

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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### NOTES BY THE WAY.

We are sometimes asked: 'And what, after all, is the use of Spiritualism?' Well, it has many uses; but is it nothing to have, in one's *belief* in a future life, the strong thread of contact with *fact*? Here is a fragment of one of many touching letters on the subject:—

What I want is to learn what Spiritualism can tell us of our connection with the future life. Is there anything one can lay hold of with confidence in it? I have felt, through the later part of my life, such comfort and faith in our simple religious views, that I have been greatly distressed to find that when I came closely to face death, as I have once or twice during my severe illness, instead of the peace of mind I had hoped for, difficulties and disquieting doubts were arising which would not be set aside; such as: 'Shall we indeed meet those dear ones who are gone before?' 'How can we be sure of this?' &c. This is what I want to seek. Is there anything in Spiritualism that will comfort one? I have never studied the science, nor do I know anyone who has, but I know from your work that you could guide me.

Some one has sent us a pamphlet on Madame de Staël, by Helen Hinsdale Rich. It is published at Chicago, United States, and we gather that the pamphlet has been frequently used as a lecture, which 'entranced one of the most refined and intellectual audiences ever brought together in America.' We are rather sorry for it. The lecture has its good points, but it is a showy, Parisian though anti-republican, sort of thing, and 'strongly aristocratic, with a rough jibe at 'Carlyle (the literary dyspeptic)' and 'the ghoul of poor little Jane Carlyle,' and another jibe at Cromwell, 'the canting, impious hypocrite.' We have been long aware of the growth of a Tory aristocracy in America. Is this a sign of it?

Are we not a trifle too fond of talking about 'wickedness'? Certainly there is much vague talk on that subject. We said to a friend the other day: 'A good deal of "wickedness" is custom, habit, point of view, ignorance, goodness in the making, or goodness gone wrong, but especially misdirected nature.' Surely the angels are very pitiful, because they understand; though none the less do they detest real wickedness.

We had written thus far, when a friend sent us the following message which he had received by automatic writing:—

It is not an easy task for anyone to form a just estimate of *life-work*. So much has to be reckoned with; the motive which prompts the action, the aim in view—must all be taken into account before the life-work of any individual can be fairly pronounced upon. The judgments men pass on one another are mostly hard and unjust; but *here*, with a wider outlook and a more loving and merciful spirit, the verdict is different.

Goodness is not always *acknowledged*, because *not seen*. A superficial goodness is often spurious, and the judgment of the world is so hasty that the real divine spark of goodness, which is

hidden away and possibly slumbering in the heart, is altogether overlooked. So it will come to pass, in the day when all things are made manifest and we see with a clearer vision, that there is a soul of goodness in things men call evil.

How careful you should be in putting on your *labels* 'good' and 'evil'! Once affix the label and argument is useless; there is no appeal when the world has put the label on to any man's action.

By a general consensus of opinion of those who are on this side, the labelling process, which is carried on to such a large extent with you, is one of the chief causes of that lack of charity which is so distressing and so hard to put right again. An open mind is to be sought after and cultivated, and finality in pronouncing judgment is most reprehensible, especially if you remember how finite and insignificant you are.

It is just possible that some of our ardent propagandists may miss their way in paying too much attention to the old creeds of Christendom. It is hardly our business to fight them, and it may be wasteful on our part to do so. We commend to them a poem by Oliver Wendell Holmes which has lately come to light, and has just been published for the first time. There is great charm in the summons to the young age to ignore the old creeds, and to leave the old hands to fight them:—

Why linger round the sunken wrecks  
Where old Armadas found their graves?  
Why slumber on the sleepy decks  
While foam and clash the angry waves?  
Up! when the storm-blast rends the cloud,  
And winged with ruin sweeps the gale,  
Young feet must climb the quivering shrouds  
Young hands must reef the bursting sail!

Leave us to fight the 'tyrant' creeds  
Who felt their shackles, feel their scars;  
The cheerful sunlight little heeds  
The brutes that prowl beneath the stars;  
The dawn is here, the day star shows  
The spoils of many a battle won,  
But sin and sorrow still are foes  
That face us in the morning sun.

Who sleeps beneath yon bannered mound  
The proudly sorrowing mourner seeks,  
The garland-bearing crowd surrounds?  
A light-haired boy with beardless cheeks!  
'Tis time this 'fallen world' should rise;  
Let youth and sacred work begin!  
What nobler task, what fairer prize  
Than earth to save and Heaven to win?

We have received some copies of a useful leaflet, 'What is Spiritualism?' ('Two Worlds' Publishing Company, Manchester.) It is temperate, clear, devout, enlightening. We have probably yet to learn how to use such silent messengers.

There are a few people left who still hold out against the doctrine of evolution in relation to human development. They probably hope that something may yet turn up to save creation by miracle, in the sense of sudden interference from beyond the veil. They will be disappointed. So far from this brilliant doctrine being overturned, we think it is

destined to be used for much wider applications. Professor Le Conte has lately set this forth in a rather taking way. He says :—

Evolution is now, therefore, applied to practical life, because it has passed from the domain of vague philosophic speculation into that of definite scientific knowledge. This change has not taken place all at once, but only by the successive labours of many men, each contributing his own characteristic part. It was the part of Lamarck to awaken scientific attention and deeply stir the scientific mind. It was the part of Darwin to convince the scientific mind of the truth of the evolution of the organic kingdom. It was the part of Spencer to extend the law of evolution to embrace every department of nature, and thus to make it applicable to society, to religion, and to education. It was the part of Huxley to fight the battles of evolution and to conquer its acceptance by the intelligent but unscientific public. It was and is the part of American evolutionists to complete the evidence from paleontology where it was weakest, and also—for we are less hampered by tradition here than elsewhere—to apply it fearlessly, yet I hope reverently, to religious and social thought.

For some occult reason we like this story from the American 'Christian Advocate':—

A Chinaman applied for the position of cook in a family in one of our Western cities. The lady of the house and most of the family were members of a fashionable church, and they were determined to look well after the character of their servants. So when John Chinaman appeared at the door with his application, he was asked :—

'Do you drink whiskey?'

'No,' said he, 'I Clistian man.'

'Do you play cards?'

'No; I Clistian man.'

He was employed and gave great satisfaction. He did his work well, was honest, upright, correct, and respectful. After some weeks the lady gave a 'progressive euchre' party, and had wines at the table. John Chinaman was called to serve the party, and did so with grace and acceptability. But the next morning he waited on the lady and said he wished to quit work.

'Why, what is the matter?' she inquired.

John answered: 'I Clistian man; I told you so before; no heathen. No workee for Melican heathen!'

Somehow, there is always something delicious in this sort of teaching of highly civilised Christians by 'the heathen.'

### THE PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS.

The Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance have had before them a considerable number of letters received in response to a circular addressed by the President to leading Spiritualists abroad, on the question of the proposed International Congress to be held in London.

With scarcely an exception the replies were decidedly in favour of the proposal, but there was a large preponderance of opinion that the Congress should not be held sooner than 1897, and from an influential quarter came the very pertinent suggestion that 1898 would be the most appropriate time, that year marking the Jubilee of the origin of the modern Spiritualistic movement. This suggestion met with the full approval of the Council, who will accordingly take the necessary steps for its successful realisation, in which they confidently hope to have the cordial co-operation of their friends in all parts of the world.

Suggestions, offers of papers, &c., proposals to attend, and all other communications may be addressed to the President of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, London, W.C.

Editors of Spiritualistic papers abroad will oblige by placing this information before their readers.

MRS. ANNIE BESANT will deliver her last two lectures (previous to her departure early in December for India) at the Queen's Small Hall, No. 2 entrance, on Sundays, November 24th and December 1st, at 7 p.m. Subjects, 'The Higher Bodies'; 'The Man.'

### SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY: THEIR LIKENESS AND UNLIKENESS.

BY MR. HERBERT BURROWS.

On Friday evening, November 15th, at a meeting of the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance at the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall, MR. HERBERT BURROWS delivered an address on 'Spiritualism and Theosophy: Their Likeness and Unlikeness,' MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS, the President of the Alliance, occupying the chair.

After some introductory remarks by the President, Mr. Burrows took up the subject of the evening.

He had been invited (he said) by the President to address the members and friends of the Alliance on the subject of Spiritualism and Theosophy, and the points of similarity and dissimilarity existing between the two systems. It would be his aim, however, to dwell on the points of agreement rather than the differences that existed, for although it would be his duty to contrast some of the differences between the two modes of thought, he wished to emphasise the fact that Spiritualists and Theosophists were really in agreement on the great fundamental principle of the spiritual nature of man and the Universe, and in that respect they could present a firm front to the common enemy. It seemed to him that it was only by such means they could check the spread of that materialism which was accountable for so much of the agnostic pessimism by which the thought of the age was so largely dominated, and which, if not thoroughly met from a true and sound scientific standpoint, would, in the end, pull down Humanity to a lower level rather than uplift it. Nevertheless, in spite of the fundamental principles upon which Spiritualists and Theosophists were at one, there were some radical differences, and, speaking as a Theosophist, he wanted to face that fact fully, fairly, and frankly at the outset, and he hoped that representatives of both systems present that night would lend him their assistance, so that in the end they would be able to arrive at some common ground of agreement which would bring them together instead of separating them as, undoubtedly, they had been separated in the past. The Spiritualists, he hoped, on the one side, would believe that (as Mr. Page Hopps had observed on the occasion of a recent lecture), they were 'living in a perfect ocean of the occult,' and that one particular explanation alone was not sufficient to cover all the wonders which were everywhere happening, and the Theosophists, on the other hand, would, he hoped, remember that it was not always well to be quite sure of being the only persons who possessed the truth. It would be necessary for both parties to give up a little of their particular bias before they could arrive at a common ground of agreement.

