

# Light:

## A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe

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

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### NOTES BY THE WAY.

The philosophers are a curious race, whose love of wisdom bravely blends with love of their own way. No men more eager to cry out for the truth; no men more ready to stand in the gangway and protest: "Thus far shalt thou come and no farther!"

It is an old story, but it came up smiling as we read the report of Mr. Clodd's late lecture on Folk-Lore. Because he could not help it, he defined Folk-Lore as "the psychological side of anthropology"—a pretty definition! Rows of skulls in a museum are all very well; but, as Mr. Clodd says, the ideas that went through those skulls are far more important, and could tell us a great deal more about man. But Mr. Clodd evidently looks upon those ideas with a big-brotherly and good-natured contempt. He thinks that, as a race, we are emotionally hundreds of thousands of years old; but rationally we are in embryo; and so it seems to follow that all our old beliefs in ghosts and God must be put away as childish things.

We are not quite sure whether Mr. Clodd would really say this, but it looks like it. In any case, he finished by a big hit at the Psychological Research people and their "superstitions." As for Spiritualists—we suppose they were far beyond his ken. But he *could* see as far as Westminster Town Hall, and this is what he said: "I think it deplorable that those who indulge in this sort of superstition should have amongst their number men eminent in other departments of science, and that philosophers who daily give adhesion to the principle of the conservation of energy should consort in dark rooms and at Spiritualistic séances, where the fundamental ideas of time, space, and the law of gravity are treated as naught. The mind of such a type of scientific man must, I fancy, be built in watertight compartments." How nice this is from a lover of wisdom and a seeker after the truth! We hope Mr. Sidgwick, Mr. Crookes, Professor Lodge, Professor Barrett, and Mr. Myers will appreciate it—at its true value.

A Mr. T. H. Lewis has a funny article in "The English Illustrated Magazine" in the shape of an interview with Mr. Maskelyne; and we are not surprised that Spiritualism came in for the lion's share. We have already alluded to some portions of this article as quoted in the "Westminster Gazette," but there are other points in it which seem to call for further notice. The conjurer, though he still whistles to keep his courage up, practically admits his failure to put down Spiritualism. With comical frankness he says: "I think Spiritualism may now be left to drag on its dreary existence. It is impossible to stamp it out entirely." That is about as far as we could expect a baffled conjurer to go. But almost the next sentence is very, very funny. "You must bear in mind that Spiritualism has always existed in

one form or another, but, so far as the general public is concerned, it is as dead as a door-nail." Truly, it *has* "always existed"; and there are a hundred signs that it is taking hold of the public in an altogether lively way. The man who calls it *dead* is either ill-informed or he is vexed. We think Mr. Maskelyne is vexed. He is hard on Mr. Stead—thinks he has "adopted Spiritualism for business purposes," and revives the old objection to apparitions, that clothes could not be made immortal. Poor man! he is mournfully out-of-date. Even a juvenile psychical researcher has got beyond that difficulty.

But the funniest thing in the article is a diagram labelled "Apparatus for table-rapping," which Mr. Maskelyne gravely thinks explains it all. It is a mechanism for fixing round knee and ankle, with a long poker projecting from the knee portion, by which, says the poor man, the raps are made. Will he explain how the poker works when a woman wears it on her knee? Will he explain where the cumbrous machinery is when, before a séance, a medium is stripped and re-dressed? Will he explain where it was when Kate Fox, in a private drawing-room, was placed on a chair, in full daylight, and keenly observed by four persons while raps that could be heard upstairs were produced on the upper panels of the open door? But what is the good of arguing with a baffled conjurer? In fact, we ought to be somewhat grateful to him. If this poker business is his exposure of "table-rapping" it is an admirable aid to faith. The real thing, in its simplicity, is never more easy to believe than when we are invited to inspect these laborious and clumsy contrivances for producing the sham.

The rift in the Theosophical lute goes on widening. Mrs. Besant's long manifesto in the "Daily Chronicle" only makes it more clear that Mr. Judge has been playing Mahatma. But the next day Colonel Olcott came to the rescue in a very remarkable way. He, too, seems to imply that Mr. Judge is guilty, but he opens a gate which promises to lead into some very curious pastures at which also Mrs. Besant hints. The suggestion is that Mr. Judge is a psychic or medium, and that he was only *used* to produce forged papers. It is a dangerous doctrine, but we shall hear much of it in the future, and society will have to add this to its burdens and its puzzles. But here is the Colonel's gate:—

It is proper for me, as a student of practical psychology of very long experience, to draw attention to the important fact that, even if the charges of forged writing and false messages brought against Mr. Judge were made good before a jury under the exoteric rules of evidence, still this might not be proof of guilty knowledge and intent. This must not be overlooked, for it bears distinctly upon the question of moral responsibility. Every student of modern Spiritualism and Eastern Occultism knows that a medium, or psychic, if you prefer the word, is often irresistibly impelled by an extraneous force to do acts of turpitude of which he is incapable in his normal state of consciousness. Only a few days ago, I read in the learned Dr. Gibier's "Analyse des Choses," a solemn statement of this fact, accompanied with striking examples in his own practice. The renowned Professor Bernheim also proved this terrible fact to

me by hypnotic experiments on male and female patients in the Hôpital Civil at Nancy. Equally well-known is it that persons, otherwise accounted sane, are liable to hallucinations which make them sometimes mistake their own fancies for spiritual revelations and a vulgar earth-bound spirit for an exalted historical personage. At this moment I have knowledge of at least seven different psychics in our society who believe themselves to be in communication with the same Mahatmas and doing their work, who have each a knot of disciples or adherents about them, and whose supposed teachers give orders which conflict with each other's! I cannot impugn the good faith of either of these sensitives, while, on the other hand, I cannot see my way to accepting any of their mandates in the absence of satisfactory proof of their genuineness. . . . All professed teachings of Mahatmas must be judged by their intrinsic merit; if they are wise they become no better by reason of their alleged high source; if foolish their worthlessness is not nullified by ascribing to them the claim of authority.

In conclusion, then, I beg you to realise that after proving that a certain writing given out by a psychic is forged and calculated to deceive, you must then prove that the writer was a free agent before you can fasten upon him the stigma of moral obliquity.

All that is very interesting, but it takes us on to very thin ice: and the pond is deep!

"The Popular Medical Monthly" has a most consoling article on "Dying," which goes far to dispel the delusion that dying is necessarily agonising or even distressing. It cites cases of intense injury from burning, a blow, drowning, &c., and affirms that such evidence as is forthcoming, after recovery, establishes the conclusion that violent deaths are, as a rule, painless:—the more "dreadful," the less pain. It is, as we say, vastly consoling, and very probably true.

"The Lyceum Banner Almanac and Spiritualists' Calendar for 1895" is published by Mr. Morse. It is a huge sheet, two-thirds of which are occupied by advertisements. The remaining third is Almanac and Calendar. But why "Spiritualists' "? Here and there we have a record such as "'LIGHT' first issued, 1881," and "Preston Lyceum opened, 1894"; but the bulk of the records are, almost of necessity, old acquaintances, having no reference to Spiritualism. The sheet has in it a good idea and the germs of a useful result; but, at present, it hardly justifies its title. We are sorry to say this, but, as the Calendar reminds us, we must "Be just and fear not," and, again in the words of the Calendar, we know that "To err is human." We hope it will be remembered in our favour that (as the Calendar again reminds us) "To forgive is divine." We do not doubt, however, that in Mr. Morse's able hands, another year will set matters right.

"The Lyceum Banner," published by Mr. J. J. Morse, gives us a good "Fifth Annual New Year's number," and only one penny! It is all very wholesome. The cat story, alone, with its tiny picture, is worth the money.

MEMORIAL SERVICE TO MR. JAMES BURNS.—Measures are being taken to ensure the holding of a memorial service to commemorate the life and work of Mr. James Burns, the founder and editor of the "Medium and Daybreak." The initiative has been taken by Mr. J. J. Morse, and it is proposed that the meeting shall be held early in February, at the Holborn Town Hall. A provisional meeting of friends was called for Thursday evening in this week and a further meeting will be held on Tuesday evening next, the 29th inst., at Morse's Library, Florence House, 26, Osnaurgh-street, N.W. A report of what transpires will be published in "LIGHT" and other Spiritualist papers. Mr. Morse cordially invites all interested in the matter to meet him and the other friends, as above mentioned, on Tuesday next, at 8 p.m.

AGENTS FOR "LIGHT."—We shall be grateful if our friends will kindly supply us with the names and addresses of any news-vendors or others, whether in London or the country, who either keep "LIGHT" for sale, or are willing to do so.

## THE DUCHESS DE POMAR AND MR. MAITLAND.

Either the memory of my excellent and valued friend the Duchesse de Pomar has sadly failed her, or your representative has sadly misreported her. No such incident ever took place as that related of the comparison drawn by her between Marie Stuart and Mrs. Kingsford, and of my being "furious" thereat. There was, to my great regret, a difference between us on one occasion, but I had hoped it had been effectually composed and would never be obtruded on public notice. That difference arose out of my endeavour to show her that, in claiming to be connected with the soul of Marie Stuart without being the actual re-incarnation of that soul, she was inventing an altogether new and impossible doctrine, as by supposing the astral to be re-incarnate; and that the only explanation of the connection subsisting between them—for believing in which I and my colleague had special reasons based on actual experience—is that the influence which has attached itself to her and by which she is overshadowed, is the astral form of Marie Stuart, in accordance with the practice, recognised by Occultists, of such forms to frequent the sphere of the souls to which they once belonged, after their return into earthly conditions, provided the interval before such return has been sufficiently brief, as it would be in the case of a person dying, as did Marie Stuart, violently and in the prime of life; since, in such a case, re-incarnation occurs before the astral form has had time to disintegrate. The doctrine thus favoured by the Duchesse has the further defect of making the astral a possible source of inspiration instead of being reflective merely, and not of itself perceptive, which the soul alone is.

