

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe

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

NO. 737 — VOL. XV. [Registered as] SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1895 [a Newspaper] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We have seen an interesting account of the newest conjuring rapping table. The more the better. This much-improved table requires a hollow foot containing a Leclanché element battery, connected with a system of ingenious wires and springs and an electro-magnetic coil. The thing is worked from the top of the table by the hand, which has to be placed on a prepared disc in order to make and break contact. The wires can be so arranged as to communicate with a transmitter in a distant room.

What trouble these clever people take for nothing! Did anyone ever doubt that a table could be made that would produce raps? We hope it will amuse the children.

We have heard "raps" on palings by the road side, at a minute's notice; on drawing-room vases; on window panes; on a table at a restaurant; on the rock of a cliff; on a book held by a child. Do these ingenious people think they are really "exposing spirit-rapping"? We can only say, in the words of the immortal collier who, on being asked how he could smile while his wife hit him, replied, "It pleases she, and it don't hurt me."

J. P. Cooke, of Washington, U.S., has published a curious book entitled "Autobiography. By Jesus Christ." It strongly professes to have been produced by passive writing done by Olive G. Pettis, who says, "As I am held by a power I cannot fully comprehend, I would say, every expression is as new to me as it is to the reader, until it is printed before me, in electric words, which seem to drop before me." It is impossible to say anything useful concerning the origin of this strange story. For our own part, while admitting that it is readable and curious, we do not believe that Jesus Christ had anything to do with its production.

Mons. Ferdinand Brunetière, writing in the "Revue des Deux Mondes," has a pretty fling at that swaggering "Science" which, for a hundred years, has been promising to save the world. Truly, Science has done some wonderful things—has, let it be confessed, made a new world of it in some respects. But this odd thing has happened—that, just in the very direction in which it has swaggered most, it has most broken down. It was going to give us the measurement of everything, and leave no rooms for ghosts or God; and lo! it turns out that the greatest discovery of Science is that what it took for the kernel is only the shell! Says Mons. Brunetière:—

No one can deny that the physical or natural sciences have promised to suppress "mystery." Not only have they not suppressed it, but we see clearly to-day that they never will throw light on it. They are powerless—I will not say to resolve, but even to give a hint of a solution of questions of the utmost importance to us: these are the questions relating to the origin of man, the law of his conduct, and his future destiny. The un-

knowable surrounds us, envelops us, constrains us; and we cannot get from the laws of physics or the results of physiology any means of knowing anything about this unknowable. I admire as much as anybody the immortal labours of Darwin; and when the influence of his doctrine is compared to that of the discoveries of Newton, I willingly admit the truth of the comparison. Yet, whether we are descended from the monkey, or the monkey and ourselves have a common ancestor, we have not advanced a step toward knowing anything about the origin of man. Neither anthropology, nor ethnology, nor linguistics, has ever been able to tell us *what we are*. . . Yet those who put their whole faith in science keep saying; "Give us more time. The day will come when science will throw more light on the questions you suggest." Supposing that to be so, in the meanwhile we have got to live, to live a life which is not purely animal; and no science to-day furnishes us with any means of living such a life.

The real truth is that Science, in so far as it succeeds in reaching the boundaries of sense, only opens before us unimaginable realms, with which, at present, it seems unable to even tentatively deal. Its greatest discoveries call for great humility.

We are glad to see that the New York "Sunday Mercury" denies the very common but very unhistorical statement that modern Spiritualism began with "the Fox sisters." We are glad, too, to see that the "Sunday Mercury" and many other papers are giving such serious attention to the subject. The "Mercury" refers to the scholarly Life of Swedenborg by White, and reminds its readers that a hundred years ago spirit phenomena were common enough. Quoting White to this effect, it says:—

This is valuable information now that so-called Spiritualism is enjoying a sudden revival, both in New York and Boston, and which will soon reach other cities. One might go back to the days of the ancients and find similar phenomena.

Certainly. The Bible itself is full of it.

Professor Hyslop, of Columbia College (U.S.), has been giving his views concerning the tenth volume of the Reports of our Psychological Research Society. He is struck with the remarkable statement in the Report that "between deaths and apparitions of dying persons a connection exists which is not due to chance alone. This we hold as a proved fact." He very naturally says:—

This is remarkable language for the signatures of Professor and Mrs. Sidgwick, than whom few harder-headed sceptics could be found. It is more than borne out, however, by a consideration which the Committee does not mention, but which the facts entirely justify, and it is that since many of the apparitions occurred not merely on the day, but at the very hour or minute of death, the improbability of their explanation by chance is really much greater than the figures here given.

After this sympathetic reference to the Report, however, the Professor points out a danger. In the first place, if the finding of the Society or its Committee holds its ground, it will produce a revolution in all existing speculations regarding the relation between mind and matter. He says:—

If telepathy be accepted as a fact, it would imply the acquisition of knowledge independently of the ordinary channels of

sense, overthrowing all the assumptions of psychology and philosophy from the time of Aristotle to the present.

Of course this will lead, in the near future, to— psychological and theological speculation of the most hasty and crude sort, which will require the profoundest knowledge of mental phenomena, normal and abnormal, and the best methods of science to counteract, and to keep within the limits of sober reason. The hardly-won conquests of intellectual freedom and self-control can easily be overthrown by a reaction that will know no bounds and which it will be impossible to regulate. Though there may be some moral gain from the change of beliefs, as will no doubt be the case in the long run, we have too recently escaped the intellectual, religious, and political tyranny of the Middle Ages to contemplate the immediate consequences of the reaction with any complacency.

But the good Professor sees light. If we can escape the outburst of hasty and crude speculation, and of Middle Ages superstition, and effect a genuine reconciliation between science and religion, all will be well.

No one can calculate the enormous effect upon intellectual, social, and political conditions which would ensue upon the reconciliation of science and religion by the proof of immortality.

We know very little about the "Antipas," with whom our friend R. J. Lees has been discussing; but we always thought he was a "believer" of some kind. His random talking in that discussion, however, reads like old-fashioned Bradlaughism, and of a very crude, early type. The following is his conclusive argument that Samuel could not have appeared to Saul at Endor:—

The Bible distinctly stated, first, that Samuel was dead, and secondly, that he was buried at Ramah, a place some fifty miles from Endor. Yet Mr. Lees strove to show that he was in the cave at Endor! The only explanation of this he could offer would be that there were two Samuels. If Mr. Lees' contention was correct, and it was the original Samuel who appeared at Endor, then he must have been raised from the dead, and conveyed by some means from his sepulchre to the place of meeting.

Evidently, then, "Antipas" thinks that the corpse in the grave is the man; and that if you want to see him you must go to his grave, or have him dug up and carried round! Spiritualists have, indeed, a great work before them, even in relation to the A B C of their great faith.

An "Echo" reporter has interviewed Dr. Forbes Winslow concerning hypnotic trances. The Doctor confesses that he has not had many opportunities of judging; and, indeed, that until lately he was prejudiced against it; but he is now more than resigned; he is hopeful: and he who came to scoff remains to praise. He recalls the fact that mesmerism preceded hypnotism, but says nothing about the brave and honest pioneers like Dr. Elliotson, who were well-nigh crushed by the "scientific men" of their day. And "thus the whirligig of Time brings in his revenges." We do not wish to rake up old grievances, but it is as good as a roaring fire to have a Dr. Forbes Winslow lecturing the slow and foolish people who will not believe in these wonderful things. "So many people shut their eyes to the progress of science," said he! Poor Science! How facts do drag it on, to be sure!

David Swing was one of the strongest and most resolute of American thinkers. Banished from the regulation Churches, he became a mighty power for good in the American world; and his preaching in Chicago led on, we believe, to the present awakening of a better spirit there. A noble sermon of his has just been printed, entitled, "Sympathy with the World," a grand subject, and one which preachers of all kinds need to ponder.

This fine spirit rebuked the ecclesiastical temper which shrank from the actual world, and chafed in a world of its

own. "Come into the open," he cried, "first of all let us be men and women, and sympathise with all things human":—

No cloistered nun ever drew from her solitude such personal power as came to Madame Guyon, who flung her heart to the people; and all the women in all convents together would not equal intellectually the Madame de Staël, who kept always near the French and German cottage and palace. Napoleon feared no French or German recluse, male or female; but he did fear the mind of a woman who was equalling himself in the study of mankind. She had been in the cottage of the poor and in the salons of the great, and knew all the inmost sentiments that were flowing like an underground river across the continent. There is a couplet about as follows:—

In cloistered state let narrow sages dwell,
Proud of a heart as narrow as their cell—

words reminding us of the intellectual ruin which set in in that day when men and women took upon themselves the vows of isolation and poverty. When any of these sent forth any literature, it was not really literature, the broad experience of man, but it was the wail of some failing brain, the scanty blossoms of a tree about to die. For the world's powerful thought you must look to those who lived near the people.

It is not always a delightful thing to do. So much seems in vain! But nothing good is in vain. Everything helps. Even things that seem contradictory may blend in the long run, and make the richer harmony. We must not ask for gratitude or any payment from the world, but simply go on helping it as we can:—

The intellectual grandeur of to-day is the treasured up thought of all the past. The poems of Horace and the hymns of Isaac Watts, the preaching of Paul and Wesley, and of all between, meet in one result. Our liberty is the result of all tears and battles. All we have come from the hands of all. Nothing is doubtful, except whether you or I shall see the good we may help to accomplish. If we insist upon thus seeing results, we may well carry heavy hearts; for when we plant a tree, there is no one to assure us that we shall see it in future years laden with rich fruit. It may be its autumn harvest will drop upon our grave. But, aside from this sad questioning, nothing is more real and assured in our world than that all the love and care poured out upon the multitude by each one will become a part of the future riches of earth.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

On Monday evening last, at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, Miss MacCreadie gave some illustrations of her powers as a clairvoyante and psychometrist to a very full audience. All abnormal faculties are more or less fitful, dependent on conditions of the nature of which we at present know little or nothing, and it is not, therefore, a matter for surprise that on this occasion Miss MacCreadie was not so successful as could have been wished, many of her descriptions failing of recognition; but, on the other hand, some of them were singularly correct, even the names being rightly given.