A good many Theosophists had arrived at their Theosophy by way of Spiritualism; that was partly his own case and also that of Mrs. Besant. That fact in itself ought to cause a considerable degree of *rapprochement* between Spiritualists on the one side and Theosophists on the other. So far as their features of similarity were concerned, both possessed a belief in the spiritual nature of man, and both stood in direct opposition to materialism and the materialistic orthodoxy of the Churches. Roughly speaking, there were two classes of Theosophists on the one side, and two classes of Spiritualists on the other, and he might classify the two divisions, in each case, as the wise and the foolish. He thought there were wise and foolish persons in the Spiritualist ranks, and he was quite sure there were wise and foolish among the Theosophists. He meant by foolish people those who were inclined to take a materialistic view of the higher truths. Thus, he knew people among the Theosophists, who, if anything happened in their lives a little out of the common, were apt to attribute it to some occult cause (as, for instance, black magic) instead of adopting the Newtonian maxim that where anything happened that was explainable by two causes, it was wise to take the cause nearer at hand. He had found very much the same thing amongst Spiritualists (although not so much now as in the past), where he had met people disposed to take every trivial occurrence a little outside their ordinary experience, as the result of spirit intervention. But they might leave the consideration of the foolish people of both parties, and concentrate their attention upon the wise, and the wise in both camps were agreed upon this—that no one hypothesis, either from the Theosophic or Spiritualistic standpoint, was sufficient to explain this ocean of occult things in which they lived and

moved and had their being. That was an undoubted fact in both cases.

It was, however, necessary to contrast some of their differences, and one unlikeness (as he saw it) between Spiritualism on the one side and the Theosophic notion on the other, was that Theosophists professed to have behind their explanations of occultism (using the word in its widest sense) a cosmogony of the Universe, and a philosophy of life, and he was bound to say (speaking, of course, as an outsider), that Spiritualism seemed to be rather wanting in this respect. At any rate, he did not find, in Spiritualistic literature and in conversation with Spiritualists generally, a very clear and definite conception of the nature of the Universe and the nature of life. They might say that this was not needed; but it seemed to him that it was. It became needful in view of the complex character of life, and the necessity for a correct interpretation of its phenomena. And here came the difficulty of the subject, to him. The wise Theosophist did not attempt to explain the meaning of Occultism in its widest sense in any mathematical way. He did not attempt to divide the Universe up or map it out, cutting it, so to speak, into cubes or squares or triangles, each standing by itself, and meaning some particular thing, and he was quite certain that the wise Spiritualist did not do anything of the sort. This complexity of the Universe so intermixed and inter-laced its various phenomena in human thought that it was impossible to draw a sharp and definite line between the facts on the one side, and the causes on the other, in whatever realm they directed their thoughts; and in contrasting the two schools of thought, that of the Theosophists on the one side and that of the Spiritualists on the other, this was a necessary consideration to be borne in mind in order to get at their likeness or unlikeness.

The question was, What is Spiritualism? They might put the question to him, What is Theosophy? He put the question to himself first of all, What is Spiritualism? So far as he had read the history of mankind there had always been two streams of thought in the history of the world—one Spiritualistic and the other Materialistic; the Materialistic affecting and touching by far the smaller number of people. He did not believe that Materialism had ever been the swaying force over the minds and souls of men that Materialists would have them believe. His opinion was that the Spiritualistic hypothesis had been the ruling force over the destinies of mankind in all ages and countries. In the East they had the spiritual stream of thought concentrated; it had taken the psychological view of life. But in Western Europe Materialism had been the dominant note, and the spirit of commercialism prevailing had been very largely to blame for it. Modern Spiritualism, he considered, had been the reaction against this latter form of thought.

It would be useful here, said the lecturer, to deal with the Theosophical conception of the manner in which Spiritualism originated. A good many Theosophists had the idea which his friend Mr. Sinnett had lately propounded, in an address delivered in November of last year, at a meeting of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society. He might quote Mr. Sinnett's statement of opinion on the subject:—

The fact I believe to be, that in the beginning the development of modern Spiritualism was earnestly promoted by a school of living occultists—not the school to which the Theosophical development has been due, but a school of which I should never think without great respect. The whole relation can hardly be explained in a public paper, but it may easily be apprehended that there are various roads all leading ultimately in the direction of the highest initiation, which start, so to speak, from different phases of human thought and evolution. Occultists of one type amongst those who have not attained the highest levels of spiritual evolution, at which there would be no possibility of divergence in opinion, may be thought of as inclined to pursue one course of action in their attempts to awaken the dormant spirituality of mankind; those of another type might estimate its advantages and disadvantages differently, and would pursue another course of action by preference. I am fully prepared to believe that Spiritualism has thus had from the first a certain amount of adept support.

They knew the common idea about Madame Blavatsky—that her first visit to America was due to the fact that she was actually sent by the Mahatmas in order to take hold of the Spiritualism of that country, and endeavour to show that the Theosophical conception was the correct one, rather than the one put forward by Spiritualists. Now he would say at once that he did not believe that this idea was correct. Any honest Theosophist who had studied the life and letters of Madame Blavatsky could not fail to come to the conclusion that she

was practically a Spiritualist when she went to America, and those who read 'Isis Unveiled' would see in its pages a large amount of Spiritualism, which little by little was given up by Madame Blavatsky.

It was not his intention to attempt to investigate the cause of the quarrel between Spiritualists and Theosophists; there had been very harsh words on both sides. He did not wish to accentuate this phase of the subject; it would be better to endeavour to form some bond of union than to dwell upon the things that tended to separate and divide them. The Theosophists admitted the facts of Spiritualism, but of course they also believed that a very large proportion of them were not attributable to spiritual agency. He also admitted that in a great deal of the Spiritualistic literature there was set forth a considerable amount of the philosophy of Life and Death. To him (the lecturer), and he supposed also to a great many other Theosophists, Theosophy, as it were, stepped into the breach made by Spiritualism in the wall of the Materialistic stronghold. It attempted to assign to all these phenomena their true place in the philosophy of life, and in this connection, he might again quote from the address from Mr. Sinnett, already referred to. Mr. Sinnett had said:—

Spiritualists themselves are not much forwarder in capacity to interpret the facts they have accumulated than the outsiders who ridicule their work. They are only in advance of their generation in so far as they know that these facts are awaiting interpretation. Of course, they believe themselves safe in interpreting some of them along the lines of the main hypothesis on which the theory of Spiritualism rests. This much is certain: at spiritual séances which are really what they seem—not fraudulent burlesques of the real thing, arranged to impose upon foolish or uncritical audiences—beings exercising intelligence and clothed in some form of matter, not visible to ordinary eyesight nor belonging to the physical plane of life at all, are sometimes present, and either by mechanical methods of signalling or through mediums in trance they identify themselves to the satisfaction of living persons concerned, as the very friends or relatives these have lost. Furthermore, under the influence of such entities or of others belonging to some plane of nature, which is *not* that on which incarnate humanity exists, material objects can be controlled to an extent which sets the commonly received theories of the physical world completely at defiance. But sitting in presence of such experiences and appealing for explanation merely to the shadowy agencies, by whom they seemed to be provoked, the Spiritualists themselves are no nearer to scientific interpretation of their own phenomena than they were in the beginning. They set down all that occurs to the power of their spirit friends, but these have been wholly unable, it would seem, to account for the simplest of the phenomena on this plane, or to give a coherent or credible statement concerning the realm of nature to which they have been transferred.

He (the speaker) did not pledge himself to that statement. He only quoted it to show the common idea which was held by Theosophists concerning Spiritualism.

Another point of contact between the two systems lay in their claim to antiquity. Spiritualists, he presumed, would admit that their Spiritualism went back as far as the history of the world could be traced. Theosophists made even a larger claim, and asserted that Theosophy went back even beyond history: and was, in fine, the modern expression of an underlying truth that had always been seen in the Universe—the spiritual nature of man and the spiritual nature of that Universe.