The immediate cause, however, of the difference which, magnified by lapse of time, has assumed such serious proportions in the Duchesse's memory, was due to the article in her magazine, "L'Aurore," written to introduce to the world the French edition so generously undertaken by her of "The Perfect Way." In that article she ascribed to our book the doctrine of which I had attempted to show her the error, and which is repeated in the statement ascribed to me by your representative. This is the doctrine that the astral may re-incarnate as a soul and eventually become a true and divine soul, and that these are the two states of the soul which Scripture denotes by "Eve" and "Mary"! As such a travesty of our teaching would have been fatal to our book with all competent students of the mystical and occult, had it remained uncontradicted, my remonstrances were naturally somewhat vigorous. But they were wholly unaccompanied by expressions of the kind ascribed to me—expressions, I feel constrained to remark, which, however possible to their narrators in the loose gossip of an after-dinner conversation, such as the interview reported seems to have been, are utterly foreign to my character and manner, and, in my view, are sadly beneath the dignity of the persons and subjects concerned. My remonstrances served, however, to elicit the necessary rectification in the following number. And I can only ascribe the grotesque version given by your representative of the matter, to indistinctness either of apprehension at the time, or of recollection, on the part of the Duchesse. As for any comparison between *persons*, such as that ascribed to me, I drew nothing of the kind, but reprovved only the notion of placing the astral phantom on the same level with the spiritual soul, by regarding it as equally a source of divine revelation. The expression "when success had come, and Mr. Maitland was independent," altogether transcends my comprehension. If intended in a commercial sense, nothing could be further from the truth. For, vast as has been the success of our book in promoting the spiritualisation of the faith of Christendom, and the consequent rescue of that faith from its fatal corruption by sacerdotal tradition, the cost of keeping it and its companion books before the world has so greatly exceeded the returns accruing from sales, as to have constituted a drain on my resources, such as prevents my publishing much else that would be of high value to the world. Nor is there any truth in the implied suggestion that but for the defrayment by our friend of the expense of its original production, "The Perfect Way" would have been "lost to the world." For regarding, as I and my colleague did, its publication as a sacred and paramount duty,—since we had neither sought nor obtained the revelation contained in it for our own exclusive benefit, but for the world's salvation from the abyss of Materialism and negation in which it was being rapidly engulfed,—we were prepared and ready to undertake it at any sacrifice to ourselves; and so strong was our preference for this course that it was long a question

with us whether or not to accept the Duchesse's offer. And that we did ultimately accept it was mainly due to our reluctance to disappoint her by refusing what she pressed upon us again and again with the positive assurance of her conviction that such part in the promulgation of our work had been divinely assigned to her, and that she had so set her heart upon it that she would be greatly pained by our refusal, as implying that she was not deemed worthy of so high a mission.

All these things are matters of a nature so personal and private that their discussion in public has greatly surprised me and is most repugnant to me. But as it has been forced upon me by what I cannot but consider as a grave indiscretion, at least in so far as regards the omission to submit the statement for my approval, prior to its publication, I have no choice but to write in correction of it as frankly as I have written.

EDWARD MAITLAND.

[There was no misconception, on the part of our representative, of what the Duchesse said; and that she herself believed that she was giving a correct version of what transpired between her and Mr. Maitland is clear from the fact that she saw the proof and passed it before publication.—ED. "LIGHT."]

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND.

Remittances should be sent to Mr. H. Withall, Gravel-lane, Southwark, London, S.E.; and cheques should be crossed "London Joint Stock Bank." The following contributions are gratefully acknowledged:—

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\* Apportioned between "LIGHT" and the "Conference Expenses Fund."

SPECIAL NOTICE.

We beg to remind those Subscribers to "Light" and the London Spiritualist Alliance who have not already renewed their Subscriptions for 1895, that they should forward remittances at once to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C.

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.

WITCHCRAFT IN SCOTLAND. 1570 TO 1663.

By EDINA.

PART IX.—THE AULDEARN CONFESSIONS.

In my examination of the criminal records of Scotland in connection with the above subject, I have only selected the leading cases, or those which possessed some features of special interest. A large number of the minor prosecutions for witchcraft have necessarily had to be left unnoticed for reasons of space. Before closing, however, it will be necessary to deal at some length with the extraordinary confessions of witchcraft and trafficking with the devil which were made by two women at Auldearn, in Morayshire, in the year 1663. These confessions are stated in the report to have been freely and voluntarily emitted before what appears to have been a commission appointed either by the King or the Privy Council, and which was entirely composed of the landed gentry of the district, with the addition of the minister of the parish. They detail at great length the intercourse and communion alleged to have taken place between these two women and a large number of other persons of the same sex, and his Satanic majesty, along with a crowd of minor spirits. Had these statements and confessions been elicited under torture one would have ventured to conclude that they had been (like some other confessions we have noticed) concocted, or evolved for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of the prosecution. But having been freely and voluntarily emitted, the only conclusion I can come to after a careful perusal of the whole text, is, that both the women must have been insane, or, at least, had delusions begotten of their having dabbled in incantation and unlawful acts. They may have possessed some psychic power, although little or no trace of it can be found recorded in their voluminous and extraordinary narrative.

The leading deponent was Isobel Gowdie, spouse of John Gilbert, in Lochlay, Auldearn, who emitted four several confessions before the aforesaid Commission during the year 1662. She begins by declaring her extreme penitence for having ever trafficked with the devil, and states that she first met his Satanic majesty in a field near one of the farm-houses in the district; and at his request she agreed to meet him in the Auldearn Church on a certain day and hour. She did so, and there, in his presence, renounced her baptism, putting one of her hands to the crown of her head, another to the sole of her foot, and saying, in response to his dictation, that she renounced all between these two portions of her body to the devil. The Enemy of Mankind, she stated, was standing in the reader's desk, holding a black book in his hand. Thereupon, another witch, one Margaret Brodie, in Auldearn, held her up to be baptised, and the devil then marked her on the shoulder, sucked blood from the marks, spouted the blood into his hand, and then put this red fluid on her head, saying, "I baptise thee, Janet, in my awin (own) name." After this ceremony she met him in the woods of Insheoch, in daylight, and she describes him as "ane muckle black roch (hirsute) man, werie (very) cold, cold as spring water." Thereafter, she said, he often came to her in the shape of a deer or a roe. Some time after this the deponent stated that along with John Taylor, Janet Broadhead, and — Douglas, she visited the churchyard of Nairn, where they "raised" (resurrected) the corpse of an unchristened child, took from it some of the joints of the arms and legs; and these, with some pairings, or cuttings from their own fingers and toenails, some handfuls of grain, and some kail blades (colewort) chopped small, were put into the dung heap of a farmer at Broadleys with a view to destroying the efficacy of his manure, or, as it is quaintly put in the record, to "put away the fruit of his cornes."

The deponent then went on to describe certain conventicles of witches, and named in detail all the persons who attended them. On one occasion, she averred, they yoked frogs to a plough and walked behind it, praying the devil to destroy the fruits of the earth, and that thorns and thistles should grow on the ground. Isobel Gowdie being asked what they did to deceive their husbands during their nocturnal gatherings with the devil, stated that they left a broomstick in each bed till they returned home in the early morning. This broomstick, she stated, assumed for the time they were absent their earthly form. She also described in full detail a nocturnal visit paid by a "coven," or party of witches,

to the Earl of Moray's castle at Durnaway, near Forres, where, in concert with the devil, they ate and drank their fill, and carried away quantities of victuals; obtaining entrance and egress by means of the windows. She stated that they had no trouble in moving from place to place, as the straws in the field became as horses to them, and on crying out "Horse and Hattock, in the devil's name," they would be transported to whatever place they desired to go. When, by the devil's orders, they shot or destroyed any person, Isobel averred that the soul of such people went to heaven, while the body "remained with us."

The deponent further stated that she had met the Queen of Fairyland at the Downie Hills and got meat from her, more than she could eat. She describes the Queen as brawlie (prettily) clad in white linens, while the King, her husband, was clad in white and brown clothes, and was a braw (goodly) man, weel faured (well favoured), with a broad face. While visiting the King and Queen of Fairyland, as aforesaid, she stated that there were a great number of elf bulls "routing and skoyling" (making a great noise) which greatly affrighted her.

In connection with these statements by Isobel Gowdie of her transportation by means of phantom horses from place to place on pronouncing certain cabalistic words, I find an interesting foot-note by the commentator, dealing with a story communicated by Mr. John Aubrey, F.R.S., who had received it from an accurate source, and states that it was certainly a tradition of the Duffus family. This story, if true, looks like a case of levitation or rather transportation in trance. It is to the effect that the Lord Duffus while one day walking near his mansion-house was suddenly carried over to Paris and found himself in the King's cellar holding a silver cup in his hand. The tale runs that Lord Duffus was then brought before the King of France, who asked him how he came there, and who he was; whereupon his lordship replied that, being in the fields one day and hearing voices in the air saying "Horse and Hattock—let us fly," he repeated the words, and was instantly caught up and transported along with a number of other persons who suddenly appeared on the scene, and that he fell asleep, and on awaking found himself alone in the King's cellar in Paris. The tale closes with the statement that the King was so much impressed with his narrative that he gave the Lord Duffus a present of the silver cup he had in his hand when found in the cellar as aforesaid.

I reserve the further details of the confession of Isobel Gowdie and her companion, Janet Broadhead, for a tenth and concluding article.

#### "THE UNKNOWN WORLD."

"The Unknown World" (James Elliott and Co.) opens the year in as mystical a vein as ever, and abounds in erudition, *sui generis*; although it is fair to add that some of its contents are of general interest. The editorial paragraphs at the commencement contain an allusion to the decease of Mr. James Burns, and it is suggested that a final effort should now be made to extinguish the "liabilities" altogether. It is a worthy proposal, and, it is to be hoped, will not pass unnoticed. As our contemporary truly remarks, "It is a necessity which will not recur, for, we take it, that one section of the spiritual movement dies with the editor of the 'Medium'; there is surely no need that it should die also under the auspices of an 'official receiver.'"

The principal items in "The Unknown World" comprise, "The Cloud upon the Sanctuary," by the Councillor D'Eckartshausen (translated by Madame Isabel de Steiger), a forcibly written essay on the relationship between the natural and spiritual man, which contains much truth, although we disagree with some of its conclusions. The translator appends to the article some explanatory notes written with her accustomed ability. Other able articles are, "The Word of Life," by C. R. Shaw Stewart, and "Occultism and Evolution," by F. Arundale. "The Impending World Crisis" is the third of the papers under the general title of "The Brotherhood of the New Life," and consists chiefly of quotations of a sort that should delight the Rev. M. Baxter, and others who look for the final cataclysm. "Chapters in Exposition of the New Gospel of Interpretation," which is, in general, an attack upon, and rectification of, "corrupt orthodoxy," is continued, but closes in the next issue. The remainder of the contributions (which we have not space to notice in detail) are of a high order; the poetry is also meritorious.