At the next meeting, to be held on Monday evening, March 4th, Miss X., one of the Editors of "Borderland," has kindly promised to give an address on "Some Curiosities of Crystal Gazing, with Practical Hints for Experiment." On this subject nobody can speak more authoritatively than Miss X., as she has not only made an exhaustive study of the question in its various phases, but has also had the advantage of a long personal experience as a Crystal Seer. If she does not know all about it nobody does.

THE COMING CONFERENCE.—Contributions are respectfully invited towards the expenses of the Conference of Spiritualists to be held in London in May next. They may be forwarded to any member of the Finance Committee, which consists of Mr. Thomas Everitt, Lilian Villa, Holder's Hill, Hendon, N.W. (Chairman); Mrs. Everitt; Mrs. Russell Davies, 44, Anerley-road, Upper Norwood, S.E.; Miss Rowan Vincent, 31, Gower-place, W.C.; Mrs. Bliss, 23, Devonshire-road, Forest Hill, S.E.; Rev. J. Page Hopps, Oak Tree House, South Norwood Hill, S.E.; Mr. W. E. Long, 35, Station-road, Camberwell, S.E.; Mr. A. J. Sutton, 12, Upper Woburn-place, W.C.; and the Treasurer, Mr. H. Withall, Gravel-lane, Southwark, S.E.

MORE ABOUT MADAME BLAVATSKY.*

Perusing Mr. Lillie's new book on Madame Blavatsky is not unlike listening at a coroner's inquest, in which the details of a post-mortem examination play a considerable part. But we have had so much recently about Theosophy and its late High Priestess that the subject is getting monotonous, and most people have now formed some conclusion in the matter.

Mr. Lillie brings abundant evidence to show that before the foundation of the Theosophical Society Madame Blavatsky was a Spiritualist and a medium; but we do not remember that she ever denied that in her youth she was a powerful physical medium, and her own experiences in that character necessarily made her a Spiritualist, without the aid of Allan Kardec, or any other regular authority on the subject. To the end she bravely maintained the reality of spiritual manifestations, while questioning the usual Spiritualistic explanation of them, quoting for this the authority of her "Master," this particular "teaching" of her Master being about the least original of all those doctrines whose aggregate is "Blavatskyism"; for the doctrine current throughout the East, as was the case, too, among the mediæval occultists, is that various orders of non-human spirits have far more to do with the phenomena than have the spirits of mortals.

Mr. Lillie makes out a case against Madame Blavatsky on the lines usually followed by her critics. But in fairness the High Priestess of Theosophy ought not to be judged solely by the opinions and assertions of either friends or enemies, for neither of these classes are, as a rule, without bias—the former refusing to consider the evidence of fraud on her part, because they think that a woman who "gave out" "The Secret Doctrine" *could not* be guilty of fraud; and the latter refusing to take into consideration the cosmic system thus given out, because a woman who lied and cheated, as they assert she did, *could not* have written anything worthy of attention. It is impossible to form a trustworthy estimate of Madame Blavatsky without a dispassionate study of "Isis Unveiled" and "The Secret Doctrine." Mr. Emmette Coleman now tells us that those books are mere patchworks of extracts from about one hundred more or less well-known works; but Madame Blavatsky, if that be the case, has done what no other of the thousands of readers of those works attempted: she has pieced together ideas from these sources, and thus produced, or "restored," a complete theory of the universe, and brought to light a religio-philosophical system which has acted very powerfully on the imaginations and emotions of thousands of educated and intelligent persons in every quarter of the globe, many of whom were previously "hard-shell" materialists. As Mr. Stead has remarked, Madame Blavatsky has done more than anyone else in recent times to reawaken an intelligent interest in the invisible universe, and a reasoned belief in a future state. It is these facts which the critic and historian of Madame Blavatsky will now have to face, since the "fraud-hunter" may be said to have by this time successfully done his work. It does not seem to have been difficult to prove that Madame Blavatsky was at one time a Spiritualist, and at another time a cheat, and at all times what a matter-of-fact person might call somewhat "crazy"; and Mr. Lillie may be said to have summed up the evidence on these points in an able and convincing manner; but the "teachings" of Theosophy are almost untouched by these facts, and all the more so if it be true, as Madame Blavatsky's enemies assert, that there is nothing original in those "teachings," for in that

case it is not she that has to be "answered," but the thinkers and philosophers of many ages and countries.

It is as certain as her own reiterated assurances can make it, that Madame Blavatsky did not intend to found "a new religion"; and yet a large section of her followers have devoted all their energies to converting her "Theosophy" into a creed. Who are responsible for this? Apparently the very people who, while almost worshipping Madame Blavatsky herself, have reduced the "Mahatmas" to the condition of laughing-stocks by their quarrels and mutual accusations, by their unwarranted assumption of superior goodness and knowledge, and by their hocus-pocus of precipitated messages, bogus seals, &c.

Even "the man in the street" can sit in judgment on Madame Blavatsky in regard to certain matters with which his experience enables him to deal—he can say that he has proof that she squirmed, shifted, lied, and cheated. But her appearance on the scene, her strange career, her enigmatical personality, and more especially the results which her efforts have already produced, require a little more pondering, a little more penetration, and a little more knowledge of hidden causes and springs of action than the "man in the street," or even the man in the library, seems to possess.

In conclusion, we can recommend Mr. Lillie's book to those who wish to get a general idea of the history of Madame Blavatsky and her Theosophical Society from the anti-theosophical point of view.

EFFECTS OF FRAUD IN PHILADELPHIA.

Those of the readers of "LIGHT" who regard fraud in connection with the exercise of so called mediumship in its *true* light, as a heinous crime against the most sacred hopes of humanity, will be interested in reading how direful the effects of this cowardly sin have been in almost entirely arresting the progress of the great cause in the city of Philadelphia. I extract the following, from the pen of R. B. Westbrook, from "The Religio-Philosophical Journal":—

I have been very familiar with the condition of Spiritualism in this city for over a score of years, and I am ashamed to acknowledge its palpable decline. Twenty years ago the hall used in Philadelphia was large and attractive, and multitudes flocked to hear the new gospel. Now the hall occupied by the First Society of Spiritualists in this city is over a coal-yard, and is not otherwise attractive. The hall used by the Spiritual Conference is a good one. Formerly multitudes of our most respectable citizens attended the lectures, now it is a rare thing to see a man of any standing among the listeners. How do I account for these things? Mainly on account of the frauds with which we have been cursed. Let me enumerate.

First came Mrs. Fay, who was caught in her tricks, was arrested, confessed, and was released by the Mayor on her promise to leave the city at once. Second came the Holmes, who fooled Robert Dale Owen and Dr. Henry T. Childs with Katie King, who proved to be a poor young widow hired to personate Katie, and who, when caught, confessed the whole trick, and justified herself on the ground of her financial necessities. Then came the Blisses who were caught with a trapdoor, which they had cut through the floor from the cellar—and a young woman came forward and confessed that she had been hired to personate spirits, and showed how she did it. Then came James, from whose person I saw *over forty articles* taken in the séance-room, which he had used to personate spirits. But time would fail me to tell of the notorious trickster Gordon, detected in the most outrageous frauds, and of many others who have imposed themselves on the community. What remedy do I propose? Pay the so-called mediums *no money*. Multitudes have gone into the business from *motives of gain*, and, besides their regular fees, have wormed large sums of money from their dupes. I sympathise with the Quakers in their dislike of "hireling priests," I have a greater repugnance to "hireling mediums." *Cut off the financial supplies and the humbugging will cease. Let respectable and*

*—"Madame Blavatsky and Her 'Theosophy': A Study." By ARTHUR LILLIE. (Swan Sonnenschein and Co. 1895. Pp. 228. Price 6s.)

sincere Spiritualists unite to expose and punish these vampires. There is no dungeon, in my opinion, dark enough, and no cell cold enough, and no work hard enough for a miserable class of frauds who make a livelihood by trifling with sacred things, and who impose on the credulity of persons bereaved of loving friends.

The italics are my own. I commend the above outburst of honest indignation, as well as the proposed remedy, to the attention of *all* earnest Spiritualists. Here (in Paris) I believe all the public séances are gratuitous, and this is, I think, as it should be.

ELIZA LUTLEY BOUCHER.

WITCHCRAFT IN SCOTLAND : 1570 TO 1663.

BY EDINA.

PART X. THE AULDEARN CASES.—(Concluded.)

In further continuation of her confessions, Isobel Gowdie described at some length a covin (gathering) of witches whose names she fully disclosed, whereat they made an image of clay about the size of a cake. The image was roasted, or baked on a fire, at intervals, which was done for the purpose of destroying the children of the Laird of Powis. She further narrated, that with other two witches whom she named, and all three, for the time, appearing in the likeness of two cats and a hare, they visited the dyehouse of a person of the name of Cumming, and taking each a thread of the yarns which they found there they knotted them, and in the Devil's name cast these into the vats, with the view of taking the strength of the dye away ; and with the result (she said) that all the liquid became black. Isobel also detailed an incident which happened to her on one occasion when she was appearing in the guise of a hare and when some hounds went in pursuit of her ; so hot became the pursuit that she had to take refuge in a house, and lie for a time behind a chest till the hounds passed, when she was able again to turn herself into a woman and get home. Her mode of resuming her proper character she stated to be the repetition of this invocation :—

Hare, Hare, God send thee care ;
I am in a Hare's likeness now,
But I shall be a Woman e'en now.

The beldame, in the course of a long and elaborate fourth confession of her communion with various familiar spirits, gave the names of several of them, and the witches they controlled. One was named "Swein," and he waited on, or controlled, a witch named Alison Wilson. Swein was clothed, she said, in "grass-green." Others were named "Pickle-nearest-the-Wind," "Rorie," "Through-the-Corn-Yard," "Roaring Lion," "Mak Hector," "Robert the Rule," "Thief of Hell," and lastly, "Red Rover," who was her own controlling spirit. She said there were "many other devils," but the "Master Devil" was bigger and greater than any of them.