Now came the consideration of a point of fundamental unlikeness, which he might designate, on the Theosophic side, as the 'conscious idea,' and on the Spiritualistic side, as the 'mediumistic idea.' To give an explanation of his meaning, he would roughly state what the Theosophical conception of man and the universe really was. To both parties—Theosophists and Spiritualists—the keynote of the universe was life, and not death—that was the keynote of both systems of thought. The Theosophist also believed in the manifestation of this universal life in the physical universe in cycles, and looked on spirit and matter as two poles or sides of the manifestation of this universal life, and thus it regarded the whole universe as existing in stages of consciousness; and concerning man, it held that he contained in epitome every element, force, and principle in the universe; that (to speak pedantically) the macrocosm was always mirrored in the microcosm, and that all the powers of the macrocosm were potential in the microcosm. It postulated the existence of seven principles in man; the four lower principles were the personality, and the three higher principles the individuality,

the four lower ones being the impermanent linked for the time being to the three higher, these lower principles containing, as it were, the reflection of the ray of the divine universal life. This was, to some extent, the old Platonic method of reasoning from the universal to the particular, instead of from the particular to the universal. Again, there was their fundamental idea of Re-incarnation, which was not generally held by Spiritualists, except those of the Allan Kardec school. Then they came to their fundamental difference in the matter of Eschatology. Theosophists talked of 'Devachan,' the state of the re-incarnating Ego after death, before the next manifestation on the physical plane. They believed that the re-incarnating Ego did not come into contact with this plane of existence, but worked out the justice or injustice to which it had been subjected during its mortal life, and prepared itself for its next incarnation here on earth. These incarnations proceeded until the spiritual part had realised itself, and, by gathering up experiences, it at last absorbed from the personality all that was worth absorption, and prepared itself for that future state when re-incarnation was no longer necessary, although it was occasionally voluntarily undertaken to help those still on lower grades of development. That was putting it roughly and imperfectly, perhaps, but it was a fairly accurate idea of the fundamental conceptions of the Theosophical school. By proper training here and now, man could bring himself into contact with the various stages of consciousness contained in the universe. The Theosophical idea was that man himself might be the master of these occult realms of Nature, whereas (as he read it) the Spiritualist idea seemed to tend in the direction of man being mastered by the spiritual forces. He would take the actual fact of a medium being entranced by some outside power as a living proof that man was mastered instead of mastering. The Theosophical idea was that man might bring himself into contact with these various stages of consciousness in the universe, and consciously conduct his investigations. This was to him one of the fundamental differences between the two systems, and, it seemed to him that this was a gap which would take a great deal to build over.

Then there was the question of a Deity. He did not know what the Spiritualistic attitude on this question was, but he might say that Theosophists adopted the Pantheistic idea. They had no belief in a personal God—they were not even Theists, for the Theistic idea had about it more than a suggestion of Anthropomorphism.

Dealing with the question of spirit communion, the lecturer referred to the Theosophical idea of spirit-messages being always the work of shells or spooks. He had frequently protested against this idea. He had come across certain classes of phenomena which could not be accounted for on the shell or spook theory. On the other hand he had encountered a very large body of phenomena, which could not be explained on the hypothesis of spirit agency. The Theosophists believed that at many séances the finer and subtler forces of nature are brought into play; they would also suggest that some of the phenomena are produced by the combined intelligence of the sitters acting on these finer and subtler forces. Nevertheless Madame Blavatsky had acknowledged that, in certain cases, the spirits of the departed *do* communicate with the people on earth. She had some very harsh words, however, on the practice of spirit communion, which he might quote to them. They were to be found in 'The Key to Theosophy,' in the form of question and answer. The quotation was as follows:—

**INQUIRER:** But why could not this Ego manifest and communicate with mortals as Spiritualists will have it? What is there to prevent a mother from communicating with the children she left on earth, a husband with his wife, and so on? It is a most consoling belief, I must confess; nor do I wonder that those who believe in it are so averse to give it up.

**THEOSOPHIST:** Nor are they forced to, unless they happen to prefer truth to fiction, however consoling. Uncongenial our doctrines may be to Spiritualists, yet nothing of what we believe in and teach is half as selfish and cruel as what they preach.—'The Key to Theosophy,' p. 145.

He, the lecturer, did not pledge himself to this. Madame Blavatsky's reference was, of course, to the disturbing influences which she alleged the holding of séances brought to bear on those who had departed from earth, thus bringing them down again into the earth sphere, which, from her point of view, was a cruel thing. Apart from those rare cases where Theosophists admit the return of the actual human spirit, it had been stated by Madame Blavatsky that in some instances the spirit com-

municators at séances were really human beings who had passed through the necessary number of re-incarnations, but who elected to remain out of the body, guiding the higher and purer aspirations of men.

Here Mr. Burrows referred to his early investigations of Spiritualism. He had investigated the subject because he wanted, if possible, to believe in immortality. He did not believe what some people asserted, that the wish to live hereafter was a sign of human weakness. It seemed to him rather the sign of a strong nature to wish to continue a conscious existence, even on another stage of being. But although he had met with phenomena which seemed susceptible of the Spiritualistic explanation, he had met with much more that was only adequately covered by the Theosophical hypothesis.

Theosophists would deprecate the meddling with séances at all, because they believed them to be sources of great danger and degradation, and they did not believe in the idea of anyone being controlled by outside forces.

He believed that it was now generally admitted by Spiritualists that some of the phenomena were not due to the agency of departed spirits, and that the Spiritual hypothesis was not always necessary. Here Theosophists and Spiritualists were absolutely in accord. As real thought advanced, the complexity of the human being grew and grew, until it seemed to him that the seven principles might be easily multiplied to seven times seven. The real crux between them was the very simple question: Do spirits come back on this earth after they have left it? He was bound to say that Spiritualists could produce a large amount of phenomena, which went to prove, and could only be explained by, that particular theory.

He did not know whether Spiritualists had any idea concerning the great teachers of the world analogous to that of the Theosophists, who believed in the existence of Mahatmas. How, for example, did Spiritualists explain Christ, Buddha, Socrates, Zoroaster, Mohammed, and Confucius? Theosophists believed these great souls to have raised themselves by training and self-sacrifice to higher planes of evolution than those of ordinary human beings. He would give them his own idea of this Mahatmic conception, and he would put it in a mathematical way. He was himself something of a mathematician, but he believed there were many men who were very much his superiors in that line of study. If, for example, he were asked whether he believed that certain people had developed extraordinary powers in the direction of mathematics, he would reply emphatically in the affirmative. But suppose the question was put in another form and he should be asked, 'Do you know a certain John Jones, a Senior Wrangler, of Trumpington-street, Cambridge?' Then he would have to reply 'No.' He believed in the possibilities of evolution, and in the finer and subtler powers and forces in Nature; and if he were asked if he considered there were people who knew more of these powers and forces than himself he would reply 'Yes,' for, arguing by analogy, it seemed extremely probable to him that there might be men or women adepts, initiates, Mahatmas (what they would), who had so far progressed along mental, moral, and psychical lines of development as to have outstripped the majority of their fellows, but if he were asked whether he knew of any particular Mahatma named Morya or Koot Hoomi, he would have to say 'No,' although that did not destroy his belief in the general principle of what he might call the Mahatma line of evolution. He believed that every man was a latent Mahatma, a latent Christ.

With regard to the power over nature which the Mahatma was supposed to possess, and which he (the speaker) believed he could possess where this evolution was carried on through a long series of lives, they came to another point of unlikeness between the two systems. The Mahatma was enabled to consciously explore occult forces of nature by means of the thought body which he could project at will. Mediumship, on the other hand, implied the passive and automatic agency of an instrument. Long even before an individual arrived at the Mahatmic stage, he could learn to project his own astral or thought-body, and thereby gain actual knowledge of the stages of consciousness already referred to. It had been urged that many of the Theosophical articles of belief were merely theories or hypotheses, but the Theosophists might tell them that it was possible to so train oneself as to be able to actually visit the Devachanic state of consciousness and find out what is there. Herein there seemed to be a fundamental unlikeness between the two systems.

Turning aside once more from the question of their differences, the lecturer expressed the hope that, in view of the enormous power Materialism still wielded in politics, science, art, literature, and commercialism, Spiritualists and Theosophists would see that the one thing to do was to come together in defence of the common interests against the common enemy. The lecture closed with a brilliant peroration, and the lecturer resumed his seat amid applause.

An animated discussion followed, the report of which, however, we are compelled, by the exigencies of space, to hold over for the present.

#### MR. LANG'S 'DAILY CHRONICLE' LETTER.

A letter, in reply to Mr. Andrew Lang's amusing letter in the 'Daily Chronicle,' was sent by Mr. J. Page Hopps. This was declined. How wonderfully ready the newspapers are to blaze abroad anything that can be made to tell against us! and how unfairly disinclined to publish anything on the other side!

The following is Mr. Hopps' letter:—

SIR,—Mr. Andrew Lang's delicious letter is, of course, delightful; and it is a portrait, as well as a luxury. Those of us who have long watched him know well his charming attitude and his pretty sidling on that fence. Once or twice we thought we had him over, but his adroitness is as clever as his chaff; and there he still sits and swings!

I venture to tenderly object to one rather harsh line in his letter—that in which he damns the adoption of the hypothesis of the action of spirits in the physical sphere, as a mere survival of savagery—'or words to that effect.' Now, I do not want to get too far away from Mr. Lang's exquisite chaff, but I should like, out of say fifty incidents in my own experience, to briefly recite three.

1. I was invited by an intelligent, solid, and serious-minded London tradesman to spend an evening at his home, with about ten other friends, to see some curious phenomena which he could account for in only one way. It was a stormy night; and, instead of ten, we were, I think, only six in all. To tell what happened would be a long story. I will content myself with this bare statement as to one incident. A large dining-room table, which I had seen set out for a dozen guests, rose from the floor, with my host upon it,—no one touching it but his wife,—the rest of us sitting away and looking on; and this in the full glare of gaslight. This was about thirty years ago; and that kind of thing has been going on ever since, and hundreds have been driven by it to side with Mr. Lang's savages. My friends of that night are in London still. They have never made any particular fuss about it. So far as I know, they have never taken sixpence for their 'performances,' though they must have spent many pounds in entertaining their friends. It is true they have not converted Mr. Maskelyne, and I am not aware that they have tried; but it is quite conceivable that they do not care what the conjurers and the detectives think; and it is also conceivable that they may not care to have their beautiful and peaceful little home invaded and perhaps insulted by them.