#### A COMPLETE TEST OF IDENTITY.

BY EDINA.

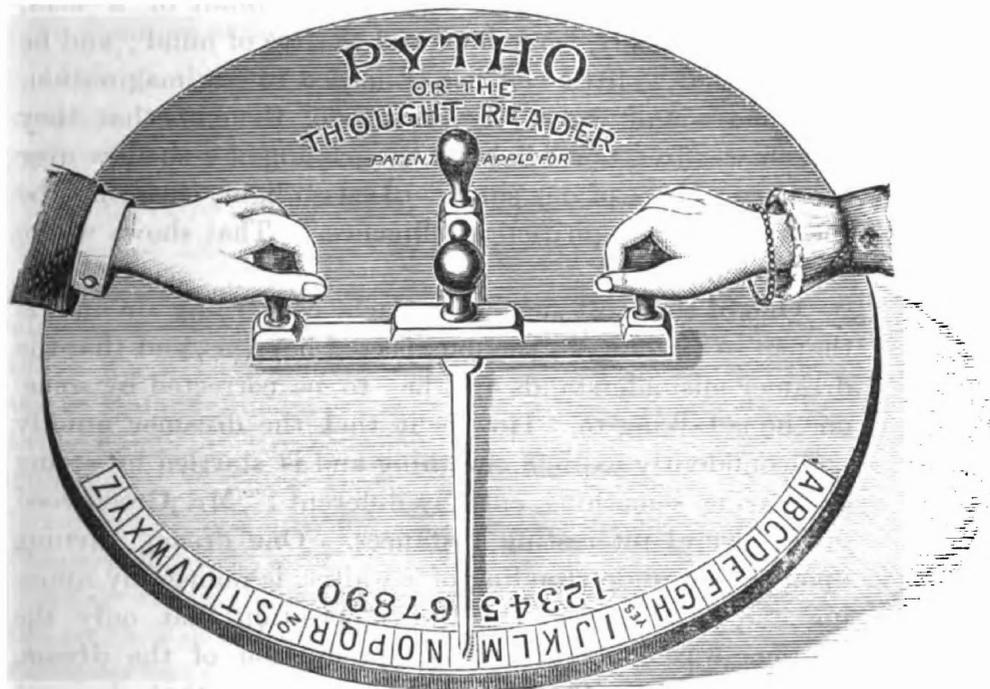
Of all the forms of psychic manifestation known to me, automatic writing has always seemed to be the most convincing, just because the "written" communication often discloses personal characteristics or expressions commonly in use by the deceased in earth life. Even the reproduction of a "slang" phrase, if it can be proved that the communicator was in the habit of using it when here, is very convincing. Next to automatic writing as a test of identity, in my humble judgment, comes the identification, by the medium, of portraits of persons he or she never saw in earth life, but who have visited him or her since passing over, and whose likenesses are shown to the psychic without premonition, and under strict test conditions. It has been my great privilege, during the past five years, to be able to test our medium's recollection of many spiritual personages whom she has seen after they had passed over, and whose face or personal characteristics were quite unknown to her when here. In this we have been very successful, as I have more than once pointed out in these columns. A recent experience of this kind may not be uninteresting, as it was (to myself) very convincing. About three and a-half years ago, in the columns of "LIGHT," I dealt with the case of a distinguished member of the legal profession, who was quite unknown to the medium, and with whom I opened up communication by means of her control, "Professor Sandringham." On the evening of the day on which he first appeared to her clairvoyant vision, she at my suggestion went with her mother, and, under test conditions, identified his portrait in the Royal Scottish Academy, where it was exhibited for a few weeks before presentation to his surviving relations. The four written messages, since received by me from this personage, leave not the faintest scintilla of doubt on my own mind as to his identity. This gentleman, when in earth life, was on most intimate terms with all the leading "lights" of the legal profession in Scotland, and on a recent visit of his spirit-form to my house, he was accompanied by a very accomplished Scottish jurist, also now on the other side, who gave his name to the medium. She was quite unacquainted with his face or personal appearance; so I resolved to test identity in the most complete manner possible, and at the earliest opportunity. On the night of January 14th this distinguished Scotsman again appeared in the room and gave his name to the medium, but was able to do little more than pronounce my name and that of two of my colleagues in business. I put a test question to him through the medium, but he was either unable or unwilling to answer. On Wednesday, January 16th, I remembered that, lying in a private drawer in my office, was a reproduction of a photograph of this lawyer, taken, so far as my memory serves me, about from ten to twelve years ago, when the features were full, and the face very different from what it was during the closing years of a long and active life. For two years prior to his demise he had cultivated a moustache, which had greatly altered his appearance, so that the picture in my possession was not a good test of identity, if by that word we understand the appearance of the deceased at the time of his passing over. Well, this portrait was brought home and shown to the medium by her mother in my presence without premonition, and with the name covered up. She looked at it carefully for about fifteen seconds, and then turning to me, said: "That is Lord ——" (the name he mentioned to her being the courtesy title by which he was known in earth life), "but his face is much changed now from that;" and then she went on to describe the ravages which age and time had made in the countenance, as also the moustache: thus showing me in the clearest manner that it was in very deed this eminent lawyer who had twice given me a "look in."

I have only to add that I never had any personal intercourse with this jurist in earth life, but as he originally came here with another lawyer from whom I have had many convincing messages, the inference is pretty obvious that this first communicator had brought him to our home to demonstrate to me his continued existence in another sphere.

Your readers may take it as an absolute certainty that the medium never saw either of these personages in earth life, and I am satisfied that in both instances the chain of identity is complete. But the important point in my view, in the present instance, is the identification of a portrait taken twelve years before demise, and the pointing out of the changes which age and infirmity had made on the face during the closing years of life.

RIVALS TO "PLANCHETTE" AND "OUIJA."

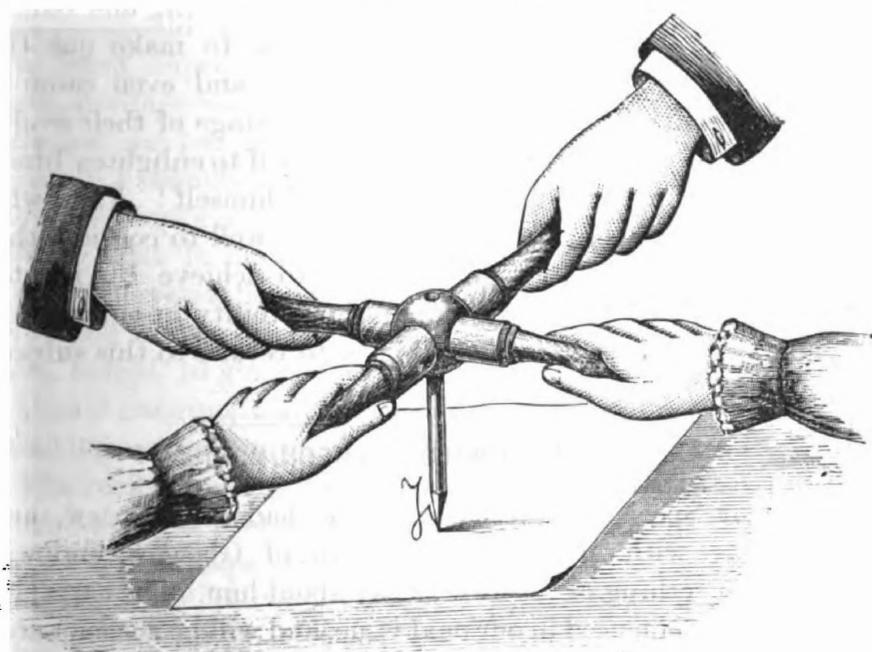
Two new instruments have just been brought out, a description of which may be interesting to some of our readers. One of them "Pytho," or The Thought Reader, is intended for the spelling-out of supernormal messages by pointing to printed letters; while the other, "Chrao," or The Interpreter, is designed chiefly for the recording of messages by



writing; and the inventor claims for them that they afford the simplest and most efficient means yet devised for attaining the object sought.

"PYTHO."

"Pytho," as shown in the illustration, consists of a wooden disc with letters and numbers marked round a third of the circumference, and an arrangement of three short radial arms fitted with revolving handles, which, together with a brass pointer extending to the letters, rotate about a pin fixed in the centre of the board. It can be used by one, two, or three persons. The best plan, when only one person is making the trial, is to use the two opposite handles, with one hand on each. Those who desire larger letters, at the cost of rather more arm action, can easily secure a circular strip of paper, marked with letters in compartments, round any length of the circumference. The inventor has personally found the present arrangement sufficiently clear, but he would be grateful for the opinion of other Spiritualists as to whether they consider the existing size and



"CHRAO," OR THE INTERPRETER.

distance of the letters large enough. He much hopes that "Pytho" will also be tried at séances with the sitters' fingers placed round the non-lettered part of the circumference, and not grasping the handles. Owing to facility of rotation, which has been studied in making the instrument, it would appear likely that messages might be directly spelt out by the controls without actual manipulation of the handles on the part of the sitters. Such messages would, of course, be particularly valuable from an evidential point of view; and, as has been

suggested, if "Pytho" thus answers the purpose of a simple test instrument, a modification of it might be made with the object of especial convenience for this particular development.

"CHRAO."

"Chrao" consists of four cross-pieces of wood, fitting into a small central ball, which is pierced for the reception of a pencil for direct writing, or a smooth-footed leg for the indication of letters already marked out on an accompanying chart. It can be used by one, two, three, or four persons. When used by one person it gives a convenient rest for automatic writing if two of the arms, together with the pencil point, are rested on the paper, and the instrument is grasped about its centre, with the first finger over the bridge. It may be similarly used by one person for the indication of letters, in which case an inverted pencil, with bevelled end, is as good as anything for a pointer. When "Chrao" is thus used by one person, the alphabet should be marked out on any good-sized piece of smooth paper. There are various other methods of manipulation for a single person. The device of handles aims at giving a firm grip, so as to prevent the instrument from being dashed away in violent manifestations. The inventor has found "Chrao" of great practical use for dark séances, if used in conjunction with an ordinary piece of luminous cardboard bearing large letters boldly marked upon it, as messages are thus spelt out much more quickly than by means of raps. "Pytho" could be similarly used

with a circumference of luminous lettered paper, secured by tin tacks or the like. The simplest plan to produce a speedy strong luminosity is to burn a small piece of magnesium wire close above the prepared surface or letters.