Thereafter, this person confessed, at considerable length, the various incantations or invocations used by her and the other witches of the "covin" for various wicked ends. One or two of these may here be quoted. For "raising wind" the invocation was :—

I knock this rag upon this stane (stone),
To raise the wind in the Devil's name ;
It sall not lie till I please again.

In shooting people with arrows, by order of the Devil, the invocation was as follows :—

I shoot you in the Devil's name,
He sall not win leall hame (get home safe) ;
And this sall be always trew (true),
There sall not be one bit of him lieiw (alive).

The invocation to be given by a witch when turning herself into the form of a hare was as follows :—

I sall go into ane Hare,
With sorrow and sich (sighing) and mickle care ;
And I sall go in the Devil's name,
I while (aye, and until) I come home again.

In her first "voyage" or "excursion" with a covin of witches Isobel stated they shot a man with the Devil's arrows, who was standing at the plough, and he fell dead on his face. She also, by the Devil's orders, shot a woman who was working in the field, and she also fell dead.

Again, in the winter of 1660, the Reverend Mr. Forbes, the minister of Auldearn, being sick, the witches, in order that he

might remain in his bed and continue in sickness, made a bag in which was contained the gall, flesh, and intestines of a toad, a handful of barley, the pairings of some toe and finger nails, a hare's liver, and some rags ; which they steeped in water, and Satan being present, the following incantation was then used :—

He is lying in his bed, he is lying seik (sick) and sair (sore) ;
Let him lye on his bed three months and three days mair (more),

whereby it was intended the minister should not recover his sickness for three months and three days thereafter.

Isobel further confessed having got many arrows from the Devil, with which she had killed a great number of men and women whose names she gave in full. She stated that his Satanic Majesty often beat, scourged, and abused the covin of witches, with which she was more nearly connected, and they used to cry out "Pity! Mercy, our Lord!" but "pity and mercy he had nane." He often gave them beautiful new coins, which looked bright, as if from the Mint ; but after keeping them some time they became useless, turning out bits of dirty earth or "muck."

I have endeavoured as succinctly and briefly as possible to summarise the contents of these four long and most extraordinary confessions of Isobel Gowdie. One of her companions, viz., Janet Broadhead, also submitted a confession before the Commission, and while it is considerably abbreviated, all the leading statements in Isobel Gowdie's four confessions are repeated *en omnibus*. Singularly enough, the criminal records of this time, although they have given us *ad longum* these extraordinary confessions, do not state the fate either of the two deponents or of any of the other members of the covin of witches named by them. There seems little doubt, however, that after the elaborate confessions and statements of traffic with Satan, and the admission of so many crimes and misdemeanours, the two leading members of the Auldearn band of witches met their death at the stake.

What are we to make of all these extraordinary statements, by these two ignorant and self-deluded women ? So far as my judgment goes, the only conclusion apparent is that they must be put down to delusion or hallucination. Both these women may have been clairvoyant and have seen spirits from the other sphere ; but if they did, any psychic gifts they possessed were ruined and distorted or destroyed by their belief in the power of incantations, of transformations into the likeness of animals, and the ability to ride on phantom horses through the air. That is the only solution of these extraordinary confessions and statements which occurs to me. The statement that each person in the witch circle was controlled by a familiar spirit whose name and attire are given, is the only one which goes to show that the deponents were *en rapport* with spiritual entities in the other world ; and if these statements had stood alone, they might have been held to give some indication of communion with mischievous, or idle, or even wicked spirits. But the whole matter standing as it does, the only possible explanation of these confessions appears to me to be that they were emitted by persons labouring under delusions as to their intercourse with the invisible world and their power to do mischief or destroy life by means of sorcery and incantation. The whole story is very redolent of the superstition and cruelty of this dark period of Scottish history.

With the Auldearn cases the series will close ; although only a small number of the trials recorded have been dealt with. For some time after 1663, prosecutions for witchcraft were frequent in Scotland, but with gradual enlightenment and the removal of superstition, more charitable views began to prevail, and even when witchcraft was held to have been proved, the punishment of death was not so frequently exacted. I find that Sir George MacKenzie records that, when a Justice Depute, he visited in prison a poor silly woman who had publicly confessed to being guilty of witchcraft, and he relates that, under a vow of secrecy, she told him she had not confessed because she was guilty, but being a poor creature who worked for her daily bread, she knew if she had denied the charges no one would have believed her, not a soul would give her work or bread, and they would probably have set dogs on her if she came near them. On her bended knees, and before Sir George, she called God to witness to her innocence. What wonder, therefore, that under an earlier and more cruel régime the infliction of torture brought forth admissions from the victims of any amount of sorcery or malpractices. It may be of interest to your readers to state in conclusion that the last important prosecution for witchcraft in Scotland, in the High Court, was on May 3rd, 1708, at the

Dumfries Circuit, against one Elspeth Rule. On this occasion the accused was found guilty only by a majority of the jury, sentenced to be branded on the cheek, and banished the country. The last execution for witchcraft in Scotland took place in a case tried in Ross-shire, before the Sheriff, in 1722. The victim was an insane old woman named Loh (or Loch), in Sutherlandshire, who was charged with having changed her daughter into a pony, upon which she had ridden; and the pony, having been shod by the Devil, her daughter, after re-transformation into a woman, remained ever after quite lame from the injuries to her feet. The chronicler of this case relates that this poor insane person was so unconcerned as to her fate that, the day being cold, she sat and warmed herself at the fire which was to burn her remains, while the other preparations for her execution were being made.

In supplement to these witchcraft series I shall next deal with two or three interesting psychological cases found recorded in the criminal annals of Scotland, including that of the notorious Major Weir.

A CHALLENGE TO MR. MASKELYNE.

A correspondent supplies the following information as to a challenge recently given to Mr. Maskelyne:—

Mr. Maskelyne's recent fulminations against Spiritualism (in the "Pall Mall Magazine" and the "Evening News") have brought down upon him the righteous wrath of our friend, "S. + S." Taking up the oft-repeated boast that Mr. Maskelyne and others like him, can do all that is done through mediums, our friend determined to put the matter to the test. He therefore, under the heading of "After Mr. Maskelyne's Scalp!—Spiritualists on the War Path.—A Challenge," sent a letter to the "Evening News," offering if Mr. Maskelyne, the next time he had a bodily pain of any sort, would communicate with him, to introduce a Spiritualist who—"without touching, questioning, or hypnotising the 'patient'"—would at once proceed to

- 1.—Indicate the precise locality of Mr. Maskelyne's pain;
- 2.—Describe the exact nature of the pain;
- 3.—State how and why the pain arose;
- 4.—Mention how long it had been present; and
- 5.—According to the degree of its severity, entirely remove, or immensely relieve the pain on the spot.

When this had been done, "S. + S." continued, Mr. Maskelyne would be asked to duplicate the "phenomenon" by trickery.

To this challenge the "Evening News," under the heading, "Mr. Maskelyne's Scalp.—His Reply to 'S. + S.'—What he is Prepared to Do," published a long letter from that gentleman, in the course of which he "freely admitted" that he would not be able to duplicate the phenomenon described. Thus far, so good; but Mr. Maskelyne proceeded to "trot out" afresh so many of his stale, weather-beaten, and long-since-demolished objections to Spiritualism, and charges against Spiritualists, that, as we have said, "S. + S." arose in his wrath, and administered a castigation to "our only pope" (as he christened him) which we hope may benefit the recipient by teaching him "better manners."

With curious ideas of fair play, the "Evening News" refused to allow any reply to the Piccadilly "pope" to appear in its columns. We are gratified, however, but not surprised, to find that our esteemed contemporary "Daylight" (Norwich) has not proved itself to be so bigoted. In its issues of the 2nd and 9th inst., under the title of "Mr. Maskelyne Scalped!—The Suppressed Rejoinder," it publishes our friend's article in full. We advise our readers to provide themselves with copies. For "shot and shell" against Spiritualism's "arch-heretic," James Payne, Victor Hugo, Cicero, Florence Marryat, W. H. Edwards, Mark Twain, Artemus Ward, Pope, George Bernard Shaw, and (last, but not least) Edward Maitland, are all—in turn, and in the order in which we have named them—laid under contribution; and the "tomahawking" (to revert to the original metaphor) is as complete as it is merciless. The healing medium who will be put forward to meet Mr. Maskelyne is Mr. W. H. Edwards, of the Chepstow Hall Society, Peckham.

VOLUME OF "LIGHT" FOR 1895.—Now ready, handsomely bound in half roan, the volume of "LIGHT" for 1895. Price, post free in the United Kingdom, 15s. 9d. Early application must be made, as the supply is limited. Offices of "LIGHT," 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL PUZZLE.*

That the problems of a woman's nature, ordinarily regarded, are many and deep is a proposition that no student of "The Journal of Marie Bashkirtseff," for instance, will attempt to controvert. When, however (as told in the volume before us), they take a pronouncedly abnormal and psychological form, the mystery thickens, and the puzzle grows more insoluble than ever. Mollie Fancher appears to have been, in her youth, a favourable specimen of the American girl, slender and graceful in form, bright, accomplished, and ambitious in character. It was about the time when her scholastic attainments led her to expect to graduate, that the accident happened which changed the entire course of her life. She was but just recovering from the effects of being thrown from a runaway horse, when another catastrophe, in the shape of a fall from a train-car, overtook her. The resulting injuries were such that her case was several times given up as hopeless by her medical attendants. Then came a series of "trances and spasms," culminating in what can be only inadequately described as a "trance," which, incredible as it may seem, extended over a period of nine years. During those nine years she wrote upwards of 6,500 letters, did a vast amount of knitting and embroidery, and a great deal of what is described as very beautiful wax-work. During this time, too, she exhibited the faculty of clairvoyance in an intensely lucid degree; and "five other Mollie Fanchers" made their appearance. We are not concerned to explain the phenomenon indicated by this phrase; the advocates of the various theories of "subliminal consciousness," "multiplex personality," and "abnormal cerebration" are free to pass their own criticisms upon the case. The fact remains that, to quote the book, five different personalities or "selves" of Miss Fancher were manifested, severally distinguished as "Sunbeam," "Idol," "Rosebud," "Pearl," and "Ruby." The significant feature of these manifestations was that each of the personalities seems to have been more or less identified with some previous parts of Miss Fancher's own life. We may give one example. "Rosebud" appeared to have been representative of Miss Fancher's life up to the age of seven. It was while exhibiting this "life" or "personality" that Miss Fancher one day wrote a letter, the composition and character of which were just such as would have been expected from a child of seven. Further investigation revealed the fact that it was as nearly as possible like a letter the patient had written some eight years previously, when herself a child of about the same age represented by "Rosebud." The faculties of clairvoyance and prevision exhibited by Miss Fancher during this period were, however, productive of the greater interest amongst students of the case, and it is with examples of these faculties that the book is mainly occupied.

