be done to give us the slightest hint of the nature and conditions of spirit-life. He may complain that all these messages are on the plane or in the line of what we know already. Why, of course! Anything else is a sheer impossibility. We will make Mr. Besant a present of a subject for a novel, the central figure of which shall be a man who is able to slip behind our present plane of being into some other and entirely different one. Then let him try to describe what goes on there. In order to do that, he would have to invent a new vocabulary, new illustrations, new senses, and a new brain. We wish he would try it, and let us see what he would consider to be a revelation of real "importance."

THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP.—In our next issue we shall publish a portrait of Mrs. J. A. Stansfield, and some account of her mediumship as a clairvoyant and psychometrist.



## THE "CYPRIAN PRIESTESS" CONTROVERSY.

BY EDINA.

Some of your correspondents appear to be desirous that Mr. David Duguid should now step into the arena to discuss the identity of this personage, and demonstrate the *bona fide* nature of the production, through him, of the alleged spirit-photograph prefixed to "The Veil Lifted." Their desire is, however, not likely to be gratified, (1) because Mr. Duguid has not the literary capacity for such a task; and (2) because he cares very little for any theories propounded on the subject. His record is too "clean" for any doubt to exist, among those who know him, regarding his absolute *bona fides* in the production of those photographs; and had it not been that I happen to be in possession of some facts relative to the production of one of the photographs of the person designed as "the Cyprian Priestess," I would not now have ventured into the field of controversy. My sole purpose in doing so is, if possible, to demonstrate that on one occasion at least during the past three years, a photograph bearing a strong resemblance—I might almost say being a reproduction of the frontispiece photograph in "The Veil Lifted"—was produced under test conditions, before two reliable witnesses, who went to Mr. Duguid's house in Glasgow and sat with him for spirit-photographs. This statement of facts may help to dispel some of the insinuations of double exposure, fraud, manipulation of the dry plates, &c., which have been far too common of late on the part of those sceptical persons who are so ready with every theory but the spiritual one to account for these marvellous phenomena; and who are so eager to attribute *mala fides* to persons whose character for probity has hitherto been as unblemished and free from suspicion as is their own.

The facts connected with the production of the spirit-photographs in question are shortly these: Three years ago, an intimate personal friend of mine—a professional gentleman of high standing in Edinburgh—had a series of sittings with David Duguid for spirit-photography. These took place, first, in my friend's house in Edinburgh, and latterly in the premises occupied by the latter in Glasgow. These sittings were throughout most successful, and resulted in the production of a series of very beautiful psychic photographs, of which my friend is justly proud. On the occasion of his visit to Glasgow, this gentleman was usually accompanied by his daughter, who is a very good clairvoyant and very "sensitive." On the occasion on which the photographs now to be dealt with were got, the procedure was as follows: My friend took with him to Glasgow a closed packet of dry plates which he opened for the first time in presence of Mr. Duguid in the dark room, and placed them one by one as they were required in the slide. This slide was then handed to Mr. Duguid who, accompanied by my friend, went into the sitting-room where his daughter was placed. Mr. Duguid then put the slide in the camera, and photographed the lady. After the requisite time had elapsed, Mr. Duguid took out the slide, and in company with Mr. — proceeded to the dark room, where the negative was taken out by my friend and developed throughout by him alone, the medium only mixing the chemicals and looking on during the operation. All this time the slide, plate, and negative were under the close observation of my friend, who, although he has the highest opinion of Mr. Duguid's probity, took every precaution to prevent fraud or trickery. The result of this experiment was the production of a photograph, a copy of which is herewith sent, and which it will be observed bears a striking resemblance to that of the "Cyprian Priestess" prefixed to "The Veil Lifted," although in my judgment the face in the book is fuller than that depicted in the photograph now sent.

The next experiment was conducted at the same sitting, and in a similar manner to the first; but on this occasion my friend, after seeing the slide put in the camera by Mr. Duguid, sat himself to be photographed, his daughter simply looking on. Shortly before the second experiment began the lady informed her father in a low whisper, which Mr. Duguid could not hear, that she saw a spirit-form taking possession of some white flowers which he had brought from his hothouse in Edinburgh, and which were placed in a glass of water close to the camera. After the negative was developed in the same manner as that described in the first experiment, it was found that an entirely new female face and figure were found depicted on the plate, and, singular to relate, there is disclosed on the right hand of this figure the bunch of flowers which were in the tumbler as before set forth. A copy of this photograph is also herewith sent. Both it and the one just taken contained the likenesses of the lady and gentleman who respectively sat on this occasion, but for personal reasons the copies now forwarded contain the psychic production alone. I have only further to state that the negatives were, after development, taken possession of by my friend, who took them with him to Edinburgh and printed them off at his leisure. He is an excellent amateur photographer and thoroughly familiar with the whole *modus operandi*.

Your readers have now the whole facts connected with the production of these two photographs, and, in my humble judgment, they go to show the production of two faces and figures utterly dissimilar, both of which were got under test conditions, and one of whom is presented as holding a bunch of flowers similar to a cluster which was immersed in a glass of water close to the camera. The first of these is, as I have said, extremely like that of the "Cyprian Priestess" as given in "The Veil Lifted"; while the other bears to it no resemblance whatever. It is permissible to inquire what further tests or precautions would have been deemed necessary to satisfy the most exacting sceptic as to Mr. Duguid's absolute *bona fides* in the matter. But there is more behind. My friend tells me that long ere his protracted series of sittings were closed he was able, either owing to an increase of his own psychic power or through the repetition of the phenomena, to conduct the whole photographic experiment himself, without Mr. Duguid doing more than lending his presence in the sitting-room, and on almost every occasion spirit-photographs were got of an extremely interesting description. Some of these have already seen the light in "The Veil Lifted," but the larger portion still remain in his album for the inspection of those of his friends who are interested in this class of phenomena.