The instruments are published—together with printed instructions for use—by F. H. Ayres, of 111, Aldersgate-street, London, E.C. Orders will also be received at the office of "LIGHT." "Pytho" is priced at 7s. 6d., with a smaller size at 3s. 9d.; "Chrao" at 1s. 6d., and 2s. with two arms made detachable. Cost of carriage extra.

The inventor states that he has had interesting results with both "Pytho" and "Chrao," including information regarding facts unknown at the time but subsequently verified, the messages having been obtained while the operator's eyes were closed; and he would be glad of accounts from others who may meet with similar success.

AN EXTRAORDINARY AFFAIR is reported from Heap Bridge, Heywood. A woman living there was supposed to have died, and she was washed, laid out, and measured for her coffin, a piece of linen being placed over her mouth. Eight hours later, however, as two women were tidying the room, the supposed corpse blew the linen away and raised herself up in bed. The two women were terribly frightened, and in their hasty retreat both tumbled downstairs, and are now suffering from slight injuries as well as shock. Some time elapsed before anyone else could be induced to enter the house, but eventually several persons went in together, and found the woman still sitting up in bed. She was exceedingly weak, and was expected to recover; she survived but a few hours, however. The doctor expresses the opinion that her death was accelerated by shock. During the night the woman conversed with her son, who had carried her upstairs for dead, and told him of the awful sensation she felt while unable to speak during the washing and laying out of her body.

SPIRITUALISM BASED ON FACTS.—Some might object that Modern Spiritualism is not Rationalism, to which I reply—Why not? It is founded on a personal and critical observation of facts. Is not that rational? Is it more rational to refuse to investigate these facts, or to deny them without investigation? I, myself, had been for nearly thirty years an Agnostic when I investigated these phenomena, and found them, against all my prepossessions, to be realities. Is it rational to ignore or deny phenomena which have been demonstrated to the satisfaction of such men as Robert Chambers, Professor De Morgan, Dr. Lockhart Robertson, William Crookes, and scores of other eminent men, and has drawn from the ranks of English Secularists Robert Owen, George Sexton, and Annie Besant? But really, it is not a question of theory, since, when the whole facts are known to be realities, no other conclusion is possible or rational than that of the Spiritualists.—ALFRED R. WALLACE.

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### DREAMS AND DREAMERS.

A few weeks ago, referring to our report of a paper and discussion on dreams, a correspondent said: "I do not see that either Mr. Page Hopps or the other speakers attempted to explain the nature and cause of dreaming." Very likely not. The man who would make that attempt would be either strangely ignorant or remarkably wise. The honest truth is that we are as much in the dark about "the nature and cause of dreaming" as the sleeper is when he dreams. Between the old superstition that dreams are "supernatural" incursions, and the new superstition that they are only vagaries of memory or the products of supper, there is a vast region which awaits the careful and patient explorer, who shall be neither superstitious nor scornful, and who, while willing to accept any facts, shall keep his eyes on the supreme fact that, anyhow, dreams, so far from being unworthy of observation, may possibly reveal and yield vast stores of knowledge in relation to the working of imagination and memory.

In the spirit of this remark we welcome a most serious and thoughtful book by Mr. Frederick Greenwood on "Imagination in Dreams, and their Study." (London: John Lane.) Mr. Greenwood seems to us to be in the right state of mind on this subject, and to occupy the region of what we may call the middle distance between the over-clad occultist and the naked agnostic. To use his own words, in describing the two extremes, we may say that the one revels in a mysticism deliciously haunted with fearsomeness, while the other is never so pleased as when he can show the glory and mystery of sight lodging in a dirty little patch of eye pigment, or when he tracks the brightest hopes, joys, and inspirations of life to some other secretion.

Mr. Greenwood is very wide awake to the extremely varying range of dreams. The usual slovenly remark, "Oh, it is only dreaming," finds no favour with him. One might just as well say, "Oh, it is only talking," when the range of speech reaches from the drivel of a sot to the superb eloquence of a Gladstone. Dreams vary, and are as far apart as "the fancies of a fool and the inspirations of a poet." The full recognition of this is the first requisite for any useful study of them. One may be only the result of indigestion; another may impressively suggest that, after all, there is some truth in the old saying of the Book of Job: "A thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof, in thoughts from the visions of the night." That there *are* such things as teaching and informing dreams, no one can doubt who has both a serious and an informed mind. "Fancy is free," says Mr. Greenwood, "and we are at liberty to please ourselves with the conjec-

ture that when our mental faculties are discharged of their duties in sleep, resting like harps from which the hand has been withdrawn, some spiritual influence may come in and take possession, turning them to its own uses." This is more than the "pretty poetical kind of notion" which Mr. Greenwood is content to have it called; and, as he says, the physiologist is bound to support the notion even "from his knife-and-scalpel knowledge." "He knows his nerve-systems and his nerve-centres in the brain of a man, which is the study, workshop, and theatre of mind; and he will say that so little violence is needed to stir imagination, or to move and direct the springs of thought, that they will answer to a touch light as the passing of a shadow over the harp-strings of our simile. Just so light, then, may be the touch of the spiritual intelligence." That shows where Mr. Greenwood is.

One of the most suggestive facts concerning dreams is that in so many cases the unexpected happens, and that the dreamer misunderstands and has to be corrected by someone he is talking to. How is it that the dreamer quietly and confidently expects one thing and is startled by seeing or hearing something entirely different? Mr. Greenwood gives several interesting instances. One dream, turning upon the misunderstanding of a waiter, is immensely amusing and instructive. On the supposition that only the dreamer was concerned in the production of the dream, we are landed in the odd conclusion that he put into the waiter's mouth words which he at once proceeded to entirely misunderstand, and that he invented a startling denouement without knowing it, until somebody's error is explained, which then startles him into a new and unexpected result. "It is as if Sheridan wondered, while he was writing his 'School for Scandal,' why on earth a screen was to be placed on the stage in Act III., and found out the purpose with a shock of surprise when he caused the screen to fall." It is important that the exact point here should be seen. We are not now discussing monstrous, disordered, "wild" dreams, but dreams in which the dreamer, apparently in possession of his keenest and soberest senses, constructs a drama whose course he nevertheless watches with surprise, "in which he himself—that is to say, his whole conscious being, all that he ever called 'myself'—is made to play a part, while yet he has to follow the development of the story in ignorance of its every turn. Not in idle ignorance either, but in striving and baffled ignorance; for he was eagerly curious to make out the incidents of the dream as they arose, and even came to wrong conclusions about them at one stage of their evolution, after calling upon imagination itself to enlighten him." And yet he is said to be doing it all himself! They who call dreams "mere nonsense" might do well to consider this fact, that, in sleep, the mind is able to achieve "a mental operation far out of the range of possibility in our waking hours." But we see we shall have to return to this subject again.

### THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

Our Special Representative has had an interview, and a séance, with Mr. David Anderson, of Glasgow, and will have something of interest to say about him. The narrative will be commenced in our next issue, and will be accompanied by a portrait.

### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of members and friends of the Alliance will be held at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, at seven o'clock on Monday evening next, when Mr. T. Shorter will give an address on "The Lessons to be Drawn from the Alleged Exposure of Mediums." Mr. Shorter, as an old and experienced Spiritualist, will be able to speak with some authority on this interesting and important question.

"A MODERN PRIESTESS OF ISIS." \*

The Theosophical Society seems to have fallen upon evil days. Closely following the barbed arrow of the "Westminster Gazette" came the adverse summing up of the whole case by Mr. Arthur Lillie in his "Madame Blavatsky and her Theosophy"; and now we have Mr. Walter Leaf's abridged translation from the Russian, of the eight damning articles of Mons. Solovyoff, which appeared in 1892 in the "Rusky Vvestnik," the leading literary magazine of Russia. This translation was made for the Society for Psychical Research, and is published with the special approval of its Council under the title of "A Modern Priestess of Isis." Appended to the narrative of Mons. Solovyoff is an abstract of a Russian pamphlet by Madame Jelihovsky, Madame Blavatsky's sister, in reply to Mons. Solovyoff's articles, and containing letters from that gentleman to Madame Blavatsky, &c. Following this is a similar abridgement of Mons. Solovyoff's answer to Madame Jelihovsky. A third appendix gives a summary of Mr. Emmette Coleman's discoveries in regard to the sources of Madame Blavatsky's "teachings."

Since the publication of the Society for Psychical Research's well known "Reports," nothing against Madame Blavatsky has appeared in print of so serious a nature as "A Modern Priestess of Isis." Mons. Solovyoff's acquaintance with Madame Blavatsky was in 1884 and 1885, during the stormy period of the "Coulomb exposure," and it was of a very intimate character; but his actual intercourse with her seems to have covered less than three months, distributed between Paris, Würzburg, and Elberfeld; and his personal narrative, although bearing the impress of truthfulness in many ways, is marred to some extent by the fact that he confesses to having deliberately led Madame Blavatsky to believe that he was an honest student of Occultism and a devoted friend to herself, while, in reality, he had irrevocably condemned her in his mind as a complete fraud, and his sole purpose in frequenting her society was to entrap her, and expose her to the world. It is not easy for an Englishman to understand how Mons. Solovyoff can so complacently acknowledge his treachery as he does in several places in his book; for instance, he writes: "Whatever came, I would collect such proofs of all these deceptions as should be sufficient not only for me but for all these blind dupes. . . . Let her look upon me as a friend, in other words, as her blind and absolute dupe; for if she got into her head the faintest suspicion of my object, of course, I should attain nothing whatever." He did not hide his scepticism about "Masters" and phenomena, knowing that it made but little difference in regard to Madame Blavatsky's *personal* friendship; he misled her by pretending to have an affectionate regard for herself. He seems, indeed, to glory in a duplicity and treachery which, we should imagine, can hardly cause the Society for Psychical Research to be very proud of its witness.