It would be unfair to the writer of the volume to quote further from it. We may, therefore, content ourselves by remarking that it is a work of singular interest, and, whether as a psychical or pathological study, the case of Mollie Fancher must rank prominently amongst those examples of the abnormal in nature which have puzzled alike doctors of medicine and doctors of divinity. It may be of interest to add that the book is not written from the Spiritualistic standpoint.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF NORTH WALES.

A debate took place at the above college, on the 15th inst., on the question: "Is Spiritualism a Fact?" Mr. J. R. Prytherch introduced the subject, relating some of the experiments of Mr. Traill Taylor in spirit-photography, of Mr. Crookes, and of Dr. Oliver Lodge. Mr. O. W. Griffith replied. He admitted fully that many mediums and believers in Spiritualism were honest and intelligent people, but thought the phenomena could be explained by self-deception, unconscious muscular action, optical illusions, &c. Mr. Jenkyn Thomas, M.A., said that the arrogance of some scientists in declaring that anything they could not explain was contrary to the laws of Nature, was quite unwarranted, and that the evidence in favour of Spiritualism was worthy of credence. Mr. W. H. Hill stated that he had known several mediums amongst his own friends, and could vouch for the genuineness of some of the phenomena from personal experience. He also pointed out the insufficiency of Mr. Griffith's theories to account for many of the facts. On a division, sixteen voted in favour of the truth of Spiritualism and twenty-eight against it; many did not vote.

* "Mollie Fancher, the Brooklyn Enigma." By Abram H. Dailey. (Eagle Book Printing Department, Brooklyn, N.Y.)

OFFICE OF "LIGHT," 2, DUKE STREET, ADELPHI,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23rd. 1895.

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

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ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.—Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 5s. Column, £2 2s. Page, £4. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

Light.

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.
PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke Street, Adelphi, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and not to the Editor. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed "—— & Co."

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PALMISTRY AND DOGBERRY.

We want to be as respectful as we can to our magistrates, but they do not always assist our praiseworthy efforts and desires, and we confess that Mr. Alderman Green, at the Mansion House last week, put our respect to a severe test. He had to try a case in which a certain Sophia Robson was charged with telling fortunes by Palmistry, and he fined her £25, or one month. The decision was bad enough, but the reason given for it was absolutely comical. A celebrated judge once said that a knowing judge never gave his reason for a decision. It would have been well for Mr. Alderman Green if he had remembered the shrewd remark and acted upon it. But the good dull Englishman had to have his fling, and this is what he said, according to the "Daily Chronicle":—

Mr. Alderman Green said he could not have any doubt whatever with regard to the fact of the prisoner carrying on business in Queen-street for the purpose of telling fortunes. Ignorant people, and people with some amount of intelligence and education, had a great fondness for having what they called their fortunes told, and they were ready and willing to pay money for what was really nothing more or less than sheer nonsense. It was right and proper that the law should step in for the protection of those people. He fined the prisoner £25, or one month.

We gladly embalm these memorable words in these columns. The daily newspaper goes the way of all waste papers, but our "LIGHT" never goes out: and we should like those who come after us to know the special kind of "nonsense" that could be talked in 1895.

Boiled down, the worthy magistrate's decision comes to this—that the law should step in and protect people who want half-a-crown's worth of nonsense; for that was the amount paid. The poor man admitted that not only ignorant people but "people with some amount of intelligence and education had a great fondness" for this particular way of spending two-and-six; just as some other people have a great fondness for half-a-crown's worth of Empire or Alhambra, or half-a-crown's worth of cigars, or half-a-crown's worth of feathers for an Old Kent-road bonnet, all of which many reasonable people, and some of which even Mr. Alderman Green, might regard as "sheer nonsense." Are we to understand, then, that Mr. Alderman Green proposes to go on the rampage against all the ignorant or fairly-educated and intelligent people who occasionally play the fool with, or experiment with, half-a-crown? Are all these people to have the law "step in" for their "protection"? If so, his will be a busy life, and his court will have to be considerably enlarged. "Protection" should mean defence, and defence against compulsion; but no one pretended that Sophia Robson ever tried to compel anybody to plank down half-a-crown and listen to

her prognostications; and we maintain that in this matter the word "protection" was about as much out of place as Mr. Alderman Green seemed to be.

We may as well say at once that we know nothing of Sophia Robson, that we never heard of her before, and that we do not care if we never hear of her again, but, as lovers of justice, with a bias in favour of common-sense, we say emphatically that her conviction was tainted with crass absurdity.

Take a case in an entirely different sphere; not the Alhambra or the Empire with their rancid "nonsense," but the ranters' Little Bethel round the corner. In that sanctuary of bigoted ignorance and ignorant bigotry, a man periodically appears who tells fortunes on a very grand scale indeed. He knows who will go to heaven, and he knows how to get them there; and poor people, with not much "intelligence and education," pay half-a-crown a quarter to get their eternal fortunes told. We are not jesting. It is the actual fact, and this "ranter" persuades the people that he knows and can perform: but Archdeacon Farrar thinks, and perhaps Mr. Alderman Green thinks, this is "sheer nonsense." Does he propose to ask the law to "step in for the protection" of Mr. Howler's seat-holders against the "sheer nonsense" of his assurances? Not a bit of it. He knows there would be no "sheer nonsense" that could equal that.

So across the way, at the Roman Catholic Church. At the door there is a font of holy water; there is also a money-box. Watch the priest at the altar. By some holy incantation, he is pretending, or let us say professing, to elevate the body and blood of God in the form of transubstantiated bread and wine. The people kneel, and think they get some saving grace—and pay. What does Mr. Alderman Green think of that as a matter of "sheer nonsense"? Does he propose to haul the magic man from the altar to the Mansion House? If not, why not? We can assure him there would be no end to it.

The worst of it is that not only "nonsense" but injustice taints this judgment. It is notorious that what is called "Palmistry" is a fashionable amusement, and an amusement fast blossoming into a profession. At fancy fairs, bazaars and the like, practisers of Palmistry are the rage, and thousands of half-crowns pass every week during the season. As Sophia Robson said, and very naturally said; "I did not know Palmistry was illegal. It is practised in Bond-street and Albert Gate"; and, very naturally too, she quoted Mr. Asquith, who holds that Palmistry is not illegal, but that imposition should be guarded against. Precisely; but who is to judge of imposition? Let us say that the Archbishop of Canterbury is the genuine article, and that the "ranter" is guilty of "sheer nonsense." But who is to decide? Besides, the whole thing may be only amusing pastime, quite worth two-and-six in the opinion of some people. Why "step in" to "protect" the people who ask *not* to be protected—who, in fact, like such things, whether in fashionable Bond-street or more matter of fact Cheapside?

But what if it is not all "sheer nonsense"? What if there is some curious subtile connection between the lines of the hand and the character and life? People used to say, and do say still, that there is also some subtile connection between the bumps on the head and the character and one's chances in life: and some other people think that is "sheer nonsense." Would Mr. Alderman Green fine the phrenologist who took half-a-crown for a "chart" and a delineation and advice?

We submit to the worthy Alderman that he does not know everything; that what is "sheer nonsense" to him may be a very curious study to others; and that, though the Mansion House is a very important place, it is hardly the arena to which we should take a question which was much more subtile than a disputed are.

THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

MISS X.— OF "BORDERLAND."

BY OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE.

That a lady should be a medium, exercise deliberately and openly her gifts as a medium, and yet, if not deny, at least not admit, that she or any other medium is a medium, is surely one of the Mysteries of Mediumship.

For this reason I was very curious to have a word or two with Miss X.

Miss X. is herself a mystery. Whether her desire to remain so can long continue to receive gratification is doubtful. To-day she is Miss X., co-editor with Mr. Stead, of "Borderland," and a Psychical Researcher of note and success; to-morrow she may be—well, X stands for a quantity unknown, and one thing at any rate is certain to my mind, that this very clever, keen-witted, and logical-minded woman is a potent factor with whom Spiritualists before long will have to reckon; and it will be as well if they can reckon with her on their own side.

Our interview arose from some correspondence about a little girl with whom had been associated some remarkable disturbances that seemed to point to powerful incipient mediumship; and Miss X., on, as I thought, the insufficient ground (although, of course, I could not dispute the point with her) that she knew the original and innate depravity of the youthful feminine heart, suggested that a good sound whipping might lead to a prosaic solution of the mystery. A little nettled, the more so as I had just had another letter, from the scene of the phenomena, informing me that a member of the Psychical Research Society was investigating the occurrences, but "had not yet discovered any evidence of trickery," I, in turn, suggested that Miss X. should join this investigator in his work, feeling sure that her birch-rod would prove a valuable accessory in his quest for fraud. Thereupon, Miss X., somewhat aggrieved, told me that I was very much mistaken; and to learn how that could be I called on her at the house in Pall Mall East, where on three floors they cure you of physical ills by Matteian remedies and other things, and on the top floor of all, if you successfully run the gauntlet of the other three and survive the climb, a psychical diagnosis further awaits you. Miss X., however, assured me that the relation is merely geographical. Here is the office of "Borderland," and here Miss X. and her secretaries twain work the oracle for that distinguished publication.

"Please don't suppose," she began, "that my birch-rod proposition is an *ex parte* or *a priori* conclusion. It was based 'on information received.'"

"But you did not say so, you know."

"No. I am afraid I treated the matter a little flip-pantly, and gave a wrong impression. There is another assumption to correct. You think I do not believe in mediums. That is a mistake. I have seen a great many mediums in whom I most emphatically don't believe, and so, no doubt, have you; but when I dispute nine cases out of ten, it is because of the *reverence*, which is more than faith, that I have for the tenth. My attitude is not one of infidelity, but of agnosticism, and this for the sake of others."