With reference to Mr. Brodie Innes's picture of "Night," which, it is said, is an exact duplicate of that of the "Cyprian Priestess," I have simply to remark that until it is known from whence it was derived little light can be thrown on the mystery. But the material point to be kept in view here is, that many years after the author of "The Veil Lifted" got his spirit-photo of this "Cyprian Priestess," another likeness of the same personage was got, also under test conditions, by a professional gentleman in Edinburgh, who at the same sitting obtained another abnormal likeness of a totally different person, of which so far as known to me no other copy exists.

The two photographs now sent are open to the inspection of any person interested in this class of occult phenomena; and the Editor of this paper has received (in confidence) the name and address of the lady and gentleman in whose presence these productions were obtained.

In going over the contents of this article before it was finally sent to press, with the professional gentleman before referred to, he informed me that so lately as August, 1894, he had a photographic séance with David Duguid in his



house in Edinburgh, Mr. Duguid having come specially from Glasgow for the purpose. The camera used belonged to my friend; the chemicals were his; and the plates consisted of a closed packet purchased in Edinburgh in expectation of the visit. Three attempts were made by Mr. Duguid to get results, and, as often, the negatives on development disclosed nothing. Mr. Duguid then said: "I give it up as hopeless this time." My friend then intervened and said, "Let me have a try." He then took a plate from the packet in his possession, put it in the slide, placed his daughter in position before the camera, and took a photograph of her face and figure. On development there was found leaning against her side, and in clear profile, a photograph of part of the form and face of a female wearing a shawl. All this time David Duguid sat in the room, but took no part in the experiment, doing nothing, and handling nothing. And yet, here the abnormal production came. I have asked my friend to print a copy of this abnormal photograph and now send it for the private inspection of the Editor of "LIGHT." I am sorry not to be able to let the general public look at it; but as it contains the portrait of the lady who sat on this occasion, it is not desirable, in the interests of privacy, that it be publicly inspected. Here again, I observe, there is proof positive and reliable that Mr. Duguid had no hand whatever in the production of this photograph, and yet I opine it came solely because this gifted psychic was present in the room at the time.

#### A SEANCE WITH MRS. TITFORD.

A member of our staff reports that he has had a favourable opportunity of witnessing some manifestations through the mediumship of Mrs. Titford, whose portrait and biography appeared in these columns some six months ago. The sitting was held at the house of a lady who resides in a northern suburb, and was given mainly for her edification, since it was understood that she had little or no acquaintance with objective phenomena. The sitters consisted of the lady alluded to and her daughter, a young gentleman from the Midlands, a veteran Spiritualist whose name is prominent in the annals of spirit-photography, a well-known lady psychometrist, the medium (Mrs. Titford), her father and sister, and our representative, who was present in an unofficial capacity.

The room selected for the experiment is not remarkable for its capacity, and, conversely, the table being an exceedingly large one, the sitters were packed pretty closely into the available space. Assurance having been given by raps that the sitters were properly placed, the luminous card "led off" the proceedings by floating to the ceiling. After a while it began to descend, disclosing a vaporous something distantly resembling a child's face. Then a voice, apparently that of a small boy, spoke out of the darkness overhead, and, gradually becoming more distinct, was heard to enunciate several times the word "Papa." The call was promptly responded to by the father of the medium, who recognised it as that of his spirit-son. A moment afterwards the luminous card perched on the shoulder of our representative, revealing with startling distinctness a small face, which, smiling pleasantly upon him, inquired, "Can you see me?" The tap of tiny fingers on the heads and faces of the sitters accompanied this appearance. Then the musical-box, accompanied by the luminous card, soared towards the ceiling, pausing in its flight to be wound up by some unseen but exceedingly vigorous agency. It then began to gyrate with increasing rapidity until the luminous tablet made almost a continuous line of light. This musical-box, it may be mentioned, weighs seven pounds. For at least ten minutes it maintained its aerial dance round the chandeliers and about the heads of the sitters. Then came the sound of fingers at the piano, at which, owing to the crowded state of the room, there was certainly not space enough for a person in the flesh. A simple tune was struck out, and the infantile voice, which had been heard from time to time, commenced an animated conversation with the sitters from the centre of the table. This was followed by other interesting phenomena, which are, of course, familiar occurrences at physical séances. The veteran Spiritualist before alluded to had a deeply touching experience during the evening in the

tangible visit of a departed member of his family, but the details of this are too sacred for cold print, and are respected accordingly. The sitting, although not a test séance, was characterised by a number of features which would have made any sinister hypothesis very difficult, if not absolutely untenable.

#### "A BANEFUL POSSESSION."

We take the following from last week's "Notes and Queries":—

There is related in "The Life and Adventures of John Gladwyn Jebb," an experience so curious, so mysterious, that lovers of the occult will gladly welcome its reappearance in the widely-read pages of "Notes and Queries." Mr. Jebb was presented by his Indian friends with the only known specimen of an Aztec God of Slaughter, which had been dug up near the city of Mexico. From the day it came into his possession its malign influence was upon him—his fortune failed, his best friends died, his own health gave way, and death ensued; stranger still, a curse lingers with this stone image, and the present possessors have reason to rue the day that they gave it harbourage.

The first night the Aztec god spent on foreign soil was signalised by loud noises all over a house hitherto warranted to be of the quietest by its owners. Nor did the trouble stop here, for every night, with other unpleasing manifestations, loud knockings took place at a particular door as long as the idol remained in the house. So noisy were they that some people could not sleep for the sounds, though others heard nothing at all. Nothing can be proved against a stone image, but it seems within the bounds of imagination that an unconscious figure looking down on centuries of bloodshed should become in a manner saturated with the malignant atmosphere around it, and should give forth the spirit of its victims' agony and curses. Whatever the cause might be, the effects were as has been stated, and from the day when he joyfully accepted it to that of his death three years later, the idol sat and smiled, while Jack struggled bravely, but went down—down!