The really damning evidence against Madame Blavatsky in "A Modern Priestess of Isis" is furnished by that lady herself, in the shape of letters written by her to Mons. Solovyoff, under the impression that he was a "devoted" and "affectionate" friend, and to the Hon. A. N. Aksakoff, the editor of the Leipzig "Psychische Studien." The latter series of letters, extending from 1874 to 1879, is by far the more important of the two, and a careful perusal of those letters, and a comparison of them with the record of the events to which they relate, contained in Colonel Olcott's "Old Diary Leaves," make it seem impossible, we

think, not to endorse the judgment delivered by Mr. Leaf in his preface:—

The correspondence with Mr. Aksakoff proves beyond the possibility of refutation (1) that at one time, in spite of her subsequent vehement denials of the fact, Madame Blavatsky was a professed and thorough Spiritualist in the ordinary sense of the word. She, therefore, adopted the "theosophical" attitude of hostility to Spiritualism only after 1874, and had recourse to deliberate falsehood to conceal that fact. (2) At that period she is entirely silent as to the Mahatmas who guided her action; her guardian and teacher is the "pure spirit," John King, well known at the séances of Williams and other professional mediums in both hemispheres; he is her "only friend," and thus occupies the place later taken by Morya and Koot Hoomi. With these two facts the whole legend, according to which she had, before her stay in America in 1874, received initiation and instruction from her Mahatmas in Tibet, and ever since stood in continuous relations with them, is shown to be a later fabrication. The foundation of her whole theosophical teaching is a mere lie. The steps by which John King is developed into Morya are, moreover, indicated. This correspondence also forms a complete refutation of Madame Blavatsky's later doctrine.

This Aksakoff correspondence also opens up the question of Madame Blavatsky's "missing years," the memory of which she wished to obliterate. Her own admissions in this correspondence seem to indicate that those years were passed in a manner very different from studying Occultism in Tibet!

Next to the Aksakoff letters, the most important thing in the book is Madame Blavatsky's correspondence with Solovyoff himself. These letters are not so valuable as a record of facts as they are as a revelation of character. This is especially true of her so-called "confession," a lengthy and extraordinary document, full of wild and incoherent lamentations, accusations, and threats. She will, she declares, accuse herself and others of the most frightful immorality, and of all kinds of wickedness, and will bring the whole house tumbling about her ears, and she and everyone else will be socially annihilated! It would be impossible by quotations to give our readers a true idea of these strange letters; as a whole, they form a portrait, and a most curious psychological study.

As to Mons. Solovyoff's narrative itself, even did it refer to a far less interesting and puzzling personage than Madame Blavatsky, its literary ability would make it excellent reading. That our author's powers of observation, or of memory, are not always to be trusted is proved by such mis-statements as that Madame Blavatsky was "a rather tall woman," and that Colonel Olcott has a bald head; but one can pardon these little inaccuracies in a writer so graphic and so amusing. Here, for example, is his somewhat malicious description of the arrival of Madame Blavatsky and retinue at the village of St. Cergues, near Geneva, where she stopped for a few days to see Mons. Solovyoff, when on her way from Naples to Elberfeld in 1885:—

At the usual hour, after dinner, about three o'clock, the Geneva diligence arrived at the Pension Delaigue. Round it, as always, there gathered a crowd to get the newspapers and letters, and to observe the new arrivals, if such there were.

Suddenly there sprang from the diligence a strange creature, something half-way between a great ape and a tiny black man. Its leanness was amazing. A poor half-European sort of dress dangled on it, as though there were nothing but bones beneath; a face the size of a fist, of a dark crimson colour, and without any signs of vegetation; on the head a dense cap of long, black, curling hair; huge eyes, also perfectly black, of course, with a frightened and suspicious expression. The black man said something in English with a piping, but at the same time hoarse, voice.

After him emerged a clumsy young person, with a red, disconcerted face.

The public gazed open-mouthed at the black man. But there was more to come. The black man and the clumsy young woman, and then I and Madame de Morsier succeed with great

\* "A Modern Priestess of Isis." Abridged and translated on behalf of the Society for Psychical Research from the Russian of VSEVOLOD SERGYEVICH SOLOVYOFF, by WALTER LEAF, Litt.D. With Appendices. (Longmans, Green, & Co., 1895. 6s.)

difficulty in extricating from the diligence something that was shut up in it. That something was "Madame" herself, all swollen, tired out with travelling, grumbling; with a huge, dark-grey face, and wide-open eyes, like two round, discoloured turquoises. . . . After embracing us, and declaring that Bavaji was no good, understood nothing at all, and that this "idiot of a girl" was so stupid that there had never been a like fool upon earth, Madame set about scolding them in very choice language, and worrying them without the least mercy. At last they both became incapable of understanding anything whatever, suffering was depicted on their countenances, and tears stood in their eyes.

Mons. Solovyoff thinks that Mr. Richard Hodgson, when reporting to the Society for Psychical Research, made two great mistakes. Mr. Hodgson concluded that Madame Blavatsky was a Russian spy; and he judged Colonel Olcott to be a dupe, and not a confederate. Mons. Solovyoff is sure that Colonel Olcott, notwithstanding his "stupidity," was an accomplice of Madame in her frauds; and he denies that Madame Blavatsky was a Russian spy, because, when he knew her, she wanted to become one. He says that, some years before, she had applied to the Russian Government to be made a secret agent, but was refused; and that in 1885 she begged him to use his influence on his return to St. Petersburg to have her appointed to that post, saying that she would then return to India and raise such a revolt against the English that in a year India would be Russian. It is impossible to believe that any sane woman in Madame Blavatsky's position and state of health could have seriously made any such proposal; and that she did so she herself vehemently denied. Writing to her sister of this episode, she said:—

Solovyoff now accuses me of offering myself to him as a spy of the Russian Government in India. . . . If a man in his right senses thinks seriously of such an accusation, he will see the absurdity of it. I am publicly accused of being a Russian spy, and this is made the motive of all the (supposed) fraudulent phenomena and of my invention of the "Mahatmas." I, a dying woman, am turned out of India just on account of such a silly accusation, which, in spite of its silliness, might have ended in prison and exile, solely because I am a Russian; and though I have already suffered from this calumny, and do not understand the A B C of politics, I am made to offer myself as a spy! And to whom? To Solovyoff! . . . To him whom I know for an incorrigible gossip and tale-bearer! . . . And so I want to be hanged, do I?

When we consider M. Solovyoff's own description of her state of health at this time, it seems incredible that Madame Blavatsky should have proposed to undertake the not very easy task of driving the English out of India. Her condition on one occasion he thus describes:—

Next day I came to bid her good-bye. . . . Helena Petrovna was lying, all swollen, on a great bed, and groaning.

As I looked upon her perfectly grey face, which betrayed extreme suffering, I simply did not recognise the "Madame" who yesterday evening, though she could hardly move in her armchair, was still energetic, and at times even cheerful.

"My God! What is the matter with you?" I asked.

"I almost died last night, my dear," she groaned; "it got at my heart, and so—look here."

With an effort she got her hand from under the bedclothes. It was no more a hand; it was but an inflexible thick log.

"How about the doctor?"

She smiled contemptuously.

"One is actually coming from England. He will be here to-morrow, or the day after. But what does it matter? If you die, you die; we shall all come to that. What does a doctor matter, my dear man? If the 'Master' wishes, I shall be up again directly. That has happened before now; and if he does not wish, who can help me?"

I was ill at ease, grieved, and sorry for her to the last degree.

"Do you mean to go away? To-day?" she asked.

"Yes; I must."

"Don't go away," she suddenly whispered in a peculiar tone.

"Can't you stay with me three or four days? Have a little pity on me."

Her voice broke, and tears started from her eyes.

"See, I am alone," she went on, amid sobs visibly rising to her throat. "All these people are strangers, strangers. . . . But you are my own, a kinsman, a Russian. My friend above price, you, my dear child, do not desert an old woman like me at such a time."

The "friend above price" very reluctantly stopped with her, reflecting that "if she was only playing a part even then, she played it admirably. Most probably she was genuine, and was playing a part at the same time; in her the irreconcilable was reconciled." On another occasion he finds "a famous specialist for internal complaints" in her room:—

To my inquiry about his patient, he replied: "I never saw anything like it in the whole course of my many years' practice. She has several mortal diseases—an ordinary person would have been dead long ago from any one of them. But hers is a phenomenal nature; and if she has lived so long, she may, for all we can tell, live on yet."

As to Colonel Olcott's complicity in Madame Blavatsky's alleged trickery, no proof of it is given, unless Madame Blavatsky's proposal, which Mons. Solovyoff affirms, that he should be her accomplice in Colonel Olcott's place, be called proof; but such a proposal on her part seems as unlikely as her desire to become a Russian secret agent; and in neither case have we more than Mons. Solovyoff's bare word for these very unlikely proposals.

But even if it be allowed that Mons. Solovyoff has proved that Madame Blavatsky told dreadful lies and deceived her "dupes" with fraudulent phenomena, there still remains the question whether there really was not a "phenomenal element" in her life and personality. It seems rather an unfortunate thing that those about her who kept a cool head were often so completely possessed by one idea—desire to "unmask" her—that they forgot all about this phenomenal element in their zeal as detectives. Mons. Solovyoff professes to have been a student of Occultism before he met Madame Blavatsky, and he says that it was in furtherance of those studies that he first sought her acquaintance. He tells us that he still believes in the possible existence of men such as the adepts are depicted to be; and that he does not deny the existence of unknown laws of nature and undeveloped powers in man, and he does not question the actuality of mediumship. He, himself, had some curious experiences with Madame Blavatsky, which one would think would certainly have taken some of his attention from his detective work had he been a real student of the Occult. But these experiences he treats in a fashion so careless as to show that he is utterly blind to their significance, and he seems, therefore, to be rather incompetent to give an opinion about the "phenomenal element" in Madame Blavatsky. On one occasion he saw her in his room, and she vanished from his sight. On another occasion, when in company with a Miss A. he was about to start from Brussels for Elberfeld, where Madame Blavatsky was stopping, he suddenly felt unaccountably sleepy at one o'clock in the day. He says:—

I begged Miss A. to excuse me; went to my own room and threw myself on the bed. However, I did not fall asleep, but lay with my eyes closed, and there before me, one after the other, passed, quite clear and distinct, various landscapes which I did not know. This was so new to me, and so beautiful, that I lay without stirring for fear of interrupting and spoiling the visions.