"I am really very sorry ———"

"Do not say so. I am myself to blame; but I cannot help feeling that if I and the Spiritualists could come into a little closer contact, and know each other better, there would be a better feeling towards me. Till I came across Mr. Myers and the Society for Psychical Research I never had occasion for the criticism which is now assumed to be my *métier*, but in relation to S. P. R. work I occupy the position, unique in that body, of being one who has not only had experiences, but (from the fact of my having received a man's education) the

training enabling me to criticise them. For those who believe, other people's experiences are superfluous; those who don't, must, or should be, sure of their own ground. I have been privileged to suggest to many who formerly despised psychical research to at least *inquire*. They have believed my statements as to my own experiences; they have also believed me logical and level-headed, and have found such a combination suggestive. There are many points in an inquiry like ours which I feel to be too personal, too sacred, for careless handling and public discussion. On these I am silent—not from want of faith, but because the unseen is too real, too vivid for mere curiosity and speculation. It is in no spirit of egotism that I dwell thus at length upon my own views, but because I feel that I am somewhat misunderstood by those whom I would wish to regard me as a fellow worker rather than as a wielder of the birch-rod."

"I am corrected. We are not so much at variance after all?"

"In essentials—the desire for truth," said Miss X. earnestly, "we are surely in unity; in non-essentials we may well claim liberty; in all things I, and I am sure you too, would cordially extend as you have a right to claim—charity."

The atmosphere being thus pleasantly cleared, I felt it was time to learn something from Miss X. of those personal experiences to which she had referred, and which I was sure would prove of very high interest.

"I have not," she said, "reached the point of regarding myself as the medium of beings in another state, but it is certain that there are abnormal powers associated with me which I have as yet not satisfactorily accounted for."

"And you may still come round to our way of thinking?"

"I am far from saying that that is impossible; but my position is that every natural explanation should be exhausted before the theory favoured by Spiritualists is accepted."

"Yes, I know."

"These strong intuitive and clairvoyant powers have exhibited themselves since I was a child of three. Not long since, going through the note-books of a deceased relative, I came across this entry, having reference to myself at the age mentioned: 'Baby cried without reason, afterwards asked if her mother were ill.' I took the trouble to inquire carefully into this matter, and found that on the very day to which the entry related, I being at the time sixty miles away from home, my mother was taken suddenly and seriously ill, as the result of an accident, the illness ending in her death. That is the first recorded instance of my seer faculty. The earliest experiences that I can remember were of a class that would now be explained by the theory of thought-transference. I was living among relatives who did not understand the state of affairs, and who alternated between the supposition that I was ill, and the supposition that I was naughty, so that sometimes I was met with rice-pudding, and sometimes with such punishments as having to learn French grammar and German irregular verbs."

"Did it never occur to your friends that, under the circumstances, a good whipping might be a useful antidote?"

Miss X. laughed good-naturedly. "No; but you see they were inexperienced, and did not know the right way to go to work; so that, when I saw things that other people did not see, I used to have to learn French poetry, and I can now recite hundreds of lines of Racine in consequence; and when I heard things which were inaudible to anybody else, I was generally rewarded with solitary confinement. The natural result was that by the time I was seven or eight I learned to hold my tongue. Being an only girl, practically an only child, I led a very lonely

life among the Yorkshire hills, living very much out of doors, with a great love of nature, and probably growing more romantic than was good for me, and naturally all this led to the development of the tendency which I have already spoken of, the tendency of seeing and hearing what others about me neither saw nor heard; and the fact of the gift, or whatever it was, being snubbed or punished, also helped no doubt in its development. There was no one I could consult on the subject, and the feeling I had about it was that it was naughty, and not to be encouraged; but, in spite of all this, I did derive certain advantages from it. For instance, I used to find that in games of skill, such as chess, or humbler amusements like 'quartettes,' I could see what was in my opponent's mind, or what was coming, and so could invariably win. I had only boys for companions then, and I could read the minds of some of them like books."

"Do you read men's minds now?"

Miss X. turned her cold, clear eye upon me. "More easily, I think, than some of them would like to know," she replied with significance.

"Oh," I said hastily, "let us get on with the story."

(To be continued.)

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED
DECEMBER 31ST, 1894.

In presenting our eleventh Annual Report, we feel that our first duty is to place on record our sense of the loss, which we sustained very early in the year, of our esteemed friend and colleague, Mr. W. Paice, who, at the time of his departure, was a member of this Council and Editor of "LIGHT." On January 22nd he was present at our *Conversazione* in St. James's Hall, and though in feeble health at the time, there was no apparent reason to suspect that his work here was so near its close; but two days later he suddenly expired in the presence of Miss Paice, who resided with him. Some of the members of the Alliance will remember with satisfaction that they availed themselves of the opportunity to testify their esteem for the father, by assisting the daughter in the painful circumstances in which she had thus been so unexpectedly placed.

The periodical Assemblies in the Rooms of the Alliance, at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, have been well sustained, and much interest has been manifested in the proceedings. At these gatherings free discussion is invited, and inquirers are encouraged to state any difficulties which may have occurred to them, and to ask for counsel and information. The following meetings were held during the year, and we desire to express our thanks to the friends who thus gave us their kind assistance:—

1894.

- Jan. 8.—MR. R. HARTE: "The Proper Function of Spiritualism."
 Feb. 5.—REV. J. PAGE HOPPS: "Professor Tyndall's Excursions into Spiritualism."
 „ 19.—"Talks with Mr. Morse's Controls."
 Mar. 19.—MISS ROWAN VINCENT: "Spiritualism of the Future."
 May 1.—MR. MORSE: "The Gates Ajar." Trance Address.
 Nov. 5.—MR. MORSE: "Spirit Manifestations." Trance Address.
 Dec. 3.—REV. J. PAGE HOPPS: "Dreams."
 „ 17.—MR. E. W. WALLIS: "Life Problems in the Light of Spiritualism."

On the 8th of April we tried the experiment of a Sunday evening service, which was held in St. Andrew's Hall (Newman-street). The service was conducted by Mrs. Hardinge Britten, who gave a very able address on the question: "What new thing has Spiritualism taught, and what good thing has it done?" There was a large attendance, and the experiment was in every way a success.

Perhaps the most notable events of the year in connection with the work of the Alliance were the two *Conversaciones* in St. James's Hall, at each of which there was a very large attendance. At the first of these, held on January 22nd, Mr. F. W. H. Myers kindly attended, and read "An Unpublished

Manuscript by Mr. Stainton Moses on the Identity of Spirit, which he supplemented by some sympathetic and appropriate remarks; and at the second, held on September 27th, we were so fortunate as to secure the presence of Mr. W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., M.R.I.A., Professor of Physics at the Royal College of Science for Ireland, who delivered an important address on "Spiritualism and Science," which has since been published in "LIGHT," and which, considerably extended and annotated, will shortly be issued in book form. This address was greatly appreciated, and seeing that in all probability it would never have been written but for the kindness of Professor Barrett in yielding to our urgent solicitations, we think ourselves justified in hoping that in this matter it will be generally recognised that we were happily instrumental in rendering an important service to the Cause.

To both Mr. Myers and Professor Barrett the cordial thanks of the Alliance are due for their very special help at these very pleasant reunions; and we also desire at the same time to gratefully acknowledge the valuable aid, contributed by voluntary helpers, in sustaining the usual excellence of the musical programme, as well as by the Messrs. Brinsmead in their loan, on each occasion, of a grand piano.

We regret to note a disposition, on the part of some of our older members, to retire—presumably on the ground that they are no longer able to take an active part in our work, and that they ought, therefore, to give place to younger friends. We respectfully suggest to them that this is a mistake. By remaining with us they give us the consciousness of their sympathy; and, moreover, their fees of membership are greatly needed if our labours are to be prosecuted in the future with the same success as has attended them in the past. We earnestly beg of them, therefore, to put aside all thoughts of severance.

Fortunately, new members are being added to the Alliance, led to us by the growth of interest in our subject which is becoming more and more apparent. These gladly avail themselves of the books in our Lending Library; but—they want some personal experience; they would like to witness something in the way of phenomena, however simple. We suggest that they should form private circles with their personal friends, but frequently this is altogether impossible, and so their desires go unsatisfied. Perhaps the case could be met by some of our mediumistic friends holding their séances in the rooms of the Alliance, and admitting one or two inquirers at each sitting. We invite them to give to this suggestion their favourable consideration.

Our valuable Library continues to be much appreciated. It contains a large number of standard works on Spiritualism and kindred subjects, and new books of sterling worth are added as they appear. Mr. B. D. Godfrey, the librarian, is in attendance at Duke-street every day from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.—except on Saturdays, when the hours are from 10 to 2—for the reception of visitors, and to answer general inquiries. He will afford members access to the Reading-room, in which will be found most of the current periodical literature of Spiritualism published at home and abroad.

In conclusion, we confidently appeal to the work of the past year, in all its various departments, as a title to the confidence of members, and to a continued and increasing support.

Signed on behalf of the Council,

E. DAWSON ROGERS, *President*.

2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C.

February, 1895.

MR. JESSE SHEPARD.—As a *souvenir* of Mr. Shepard's work in Berlin he has just been presented with an illuminated address by the leading members of the Berlin Vereinigung Sphinx. This exquisite piece of art work is symbolical and mystical in design. At the top is a large double eagle, the Prussian emblem; at the left an idealistic portrait of Sappho holding a harp; at the bottom a finely wrought scene representing the new Reichstag Palace, the bridge near it, and the house in which Mr. Shepard resided whilst in Berlin. The address is in German, and begins with the beautiful inscription: "Dem Künstler von Gottes Gnaden," above which is a cherub offering a wreath of the symbolical laurel. Below the inscription are the signatures of the donors, including the president of the society, Dr. Dörr; the secretary, Herr Max Rahn, editor of the "Uebersinnliche Welt"; Egbert Müller, Ph.D.; Herr A. Weinholz, Baron Victor von Alten, and many others. Mr. Shepard is at present in Montreux, Switzerland, where he has been very ill for some time, but is now convalescent.