Dublin.

W. A. HENDERSON.

#### 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.]

#### "Madame Blavatsky and Her Theosophy."

SIR,—In "LIGHT" of February 23rd appears a review of my work, "Madame Blavatsky and Her Theosophy," dealing with the evidence, paltry and unconvincing according to the critic, that I adduce against her and her creed. It is said that I devote many pages to prove that the Russian lady was at one time a Spiritualistic medium, a fact that she "never denied," and that the "teachings of Theosophy are quite untouched" by my "facts."

In 1856 Madame Blavatsky visited, it is alleged, Tibet, and there received a mighty "mission," as Mr. Sinnett puts it. This mission, as the lady herself explained in a letter to the "Pall Mall Gazette" (April 26th, 1884), was

1. To put down Spiritualism.
2. To convert the materialists.
3. To prove the existence of the "Brothers."

But this mission, though delivered to her by certain Mahatmas in 1856-57, was not made public until she wrote an article in the "Theosophist" for October, 1881, that is, some twenty-five years afterwards. Plainly this gap of twenty-five years is the crux of the whole case.

During this time, did she strenuously attempt to "put down Spiritualism"? On the contrary, she figured as a professional medium, got up Spiritualistic societies, announced that she saw her father and her uncle among the spooks at séances, had John King for a guide for fourteen years; and, forgetting that she had received a mission, in 1856, to put down Spiritualism, she wrote in a public print: "Home converted me to Spiritualism in 1858." Plainly, till then she knew nothing about it.

Now, it seems to me that the teachings of Theosophy are very much "affected" by these facts. Theosophy professes to be a "block of absolute truth," received from certain Mahatmas. "Without the Mahatmas," as Mrs. Besant admits, "the Theosophical Society is an absurdity" ("Lucifer," December



15th, 1890). And yet it is plain that during these crucial twenty-five years Madame Blavatsky knew nothing about this Theosophy and these Mahatmas. Mr. Sinnett, driven to the wall, puts forward the plea that the Russian lady was playing a comedy all this time, pretending to be a Spiritualist to conceal mighty truths. But three high authorities may be brought to confront him here — Colonel Olcott, Madame Blavatsky, and the Mahatmas themselves.

The Russian lady, seeing how fatal Mr. Sinnett's theory was, came out boldly with one of her reckless denials: "I never was a Spiritualist," she said, in "LIGHT." Again in the "Theosophist" (October, 1881) we read: "In truth, mediumship is a dangerous, too often a fatal capacity, and if we oppose Spiritualism as we have ever consistently done, &c." My critic in saying that Madame Blavatsky never denied that she had been a Spiritualist, seems to have not quite got up all the facts of the case.

The second authority to be cited is more important still. Colonel Olcott has told us that the Mahatmas themselves, through the Russian lady, positively announced that the first contact between Theosophy and the Western world occurred at the battle of Mentana (November 3rd, 1867). At that fight a disguised Russian lady was killed, and a Mahatma took possession of her dead body by a magical process called Avesâ. This at once puts out of court the visit to Tibet and its initiations, the subterranean cave temple and the Book of Dzyan, the inspiration of "Isis Unveiled"; and makes indeed the greater part of Mr. Sinnett's biography pure fiction. Colonel Olcott shows that it is quite impossible that the teachings grouped together under the title of "Esoteric Buddhism," were known to Madame Blavatsky in America, as in the United States she put forth other teachings that contradicted them *in toto*, and announced that these other teachings came also from the "Masters."

But my critic may urge here: "Mr. Lillie has demolished Theosophy as a gospel derived from Mahatmas. Our contention was that he had not demolished Theosophy as an abstract truth." Here the critic has me.

Theosophy, through Madame Blavatsky, has announced that there is a God, that there is no God; that Nirvâna is annihilation, that Nirvâna is not annihilation; that the metempsychosis is a fact, that the metempsychosis is a fiction; that vegetarianism is necessary for psychic development, that vegetarianism is not necessary; that the dead are split in half and that the better halves "can never again span the abyss that separates their state from ours"; that the better halves can span the abyss; and so on through a hundred contradictions, to be seen in my little work.

Of course, this "Theosophy," or at any rate half of it, cannot be upset. ARTHUR LILLIE.

#### The "Priestess of Isis" and Her Acousers.

SIR,—I fully agree with the letter in your last issue in defence of Madame Blavatsky. I have often criticised Theosophy, but I knew Madame Blavatsky personally, and while I feel that she had faults, and that some of her methods may be politely termed "oriental," yet I know that she was a great Occultist.

Theosophists, who have exalted her into a goddess, and her enemies, who look upon her as a mere charlatan, are both mistaken. While studying Occultism I have seen the rise and fall of many pretentious wonder-workers and their systems, but in these days, when the Theosophical Society is in deep waters, let us not be unjust either to the Society or to its founder. As an Occultist, I know that behind her there were great occult forces at work, but whether she understood fully their nature is doubtful. Madame Blavatsky once told me that, like Frankenstein, she had raised a monster in the Theosophical Society. It is because that Society has drifted from the purposes for which it was intended that certain influences have been brought to bear upon it. But if people suppose that behind the occult movement in the present day there are no other powers at work than the spirits who usually manifest at séances, they are making a huge mistake. Madame Blavatsky's work will stand when her faults, and the critics who magnified them, are forgotten. She was a messenger, and one of many in this age and in past ages who have been sent by the occult orders.