That same afternoon on looking out of the window of the train he saw the originals of those visionary landscapes:—

The effect was almost painful. There could be no doubt about it, just as I could not doubt that this was the first time I had ever travelled by this line or been in this region. Until it grew dark I continued to gaze in reality upon all that I had seen in the morning as I lay on the bed with my eyes closed.

Stranger yet was to come. On the same evening he sat for an hour gazing in admiration upon the two oil-

paintings of the Mahatmas by Schmiechen. What happened to him afterwards is best told in his own words:—

On the way to the hotel we could talk of nothing but the wonderful portrait of the "Master," and in the darkness he seemed to stand before me. I tried to shut my eyes, but I still saw him clearly in every detail. When I reached my room, I locked the door, undressed, and went to sleep.

Suddenly I woke up, or, what is more probable, I imagined, I dreamed, that I was awoke by a warm breath. I found myself in the same room, and before me in the half darkness, there stood a tall human figure in white. I felt a voice, without knowing how, or in what language, bidding me light the candle. I was not in the least alarmed and was not surprised. I lighted the candle and it appeared to me that it was two o'clock by my watch. The vision did not vanish. There was a living man before me, and this man was clearly none other than the original of the wonderful portrait, an exact repetition of it. He placed himself on a chair beside me, and told me in an unknown but intelligible language various matters of interest to myself. Among other things, he told me that, in order to see him in his astral body, I had had to go through much preparation, and that the last lesson had been given me that morning, when I saw with closed eyes the landscapes through which I was to pass on the way to Elberfeld; and that I possessed a great and growing magnetic force. I asked how I was to employ it; but he vanished in silence. I thought I sprang after him, but the door was closed. The idea came upon me that it was an hallucination, and that I was going out of my mind. But there was Mahatma Morya back again in his place, without movement, with his gaze fixed upon me the same, exactly the same, as he was imprinted on my brain. He began to shake his head, smiled, and said, still in the voiceless, imaginary language of dreams: "Be assured that I am not an hallucination, and that your reason is not deserting you. Madame Blavatsky will show you to-morrow in the presence of all that my visit was real." He vanished; I looked at my watch and saw that it was about three o'clock; I put out the candle and went to sleep at once.

Mons. Solovyoff came to the conclusion next morning that he had had "a very clear, vivid dream"; and he made no attempt to follow up this curious experience, which to a real student of the Occult would have been of the highest interest; neither does he make any attempt at all to explain away the prophetically foreseen landscapes. He sent an account of this visit of Morya to the Society for Psychical Research at the time, but in language that threw far less doubt on its reality—a circumstance which it has been forgotten to state in the text.

The "raps" which Madame Blavatsky produced at a distance from her by a wave of her hand, Mons. Solovyoff allows that he is unable to explain. When she put her hand on his shoulder he produced the same raps by waving his own hand. The sound of the "astral bell," he says, was made by a "little piece of silver," which Madame Blavatsky "manipulated" under her shawl. Those who heard the "astral bell" will hardly accept this explanation. It is by such lame assertions as this that Mons. Solovyoff's narrative will lose force with those whose recollections enable them to check it.

In conclusion, we must say that the psychological problem presented by Madame Blavatsky is by no means solved in "A Modern Priestess of Isis." Indeed, in some respects Mons. Solovyoff adds to its difficulty. He bears evidence to her ill health, to her wonderful industry, to her *apparently* sincere belief in her Master, to the existence of an element in her life that puzzles him—for instance, when he says: "At some moments she positively produced the impression of a person enslaved and bound by something or other." All through, while bent upon crushing her, he felt pity for her; but he says: "This pity is no sign of any magnanimity on my part. It is due to Helena Petrovna herself, and not to me. In her quiet and good moments she was eminently sympathetic. There was within her a fascination, a kind of magnetism, which attracted to her with an irresistible force."

A young lady once said to him: "Madame Blavatsky is a terrible criminal; but why did she often produce such an impression that one wanted to weep over her for intolerable pity?" To this he replies: "The secret of this wonderful sympathy in 'the modern priestess of Isis' must be sought in her original, peculiar, and fiery talent, and in her stormy, raging energy. Such talent and energy are an elemental force with which it is not easy to wrestle."

Mons. Solovyoff distinguishes three personalities in Madame Blavatsky—the sympathetic woman, the clever writer, and the fraud; but this is mere description, and the only attempt which he makes to "explain" the career of one who, according to him, was at the same time "a really inspired prophetess" and "a most shameless impostor," is a hint that she might have belonged to a Buddhistic fraternity, which had sent her to the West to upset Christianity!

We recommend everyone who is interested in the strange story of Madame Blavatsky and her Theosophical Society to read "A Modern Priestess of Isis." More especially, we commend it for attentive perusal to the members of the Theosophical Society, who can no longer afford to ignore facts, if, for the future, they would not be ignored themselves.

Finally, we beg leave to congratulate Mr. Leaf on his admirable work as a translator.

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RECEIVED.

- "She Proposes." By AN OLD OFFICER. (London: E. W. Allen, 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C.)
- "The Unknown World" for January. (London: Elliott & Co., Temple Chambers, Falcon-court, Fleet-street, E.C. 6d.)
- "Illustrated Modern Art and Literature" for January. (London: The Modern Art Publishing Co., 68, Fleet-street, E.C. 1s.)
- "Selected Sketches for Furniture and Decoration." By H. and J. COOPER, 8 and 9, Great Pulteney-street, London, W. 3s. 6d.)
- "New Year's Eve: A Dream." By HENRY SMITH. Illustrated by OWEN DALZIEL. (London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C. 1s.)
- "Human Nature" for January. Quarterly Organ of the Universal Phrenological Society. Edited by MADAME IDA ELLIS. (Blackpool: Ellis & Co., Kent-road. 6d.)
- "Isis and the Mahatmas." A Reply by William Q. Judge. With correspondence, original articles, and portrait. Second edition, with appendix. (London: 6, St. Edmund's-terrace, Regent's Park, N. W. 6d.)
- "What Do I Believe?" Two Essays in Justification of the Argument advanced in "The Practical Value of Religious Belief." By HENRY SMITH. (London: Watts & Co., 17, Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C. 1s.)

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MR. GEORGE SPRIGGS.—We learn from the Melbourne "This World and the Next" that Mr. George Spriggs, the president of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, was at the time of publication about to depart for England by the s.s. "Ophir." As the vessel should have left on March 30th, we may hope that Mr. Spriggs may arrive in time to represent our Australasian brethren at the Conference to be held in London in May.

MRS. MELLON.—PROPOSED TEST SEANCE BY A CONJURER.—The following letter has appeared in the Melbourne "Argus":—"Sir,—In reference to the alleged materialisation of spirit forms in Sydney under the mediumship of Mrs. Mellon, I have to-day received a wire from Dr. McCarthy, informing me that Mr. Hoskings, the conjurer, has declined his challenge to produce manifestations under conditions similar to those imposed upon Mrs. Mellon—alleging as a reason that he was not present at the test séances held by Mrs. Mellon's committee, and therefore does not know what is expected of him. Dr. M'Carthy desires that the Melbourne Press, in fairness to Mrs. Mellon, will give publicity to the fact that Mr. Hoskings will not accept the challenge and endeavour to earn the £50. Dr. M'Carthy's challenge is very simple; he says: 'Mrs. Mellon was locked up in a wire cage, after being enclosed in a bag, and produced forms outside the cage. If you will submit to be similarly treated and are successful, I will give you £50.'—Yours, &c., R. C. T. MORGAN, 159, Queen-street, December 5th."

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PESSIMISM, SCIENCE, AND GOD: *or Spiritual Solutions of Pressing Problems. A Message for The Day. Twelve Meditations.* By John Page Hopps. A full reprint of the Articles in "LIGHT." Tastefully bound. London publishers: Williams and Norgate. Post free from Mr. Page Hopps (216, South Norwood-hill, London), for One Shilling.

## 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.]

## A Forward Movement.

SIR,—There is one portion of your "Appeal" which very greatly interests me. Let me quote it:—

The Alliance needs, and it would be a grand thing if it could have, more commodious and more attractive premises, which should be the centre of various forms of activity—including a sufficiently capacious lecture-room; a dépôt for the sale of all books, by whomsoever published, on Spiritualism and kindred topics; suitable rooms for séances, properly conducted under the direction of the Council of the Alliance; and cheerful apartments for the convenience of the many visitors from the provinces and from abroad, who would be glad of such a place in which they could meet friends, at any time, by appointment, for pleasant intercourse and interchange of thought on the special subject in which they are mutually interested.

To some who cannot realise, as we can, the hindrances and disadvantages of restricted means, and therefore of lost opportunities for good, our suggestions may bear the semblance of an Ideal, the attainment of which can only be hoped for or expected in the distant future. But, in truth, the need is very real, and no time should be needlessly lost in the accomplishment of what must be the ambition of us all.

This is surely only the description of an obvious necessity,—not a luxury but the mere bread and water of our life. Think of London, and then think of No. 2, Duke-street, useful as it is! Think of the tremendous value of what we have to offer, and then think of our poor basket! I do not despise the day of small things;—far from it: but this ought not to be the day of small things. It is the day of a great outpouring, and we ought to provide a pool and a fountain.

You indicate exactly what we want;—a lecture-room (to hold 400 people), a bookselling and publishing room, a séance-room, a reading-room, and a few cosy parlours. Surely the thing is by no means impossible. For my own part I think it would "pay." Let us pluck up heart and do it. If there is no other way, let us organise a company. Some would offer gifts; others would take shares; not a few might do both. Anyhow, let us make a beginning. Find a likely site; produce a plan; get a rough estimate of cost; and then consider ways and means. These preliminary stages would cost very little; and there is no need for delay, so far as these are concerned.

I have ventured to say this, not as one who can do much as a subscriber or shareholder, but as one who is and will be very willing to help in every possible way. In the meantime, please let me hand you £3 3s.; to be divided between "LIGHT," the coming Conference, and the Spiritual Alliance (member's subscription).

South Norwood-hill

J. PAGE HOPPS.

January 21st.