"THE UNKNOWN WORLD."

With its February issue "The Unknown World" (James Elliott and Co.) commences a new volume. As for the contents, the editorial paragraphs under the title "Within and Without" are briefer than usual, a condition, however, which is compensated for by their being genuinely bright and felicitous. The translation of D'Eckartshausen's letters, entitled "The Cloud upon the Sanctuary," by Madame de Steiger, is continued. Miss E. Kislingbury contributes a thoughtful and suggestive essay on "Form" in its various relationships. This is followed by an admirable poem (unsigned), entitled "The Master." The Rev. R. W. Corbet, whose power lies in the interpretation of types and symbols, appeals to readers with an article on the more profound aspects of the Christian sacraments. Mr. Edward Maitland concludes his "Chapters in Exposition of the New Gospel of Interpretation." The Rev. G. W. Allen, whose previous papers have been followed with considerable interest in various quarters, commences a new series of essays, "Some Considerations towards a Philosophy of God and Man," a sufficiently large and deep subject. "Respiro" continues his dissertations on "The Brotherhood of the New Life," dealing with "The Impending World-Crisis." Other items of the magazine under review comprise "Thought the Quickener," a hitherto unpublished poem, by T. Lake Harris, and "The Great Elixir," a legend from the French.

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.]

Bishops Differ.

SIR,—It is much to be regretted that the Bishop of London, as you informed us in "LIGHT," of February 9th, has withdrawn the licence of a London curate on the ground that he had recommended praying for the dead. Such was not the practice of the talented Samuel Wilberforce, late Bishop of Winchester and friend of Stainton Moses. On July 14th, 1871, Commander B. H. Key wrote to Bishop Wilberforce complaining of his having permitted the following lines to be inscribed on a tombstone in the consecrated portion of Ryde cemetery :—

"Eternal rest give unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him."

To which letter, also subscribed by some of Commander Key's friends, the Bishop made the following reply :—

Denbies, Dorking, July 17th, 1871.

Gentlemen,—I have given my best attention to your communication, but nothing which you have urged affects my judgment that the Church of England has nowhere disallowed the words I have permitted to be employed, and their disallowance would, therefore, have been a breach of charity. I cannot grant your concluding prayer, &c., &c.—S. WINTON.

To Commander B. H. Key and others.

And what says "good" Bishop Heber on the same point? I quote from "Diaries of a Lady of Quality," a Miss Wynn, daughter of Sir Watkyn Williams Wynn. Bishop Heber remarks :—

We know the practice of praying for the dead to have been universal, or nearly so, among the Christians little more than 150 years after our Saviour. It is spoken of as the usual custom by Tertullian and Epiphanius. Augustine, in his Confessions, has given a beautiful prayer which he himself used for his deceased mother, Monica. And among Protestants, Luther and Dr. Johnson are eminent instances of the same conduct. I have accordingly been myself in the habit for some years of commending on some occasions, as after receiving the Sacraments, &c., my lost friends by name to God's goodness and compassion through His Son, as what can do them no harm, and may, and I hope will, be of service to them.

On almost all the subterranean tombs of the Catacombs of Rome, where the primitive Christians are buried, there is still a prayer for the dead, R.I.P., which means, "May he rest in peace." And there are prayers for the dead in the English Church service, which are so often repeated ;—"Be not angry with us for ever"; "Finally, beat down Satan under our feet," &c.

One regrets that this want of toleration should proceed from one who, in a very notable book, published in 1861, called "Essays and Reviews," containing seven chapters written by seven men of the highest intellectual standard of the day, four

of whom were clergymen, then found it his duty to chant the praise of toleration, which he now repudiates, thus : "At the Reformation an entirely new lesson commenced—the lesson of toleration. Toleration is the very opposite of dogmatism." In those days the Bishop had much need of toleration towards himself, for in these same Essays he had written :—

If geology proves to us that we must not interpret the first chapter of Genesis literally ; if historical investigations shall show us that inspiration, however it may protect the doctrine, was not empowered to protect the narrative of the inspired writers, from occasional inaccuracy ; if careful criticism shall prove that there have been occasionally interpolations and forgeries in that Book, as in many others, the results should still be welcome.

The above, written by the Bishop, is a specimen of the general opinions laid down in this book, from the ninth edition of which I have been quoting. And never scarcely, since the stupendous discovery of the grand magician and Romish priest, Copernicus, and the teachings of his first logical disciple, Luther, have opinions such as the above, emanating from the leading clergy of our land, caused a greater sensation. And, in these days of general fearless research, it is difficult to imagine the anger which this language of evolution from the clergy then caused among a certain class.

But even in those days of triumph and reproof, in this same Essay owned by the Bishop, which he proudly designated "The Education of the World," the Bishop uttered a sinister prophecy concerning himself. Writing of certain infatuated people, he says of them : "They set up a conventional code of duty, founded on their own experience, which they extend to all men." And, moreover, however wise the Bishop may be in drawing conclusions from the past, his sentiments regarding the future are, I am inclined to believe, sometimes utterly untrustworthy ; for writing in this same Essay of another set of persons, whom he would regard as infatuated, he said, in 1861 : "The discussions on table-turning a few years ago illustrated the want of intellects able to govern themselves. The whole analogy of physical science was not enough to induce suspension of judgment, which was effected in a week by the dictum of a known philosopher." Alas, poor philosopher Faraday ! Where is he now, and who now believes in his "dictum" of "muscular action" as accounting for spirit rappings ? I wonder if the Bishop still holds to that old opinion !

WM. R. TOMLINSON, M.A.

"A Modern Priestess of Isis."

SIR,—Will you allow a dispassionate reader of "A Modern Priestess of Isis" to give some impressions of the book ? The first is, regret that it should ever have seen the light, in view of the fact that the subject cannot make any reply, and also that the bitter feelings of the author are plainly to be seen on every page. Mons. Solovyoff does not, to my mind, appear to be by any means accurate ; thus, he gives a letter of Madame Blavatsky in which she speaks of the "pagan funeral" of a certain baron. On subsequent pages this becomes a "pagan baron" instead of a "pagan funeral." In Mr. Sinnett's "Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky," page 267, &c., an account is given of the phenomenon of the miniatures of the "Master" and herself. This is also given by Mons. Solovyoff, where the details are far fuller than in the first-named book. He even gives whole conversations ; nevertheless, he omits one thing of personal interest to himself which is recorded by Madame de Jelikowsky, who says : "Mons. Solovyoff fixed his eyes on a corner of the room, saying he saw something like a ball of fire, of oval form, looking like a radiant golden and bluish egg." He also omits to say that a quarter of an hour elapsed between the second and last opening of the locket, during which time Madame Jelikowsky says *not one of the three present removed their eyes* (the italics are hers), when it was found her sister's portrait had disappeared. The whole book shows such animus that one puts it down with the question, what was the cause of the intense dislike of this author to the subject ? Though an outsider, I feel convinced there was some quarrel between this man and woman, the cause of which has not been made public and which might account for the tone of "A Modern Priestess of Isis." One thing more ; we should like to ask Mons. Solovyoff if he took down, at the time, notes of the conversations, &c., as he gives them verbatim in his book.

MURIEL.

Animal Life in the Spiritual World.

SIR,—Surely Spiritualists ought not to be in doubt as to whether animals exist in a spiritual state. However, Mr. Barraclough, his article notwithstanding, seems to be in much doubt about it.

The vision of the clairvoyante who saw the spirits of concupiscent persons in the shape of dogs, and barking like dogs, must surely have been merely a vision, a symbolical presentation of a truth, and not an objective fact. Yet it seems to be a fact that animals do exist in a spiritual state, whether permanently, as animals, or temporarily, does not appear. Yet A. J. Davis and other mediums bear testimony to the fact of the spiritual existence of animals.

One of our spirit friends affirms that there are birds in her plane of being, but not beasts. The experience of other Spiritualists and mediums would be interesting. My pet theory is that the spiritual part of all lower life is successively re-incarnated in higher and higher forms, from the *anubis* upwards, culminating in man; after which there is no retrogression, the circle of consciousness being complete; and man thus being able to launch out on an independent self-conscious spiritual existence. This is, however, only theory, but the idea is not contradictory to the *modus operandi* of Nature, as we know it.

Mr. Barraclough's assertion that the lower creation has devolved from man, instead of man being evolved from the lower creation, is simply contradictory of the known facts of science.

Nothing further need be said.

46, Jameson-street, Dennistoun, Glasgow. J. S. HILL.

SIR,—Whether or not there is animal life in the spiritual world we may, perhaps, not know until we get there—for mediums are not more in accord on this point than on many another. But there is one thing we may know now, which is, that to describe evil beings with low passions and desires as having been dominated by "the spiritual principle which is the soul of a dog," is to pass an uncalled-for insult upon that noble animal, man's faithful and intelligent friend, and often his co-worker. Granted that men are often gluttonous, sensual, and the rest; but dogs are not so. Animals in their natural state seek but to satisfy legitimately the various wants that belong to their natures; not until they become demoralised by contact with man do they become bestial, like the cat and wretched pig.

Hence, I for one could not accept as true the vision of Mr. Barraclough's medium, though she herself may be perfectly veracious.

E. M. BEEBY.

Mediums and Mediumship.

SIR,—Since entering upon the study of Spiritualism, my attention has naturally turned towards mediums and mediumship, as upon these is Spiritualism based. At the initial stage of my inquiries I found that mediums were held to be rather weak-minded than otherwise (see "The Spirit Circle and the Laws of Mediumship," by Emma Hardinge, pp. 5 and 11). To my mind this seemed the opposite of complimentary, and an actual deterrent to any self-respecting individuals who might be gifted with mediumistic powers, and likely to prevent them from exercising their gifts. Still, as I was only a novice I laid these thoughts aside for future consideration, but time and experience have only deepened and strengthened those *early thoughts*, for I find that mediums are treated as of lower mental powers than those who are the sitters.

This comes out in the conditions being pretty much adjusted to suit the sitters; the suiting of the medium being subsidiary, and then, when, as a natural outcome, poor results are obtained, the weary exhausted medium is looked at askance, and inwardly doubts are felt that the estimation is right after all.