2. I once had in my own home for about two weeks a young lady who, so far as I know, had never been out of London. My home was over a hundred miles away. She had greatly interested me in her strange gift of (may I call it?) seership. Again, I must make a long story short. On one of the evenings when we were trying experiments, a young student came very late, but we allowed him to come in and take his place without speaking. Within ten minutes, this mere girl quietly took him to pieces. I had known him intimately for some years, and certainly could not have dissected him better. But she did more. She described his lodgings in Manchester, and how he behaved, and what he said there; and finished by minutely describing a young fellow who, she said, appeared behind him, and who had died almost in his arms. He had not spoken, and did not speak, a word: but, though he had been a resolute unbeliever, he told me, before going home, that every word was true. And that went on night after night, with perfect strangers to my friend.

3. Once upon a time, in my quiet but steadfast search for the truth of this thing (during ten years), I went to a 'professional' medium in London; and once more I must cut a long

story short. I was not known; I did not give my name; and we at once proceeded with the experiment. In the broad daylight, a veritable shower of little sounds poured upon the table at which I was sitting, and the medium said, 'This is a child,' and I hardly knew what to say, for I was pretty much of a novice and a sceptic. But, within twenty minutes, she (let me for a moment assume that), by sounds, spelt out her name, and the unusual inscription upon a stone in a village churchyard a hundred miles away; and, presently, 'without rhyme or reason, these letters came, 'PILIF.' I said, 'I do not understand,' and began to try to worry out the meaning, and the medium seemed rather annoyed, and said, 'O, it is nothing; we sometimes do get meaningless letters which we can make nothing of; let us go on to something else.' But I said, 'No; we have been told that "PILIF" is really meant; let us work at it.' And then the tiny sounds spelt out 'UNCLE,' and I saw it. So I said, 'Do you mean Uncle Phil?' and the little table literally rose into the air and danced, and then I could see no more, for I remembered how my darling used to come into my study, sit on my rug, and say, 'Div me Uncle Phil,' and how I used to take from the shelf his portrait with that jolly hat, and he with his knowing look and folded arms; and how she used to kiss it, until I had to take it away—till the next time. And then I saw that 'PILIF,' spelt backwards, is a roguish way of spelling Philip, and all was clear.

And Mr. Lang will go on telling us we are survivals of savages, and the vast majority of people will think it perfectly shocking that an angel in heaven should come and make sounds on tables, and spell words badly. Ah me! but that is just where we have gone wrong. We have made the Unseen grandiose, statuesque, artificial; and have almost dignified and solemnised it out of existence. As for me, I would rather have had my merry message (and such a test! for nobody knew what it meant at first) than the most lucid explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity. I don't want a dignified angel. I want my child.

November 12th.

J. PAGE HOPPS.

#### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of the members and friends of the Alliance will be held in the Upper Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), at 7 for 7.30 p.m., on Friday next, the 29th inst., when Mr. Richard Harte will give an address on 'The Proper Limits of Investigation.' As Mr. Harte holds very decided views on this question his remarks will probably lead to a lively discussion. On December 20th the Rev. J. Page Hopps will give an address on 'Experiments with Miss Kate Fox, and an Experiment with the Psychological Research Society.'

#### LORD ONSLOW'S HAUNTED HOUSE.

The 'Etoile Belge' of October 24th appears to be responsible for the following narrative, which is quoted in 'Le Messager' of Liège:—

We announced yesterday that Lord Onslow, accompanied by his solicitor, Sir George Lewis, had left London for his chateau, Clandon House, in order to inquire about the rumours prevailing in the neighbourhood regarding the nightly apparition of a lady in a cream-coloured dress. The present tenant has made these visitations the ground of a request to have the lease cancelled. The first despatch received from Lord Onslow this morning has caused an extraordinary sensation in London society. His lordship and his solicitor must have seen with their own eyes the 'cream' lady, armed with her hunting-knife, and walking across the park as well as in the house. The Earl must even have perceived two phantoms not yet described—a young girl in black and a man wearing a long beard. These spectres appear to know each other, as they salute and stop to converse. More than twenty shots have been fired at them without effect. . . . Nothing can give any idea of the excitement produced in London by this affair.

MR. J. J. MORSE.—We are pleased to learn that Mrs. Morse has received intelligence of Mr. Morse's safe arrival in New York, on Saturday last. We hope that the next news will be that he has safely reached his destination.

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

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## Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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'LIGHT' may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria Lane, London, and all Booksellers.

### THE REMINISCENCES OF MRS. DE MORGAN.

A very chatty and pleasant book is this handsome volume (London: R. Bentley and Son), recording the recollections of Sophia Elizabeth De Morgan, wife and widow of that brilliant mathematician and keen seeker after truth, Augustus De Morgan. From the first, this very clever woman lived in what we can only call a brainy atmosphere. Her people were all sharp, determined, unconventional thinkers, whose life-star seemed to be, 'Buy the truth and sell it not.' Her father, William Frend, came of a good stock, and he himself lived a very notable life of courage and self-devotion. A scholar, prizeman, wrangler, fellow and tutor of the University of Cambridge, and then an incumbent of the Church, he gave up all his prospects of profit and advancement at the call of conscience. His farewell to the Church was a ringing note of sturdy nonconformity to the ways of 'the priesthood,' to 'lordly prelates,' to 'external pomp,' to the 'proud parade of worship,' to 'subscription to articles and the imposition of tithes.' From that moment, however, this strong free man's real life began. He seemed to live at the fountain-head, where much of the fresh life and hope of his time centred, sympathising with all the elementary humanitarian aspirations and experimentings of seventy or eighty years ago. A knowing old heretical clergyman once remarked, 'If there is a queer fish in the world, he will find his way to Frend's house'; a remark which Sophia resented, but which had a great deal of truth in it.

At the very centre of all this lived the writer of these Reminiscences—acute, scholarly, thirsty for knowledge, always in contact with the learned, the adventurous, the choice spirits of her day—such as Sir Francis Burdett, John Bowring, Godfrey Higgins, John Landseer, John Bellamy, Thomas Taylor (the Platonist), William Blake, Sir John Herschel, S. T. Coleridge, George Dyer, Charles Lamb, Mrs. Barbauld, Rammohun Roy, Lady Noel Byron, Robert Owen, Daniel O'Connell, Andrew and George Combe, Dale Owen, Dr. Tuckerman, Mrs. Fry, Thomas Carlyle, Lord Shaftesbury. What a procession to pass through a girl's and woman's life! Nor was she merely an onlooker, standing at her window and seeing the show go by. She was a part of the procession, but never very long in one place. Curious, appreciative, receptive, she assimilated something from all these notable characters; and became a fine observer and keen judge.

This gives to her frequent references to Spiritualism, and to her very sensitive apprehension of the life beyond, a significance and value of no common kind. She lived in steady revolt against death. For her, there was no

such thing. Even when referring to her friend, and her father's friend, Sir Francis Burdett, she said, 'I think he was what in these days would be called an Agnostic, which, as Dr. Jessop says, is Greek for ignoramus.' There was just a touch of contempt in that, with which we cannot help sympathising. In another connection, referring to certain missionary experiments, she says that 'the superstitions of the poor blacks were expected to vanish before the light of an entirely "rational" doctrine, but it was found impossible to eradicate *all* these superstitions, for some of them contain elements of real vitality.' The italics are ours. They indicate a truth which some of our very knowing modern *savants*, or their successors, will have to learn. Talking to a friend about the somewhat glaring misapplication of a bequest, she said, 'How do you think he would like this contravention of his wish?' The reply was, 'I think that he would turn in his grave.' Upon which she sharply said, 'Perhaps: if he ever were in it.' The closing sentences of the book repeat the same thought. Referring to the good Lord Shaftesbury, she says, 'As so much of his happiness here consisted in giving relief to suffering and misery, the same sources of happiness in a higher form would, it seems certain, await him on entering a new life. I hope it is not a presumptuous belief that the friend of the slave, the prisoner, and, above all, the suffering child, is still happy in ministering to their welfare.' Her daughter, who edits these Reminiscences, says, in concluding her own Introductory Memoirs, 'The end came . . . as she would doubtless have desired, or, as she, according to her strong beliefs, would have said, "Such a passing to another life, to begin afresh."'

All this leads up to, and will indicate the significance and value of Chapter VI., which is largely concerned with her own and her celebrated husband's belief in Spiritualism. Mrs. De Morgan quotes her husband's strong statement from his remarkable book, 'From Matter to Spirit': 'I am satisfied by the evidence of my own senses of some of the facts narrated; of some others, I have evidence as good as testimony can give. I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen and heard, in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things *called* spiritual which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake.' This reference to her husband's opinion is followed by an interesting statement concerning Baron Guldenstübbe's book, by which Lord Brougham was so much impressed, as he knew the Baron well, and 'believed him to be a man of high integrity and intellectual culture.' This book, as many of our readers know, gave an account of certain experiments for obtaining direct writing. These experiments were commenced in 1856 and went on for over thirteen years, during which time the Baron made more than two thousand experiments 'in the presence of educated, sensible, and trustworthy witnesses in different parts of Europe and America.' 'Mr. Dale Owen was one among many of the witnesses whom I knew,' says Mrs. De Morgan, 'but Lord Brougham's acquaintance with those who attested the facts was considerable, and he assured my husband that these were most of them persons whose evidence would be held sufficient to establish any fact in every day life.'