Those peculiarly highly-strung and sensitive natures which are the only fit receptacles for the occult influences, are also very subject to certain frailties. Every occult student knows that the developing of the psychic nature lays us open to dangers

which ordinary mankind never experience. So we find most of these messengers a strange compound of the mighty and the mean. But I, for one, know that a great Occultist has gone from us, and that many of her secrets she has never revealed to Western students. If our Theosophists will look upon the present crisis in the right light they will see in it one more step towards their initiation. For with the break-up of dogma and presumed infallibility will come to those who remain steadfast fresh inspirations and guidance from the *real* occult masters. Meanwhile, let the dead rest in peace. Remember the great Master's saying, "Let him who is without sin among you throw the first stone."

A. F. TINDALL, A.T.C.L.

#### Are Mediums Weak-Minded?

SIR,—In your issue of February 23rd there is an important letter from Mr. Matthew Forbes on the treatment of mediums by Spiritualists. He says: "At the initial stage of my inquiries I found that mediums were held to be rather weak-minded than otherwise." Mr. Forbes justly thinks that this teaching "is an actual deterrent to any self-respecting individuals who might be gifted with mediumistic powers, and likely to prevent them from exercising their gifts." This is so true that I have wondered that so many intelligent persons have permitted themselves to be called mediums. I have never read Mrs. Hardinge Britten's pamphlet on the "Laws of Mediumship," but if it (as I cannot believe) in any way teaches that mediums are weak-minded, the teaching is in the highest degree demoralising for Spiritualism. How is it possible for the world to respect a philosophy or a religion founded on the teachings and the doings of a weak-minded class of persons just bordering on imbecility? It might be asked in what psychological category our public lecturers place themselves, and whether inspirational speaking is classed on the same plane with the supposed weak-minded class. As for intelligent persons with special gifts refusing to come into the ranks of Spiritualism and be curtly dubbed with the "style and title" of medium, to don a clown's robe and be crowned with a psychical fool's cap, the thing is too much of a joke, considering that the year of grace 1895 is no longer an epoch of voluntary martyrdom. Ludicrous as it may seem, I have more than once heard the remark from Spiritualists that this or that person "knows too much to be a medium." Spiritualism is *not* a religion, because religion *must* contain respect and reverence. Mediums are the ministers of Spiritualism; they are treated by the majority of Spiritualists with "insufferable contempt." How is it possible to base a religion on a contemptuous ministry? Some people are trying this rôle, but they will find it beyond their powers. Spiritualism will never resemble a religion, never be a moral element, until mediumship is placed on a respectable footing.

Mr. Stainton Moses has been the only physical medium who has been looked upon as an individual, intelligent entity, the only one who has been treated with respect, and this because of his university training; and yet Mr. Home had more *experience*, and was, in consequence, more critical. Were I seeking advice about Spiritualism, I should prefer a medium like Mr. Home to one like Mr. Moses. The one fatal error with Spiritualists has been the lack of discrimination between mediums and their gifts. The kind of reasoning that goes on would hardly be accepted among the Zulus. Here is a sample of it: Some mediums have led drunken lives and have been incapable of mental development, therefore all public phenomenal mediums are half-idiotic machines, and one is no better than another!

A celebrated medium once said: "I have been treated as an idiot so long that I have almost come to believe that I am one." But there is another side to the medal. The sensitive mediums, thus treated, never forget the authors of such treatment, and if some Spiritualists could know how they are talked about by these mediums; if they could listen to a few of the remarks made about them by outraged psychics; if they could only know that a kind of masonic fraternity exists among all classes of mediums, that they travel about, see one another, make a special point of warning one another against persons who relegate mediums to the category of vulgar nonentities, a good many Spiritualists would speedily change their tactics.

Mr. Forbes holds "the generality of mediums to be the opposite of weak-minded," as all reasoning persons will admit. Those who do not admit this fact must be profoundly ignorant of human nature, not to say psychological law. As for my own experience (I speak of what I have seen and heard in England, America, France, Holland, Italy, and Germany), the most



positive, indomitable persons I have known were men and women with psychical gifts. It is all very well for a few Spiritualists to hold up table-rapping, table-tipping, slate-writing and the like as the synthesis of psychological phenomena, and to judge mediums *en bloc*, after the intellectual status of a Eusapia Paladino, who can scarcely write her own name; but the thousands of mediums who know how to write their own name and a little more, will not willingly submit to a classification of so gross a kind, not even to become martyrs for the special gratification of a group of delicious fanatics who class a medium several degrees below an ironmonger, a stockbroker, or a pulpit orator, and only one remove from a galvanised mummy behind whom the electric current might be applied by some obliging Faraday, while other "sperrits" might inflate the empty skull with the highest inspiration.

L. WALDEMAR TONNER.

#### Is Spiritualism a Religion?

SIR,—The fact of the matter is that "Vir" has no religion—in the ordinary sense of the word—and he does not like Spiritualism to be treated as such. There are some who dislike religion on account of its past connection with bloodshed and persecution, and, having got free from the priestly set, they have vowed (as "Vir" has said) never again to become connected with religious associations. But is not this carrying the spirit of "freedom" too far? It seems to me that the religious tendency is *natural* to the human race, as it is found in all parts of the world, even amongst the most savage; if, therefore, we ignore so important an element in human nature, the race must, I think, be a loser, as, in doing away with religion (as defined on p. 58), to a great extent we do away with aspiration, spiritual yearning for perfection, and disgust with all that is of the earth earthy; for an instance of the effect of which course I point you to the mental and moral condition of France at the present day.

I think it will be generally admitted that man needs a religion, and in spite of all that "Vir" has written, I cannot see why Spiritualism should not be a religion to all who understand it. It is certainly a religion to me, and supplies all my needs, and, strange to say, I feel no sense of slavery (mental) but the reverse—a gradual sense of freedom in finding that the religious ideas cultivated in me in the past are all false, and that God's "plan of creation" has not been a gigantic failure; that there is nothing to be feared.