Now this teaching is far-reaching and mischievous in its results. Who cares to take up the rôle of being considered weak-minded, and consequently the object of insufferable contempt? So mediumship loses its best recruits, and Spiritualism lags correspondingly behind. And apart from the injustice of this teaching, what can be thought of a belief which is based upon the actions and utterances of weak-minded individuals? For my own part, I hold the generality of mediums to be the opposite of weak-minded, just as I hold a finely-adjusted balance to be superior to one that considerably stays where you put it, irrespective of justness of weight. I hold them to be the opposite, just as I hold a nature that is responsive to

every thrill of pleasure or of pain superior to one that requires something akin to an earthquake to make it responsive to the movement. To me they bring the glad truth that beyond this life my loved ones are as real as ever they were here, and that I can hold sweet communion with the dwellers of that fair land. Therefore I hold in high esteem those who have given me such sweets to counteract the ills of life, who have chased away the gloom with bright sunshine, who have replaced my "hope so" with "I know."

MATTHEW FORBES.

26, Forfar-road, Dundee.

Photographing Hypnotised Persons.

SIR,—With respect to the par on p. 50, February 2nd, and the letter by Mr. Coates, on p. 82, February 16th, I should like to say that the negatives described in the Turin paper may be genuine, but the result may not have been caused by the sitter having been hypnotised. Negatives of the same character have been obtained in this country through various mediums, while the sitters were in their normal condition.

Negatives have also been obtained in which the "misty white matter" has appeared in the picture in uniform widths, as if from a web of thin material, such as fine muslin, yet the misty matter was itself imperceptible to ordinary vision.

The misty matter so often seen at séances is sometimes opaque, sometimes transparent or semi-transparent. An incident may illustrate. At a small tea-party, Mr. Eglinton, who was one of the guests, was asked to give a séance. He went into a recess in the room and became entranced. Coming out in that condition he threw his hands forward toward me and made two or three passes, when luminous matter seemed to come from the palms of his hands and from his fingers, and the matter grew and expanded till it surrounded me like a small bell-shaped tent. I could see Mr. Eglinton and all the sitters; it seemed as if I were looking at them through a thick veil of very fine material; but my daughter, who was seated nearest me, could not see me at all; I was entirely obscured from her view by the misty matter which surrounded me. If a sensitised plate had been exposed at the time, would my portrait have appeared when the plate was developed?

A. G.

Is Spiritualism a Religion?

SIR,—I am glad to see that Mr. R. M. Theobald has in your issue of February 2nd given us a statement of his views, although I would have liked if his exposition had been clearer and less dogmatic. It does not at all matter, so far as the present controversy is concerned, what any or all of the disputants *consider* Spiritualism or a Religion to be, but it does concern us very much to know what they are prepared to *prove*. Nothing could be easier than to prove that Spiritualism is a religion if there was any truth in that assertion. All that you would require to do would be to state the tenets of Spiritualism and to show that these were a product springing from that source and no other. But we who hold that it is not a religion maintain that negative view only until the contrary is proven. We cannot be expected to prove a negative. We wait for some arguments, for some genuine proofs, for something more than mere dogmatic assertions, all of which go for nothing in a controversy of this kind. However, I must admit that Mr. Hewes has at last stated what he believes is a new truth, that Spiritualism (modern Spiritualism, I presume he means) has revealed. This new truth is "the knowledge that in the next world progress is eternal." There are three points to notice in this; first—that it is a *knowledge*. Now I should like very much to know how Mr. Hewes can know this or, indeed, how any so-called spirit can know it (if it is derived from spirit communion). A spirit, like a man in the flesh, can only know what he has had experience of, and as no spirit has lived for ever, how can he have knowledge of eternal progress? He can only say, I have progressed, therefore I believe I will progress. And all mankind can say the same with the same emphasis and on the same grounds exactly as a disembodied spirit can; indeed, thinking men have said so for thousands of years. The belief is as old as Plato, and can be traced in the writings of that philosopher. "The next world" probably means the condition after what is called death. But the mere alteration of our condition of sense apprehension cannot possibly make a new world, as Mr. Hewes and his brother religious Spiritualists seem to think. They repudiate the teachings of the Bible, but their ideas of a future state are entirely derived from it and

from the least philosophical portion of it. At the time when the Bible was written, mankind generally believed that the earth was flat; and that underneath was the abode of demons, and above the sky the home of the gods. Paul, one of its most philosophic writers, says, however, "the kingdom of heaven is within you"—that is to say, it is a mode of apprehension, not a place at all. Religious Spiritualists talk of the going away to a spiritual world of the spirit at death, and of its return to hold communion with us. Of course, if these expressions are used metaphorically no fault can be found with them, but it is to be feared that the ignorant take them in a literal sense.

I do not know that I can reply better to Mr. Hewes's query, as to whether I consider that the proper definition of a religion for our time is given in the New Testament definition, than by saying, Yes, I do. And I consider the definition as complete. Of course the words must be taken as expressing all benevolent action springing from love, not helping fatherless and widows merely. To quote from Mr. R. M. Theobald, "Love is religion, as it is the witness for a Divine element in man, for God is love."

In one of the first letters of Mr. Hewes he treated me as an ill-informed person, who should go and learn what the trance speakers had to say. Amongst others he mentioned Mr. Morse. On Sunday evening last I had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Morse give an address on this very subject, and he (or his controls) said in the most positive manner "that if we took the words 'a religion' to mean what they were generally understood to imply, then Spiritualism was not a religion. But if we extended the meaning of religion till it embraced a scientific knowledge of man, then only could it be so regarded."

Now we cannot so extend the meaning of religion, obviously enough. Science is science and religion religion. The dictum of Mr. Morse or his controls is in entire harmony with the ordinary Spiritualist's view, viz., that Spiritualism is a science, and has none of the distinguishing characteristics of a religion.

Mr. Morse's controls went on to say that the religion they desired was "one that began down below with the needs and sufferings of humanity as its impelling motive, unlike the religions of old that began up above in a region of speculation." Nothing could be better than the tone and spirit of this address. I wish the address could be printed and published for the benefit of those who look upon these addresses as authoritative spirit utterances. The place where Mr. Hewes will find true religion is in his own soul, and the best use he can make of it is to devote his powers to benevolent work. Let him leave off asking spirits what is truth. The truth for each man is just what he can discern, as it is for the so-called spirits. What they can discern is useful when applied to their conditions only, but is useless when applied to ours. Mr. Theobald seems to indicate that the spiritual and the material are two opposing elements. The growing opinion is that they are one. That is, that they are two different aspects of one entity.

I can see no object to be attained by having one religion for all men. Every man differs from his neighbour mentally and physically, and it is much better that this difference should also be apparent in what men believe. It has always seemed absurd to me that a body of divines (or spirits, if you like) should presume to settle what is true. If we knew all truth how could there be progress in the discovery of truth? No; we must go on from experiment to experiment, and every age will contradict the truths of the preceding one, and these again will fall before the advance of intelligence in later ages. VIR.

Mrs. A. J. Stansfield.

SIR,—Those of your readers who had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mrs. A. J. Stansfield, and listening to her on the platform at Cavendish Rooms and No. 2, Duke-street, will regret to hear that since returning home she has lost her father, who has just passed away.

In a letter I have just received from her she says she has derived great consolation from knowing that our loved ones still live, and that the parting is only for a time.

It is no loss to drop off this mortal coil—often a great gain—but to lose the familiar face and the familiar voice, and to gaze on the vacant chair, is hard for those to bear who are left behind. And in this Mrs. Stansfield deserves all our sympathy, which she will abundantly receive from all who know her.

February 13th, 1895.

W. J. BARNIKEL.

A Deserving Case.

SIR,—I wish to thank the few kind friends, through your columns, for the kindly help they have afforded the poor but deserving widow, Mrs. Wilson.

Sufficient has been sent to pay arrears of rent, whilst two kind ladies have promised to allow her 5s. per week, which will enable her to, at least, be sure of her rent. I am afraid all she will be able to earn will be by the exercise of her clairvoyant gifts, so I feel constrained to ask (if you will allow me) if there are a few others who will contribute 1s. or even 6d. a week each, say for three or six months at least, to help the old lady on her way to keep her from the workhouse. I shall be very glad to hear from those who will assist.

AMOUNTS ALREADY RECEIVED.

	£	s.	d.
"Sick and Benefit Fund," Pendleton, Manchester	1	0	0
A Lady Friend	1	0	0
I. T.	0	5	0
Mrs. Jennings	0	5	0
Mrs. Halford or Hulford (name indistinct) ...	0	5	0

I would just like to say in conclusion, "Well done! Sick and Benefit Fund of Manchester." Would that such a fund were established in the London districts. All credit to the Manchester friends for pointing the way. How long will London be before it follows so excellent and so practical an example!

18, Rockmount-road,

ELLEN BARON.

Upper Norwood, S.E.

P.S.—The ladies who are allowing Mrs. Wilson 6s. a week instead of 5s. have advanced £1, and will pay monthly.

One shilling received from T. Humphries, Peckham; 2s. 6d. from T. T., Hull.

Mrs. Wilson begs me to say that, being alone, she cannot undertake to answer questions through her clairvoyance by post, but will do her best for visitors, although in her present weakened condition it tries her very much. She does not usually make a charge, but visitors have given from 2s. 6d. to 5s.

RECEIVED.

- "Flavia." By ADAIR WELCKER. (Berkeley, California; A. Welcker.)
- "Review of Reviews," February. (London: 125, Fleet-street, E.C. 6d.)
- "The Unknown World," February. (London: Elliott & Co., Falcon-court, Fleet-street. 6d.)
- "Lucifer," February. (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. 1s. 6d.)
- "The Palmist," February. 6d. "The Senate," February. 6d. "The Popular Medical Monthly," February. 1d. (London: The Roxburghe Press, 3, Victoria-street, S.W.)
- "A Counterblast to Spookland; or, Glimpses of the Marvellous." A Defence of Mrs. Mellon. By PSYCHE. Illustrated. (Sydney: W. M. Maclardy & Co., 82, Pitt-street. 1s.)