Altogether, an interesting and notable book, and specially useful as indicating how it is, that, in spite of our Eusapias and Maskelynes, Spiritualism lives and 'holds the field.'

'LIGHT' IN NEW YORK.—Our friends in New York may be glad to know that 'LIGHT' may now be obtained at Brentano's, 31, Union-square.

BRISTOL.—A few friends in Bristol are just starting a circle in Clifton for investigation and development, and are desirous of two more ladies to join them. Address, Mr. R. Phillips, 31, Berkeley-square, Bristol.

## THE 'PSYCHOLOGICAL CLIMATE.'

BY PROFESSOR W. F. BARRETT, F.R.S.E., &amp;c.

Recent experiences suggest the need of the diffusion amongst Spiritualists of more caution and care in accepting or giving evidence, and amongst newspaper sceptics of more faith in the wisdom and honesty of other people besides themselves.

There can be little doubt that the phenomena occurring with Eusapia at Cambridge were due to trickery on her part, but that the whole of the phenomena which she exhibited abroad were due to her unaided sleight-of-hand is very hard to credit. For the very fraud which she practised at Cambridge is not only one of the commonest tricks of fraudulent 'mediums,' but was actually discounted in advance by the distinguished observers who investigated her, and some of whom still maintain the genuineness of the phenomena which they attested. Certainly, the moral courage shown by these investigators is one of the most striking and unquestionable results of the whole inquiry. For my own part, without in the least impeaching the accuracy or the acuteness of the witnesses in Eusapia's favour, I am inclined to distrust any medium who persists in sitting, more or less, in the dark, and at the same time declines to submit to any simple and unobjectionable precaution to prevent the free use of the hands. Such a precaution, for example, as that afforded by a skein of many threads of unspun silk tied, in the light, round the wrists of each sitter, the silken loop being continuous throughout the circle, but with enough slack between each hand to prevent accidental breakage; the limit of freedom is thus known, and allowed for. But the presence of sufficient light to see what is going on is, however, far better than dependence on one sense or on any mechanical or electrical safeguard, and I trust that proper illumination will in future be more widely insisted on, for the credit of the 'medium' as well as of the sitters.

Meanwhile the Eusapia exposure has thrown back the whole inquiry into these obscure regions, and for some time will render it more difficult to get a hearing on behalf of any fresh evidence, however strong that evidence may be. Furthermore, if the deliberate and detailed evidence recorded by different skilled witnesses in the 'Journal of the Society for Psychical Research,' for November, 1894, is to be regarded as worthless, as some of those witnesses assert it to be, absolutely no reliance can be placed upon any evidence whatever, obtained under similar conditions. This cuts both ways, it leads us to question the validity of our belief in these physical phenomena, and it renders it possible that further experience may lead to the future repudiation of the present repudiation. The only thing against this latter is the greater probability of fraud than of 'spiritualistic,' or 'animistic,' phenomena: a class of evidence that is regarded as inadmissible when used on behalf of the genuineness of the phenomena is regarded by the public as conclusive, when used on behalf of their fraudulent character.

Hence, what seems to be the most obvious and urgent need of the present time is the discovery of a person possessing, in some degree, the peculiar and wonderful psychical gifts of the late D. D. Home. The question then arises, must we wait until time and chance, possibly after some generations, again favour us with a second Home, or is it within our power to do anything towards the development of a gifted organisation such as his? We know, it is true, nothing of the natural history of a 'medium,' and at first sight the appearance of such a personality as Home seems like a meteoric phenomenon, or a cometary body, suddenly plunging into and then vanishing from the familiar routine of our terrestrial experience. If so, we must simply wait in doubtful expectance. But the progress

of knowledge has shown us that even meteoric or cometary intrusions are not lawless, and it is probable that the recurrence of psychical phenomena, wayward though they appear, is also subject to some definite law, profound and elusive though that law may prove to be. Of this we may be sure, that whatever law underlies these phenomena it will not belong to that order of nature with which physical science deals, but to some new department of psychological inquiry, too subtle perhaps for us fully to investigate with our present limited faculties.

This much seems to be gradually dawning upon us, that it is neither time, nor place, nor any physical condition, nor chance occurrence, but the 'psychological climate' of the age in general, and of the 'circle' in particular, that determines the absence, or the recurrence, of these phenomena. We all know that in a biting atmosphere of ferocious scepticism the most promising prospect becomes an arid waste. Students of the Gospel narrative do not need to be reminded of this, nor how largely unbelief hindered the manifestation even of our Lord's miraculous power. (Mark vi. 5, 6.)

I myself believe that the sceptical and suspicious spirit not merely tends to provoke failure, but actually tends to create the very existence of the fraud which it expects. There is a *dynamic power in human thought*, especially in the hidden depths of our personality, which not only is able to project its impressions on the minds of others, but, I am strongly inclined to believe, is able to *externalise* these impressions and ideas. So that what appears on the one hand a veritable 'manifestation,' or on the other undoubted 'fraud,' is from this point of view the result, not of the medium solely, but of the, perhaps unconscious, dynamic thought of the sitters.\* This is not unlike the *logoi*, or 'operative ideas,' of Philo Judæus, and the world may some day come round to the philosophical creed of this ancient and learned Alexandrine Jew.

It is, of course, a dangerous doctrine to preach, that 'mediums' are not wholly responsible for the fraud they may practise, but it is one that may be true, and is one not unrecognised by Spiritualists. If so, it becomes a serious ethical question how far we are justified in exposing any of our fellow creatures to such a loss of self-control, and of moral responsibility, as may be involved in 'mediumship.'

Thanks mainly to the work of Mr. F. W. H. Myers, the 'psychological climate' of the Psychical Research Society is becoming favourable to a belief in the varied manifestations of the subliminal life, and forthwith we have our crystal seers and our trance mediums—our Miss X. and our Mrs. Piper. Belief, even restricted as this originally was, creates the genuine interest which is necessary to all successful investigations, and leads on to wider and surer knowledge. Thus it comes to pass that Mr. Hodgson, in his recent address to the Psychical Research Society concerning Mrs. Piper's communications, remarks: 'One hypothesis would explain all the phenomena by telepathy from the living; the other would include also telepathy from the dead. This last hypothesis, the "spiritistic," seems at the present time to be the most satisfactory, *and its adoption has been followed by the best results.*' It is interesting to contrast the words I have italicised with the results which have followed the conscious or unconscious adoption by Mr. Hodgson of a precisely opposite theory in regard to the *physical* phenomena of Spiritualism. His own experience of these has been unfortunate. For, having with painstaking care—aided by the Coulobms in India and Mr. Davey in England—discovered the fraudulent character of certain alleged 'spiritistic' physical phenomena, he has naturally been led to view the whole of such

\* I do not wish this to be taken as an allusion to any recent experiences, for this sentence was written and printed in an article for a magazine before those experiences were known to me.

phenomena, wherever occurring, with profound distrust. I am sure, from what I know of Mr. Hodgson, that he is supremely anxious to be unbiassed and fair, but so were many of the investigators with whom Mrs. Piper sat in England, and who found in her communications nothing beyond the skill of a clever and designing woman bent on gaining notoriety.

The fact is, as Mr. C. C. Massey long ago pointed out in an able paper (published in 'LIGHT' of Feb. 5th, 1887), the failure of many investigators is due to their approaching the inquiry with an 'accentuated distrust of their successful predecessors, and with minds merely "open to conviction." . . . The first duty of the scientific inquirer is to seek the proper conditions for the *elicitation* of the phenomena to be witnessed.' This can only be the result of long and painstaking care and need imply no relaxation of common-sense or judgment. It is thus Mr. Hodgson has, won so much from his investigation of Mrs. Piper, and to the full publication of the recent evidence he has obtained we look forward with deepest interest.

### THE INTEREST OF SPIRITS IN EARTHLY AFFAIRS.

Some time ago I published an account of messages in Latin, French, Italian, and English, produced, as I have every reason to believe, by spirit agency, through an unlettered medium, a girl of nineteen or twenty, whom I was treating magnetically, in my own house, for very severe fits. Almost simultaneously with the appearance in a little note-book of these sentences (which, though usually appropriate, were chiefly mottoes, proverbs, or 'tags'), the medium also exhibited the curious faculty described by me in 'LIGHT,' September 14th, 1895, of giving, letter by letter, at my request, the German equivalent of any English word I suggested to her.

As I anticipated, both these narratives have evoked criticism. The Sceptical Person has tendered the usual explanation—which, though ingenious, is not new—that the sentences were, very possibly, taken from a book or collection of mottoes, which being quite small and cheap, might easily be picked up by a servant-girl! I pass over the unflattering postulations of my own credulity, and of the medium's duplicity; such innuendoes in such matters are almost inevitable, and from a total stranger of course they fall harmlessly. Moreover, I greatly doubt whether anyone, hearing of such manifestations without ever having seen them, could attach belief to a simple recital of them attested by no witnesses. Probably, I should have listened sceptically myself, until, nearly four years ago, my notions of the possible broadened out.

But although I cannot enter into a private correspondence, in the hope of convincing my critics, I will here try to furnish a few more proofs of some agency at work, not quite so simple as the transcription of phrases from a 'Gradus ad Parnassum,' or other book of that kind. Of course it will still be possible to question my power of sane judgment, or to attribute what follows to clairvoyance, but this will not disturb me at all.