## Is Spiritualism a Religion?

SIR,—Little reply is needed from me to the letters of Mr. Tetlow and Mr. Hewes. I believe, with both of them, in God, and also in the power of those who have departed to demonstrate their existence. I am familiar with all the psychic facts enumerated by the former, and have listened to, and read, innumerable trance addresses and controlled writings, and have myself been the recipient of the latter, but yet I fail to see that any answer has been given by these writers, or anyone else, to the question—Why should Spiritualism be regarded as a religion? What is there in these psychic facts and statements to constitute even a groundwork for a religious system of any kind? From all that I can gather from these letters, there is absolutely nothing. I have great sympathy with these writers, because at first (but for a very short time) I thought as they do. Thank God that now, for more than fifteen years, I have realised that my religion must be an individual thing quite apart from all revelations, either in books or from spirits, and it is indeed painful to me to think that there can be Spiritualists who really believe that religion is something that can be obtained from any outside source.

Whatever may be the nature of the religion that certain (so-called) controls may identify themselves with, it is no concern of mine to inquire. My religion, like Christ's, Buddha's, and every other religious thinker's, must be framed in the silence of my own soul, and grow from the experiences and realities of life just as theirs did. I do not care to have it systematised or

epitomised in a set of doctrines. It grows daily and hourly, and always from within. It has grown here, and will, no doubt, grow in the beyond.

I cannot accept, like Mr. Hewes, any statements either of incarnated or discarnated men, as constituting a religion for me, however revolutionary such statements may be, and I am at a loss to understand how any reasonable being can do so. Mr. Hewes's letters do not in any way aid in solving this mystery.

I am also little concerned whether other religious systems are better or worse than religious Spiritualism. What I feel deeply is the enormous damage that has been done to real Spiritualism by making it, or rather trying to make out of it, the miserable creed of a paltry sect; rather than a Divine revelation to man, irrespective of all creeds, opinions, and beliefs, of life beyond the grave.

Moreover, the creed, such as it is, is not new and is not in any sense the result of Spiritualism. Its devotees are credulous persons who think that when a man speaks entranced he is always controlled by a spirit, and they do this without proof that in the particular case such control is a fact.

The thing that deceives Mr. Hewes is that these trance addresses "agree in essential details." I do not see that this matters much if what is said is merely platitudes known for centuries. Besides, the relation of each soul to the Over-soul is no further from our perception than from that of discarnated men. Why, therefore, make the latter's alleged statements the ground-work of a Faith? If they are spirits, so are we, and we are as near God and truth as they are.

Neither Mr. Hewes nor anyone has replied to the question—Why should Spiritualism be regarded as a religion? Let me give the reason why a very few Spiritualists so regard it. They were brought up Methodists, Baptists, Church of England, or other sectarians, and for long believed in a system which appeared miraculous and supernatural, coming down from some higher sphere of light and wisdom through direct revelations from God Himself. Then they saw discrepancies in their system of truth, and perhaps for a time gave up all systems. Then they came in contact with what they fondly deemed a new revelation from spirits, to take the place of the old. It is the impression of this old idea of a supernatural revelation that has misled them. They should have learned, when it was discredited to their intelligence, that the lesson for them was—Never again must you fall a victim to any system, but be free, and true alone to yourselves and your own inward leading. What you know yourself on this subject is best for you. Others may have grander and more sublime beliefs. Never mind, be content with what you can yourself evolve. It took men thousands of years to free themselves from the yoke and bondage of bodily slavery. It may take an even longer time to free them wholly from intellectual slavery, but, happily, the hour of emancipation has come for thousands, and, once free, free for ever.

Men may have suffered more after physical slavery was abolished than before, but in some measure they became responsible beings when the shackles were removed from their limbs; and that more than makes amends. Just so, when man achieves his intellectual freedom and feels that now he has to frame all his thoughts and come to his own proven conclusions by his own efforts, he may feel himself very bare of borrowed knowledge, opinions, and beliefs, but he will feel that he is now a responsible, intellectual being, and that his soul is his own, and can never more be tyrannised over by any system. Then, free himself, he will join with other freemen in works of charity and mercy, leaving each man to settle his own religious belief according to the dictates of his own intelligence. VIR.

## Mediums and their Exposers.

SIR,—Your correspondent, F. W. Read, takes me to task for giving "an incorrect account of the decision in the Slade case" (see "LIGHT" for January 5th). I prefer to leave myself in the hands of your readers, who may be sufficiently interested to wade through the reports of the six days' trial. In the "Spiritualist" of November 3rd, 1876, there is a full account of the speech for the defence and the summing up of Mr. Flowers, in which occur the words (after narrowing the issue to the evidence given by Professor Lankester and Dr. Donkin): "If this be true, it involves the inference that Slade wrote the words himself. . . . I must decide according to the well-known course of nature," &c. The editor, before giving the sentence, naively says, "It is one of a class of cases

well known to lawyers, in which two witnesses depose to certain things, and, with nobody there to check them, the experience of absent persons is considered irrelevant." Just so; and, according to the evidence of the two witnesses, if that evidence was accepted as true by the magistrate a conviction would necessarily follow. Further discussion is needless, and I leave it, but my purpose is answered in drawing attention to the much wider issues involved which I specified. Psychical phenomena cannot be tested by physical means.

Referring to Mrs. Mellon—the report of test séances with Mrs. Mellon, dated Sydney, November 29th, 1894, is to hand, by a special committee (evidently neutral, if not unsympathetic), under the presidency of the Hon. Sir William Windeyer, Judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, which is eminently satisfactory as to the non-fraudulent character of Mrs. Mellon. To me it is surprising, considering the illness from which she was suffering, that the phenomena were so good as described. But what of it? Will even such a report, by such a testing committee, exonerate her from the charge that the prior séance was fraudulent?

She will be just as liable to further outrage in spite of this and many other similar test reports. To say nothing of the feelings, &c., of materialising mediums, is it wise to give publicity to cases of "exposure"? She is, I think, the last of the public ones in this country, and what is the "philosophy" of Spiritualism—as given forth by platform speakers—worth unless supported by demonstrable psychical facts? If the present policy is continued, psychic phenomena, especially as regards the materialisation phase—the most wonderful of all—will soon become things of the past, and Spiritualistic propaganda will depend upon platform oratory, and, probably, the concretion of another "sect." Are Spiritualists prepared for this? If Mrs. Britten's dictum, or prophecy, is correct—viz., "that the new Messiah is to be crucified between the two thieves, fanaticism and imposture," then I here enter my *caveat*, and venture to affirm that "imposture" goes but a little way to account for the present dearth of "physical" mediums. As to fanaticism, I dare not assume the rôle of judge in reference to this "thief." The cause of the present aspect of affairs must be sought for elsewhere, and should not be very difficult to discover.

WILLIAM OXLEY.

SIR,—I am entirely in accord with Mrs. Britten, whom we all hold in such high honour, when she says: "I know of no more criminal deed, or one so likely to be severely punished hereafter, as the cruel and degrading act of simulating the blessed ones who have left us with broken hearts." There surely can be no sin more shameful, despicable, and blasphemous; and I think, with Mrs. Britten, "that mediums should be placed beyond the possibility of being even suspected of tampering with the manifestations." But, in the case of Mrs. Mellon, we have a medium who, far from being celebrated for emotional products, seems at all times willing and anxious, as we hear from Dr. McCarthy and Mr. Morgan, secretary to the Melbourne Society for Psychical Research, to undergo any tests that are required, the same as those great initiators, the Fox sisters, did. Mrs. Mellon has been lately weighed by the above gentlemen, and found to lose more than three stones in weight when her control "Geordie" was materialised, which weight, under the penalty, perhaps, of death, has to be restored to her before the séance is over.

Then, Mrs. Mellon has a second control named "Josephine," who frequently manifests, and whose forte seems not in raising tender sensibilities concerning the departed friends of onlookers, but in suddenly vanishing from the midst of an assembly.

Then there is a third party, another control of Mrs. Mellon's, a little black child, half the height of the medium, who has been with her for these twenty years or more, and has been *seen* with her hundreds of times; and two at least of these spirits have been photographed, with the medium also present.

I am very much interested when Mrs. Britten says: "If the mediums are genuine they have nothing to fear, and the spirits will melt away in the hands of the so-called 'grabbers.'" I am interested because I thought it was otherwise. I have studied Spiritualism since the year 1856, and, candidly, I cannot call to mind reading, and certainly not seeing, any instance of the like. I have read of spirits, when materialised, struggling like men and getting away, but never "melting away." So, knowing that materialisations are sometimes genuine, I had come to the conclusion, as I expressed in a letter to "LIGHT" of December

8th: "If you hold a spirit, and keep it fast, you hold the medium." And I think the same still. And I was glad to find Mr. Robert Cooper, author of that excellent book "Spiritual Experiences, Including Seven Months with the Brothers Davenport," saying, in "LIGHT" of January 5th: "The theory suggested by Mr. Tomlinson in 'LIGHT' of December 8th, 1894, is doubtless the correct one, and is the same offered by Dr. A. R. Wallace in the same journal when the seizure occurred at Peterborough."

WM. R. TOMLINSON.

#### Idealism Stripped of its Mysticism.

SIR,—Idealism, or the philosophy of mental imagery, brought into reach by the employment of ordinary language, and the use of everyday facts, is a much simpler subject than is commonly supposed. It is the terminology of the schools, and the cloud of words in which the matter is customarily clothed, that render Idealism so unreal to most persons.

The fundamental law of ideas in relation to persons, sentiments, and things, is uniform in its progressive unfoldment. The realities of to-day, which constitute the civilised mode of our mundane existence, were the idealities of past times. They were in existence as ideas only. The locomotive, which in our time skims the surface of the earth with the speed of a swift bird, was the ideal engine of the contemporaries of Stephenson. In each case we have an idea externalised. The "Rocket" steam engine was the ideal of a motor for traction in old post-horse days.

Speaking of the objectivity of the engine, and the creative idea of it before it was made, there is but little difference in the ideality of the matter. In one case, the inventor of the engine alone sees the mental image of the machine, because it is built of mind-stuff within his own consciousness. The idea of the engine when clothed with matter is visible to all. It is true that some sensitive thought-catcher might see the idea of an inventor, but this is not to the point. What we wish to have made plain is the fact that the engine, in the mind of its creator, and what we term the real engine, made in metals, is one and the same idea in two states of existence. There is nothing of special mode to see but the idea itself. The given quantity of brass, steel, and copper simply marks the outline of the idea, and brings it into line with the permanent ground-stuff of the commonly perceived phenomena of matter.

This reasoning applies to all human creations, and proves that all initiation, reality and progress, proceed from the ideal state.