TESTING A MEDIUM FOR PSYCHOMETRY.—Mr. J. B. Tetlow, who has the reputation of being an excellent medium for psychometry, has just submitted to an interesting test at a meeting held in the Spiritual Hall, Hamerton-street, Burnley. Mr. L. Brotherton, a gentleman connected with the "Burnley Express," placed in his hands some pieces of "lime," that Mr. Tetlow might if possible give some indications of the kind of building from which the lime had been taken. Mr. Tetlow, holding the lime in his hand, described his sensations and perceptions at some length, and Mr. Brotherton at the close candidly admitted that in the main Mr. Tetlow's description was correct, stating that the lime had been taken from Whatley Abbey. Mr. Tetlow assured the company that, until then, he had no knowledge whatever of the fact, and no one seems to have doubted that he spoke the truth; but as it came out that the knowledge was in the possession of some of his friends, it was thought possible that outside critics might regard the test as insufficient, and Mr. Tetlow accordingly offered to give Mr. Brotherton an opportunity of submitting him to another test—of any kind that Mr. Brotherton might deem satisfactory. Mr. Brotherton accepted the offer and gave his assurance that everything should be done honestly. The test is to be made on the occasion of Mr. Tetlow's next visit to Blackburn, which will take place very shortly.

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.

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.—Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Towns; Thursday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason.—T.H.B., Hon. Sec.

218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END.—Some excellent clairvoyance was given on Sunday by Miss Marsh to a crowded hall, the descriptions being recognised in nearly every instance. On Sunday next Mr. Wallace will occupy the platform.—W. MARSH.

102, CAMBERWELL-ROAD.—A pleasant séance was held on Sunday evening, when Mr. J. Dale was present, and under control gave some excellent suggestions, and the sitters were told of many events, past and present, which proved remarkable tests. On Sunday next Mr. J. Dale has kindly consented to be present again, at 8 p.m.—W. M.

45, MARKHAM-SQUARE, KING'S-ROAD, CHELSEA, S.W.—On Sunday, at 3.30 p.m., séance, Mr. Coote; Monday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mr. Coote; Tuesday and Thursday, at 3.30 p.m., developing circles, Mrs. Perry; Wednesday, at 8 p.m., healing séance; Saturday, at 8 p.m., clairvoyance. All friends welcome.—WM. GEO. COOTE.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—The controls of Mr. J. J. Morse delivered a lecture on "Man's Rights, Here and Hereafter," last Sunday evening. It was a fine discourse and was highly appreciated. Next Sunday evening, Miss Rowan Vincent has again generously consented to address the meeting, her subject being "The Latent Powers in Man." Doors open at 6.30 p.m., commences at 7 p.m.—L. H.

111, CLARENDON-ROAD, NOTTING HILL, W.—At our service on Sunday last, Mr. George Davy's inspirers gave us an eloquent discourse upon "Spiritualism; the Need of the Hour," answering several questions of an important nature in a very satisfactory manner. Miss Crump kindly gave her services at the organ. Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Hector Bangs; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; Saturday, at 8 p.m., spirit circle; March 3rd, Mr. Pursey.—T.H.B., Hon. Sec.

LADBROKE GROVE BAPTIST CHAPEL, CORNWALL-ROAD (two minutes' walk from Notting Hill Station).—On Sunday, March 3rd, at 3 p.m. prompt, an address will be delivered by W. O. Drake, Freethought Spiritualist, on the question, "Is Spiritualism a Fact or a Fraud?" followed by open debate. The chair to be taken by Rev. J. Fleming Shearer; admission free. Will intended speakers please write me! I shall also be glad if some of our friends will send pamphlets for free distribution.—W. O. DRAKE, 15, Lancaster-road, Westbourne Park, W.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Mr. Veitch will occupy our platform on Sunday. On Friday, musical practice at 7.30 p.m.; at 8.30 p.m. for inquirers. Mr. Wortley gave his experience in a very lucid manner. He also dealt with what he believed and what he did not believe. Miss Adams rendered a solo, "Calling us Away," which was very delightful. Mrs. E. H. Britten, on Thursday, March 14th; tickets, 2s., 1s., and 6d. each, which can be had from any member of our committee, or of me at 23, Keogh-road, Stratford. This is for the benefit of our building fund, so we hope that our friends will come and help us to make it a thoroughly successful meeting.—T. MACCALLUM, Hon. Sec.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. H. Boddington gave an address dealing with the teaching of Spiritualism as applied to this world, and Mr. Long's guide, "Edgar B—," followed with a good exposition of Spiritualistic philosophy. Sunday next, spirit circle, at 6.30 p.m. We intend celebrating the forty-seventh anniversary of Modern Spiritualism ("The Rochester Knockings") on Sunday, March 31st, by holding special services all day at the above hall. Many well-known mediums and speakers are expected to take part in the exercises of the day. Services begin at 11 a.m., and 3 and 6.30 p.m.—CHAS. M. PAYNE, Hon. Sec.

MORSE'S LIBRARY, 26, OSNABURGH-STREET, REGENT'S PARK, N.W.—On Wednesday evening, 13th inst., a *rèunion* of members and friends took place, and although the weather had its effect on the attendance, there was a pleasant gathering, and the depressing influences of the season were largely dispelled by the social harmony that distinguishes these assemblies. The programme included the following items:—Miss Alice Hunt, piano-forte solo, "Rosamond" (ballet music); Miss Brinkley, song, "Dr. Dan"; Mr. Breasley, song, "True till Death"; Miss Florence Morse, song, "Lenore"; Mr. J. J. Morse, reading, "Othello's Speech to the Senate." Amongst the guests present were Mr. and Mrs. Mason, Mrs. Robinson, Mr. Vango, Mr. and Miss Shorter, Miss Dunbar, Mr. F. G. Webb, Mr. Blackburn, Mr. J. Parker, Mr. Willcher, Mr. E. Wynne, Miss Cook, Mrs. E. J. Westphal, Mr. W. Cunningham, Miss Trigger, Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Mrs. Bliss, Mr. Blackman, Mrs. Smith, Miss

Dickson, Miss Rowan Vincent, Mr. R. S. Hector Rumford, and Mr. and Mrs. Brinchley.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—Our social gathering last week was a great success, many thanks to the friends of South London, who so ably assisted us to make it so with solos, recitations, &c. On Thursday, the controls of Mrs. Weeder-meyer were very successful in giving clairvoyant descriptions, especially so to one lady, whose sister controlled the medium, and described a bracelet the lady was then wearing, which she had given her before passing away. On Sunday, Mr. C. Payne gave us his experience as to how he first became initiated into the truths of Spiritualism, through calling at the house of a member of this society, viz., Mrs. Gunn, delivering religious tracts, &c. During the evening Miss McKay delivered two recitations, "The Legend Beautiful," by Longfellow, and "The Pauper's Death-bed," by Mrs. Southey. Received from S. E. C. £1 towards the fund for Mr. Robson. Sunday next, at 7 o'clock, Mr. W. E. Long.—J. B., Secretary.

CARDIFF.—On Sunday Mr. Longville made his first appearance upon our platform, giving an exceedingly interesting relation of personal experiences under the head of "How and Why I became a Spiritualist." Mr. Longville's references to the diary entries of séances, &c., made by him while investigating, show the careful and critical nature of his inquiries. The results, however, compelled conviction of the reality of spirit-communication, and he to-day rejoices that, having left the church of his fathers (in which he was a duly-accredited local preacher), and wandering for some years in the mists of Agnosticism, he has found in Spiritualism that which fully meets all the intellectual requirements and religious needs of his nature. In regard to the late F. B. Chadwick, Cardiff, most of our societies will have been supplied with books of tickets for the "drawing" to take place on March 1st, by which means we hope to materially augment the fund being raised for the succour of the wife and three young children of our brother. It is earnestly hoped that all friends will show their practical sympathy by selling the tickets and making their returns promptly, in accordance with the printed instructions, to Mr. E. Adams, 11, Fitzhamon-embankment, Cardiff.—E. A.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HALL, BARROW-IN-FURNESS.—On Sunday and Monday week the Spiritualists of Barrow were again favoured with a visit from Mrs. E. H. Britten, the world-famed and talented orator. She was announced to lecture on Sunday afternoon and on Monday evening. On Sunday evening, the hall being filled, Mrs. Britten's time was occupied with answering questions sent up to her from the audience, which she did in a ready and masterly manner. It is, indeed, a great treat to the Spiritualists of Barrow to hear Mrs. Britten discourse upon the various subjects she takes in hand, invariably keeping her audiences spellbound from beginning to finish. We can only wish that Mrs. Britten's health may be preserved, so that she may be able to visit us again at some time not far distant. The chair was occupied on the three different occasions by Messrs. Cox, Whiteman, and Walmsley. Since the new hall was built the society has made rapid strides, and besides a flourishing Lyceum and Band of Hope, there is a debating class held every Wednesday evening, in which both ladies and gentlemen take part, and highly instructive papers are read and freely discussed. Every Saturday evening a concert is held in the Lyceum Hall, which, up to the present, has had crowded audiences, and seems to be doing a great amount of good.—H. SINKINSON, Reporting Sec.

THE JAMES BURNS MEMORIAL SERVICE.

A further meeting of the general committee organised to promote the above was held at Morse's Library, 26, Osnaburgh-street, N.W., on Thursday evening, the 14th inst. Contributions to the extent of £6 4s. were announced by the hon. secretary, Mr. H. Rumford, towards the expenses of the contemplated gathering. Letters were read sympathising with the purpose in view from Mrs. E. H. Britten, enclosing a donation; Mrs. Russell Davies, Miss A. Rowan Vincent, Mrs. A. V. Bliss; and from Messrs. Thomas Shorter, D. Younger, and from the secretaries of the societies at Stratford, Camberwell, Kentish Town, Otley-road, Bradford, Bristol, Leigh, Openshaw, Collyhurst, and Millom. A sub-committee, consisting of Messrs. Burns, Allen, Rumford, Preyss, and Morse, was appointed to carry out the details of the service, which will be held at the Holborn Town Hall, at 7 p.m., on Sunday, March 10th.

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 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.