On the evening of December 13th, 1892, Louisa J., the medium, was sitting with me in one of the first-floor rooms of my house, a musical box on her lap. All at once, *a propos* of nothing, she said, in a dreamy, reflective way, 'Most sincerely yours, if you deserve it.' After waiting for her to add more, I naturally asked 'What?' 'John,' she pursued, in the same quiet voice. I was quite at a loss still. 'John S.,' she went on, 'it is a letter "giving it" to someone.' It began to dawn on me that I possessed a letter in an antique cabinet of mine, signed in this manner, and by degrees I recalled all about it. It was written, I knew, by my great-granduncle, Recorder of B., and Professor of Modern History and Languages at Cambridge, and conveyed a severe reproof to his brother-in-law on an unsuitable second marriage contemplated by him. I was once very nearly destroying this letter, as having little present interest, but I ended by keeping it, in admiration of its earnest, strenuous style.

Louisa quietly proceeded: 'E.' (my chief guide) 'is so amused by the letter. It goes on to say: "Good God, what an example do you set to your son who has just taken Orders!"' She quoted other phrases, of which I had no remembrance, and then I said, 'Shall I, may I, go and fetch the letter?' as I have schooled myself not to show impatient curiosity on such

occasions. 'Yes,' said Louisa, 'E. says he has lighted a lamp for you.' I went downstairs and found a lamp ready on a certain stand near the hall-door, where none is ever placed, and by its light I sought and found the faded letter, enclosed in a tortoiseshell pocket-book with other old papers, reposing in a drawer of an inlaid ivory and tortoiseshell cabinet, which in all probability had belonged to my learned kinsman before it was mine. It is only fair to add that the cabinet drawer was not locked, but it is not very noticeable, and, as far as I know, the medium had never seen it open or had any clue to its contents, which proved to be absolutely what she had said. This curious manner of introduction, as it were, was the prelude to a permanent control from this enlightened spirit, to employ once again the Spiritualistic theory as the most credible working hypothesis. On every occasion of doubt or difficulty, 'Jack,' as in his early manhood he used to be called, was full of resources, and when consulted, gave advice more profitable than that of any living relation I possess. I will give one instance which I can in no way explain (though perhaps others may) by any theory of the subliminal self, or telepathy, or clairvoyance, hardly even by elastic 'coincidence.'

There had come down to me by inheritance in the family of my mother a holograph of Oliver Cromwell's, of the year 1646; and by the help of old records its authenticity was proved beyond a doubt. As I am no collector of autographs, I resolved to part with the MS., and consulted a clever Oxford friend how to proceed in the matter. I was advised to have it photographed and to put it into one of Messrs. Sotheby's great autograph sales, both of which counsels I followed. There was one peculiarity about the letter, from which I hoped great things, viz., the impress of a finger or thumb in black wax, which had sealed the sheet; and on the possibility of this being a real sign-manual of such a maker of history, I made a special point of it when writing to Messrs. Sotheby. They naturally requested me to fix a reserve price, and as I felt this to be a difficult point, I consulted 'Jack' through the medium, believing him to have been, while in this life, the actual owner, in his turn, of the letter in question. The medium answered (not entranced, but in a natural voice): 'He says, put a high price on it, fifty or sixty pounds.' I wrote accordingly to the firm, and their reply, which I copy, proves the fact of my actually naming this high figure:—

13, Wellington-street, Strand.

March 15th, 1894.

MADAM,—We beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th inst., and in reply, regret to say that the reserve price, £60, we consider to be much too high. The letter is an undoubtedly genuine one, and in good preservation, but it is short, and very uninteresting, being merely upon official matters. It is therefore but of very little value beyond being a specimen of the writing and signature of Cromwell. The seal may enhance the value, but we are inclined to doubt it. We mention, merely as a suggestion, that we do not see how the impression of the thumb can be proved to be Cromwell's. The letter not being in any way a private one, is it not quite possible that a secretary folded and sealed it?\*

Considering the present depressed state of the market and the absence of American buyers, owing to bad trade, we do not think any higher reserve than about £20 would be safe, but we are of course not at all sure that it will not realise much more. We shall be glad to hear from you at your early convenience.

We are, Madam,

Yours obediently,

SOTHEBY, WILKINSON AND CO.

I at once told the medium of this letter, and after the usual short hesitation, she said, 'Well then, say £20, Jack says.' I answered, 'I am ready to fix what he first advised,' but again the message was, to make the reserve £20. I wrote again to this effect—and waited. On April 7th I received a note from the great auctioneers, announcing that on the day previous (the second of the sale) my holograph had realised the sum of £54 10s. ! Many other letters of far greater interest had been sold that day, yet none had approached this price within £22.

It seems superfluous to point out the extraordinary fact that an unlettered medium should suggest so much closer an estimate of the value of the MS. than the firm of world-wide experience and fame, and an expert at Oxford, who was also consulted.

I shall be greatly interested to read any comments or theories to account for this, and I could of course produce the original letters from Sotheby, as well as a collotype of the MS.

S. T. A. N.

\* As the superscription is unquestionably in the same writing as the body of the letter, it seems as plausible as not to suppose that the same hand sealed it also.

## THE REAL ORIGIN OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

BY QUÆSTOR VITÆ.

Some interesting information with regard to the inception of the Theosophical Society has been imparted to me by Mr. H. J. Newton, the venerable president of the First Society of Spiritualists of New York, which information will be of interest to Theosophical as well as general readers.

A certain Mr. Felt, a professor of mathematics, was introduced in 1875 by Mr. H. A. Stevens, on the editorial staff of the 'Observer,' to Madame Blavatsky, who was then known in New York as a Spiritualist, and in fact posed among her acquaintances as being a medium. This Mr. Felt claimed to possess a knowledge of the ancient Egyptian occult arts by which he could evoke phantoms of the dead, by using certain magical formula, combined with the burning of aromatic herbs, &c., and without the presence of a Spiritualistic 'medium.' He was asked by Madame Blavatsky to give a lecture in her rooms in Irving-place, on the Egyptian Kabbala, and to illustrate it with experiments in magic. She invited a number of people interested in such subjects to hear the lecture. Mr. Felt did give a lecture, but dealt mainly with geometry and but little with Kabbalism. He related his experiments in magical evocations, but gave no illustrations thereof.

Colonel Olcott claims, in his 'Old Diary Leaves,' to have proposed the formation of the Theosophical Society on this occasion. Mr. Newton contravenes this, and affirms that he himself rose and orally suggested the organisation of a society to investigate Mr. Felt's statements. This proposal was supported; a committee was named, of which he was appointed chairman; and this committee met at his house, once a week, to discuss the organisation of the society, until they had completed their work and framed the bye-laws, &c., of the projected society. This work occupied about two months, when the preamble and bye-laws were read, and the first five of the original fifty-five people subscribed their signatures thereto, thereby becoming members in the society thus constituted, on October 30th, 1875. Mr. Newton still holds the original manuscript book in his possession, containing the record of the constitution of the society, with its bye laws, and bearing the fifty-five signatures of the original members.

Among the subjects discussed by this original committee, of which Mr. Newton was chairman, was that of the most suitable name to be given to the society they were initiating, and which name might define its object, viz., the searching, by physical means, for knowledge with regard to the Infinite. For this purpose a dictionary was used which is still in Mr. Newton's possession, and which he fetched, in order to show how they came to select the term Theosophy, as best meeting the above requirements. The dictionary is Webster's unabridged, American edition, in which it will be found that Theosophy is defined as 'supposed intercourse with God and superior spirits, and consequent attainment of superhuman knowledge by physical processes, as by the theurgic operations of ancient Platonists, or by the chemical processes of the German fire philosophers.' *This circumstance, says Mr. Newton, and no other, was the origin of the use of the term Theosophy in connection with the society they constituted.*

The committee engaged rooms for the society in Mott Memorial Hall. They also engaged Mr. Felt to give a course of four lectures, explanatory of Egyptian Kabbalism, to the society, at a fee of twenty-five dollars per lecture. After giving one lecture to the newly-constituted society (on May 24th, 1876, as per his receipt), and receiving his fee, Mr. Felt came to Mr. Newton, who had been made treasurer to the society, and asked him to advance him the payment for the three lectures which remained to be given. This Mr. Newton declined to do.

Mr. Felt, however, then went to Colonel Olcott, and came back with a note from the Colonel (dated June 24th, 1876) to Mr. Newton (and still in his possession), advising him to pay Felt, which Mr. Newton therefore did. That was the last that was seen by the society of Mr. Felt. Colonel Olcott and Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten then gave some lectures to the society on different aspects of Spiritualism. Of these lectures no record was kept. The society continued in existence for about two years, becoming more and more thinly attended, till it died out. Colonel Olcott has stated, in his 'Old Diary Leaves,' that Mr. Newton withdrew from the society when he found that neither Mr. Felt nor H. P. Blavatsky was going to show him

an adept or an elemental. Mr. Newton says that he only withdrew after about two years, when the society died a natural death. Mr. Judge, it appears, claims that the society continued to exist till Colonel Olcott and H. P. Blavatsky went to India. Mr. Newton says that there had been no meeting of the society for a year or two prior to their leaving for India. Colonel Olcott published a long letter in the New York 'Sun' when they left, stating that they were sent by the New York society as missionaries to India. This was pure fiction, says Mr. Newton, the society having ceased to exist, except in the fertile imaginations of H. P. Blavatsky, Colonel Olcott, and Mr. Judge.