In spite of Plato, and possibly a few other original thinkers, the world—I will be more precise, and say the religious world—did not believe in continued progress after death; its religions were man-made, and therefore it could not know that such was the fact. That knowledge is distinctly due to Spiritualism! In fact, Spiritualism has revolutionised our ideas on all that concerns religion, and, in my opinion, clearly proves existing religions to be false. Then why not, if religion is necessary to us, look upon Spiritualism in that light?

Mr. Theobald gives his reason in "Spiritualism and Religion," and has recently confirmed it in "LIGHT." He says: "All Church life centres in worship, and Christianity brings us face to face with the only object of worship." But I maintain, on the evidence of history and our own times, that Christianity has only made God one to be feared, not loved and trusted.

Again, he (Mr. Theobald) says the Bible "is a Revelation of God, the manifestation of a Divine Person, a history of His gradual self-unfolding, and of the grafting of the Divine into human history." With apologies to Mr. Theobald, I cannot understand how any thinking man, in the light of Spiritualism and in the lack of proof, can believe the above assertion; it is marvellous in one who calls himself a Spiritualist! "Vir" would have done better in combating that position than in opposing Spiritualism as the religion of man.

Nottingham.

J. FRASER HEWES.

#### A Conjuring Table.

SIR,—Allow me to say that the conjuring table which is mentioned in "LIGHT" of February 23rd, is capable of being put to a better use than that of simply amusing children. Though it certainly cannot expose all "spirit-rapping," it may help to expose *fraudulent* "spirit-rapping" by showing how raps hitherto thought to be genuine may possibly have been produced; and any machine which will do this is a benefit to society and especially so to Spiritualists.

Paris.

BERTRAM W. B. GREENE.

#### Nirmanakayas.

SIR,—I have read with considerable surprise "Quæstor Vitæ's" argument to the effect that Nirmanakayas, or Egos who refuse to enter Nirvana, continue to exist on the psychic or Devachanic plane. Possibly this may fit in with the classification of cosmic planes adopted by your correspondent, but, for myself, I think it most misleading to employ Theosophical terminology in a sense quite contrary to that in which it is used by Theosophists themselves.

It seems to me that four objective planes of form in Cosmos must be postulated. These are: the physical, the astral (Kama Loka), the psychic (Devachan), and the Turiya state. Beyond these four planes lies that subjective formless triple unity which one is compelled to postulate as underlying the manifested four planes. The uplifting of human consciousness to this triple unity may possibly constitute Nirvana, though the doctrine is so subtle that I should not like to dogmatise upon it. I have always looked upon Nirvana as that condition which is gained when the human consciousness is uplifted into permanent union with that of the divine creative Logos of the universe, Brahma. The three aspects of the divine unity are the three Buddhist vestures, corresponding thus, in terms of the human principles:—

1. Dharmakāya—Atmic consciousness.
2. Sambhogakaya—Buddhic consciousness.
3. Nirmanakaya—Manasic consciousness.

Below these subjective three lie the objective four, which are dependent on, and formed by, the divine three.

4. Turiya State.
5. Devachanic, or psychic.
6. Astral, or Kama Lokic.
7. Physical.

The astral stage is that into which the consciousness of the average man passes during dream, and in which he lives after death.

But if he has thoroughly familiarised himself with this plane during life, as must be the case with some sensitives, he passes after death to the psychic plane, which corresponds in the incarnate man to the state our consciousness is in during what we call dreamless sleep.

An adept familiarises himself with the psychic plane as well as the astral and physical during life; and, after death, passes on direct to the fourth or Turiya stage, normally.

Beyond these four states of consciousness, which may be cognised in the body as well as out of it, lies the subjective triple unity of Nirvana. And yet "Quæstor Vitæ" will have it that he who refuses Nirvana is tied down to the psychic plane only.

Your correspondent is reasonable when he argues that he whose consciousness is fitted for entering Nirvana is already there. But this shows quite plainly that there is more than one aspect to Nirvana. The Nirmanakaya refuses to pass on into the two higher aspects of Nirvana, though the potentiality of doing so inheres within him; and he remains in the third outer degree, absolute master of the four outer cosmic planes. He can, apparently, live on any one of these four planes that he chooses. It is maintained that Buddha gained Nirvana while in the physical body, long before his death.

Apparently your correspondent sees a difficulty in understanding how an Ego suited for one plane can continue to function upon some other one. But do we not see the same thing in a lower degree even in this life? A man with the mind of a poet refuses to devote himself to poetry, and turns his energies in quite another direction. As above, so below.

H. S. G.

#### Animal Life in the Spiritual World.

SIR,—The first paragraph of your correspondent, "I.O.M.A.," surprises me, as I thought he knew me as a lover of all animals. I think he has missed the point of my defence of these our good friends, which was that when they are demoralised it is the work of man. I think that the debauched London cat, and the unhappy pig living perforce in dirt, are examples of this wrong to animals which lies at our door. If dogs were as numerous as cats they might resemble them in other respects, but for the most part they lead less indulged lives and are in a minority, and this tends to cleanliness and vigour of mind and body. My knowledge of these animals renders me incapable of believing them to be a source of evil inspiration, whether in this life or the next. I think that "I.O.M.A." can hardly fail to see, on reflection, that he does me injustice.

E. M. BEEBY.



### Prayers for the Dead.

SIR,—I surmise, with the "Spectator," that one of the reasons why Protestants object to praying for the dead arises from the idea "that our destiny is fixed absolutely and irrevocably at the time of death," which, the "Spectator" thinks, "arises from a most erroneous interpretation of Scripture for which there is no excuse." In other words, that God, who has made us and not we ourselves, and has placed us all in such different positions as regards temptation and responsibility, holds a drastic law which wills to some eternal torment for one short life, and to some eternal joy as the result of one short life. So, secondly, as the "Spectator" naturally infers: "There are some who believe that human prayers cannot affect the divine purpose at all."