Whether the idea, when externalised in matter, possesses real objective existence, or is simply another mode of perception, is of little consequence, so far as the essential nature of the mental image is concerned. The identity of the idea in its dual mode is absolute. The only difference in the power of the idea, as a mental creation, consists in the fact that, in its primary state, it is perceived by its creator only, while in its exterior condition it can be sensed by the entire human race.

Although the idealistic world may be fitly regarded as the womb of thought-forms, it is, taken in the individualistic sense, a much smaller and less developed one than the mundane objective sphere. It is the private mental nursery of the individual spirit, from whence the form-seedlings are taken for transplanting in the outer fields of larger growths. It stands in the same relation to the thought-world, cognised by the million, as the uterus in its gestative operations bears to the human species. The idealistic and the external worlds are practically one. The same laws of form and calculation govern both, as no idea can exist which is not capable of reasoned exposition in the common sphere of exterior modes. If it were possible for any particular mind to sense an idea on other than the general mental basis of human modes, it could not be communicated to another sentient being, and would, therefore, be of non-effect and useless.

After perusing some of the essays of the Idealists, one should be pardoned if a suspicion crossed the mind that ideas had certainly occurred to the Idealists which were incommunicable to the outer world, despite the most eloquent efforts in technical language to expound them.

The rule for such matters is a simple one. A thought, or mental image, which is unintelligible to a number of minds, is a non-idea, or a false scent, and off the lines of thought law.

All our philosophy, science, and art came immediately from the idealistic world. Their advent, however, was of necessity in harmony with the mental structure of mundane intelligence

and no thought-sphere could exist in our cognisance which was not on the basis of human modes. An idealistic world, differing in mental modes from those of earth-life, could not be sensed by anyone. A mere difference in conformation or environment, like the various arrangements in the calculating machine of the Ninth Bridgewater Treatise, does not count.

The idealistic world would be of limited value to mankind if it could not be intellectually united with the general external methods of terrestrial life. For instance, the idea of the parallax, as a mode of measuring the distance of the heavenly bodies from the earth, would have been useless if not outwardly applied. Similarly, the first idea of oral communication between distant places by means of electricity needed the application of additional ideas—the outcome of extended powers of perception—to bring the telephone into existence. And so on throughout the entire range of man-made creations. The outer world of sense and perception is idealistic too. But it is a world of ideas that are measurably fixed in the frames and moulds of matter, and open to all. The idea is first sensed by the individual, and then carried to the mental market-place of general perception, and afterwards fixed in the common mind-world of matter for human advantage. The idealistic is the real, and the real is idealistic.

Birmingham.

J. W. MAHONY.

#### The "Massage" Question.

SIR,—Some years ago I wrote to the "Provincial Medical Journal," calling attention to the reprehensible practice adopted by massage operators, of masse-ing persons of the opposite sex. I do not say there may not be very rare and exceptional circumstances in which it may be necessary for a medical practitioner to "masse" a female patient, but the too common practice of masseuses operating on male patients, in the majority of cases is utterly indefensible.

I trust that if an association is formed to protect this class of medical auxiliaries, its rules will taboo once and for ever the foregoing course of practice by its members.

As one of the first to introduce the practice of massage to medical notice in Scotland, and having all classes of patients through my hands, I have steadily refused to "masse" any patient of the opposite sex. This field of womanly usefulness should not be trespassed upon by men.

Glenbeg, Rothesay.

JAMES COATES.

#### SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible, and by appending their signatures to their communications. Inattention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

245, KENTISH TOWN-ROAD, N.W.—On Sunday, at 7 p.m., open meeting; Thursday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; February 3rd, Mr. G. Davy.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END.—A very interesting address was given on Sunday by Mr. Wyndoe, which was highly appreciated by a large audience. After the address clairvoyant descriptions were given by Mr. Wyndoe and also by Miss Marsh, which were recognised in every instance. On Sunday next, January 27th, Mr. Bradley will give a trance address.—W. MARSH.

45, MARKHAM-SQUARE, KING'S-ROAD, CHELSEA, S.W.—Fruitful results are being realised at the developing circles conducted by Mrs. Perry, many sitters receiving help in the unfolding of their spiritual faculties. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., public séance; Monday, at 8 p.m., clairvoyance; Tuesday and Thursday, at 8 p.m., developing circles; Saturday, at 8 p.m., public séance.—WILLIAM GEORGE COOTE.

CARDIFF.—Mr. E. W. Wallis will give trance addresses at the Public Hall, Queen-street Arcade, on Sundays, January 27th and February 3rd, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. A public debate will be held in the Colonial Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday, January 29th and 30th, at 7.30 p.m. (doors open at 7 p.m.). Subject: "Are the Phenomena of Spiritualism the Production of Disembodied Spirit Agency?" Affirmative by Mr. E. W. Wallis (of Manchester), negative by Mr. W. T. Lee (of Plymouth). Admission 6d.; front seats 1s.—E. A.

111, CLARENDON-ROAD, NOTTING HILL, W.—On Sunday last we had a full meeting, when Mrs. Ashton Bingham's guides gave an excellent discourse upon "The Beautiful Life of our Exemplar Jesus," followed by very successful clairvoyance, sacred solos, recitations, &c. Mr. Brooks kindly gave his services at the pianoforte. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. Wallace; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; Saturday, at 8 p.m., spirit circle.—J. H. B.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Dr. Reynolds will occupy our platform on Sunday next. Friday for inquirers and musical practice as usual. On Sunday last Mr. Emms gave an admirable discourse on "Spiritualism: Its Significance," to a crowded hall. Mr. Gozzett rendered a violin solo, which was highly appreciated. Mrs. Hardinge Britten will give a lecture at the Stratford Town Hall on March 14th, for the benefit of our building fund, and we hope to fill our large Town Hall to overflowing.—THOS. MACCALLUM, Hon. Sec.

NEWCASTLE.—The Newcastle-on-Tyne Spiritual Evidence Society have taken the Good Templars' Hall, Clayton-street, corner of Blakett-street. Services will be resumed on Sunday, February 3rd, when Mrs. J. A. Stansfield, of Oldham, the clairvoyant, will deliver short addresses, followed by experiments in clairvoyance, at 10.45 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. On Wednesday, February 6th, there will be a tea and concert in the hall; and we trust that all friends and sympathisers will show their sympathy with us by trying to be present.—R. ELLISON.

"DAWN OF DAY" SOCIETY.—Miss Ashton Bingham, president of the Dawn of Day Society, will give an address at 8, Wilkin-street, Grafton-road, Kentish Town, on Sunday, at seven o'clock, Mrs. Charles Spring, medium; and at 132, St. John's-hill, Clapham Junction, on February 7th, a conversazione will be held in commemoration of the birth of Charles Dickens and the opening of No. 1 Branch of the Dawn of Day Society. Meeting to commence at seven o'clock. A séance at four o'clock; Mrs. Spring, medium. Silver collection.—A. B.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last another crowded and successful meeting was held, with Mrs. Stansfield as medium. Miss Everitt, who was in excellent voice, sang with great effect Piccolomini's celebrated song, "Ora pro nobis," which was greatly appreciated. Mrs. Stansfield followed with some excellent clairvoyant descriptions, two of which were not recognised at the time, but Mrs. Stansfield had the pleasure of knowing that they were fully recognised subsequently. We hope that she will, ere long, visit London again. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., trance address by the inspirers of Mr. J. J. Morse.—L. H.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—The South London Spiritualists' Mission will celebrate their eighth anniversary on Sunday next. The morning service will be taken by Mrs. Weidemeyer; the afternoon by Mrs. Bliss; and in the evening by Mr. T. Everitt, Mrs. Bliss, Mrs. Stanley, Mr. Veitch, and other prominent speakers and mediums. Spiritualists are heartily invited. Mr. W. E. Long will preside. Mr. Charles Hepburn has kindly consented to render some selections on the grand piano during the evening. Solos will be given by Mrs. Banks, Mr. W. A. George, Mr. W. H. White, and others. Services at 11 a.m., 3 p.m., and 6.30 p.m.

MORSE'S LIBRARY, 26, OSNABURGH-STREET, LONDON, N.W.—The second of the series of three lectures on Spiritualism was delivered on Friday evening last by the controls of Mr. J. J. Morse. "Spiritualism: Its Essentials" was the subject of the present address; and although its delivery was a trifle marred by the indisposition of the medium, the practical and philosophical treatment of the theme was of the usual high order. It is much to be regretted that these instructive addresses cannot be preserved in a permanent form. The prospective arrangements are:—Friday, January 25th, "Spiritualism: Its Ultimates" (the last of the series of three lectures); February 1st, "An Evening with the 'Strolling Player.'" Particulars of the special meeting at Cavendish Rooms on March 29th will shortly be announced.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—On Sunday last Mr. C. H. Dennis addressed a large meeting on "Spiritualism: Its Relation to Man's Progress." Briefly summarising the material changes in man's state from early times to the present day, the speaker argued that Spiritualism was the legitimate outcome of man's progress. Phenomena are not supernatural; they are simply the result of material laws, some of which may not be fully understood at present. The results obtained depend on those seeking information. Spiritualism is the only proof of a future life after death. Mr. A. Savage explained briefly the *modus operandi* of controls, and went on to show that true Spiritualism is a thing apart from phenomena. Highly successful psychometry brought the meeting to a close. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. C. Hardingham will give an address on "Our Critics Criticised." We hope to see a large attendance.—J. B., Sec.

CHEPSTOW HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM, S.E.—On Sunday last, after an invocation by the guides of Mr. Butcher, a reading of Mrs. G. L. Banks' poem, "What I live for," was given by Mr. Butcher. Mr. Audy followed with a few suitable remarks on the present position of the society, and Mr. Butcher expressed his regret that the society suffered so much through the laxity of attendance and proper support of its members. In speaking to those present he emphasised the necessity of each and all working in charity and forbearance in placing our grand and elevating truths before the world. In the absence of all notices, and the omission of the secretary to advise members, much doubt and uncertainty had existed as to there being any service at all. All willing to help are respectfully asked to cooperate, so that we may be able to continue the work in this latest temple of truth.—J. A. BUTCHER, Secretary *pro tem*.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. M. W.—Next week.

C. F.—Yes; we saw the Table of Contents, but that is not sufficient for notice. We shall be glad to see the book itself.