The only fact of any importance that occurred in connection with the existence of the society was that of its sending the medium Slade to Europe. Colonel Olcott, when referring to this incident on p. 654 of the 'Theosophist,' does not say a word with regard to its having occurred in connection with the Theosophical Society; his statement is so framed as to imply that the incident pertained only to the private life of H. P. Blavatsky and himself. Yet he admits that the inquiry entailed extended till May, 1876, while it will be noted that the Theosophical Society was constituted October 30th, 1875, which fact shows that it does pertain to the history of the Theosophical Society, and also shows its original Spiritualistic character. Numerous other discrepancies will be noticed between the account appearing in the 'Old Diary Leaves' and the facts as given by Mr. Newton. An effort is made to convey the impression that the society was instituted under the guidance of Theosophic adepts for the furtherance of Theosophic teachings. Its purely Spiritualistic origin and tendencies are carefully veiled. H. P. Blavatsky's letters to Aksakoff, however, at this period, as published by Solovyoff, reveal her as describing herself as an ardent Spiritualist. In consequence of this correspondence, apparently, Aksakoff wrote, asking that a reliable medium might be sent him recommended by the society, offering to pay 1,000dol. for travelling expenses. The society appointed a committee of three to investigate mediums and find one that would answer the requirements. The committee sent a report to Aksakoff recommending Slade, and he replied requesting that Slade should be sent, which was done. It was subsequent to this that Slade was arrested in London. He got away to Germany, however, and thence to Russia. Zöllner's book on 'Transcendental Physics' was one of the consequences resulting from this visit. One of the strongest documents in support of Spiritualism is thus due to the contributory assistance of the original Spiritualistic Theosophical Society.

We find that a pamphlet was published in Bombay, in 1879, containing an address, delivered by Colonel Olcott, on the society and its objects, in which a glowing description is given to the Easterns of the society and its work as being carried on both in the West and the East. To this pamphlet are added what purport to be the principles, rules, and bye-laws supposed to have been framed at New York on October 30th, 1875. But on comparing these printed rules with the original manuscript book, still in Mr. Newton's possession, the two documents are found to be entirely different from each other, the later production bearing not the slightest resemblance to the original above referred to, and to which are attached the fifty-five signatures of the original members.

The fact is that Colonel Olcott had no copy of the original, which remained in Mr. Newton's hands when the society became extinct. And this in itself shows to what extent the society had become extinct when H. P. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott left in search of fresh pastures. If the society had continued to live as a society, they would have retained possession of their original constitution. That they did not, leads to the inference that it died out and became extinct. When endeavouring to start a fresh venture in the East, it was, no doubt, considered good policy to present this new venture to the Easterns, as being a branch of an already existing important body in the West, and not as a fresh venture to re-establish a literary speculation which had already fallen flat elsewhere. Unfortunately, these two productions, when compared, are found to have no identity with each other.

Mr. Newton wishes to say that he will be glad to show the original manuscript book to Mrs. Besant, if she desires to see it, on the first occasion she may visit New York.

The title page bears the following names as officers:—President, H. S. Olcott; Vice, S. Pancoast, M.D., and J. H. Felt; Corresponding Secretary, H. P. Blavatsky; Recording

Secretary, J. Storer Cobb; Treasurer, H. J. Newton; Librarian, Ch. Southeran; Councillors, Rev. J. H. Wiggin, Mrs. E. Hardinge Britten, B. B. Westbrook, C. E. Simmons, M.D., and H. D. Monachesi; Counsel, W. Q. Judge. Organised in the City of New York, October 30th, 1875.

(To be continued.)

### SLATE-WRITING SEANCES.

General Francis J. Lippitt, writing from Annapolis, Maryland, U.S.A., sends us the following interesting narrative:—

On July 23rd last I attended a séance of Mrs. Sawyer, at Onset. The cabinet was virtually a sentry-box, made of pine board, open in front; a portière hanging over the opening. It stood in the rear part of the séance room. There was barely room in it to seat two persons on the two cane seat chairs it contained. The sitters formed an arc of a circle in front, at a distance of some eight or nine feet. Before the séance I, with certain others sitters who had no belief in psychic manifestations, made a thorough examination of the cabinet, inside and outside, without finding anything that could facilitate the perpetration of any species of fraud. On a small table on one side of the room was a pile of school slates, which were passed round the circle and seen to be perfectly clean; and during the entire evening there was sufficient light to enable one to see every person in the room, and no one could have approached the table without being plainly seen.

The medium was seated on one of the two chairs in the cabinet, and most, if not all, of the sitters were called up in turn to sit with her for the obtaining of spirit messages—first taking a school-slate from the pile on the table. In relating what occurred, I shall confine myself to my own personal experiences.

On my name being called, I went to the little table, took from it one of the book-slates, which I opened and found to be perfectly clean. I then entered the cabinet, and seated myself in the chair opposite the medium, our knees touching. The curtain was then drawn, leaving us sitting in utter darkness, until, after three or four minutes, the writing being announced completed, I returned to my seat.

On entering the cabinet I had received from the manager a slate pencil, which I held in my left hand. I placed the book-slate open on my knees. The moment the curtain was closed the medium firmly grasped my wrists with her two hands, while, by her directions, I held my own hands on her head. Never once, until I left the cabinet, was the grasp of the hands of either of us relaxed for a single instant. A moment after the curtain was drawn there came pappings by human hands on my head, my cheeks, my shoulders, and the back of my neck. A hand then took the pencil from me, and immediately I heard and felt what seemed to be writing on the book-slate. The completion of the writing was announced by a child's voice, which seemed to emerge from the floor on my right. I then went back to my seat, first returning the pencil left on my lap to the manager, whose position during all the experiments was on one side of the cabinet. And neither he nor any other mortal could have entered it, or stood in front of it, without being plainly seen.

I postponed examining my slate until full light was restored after the séance. What appeared on it will be seen in the photograph of the slate (marked A), which I had made without delay.

This photograph, marked A, and also one marked B, to which General Lippitt subsequently refers, it is impossible for us to reproduce. They are much too large for our pages, and some of the writing is so small that, if further reduced, it would be quite undecipherable. It will, however, suffice to describe them.

On the left-hand page of the book-slate A is a roughly drawn portrait, presumably intended to represent Professor Huxley, to whom, in fact, it bears a slight resemblance; and beneath the portrait is the following, in a clear but small handwriting:—

MY MUCH ESTEEMED GENERAL,

I am very glad to be able to come *en rapport* with you. I have taken great interest in your writings, and can assure you that your investigations will reach far beyond your life's work on the earth plane. I hope to be able to be in close communion with you.

HUXLEY.

On the opposite side of the slate is the following message

DEAREST PAPA,

I am delighted to know that the time is so near at hand when we can come to you through this instrument. With much love,

Ever your child,

CARRIE LIPPITT.

General Lippitt thus continues his narrative:—

As to what might appear on the slate I had not formed the slightest expectation; and certainly Professor Huxley, in view of his well-known disbelief in psychic phenomena, would have been the very last person I should have guessed as likely to come.

On July 31st following, I had a séance with Mrs. J. J. Whitney, a trance medium from California, one of the very few mediums who have never been, so far as I know, slandered or suspected of fraud. I took with me the book-slate I have mentioned, and placed it, closed, in the medium's hand, asking the control ('Mayflower') what impression she received from it. She said: 'I see two writings on it—one from your daughter, the other from a man standing here now, who seems to be one of great intellect and of a very honest nature.' I tried very hard to get his name, but 'Mayflower' could not give it.

On August 2nd, I attended another séance of Mrs. Sawyer's. The conditions were in all respects identical with those I have before described at the séance of July 23rd, as was also the *modus operandi*. But this time, instead of waiting to take a book-slate until I should be called into the cabinet, I took one from the pile, before the séance commenced. There was nothing whatever on it, and it never left my hands until the séance was over. I send you herewith a photograph of it, showing what then appeared on it, which was nothing but the portrait on the left-hand page. I was asked by several of the sitters whose portrait it was, but I declined to answer.

The next day I obtained a sitting with Henry Rogers, a slate-writer. I had with me the book-slate B, closed and secured by two rubber bands, and asked the medium if I could probably obtain any writing inside of it. He said he was willing to try. I hardly need say that I gave him no clue or point whatever as to what I was hoping to receive. I myself placed the book-slate, secured as already stated, between two of the medium's own slates, which I had examined and found clean. These slates I held in my hands while the medium bound round them a rubber band, and from that moment the slates never left my possession. During the entire séance they were either resting on the table *under my hands*, or being held by me on my head, or on my shoulder. The medium never once touched them, except by occasionally placing his finger tips for a second or two on one of the frames.

Notified by raps that the experiment was completed, the medium told me to open the slates, which I proceeded to do by taking off the rubber band. I then found both of the medium's slates covered with written messages from unexpected sources, two of which bore on them striking internal evidence of identity. Curiously enough, the bands round my book-slate had disappeared. During the whole séance, which lasted, I should judge, some twenty or twenty-five minutes, I had plainly heard writing going on between the slates. The séance was in broad daylight, at 10 a.m., and no visible person was in the room beside ourselves.

On opening the book-slate B, I found it covered with writings as shown on the photograph.

The book-slate B shows the portrait of Professor Huxley on the left-hand page, and beneath it commences a message in a large bold hand, extending over to the right-hand page, as follows:—

DEAR FRIEND,—It is with pleasure I greet you, and identify my picture. Let the spirit be with you ever, to advance this great work.