But there seems to exist a third reason why men object to pray for the dead. They hold with St. Paul, when he preached to the Corinthians, a grand argument, read at the Burial Service of the Church of England, concerning the resurrection of the dead. But St. Paul crowned his great argument by a peroration which deferred that rising from the dead to an indefinite period, to be recognised, when it should come, by the sound of a trumpet, whenever that may accrue; assuming also by his peroration that we shall none of us be in a state of joy or suffering until the trumpet shall sound, but in a state of sleep or death-like torpor until then, so needing no praying for until then, if even then, for then it would be too late and useless. Those who hold to this view forget that St. Paul, in a later epistle, his last (subject, consequently, as he must have been, to an evolution of thought through an advanced teaching of the spirit), taught, in the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that the souls and spirits of the dead, instead of being asleep and death-like immediately after their bodies' dissolution, are, on the contrary, very much alive, and watching those whom they have left behind, as "a cloud of witnesses," some of them, as we have reason to believe, ready and willing and anxious to be prayed for. The Romanists saw this from the beginning; but the Protestants, to mark a distinction, took a retrograde step and stereotyped "the last trump"; while the Romanists, quite as illogically on their side, limited prayers for the dead as only effectual from their own altars, and elsewhere and for other people stereotyped "eternal torment."

On March 11th, 1882, "LIGHT" kindly allowed me room in its pages to give an account of both Bishop Heber's and Bishop Wilberforce's opinions concerning prayers for the dead, as I had done in "The Isle of Wight Times" on July 24th, 1871. And I further then noted to "LIGHT" that, curiously enough, the Isle of Wight had continued to be a battle-field for prayers for the dead; subsequently there had been a controversy about it at Carisbrooke; and again in the year 1881. And, in this last instance, the Burial Board at Ventnor refused leave to a Protestant to insert a prayer for the dead on a tombstone. There was much controversy, which was noted in "The Isle of Wight Advertiser," and which continued from June to November; and, in that controversy, Bishop Heber's and Bishop Wilberforce's letters were again brought into requisition, and the controversy ended by the then Bishop of Winchester, Dr. Harold Brown, assuming his right of final decision, and sanctioning the following words: "May he rest in peace."

Many Spiritualists may still be living who will be glad to know that our good friend, the late Mr. Beattie, of Clifton, was one of those who entered into this question, and concluded an excellent public letter with the following: "Thanks, then, to the good Dr. Wilberforce, for giving the weight of his shrewd mind in favour of this sensible epitaph."

In my letter to "LIGHT" of March 11th, 1882, I quoted from the late Mrs. Penny, who very truly said in "LIGHT" of February 18th, 1882: "We—Roman Catholics excepted—no longer attempt to give any succour to the dead." And she asked in natural and touching tenderness of heart, "Ought not the earnest entreaties of unhappy spirits for intercessory prayers to have weight with us?" I think that they ought, indeed; and it seems the duty of those who know that unhappy spirits do ask our prayers not to hide their knowledge from the ignorant, since it is a knowledge of far-reaching powers, whose influence is charity, and whose object is relief. So, as many Spiritualists understand this subject well, would it not be wise to further a propaganda on this head in the best way we can, and in a way not difficult, by making a point of having a prayer for the dead inscribed on every tombstone that we may erect, as the early Christians did? For this is, doubtless, legal; and, therefore,

although individuals or burial boards may give trouble, they are likely, if we persevere, to be defeated in the end. And the initials, R.I.P., if nothing more, can be added even to tombstones already erected and inscribed.

The opening out of the knowledge of Hades to the laity by the New Version of the Bible ought to prove of notable assistance to advocates of prayers for the dead. My dictionary informs me that Hades means "The receptacle of departed spirits." Hades was suppressed at the Reformation by the enlargement of hell; whereby it might be said, as in the days of Isaiah, "Hell hath enlarged her desire, and opened her mouth without measure." (Isaiah v. 14.)

WILLIAM R. TOMLINSON M.A.

### The Fire Test.

SIR,—I noticed recently in "LIGHT" an interesting paragraph concerning some mediumistic experiments with fire, proving the immunity of the medium to its action. In a previous number of "LIGHT" there was also an article from the "Arena," by Dr. Peebles, to the same effect. During my residence in Boston, U.S.A., I had the satisfaction of being present at a séance, and witnessed the phenomenon in question. The medium hailed from the West, but inasmuch as the names differ in the two séances, I conclude that the one I saw was not the one referred to in "LIGHT." The one I saw (whose name I forget) professed to be controlled by an Indian spirit, and the experiments were of the same kind as Mrs. Raynor's—holding lamp glasses, taken from a burning lamp, in the naked hand, &c. But the most wonderful thing that was done, and which is not mentioned in either of the articles alluded to, was this: The medium poured some spirit into a plate and then, setting it alight, held her face in the flames, without sustaining any injury to the flesh or hair. The heat from burning spirits, I may observe, is very intense, and how it can be rendered inoperative we cannot understand, and I do not suppose the ablest chemists can suggest a theory beyond this, that heat, being the result of molecular action, a force comes into operation that counteracts that action. In the light of these facts, we can more readily give credence to what is recorded of Mr. Home, holding his head in the fire and placing live coals on people's heads and in their hands. Dr. Peebles seems to accept the Biblical story of the three men in the fiery furnace in a literal sense, but, notwithstanding my experience in fire-test experiments, I prefer to adopt a figurative interpretation in the case.

I will now mention a sequel to the séance in question. Soon afterwards, at the instance of Mr. Tebb, I called upon some of the Boston medicos to get information about the status of vaccination in that city. One of these, a well-known physician, I recognised as having been present at the fire-test séance, so after I had got through the vaccination business, I referred to the experiments in question. He expressed his conviction of their genuineness, and went on to say that he had long been acquainted with the facts of Spiritualism, and then told me how his attention was first drawn to the subject. He was attending a young lady who was "sick unto death," and was present at the closing scene. Just before she died her spiritual vision was opened, and she said she could see her relatives waiting to receive her, mentioning them by name. "And now I see John," she feebly said. John was the name of a brother who was supposed to be alive, and they thought she was mistaken, but in due course the news of his death arrived. It had taken place at a distance, and was at the time not known to his relatives.

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

### The Approaching Conference.

SIR,—Might I suggest that during the conference in May it would be useful to the cause, the well-being and good reputation of which we all have at heart, that a short series of test séances should be undertaken by one or more representative committees? Many mediums of known power will, no doubt, be in London, and though I am aware that séances held by people who are comparative strangers are not likely to produce phenomena of the most startling character, yet I think the opportunity of adducing evidence of our facts, good of its kind, and which may have some weight with the public at a time when attention will be specially drawn in our direction, is too good to be neglected.

G. L. LE M. TAYLOR, Lieut.-Col.

COPIES OF "LIGHT" WANTED.—We shall be glad if any of our readers can let us have copies of "LIGHT" for March 28th and May 9th, 1885. They are required to complete a volume for the year.



## SOCIETY WORK.

45, MARKHAM-SQUARE, KING'S-ROAD, CHELSEA, S.W.—Harmonious séances have been held, and beneficial results have been derived from the magnetisers at our healing meeting, at which all who desire to attend are welcome. Sunday, at 3.30 p.m., public séance; Monday, at 8 p.m., public séance; Tuesday and Thursday, at 3.30 p.m., developing circles; Saturday, at 8 p.m., clairvoyance.—WILLIAM GEO. COOTE.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—On Sunday, the controls of Mr. Robson gave a very excellent discourse on a subject chosen by the audience, viz., "The Advantages to a Spiritualist and vice-versâ at the time of passing away." We regret that so few friends were present, owing to the unsettled state of the weather, but we hope to see a larger attendance on Sunday next, when Mr. Savage and Mr. Dennis will occupy our platform with an address and clairvoyance.—J. B., Hon. Sec.

111, CLARENDON-ROAD, NOTTING HILL, W.—On Sunday last we had an excellent meeting, presided over by Mr. J. H. Bangs. Mr. Pursey read a paper on "Miracles" given through the mediumship of Mrs. Pursey. Very instructive and interesting discourses were also given by Mr. Veitch and Mr. W. Wallace. On Sunday next our meeting will be closed that friends may attend the Burns memorial service. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; Saturday, at 8 p.m., spirit circle; March 17th, Mrs. Whitaker.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

NEWPORT.—The Monmouthshire Psychological Society held their usual devotional meeting on Sunday, 3rd inst., when Mr. Burrell gave a reading, "From Christianity to Spiritualism through Materialism," after which Mr. Wayland's guides gave an address which they entitled "Spiritualism extols the Creator whereas Christian Dogma degrades," when the very marked contrast between the two was pointed out so distinctly that all our visitors must have received much "food for reflection." Owing to the great interest which is being evinced in this town we have arranged for a special meeting for inquirers every Tuesday, at 7.45 p.m.—S. A. M., Corres. Sec.

GLASGOW ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday morning Mr. Robertson commented on people who attribute the cause of spiritual phenomena to anything but spirit. He cited the cases of Sir David Brewster, Serjeant Cox, and Mr. Atkinson, and referred to the case of the sub-editor of "Borderland," which was reported in "LIGHT." In the evening Mr. Vance delivered an eloquent address on "Religious Sentiments and Social Evolution," in which he maintained that benefit was derived from the study of social problems in a religious light, and that we cannot dispense with social problems in spiritual thought. At both services reference was made to the loss sustained by Mr. Vall, our energetic organist, in the passing of his infant son to the higher life.—J. H.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—On Sunday, as Mrs. Bliss was unavoidably absent through illness, Mr. H. Boddington, Mr. Payne, and Mr. Challis occupied the time with addresses, which appealed specially to inquirers, urging those who were induced to become investigators to persevere in intelligent research until the facts of the spiritual life were ascertained. Sunday next, at 6.30 p.m., spirit circle. We intend celebrating the forty-seventh anniversary of Modern Spiritualism ("The Rochester Knockings") on Sunday, March 31st, by holding special services all day at the above hall. Many well-known mediums and speakers are expected to take part in the exercises of the day. Services begin at 11 a.m., and 3 and 6.30 p.m.—CHAS. M. PAYNE, Hon. Sec.

218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END.—On Sunday last wonderfully successful clairvoyant descriptions were given by one of Miss Marsh's guides. Mrs. Jones, who was present, was controlled by our late friend Mr. Burns, who gave an eloquent address. On Sunday next Mr. Bradley will give a trance address. Mr. Marsh, who has been an earnest worker in the cause of Spiritualism for many years, is anxious for the assistance of Spiritualists in subscribing for the purchase of a small organ for the hall; subscriptions, which will be duly acknowledged, to be sent to Mr. Marsh, 218, Jubilee-street.—E. FLINT, Sec.

PECKHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WINCHESTER HALL.—In future the open circle and magnetic healing, hitherto carried on at Chepstow Hall on Tuesday evenings by Mr. Edwards, will be carried on at Winchester Hall, 33, High-street, Peckham. Miss Hammond Hill, the landlady, has kindly offered us every facility, and will also identify herself with the movement. Our society will in future be known as the "Peckham Society of Spiritualists," meeting at Winchester Hall on Sunday and Thursday evenings; Sundays at 6.45 p.m., Thursdays at 8.30 p.m. We have received a large accession of members, which will probably enable us to extend our sphere of work. Thursday next, at 8.30 p.m., open circle and magnetic healing, public admitted on approval; Sunday, at 6.45 p.m., subject, "The Use and Abuse of Spiritualism."—W. H. EDWARDS, President.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—We shall hold a memorial service in memory of the late James Burns, Editor of "The Medium and Daybreak," on Sunday next, and it is earnestly hoped that friends will come and make this service a success. The collection will be for the Spiritual Institution.

On Friday Miss MacCreadie will give psychometry at our hall at 8 p.m. prompt. Friends admitted up to 8 p.m.; doors open at 7.30 p.m. Mr. Butcher gave an admirable address on Sunday on "Creeds and Dogmas," which was highly appreciated by a good audience. Mr. Gozzett ably rendered a violin solo, accompanied by the organ. Mrs. E. H. Britten will lecture at the Town Hall, Stratford, on March 14th. Tickets, 2s., 1s., and 6d., for the benefit of our building fund, which can be had of any member of our committee, or of me, at 23, Keogh-road, Stratford. Mr. T. Everitt has kindly consented to act as chairman on that occasion.—THOMAS MACCALLUM, Hon. Sec.

CARDIFF.—On the 3rd inst. Mr. H. G. Allen gave an admirable address upon "Our Duties." He summarised these as relating to ourselves—physically, mentally, and spiritually; to our fellow-men, who are living, suffering, struggling, and dying around us daily; and to the dwellers in spirit-life, the advance guard of humanity, who only await the fuller and freer means of intercommunion to bring to us on this side the veil the blessings arising from the higher knowledge and broader life into which they have entered. By living faithfully up to our duties in these three directions we shall also most perfectly fulfil our duty to God. After the service the fifth annual general meeting of members was held, when the accounts and report of the retiring executive were presented, and the new executive elected as follows: President, Mr. E. Adams; vice-presidents, Messrs. R. Marsh and E. G. Sadler; secretary, Mr. H. G. Allen; treasurer, Mr. William Billingsley; librarian, Mr. S. Longville; committee, Messrs. F. Ward, G. Dowdall, J. R. Gandy, J. Holleyhead, Williams.—E. A.

CHEPSTOW HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM, S.E.—On Tuesday last we held our first monthly social evening, and, from the attendance, which numbered about sixty, we feel that it was fully appreciated, as many outside friends expressed the wish that we would continue these meetings, and we fully intend to do so. The entertainment consisted of songs, recitations, dancing, &c. The following friends contributed to the harmony and spirit of the meeting: Miss Benyon kindly presided at the piano, and her sister, Miss Nora Benyon, rendered a violin solo; songs were given by Miss Nora Benyon, Messrs. Challis, Vernon, Beale, and Master Fish; recitations by Mr. Fish. On March 24th we are promised a lantern lecture by Mr. J. Allen, of Stratford, when we hope to see many friends. On Sunday last Mr. Dale, of Stockwell, gave an inspirational address on "Spiritual Orthodoxy," and his guides dealt with the subject in an able manner. Our speaker for next Sunday will be Mr. Challis, of Camberwell. On the Tuesday following, circle, at 8 o'clock.—J. C. JONES, Hon. Sec.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—Mr. W. E. Long's address on "Spiritualism the Church of Humanity" was full of points of vital interest to all, treated in a manner which won the highest appreciation from the audience. "Before the Church of Humanity can be built," said the lecturer, "man must understand man, knowledge must take the place of mere belief in matters spiritual. When man is taught to look within himself for the manifestation of God, of heaven, and of hell; when he recognises the need of unfolding and developing his divine nature; when, instead of drawing entirely on the past for his spiritual knowledge, he studies the spiritual phenomena and philosophy of the present and learns the great lessons of personal responsibility and of eternal progress, then that divine brotherhood of man, about which so much has been said, will be manifest, and the Church of Humanity will have a sound basis for its foundation." Next Sunday evening, at 7 o'clock, "Sunshine," Miss MacCreadie's spirit-guide, will give clairvoyant delineations of spirit friends of the audience. Doors open at 6.30.—L. H.

LADBROKE-GROVE BAPTIST CHAPEL, CORNWALL-ROAD.—Mr. W. O. Drake (Freethought Spiritualist) opened the debate, as previously announced. Subject: "Is Spiritualism a Fact or a Fraud?" There was a large audience, numbering several hundreds. The Rev. J. Fleming Shearer presided. The opener commenced his remarks by stating that they had met to consider the subject at issue entirely apart from its Scriptural, religious, social, and moral aspects, keeping close to facts and evidence. He reviewed the past and present obstacles in the path of investigation and research, and stated that the phenomena of Spiritualism had received a thorough searching examination by the scientist, materialist, and religionist of the highest order of intellect, a large number having declared in favour of the genuineness of the phenomena as being established facts beyond doubt. Messrs. T. Everitt, Veitch, Whyte, Podgett, and others, sustained the Spiritualistic position, the opposition being led by Messrs. Doe, Penealy, Hunt, Damon, and Rev. J. Fleming Shearer. Our opponents demanded immediate demonstration of facts, and gave the professed conjurer a splendid advertisement. The rev. gentleman wished the spirits could remove, without expense, his massive stone pulpit, and erect a platform in its stead; he wished to know if spirits appeared clothed or otherwise, and whether the spirits could raise the dead, &c. Mr. Drake then replied. At the close, Mr. Everitt had a busy time of it in exhibiting and explaining many specimens of spirit-writing, &c., which he had brought for view, he being in excellent form for his task.—COMMUNICATED.