Yours for the truth,

PROFESSOR HUXLEY.

On the left-hand page there is also a greeting from 'Your loving wife Elizabeth,' and in one corner the distinctly-written message:—

DEAR PAPA,—We are all here to give you greeting. Come again; we like the influences here, and we want to give you our pictures. Mamma sends love.

From your loving daughter,

CARRIE.

The General proceeds :—

A short time after, as I was passing the medium's cottage, I saw him waiting for me at the gate. He held in his hand the two rubber bands that had bound the book-slate, stating that he had picked them up from the floor just after I had left, and that he was immediately controlled to write, 'As we found the rubber bands an impediment, we were obliged to get rid of them.'

As to the question of identity, until these manifestations shall be no longer produced behind the scenes, the problem of personal identity in any particular case cannot, it seems to me, ever be satisfactorily solved.

Although I made full notes of all these occurrences within a few minutes after the respective séances, I fear that the persistent Dr. Hodgson will claim that this record is, presumably, only another instance of imperfect memory or of mal-observation. For, is it not a legitimate inference from all he has given us that, whether independent slate-writing be a reality or not, it can never be proved by human testimony?

[The photographs A and B are open to inspection at the office of 'LIGHT.'—ED. 'LIGHT.']

### A WONDERFUL HEALER.

If testimony is of any use in this 'naughty world,' the wonderful healer who has appeared at Denver, U.S., is worth watching. 'The Illustrated American' gives a portrait of him which is perfectly startling in its resemblance to the traditional portraits of Jesus Christ, though that may only suggest 'get up.' But the motive? This man is an ascetic; he refuses money; he works so hard and so continuously that the medical men regard his endurance as one of his chief wonders; he has suffered imprisonment for going about bareheaded and bare-foot.

The portrait is accompanied by a notice from which we extract the following :—

Two years ago Francis Schlatter, who is now known all over the continent as the 'Healer,' sat on his shoemaker's bench in Denver, when he received, as he says, a request or command 'to arise and go forth and heal all of the world who will believe.' From Denver he journeyed afoot to Arizona, where, in the desert, he fasted forty days and forty nights, after which he began to heal.

He first commanded general attention at Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he performed some very astonishing cures. Three weeks ago, after a second fast of sixty days and sixty nights, he arrived in Denver. Since his arrival there he has rested up to September 16th, at which time he appeared for his work with humanity. Schlatter's first day was a success. No less than seven hundred people stood in line, passed the 'Healer,' received the firm grasp of his hand and the blessing, and passed on. On the second day over two thousand were blessed by this strange man, until now the crowds which gather are so dense as to make the affair a perfect panic. The method of the 'Healer' is to grasp firmly the hand of the patient, and, with his meek face turned upward, his lips move in prayer. 'Have faith,' he says, 'and you will be made well.'

It is natural that people should scoff at his alleged strange power at first, but it has now been established beyond the slightest doubt that this man, whatever he be, has performed wonders.

The Denver 'Daily News' says :—

Francis Schlatter, the healer, is no longer an experiment, even to the most exacting, for at least a dozen cases in which he performed remarkable cures were reported yesterday. The vast majority of those who have seen the kindly old man have never doubted his power, but there were others who insisted that he was not what he pretended to be. These people now have a chance to investigate and satisfy themselves of the wonderful power of the old man.

Among the cures announced yesterday were several of paralysis, one of partial blindness, one of dropsy, and another in which the use of the lower limbs was restored. In one of these cases the cure is attested by the physician who had been treating the patient and by others. This is the most remarkable of them all. Miss Maud Ward, of Longmont, had been suffering with an impaired vision and paralysis of the right arm. She

had worn glasses for five years, and her condition was a lamentable one. Dr. D. N. Stradley, of Longmont, treated her, and was assisted by Drs. Callahan and Bickford, also of Longmont. The girl came down to Denver last week and visited Schlatter. She felt better soon after she left him, and when she reached home she could see without the use of her glasses, and could move her arm as if it had never been affected.

A Denver clergyman, after full examination, preached at the Broadway Temple on the subject, and said :—

It has not been an easy path he has trod from Denver to the Pacific and back again, depending always on what is to him the voice of 'the Father.' This man has walked across deserts and over mountains, slept in rain and sleet and snow, asked for food when told to ask for it, gone without when told to go without. I talked with a locomotive engineer, who on his trips often passed him. He said: 'If I could have found him at a station I would have taken him aboard and paid his fare. But, as it happened, I always saw him between stations.' But you here have read the main incidents of the later life of this man. I do not wonder that people go to get help from him. I believe that he has observed the conditions of power. He has taken no care of himself. He has gone where he believes he was sent. He has done what he believes he was told to do. He is the only man of the kind and degree that I ever saw. If people cannot get good from God through him I do not know why. He has conformed. It is the most literal following of Jesus Christ that I have ever known.

### 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.]

#### Spirit Photographs.

SIR,—I beg to inform your correspondent, A. C. Swinton, and other readers of 'LIGHT,' that I have secured about fifty of the best of the 'new spirit photographs,' all cabinet size. Each picture is in a frame, appropriate to itself, assigned by spiritual guidance. There are printed numbers on the frames, and the whole are hung up in my largest and best-lighted room. On the table is a catalogue of the whole, containing a history of each portrait, and of the circumstances of its production. They can be seen daily from ten till seven, at my address, 113, Edgware-road, W. As there is much discussion at the present time about the subject of spirit photography, I ask if you will be kind enough to insert this notice, so that those who are interested in the matter may have an opportunity of judging of the genuineness of these photographs for themselves.

HORATIO HUNT.

#### Where Shall We Draw the Line?

SIR,—It would scarcely be worth while replying to the somewhat acrimonious letter of your correspondent 'Anglo-Catholic,' but for the fact of his having, intentionally or unintentionally, failed to understand me.

In the first place I am taxed with trying to point out 'some of her errors' to Miss X. Anyone who reads my letter will see that I offered certain 'suggestions' only, and that in response to a general invitation from Miss X.—'again I ask, where are we to draw the line?' As students all, of the unknown if not unknowable, any attempt to write down aught as 'error' is at least rash, but an honest desire to help to remove the mist which may now and again obscure the vision of all, is legitimate enough. Miss X. asked if we Spiritualists could find an adequate reason for certain phenomena, and I suggested one which appears adequate to myself and many others, for her consideration.

I am much obliged to 'Anglo-Catholic' for the information that Occultism was in existence before the word Protestant, but I happened to be already acquainted with that fact. My position as one 'outside the pale of the Church' is something I am less aware of. What Church? I protest against all sectarian definitions, and claim to be a member of 'Our Father's Church.' That the Roman Catholic Church forbids or discourages the investigation by the laity of Modern Spiritualism, is just as true as that some of her priests tolerate it. I could give names in support of this assertion, but it is too generally known to be correct to require it. I also have close and intimate connection with members of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches, but I do not see how that affects the question at issue.

As to Heaven and Hell being places rather than conditions they can well be both. 'Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for behold, the Kingdom of God is within you,' said the Master.

The final blunder is too silly to be annoying, for your correspondent actually takes the allusion to the Society for Psychical Research to mean the Church! He says: 'Now we are to be told that the Church "invents theories to fit facts!"' Why rush so heedlessly into print? It is very certain I am unordained, and equally so that as regards inspiration we shall not draw the line at those who are! Whether I am altogether 'illiterate' may perhaps still be regarded as an open question by the larger hearted.

'BIDSTON.'

#### The Perils of Premature Burial.

SIR,—As the English view of this important and pressing subject has been pretty widely made known in the Press during the last few weeks, it may interest some of your readers to know that an American opinion, in the form of an address delivered by Professor Alex. Wilder, M.D., before members of both Houses of the Legislature at the Capitol, New York, has just been issued in a well-got-up sixpenny pamphlet, by E. W. Allen, London. The learned, and now venerable, lecturer, who was formerly Professor of Psychological Science and Medicine at New York, has given the subject of the occult causes of apparent death much attention, and deals with the facts from a popular and humanitarian view, citing well authenticated cases of premature burial and narrow escapes from a catastrophe so terrible. Dr. Wilder indicates, from a medical point of view, the causes which produce death-trance, catalepsy, syncope, and other forms of suspended animation, and how these dangerous maladies may be avoided, and concludes as follows: 'The law should require the examination of the body by a medical man or expert before permitting its interment. Where a physician has been employed he should be obliged to certify to actual death, unless the unequivocal evidences of dissolution had already appeared. Undertakers and others having charge of funerals should be compelled to ascertain that death has occurred before moving or confining the remains. Carelessness in this matter cannot be innocent, and ignorance in such a case is akin to crime. When we neglect precautions against a fate so terrible, to which every one is thus liable, our tears are little less than hypocrisy, our mourning is a mockery.'

A writer, who has had a sorrowful experience of premature burial in his own family, deals with the various signs of death, and the unsatisfactory mode of medical examination in England, and enforces the urgency of radical changes in our administration of the supposed dead.

Clarendon-street, N.W.

JAMES R. WILLIAMSON.

#### Luciferians and Freemasonry.

SIR,—I willingly submit to the correction of your correspondent, 'Crux P.M., P.Z., 32.°' I supposed myself to be speaking in the sense of the authority I was citing, in describing the late Albert Pike as the 'acknowledged head of the whole Masonic body'; but I ought to have said of 'high' Masonry. The organisation of this is of comparatively recent date; the account of it takes up many pages of 'Dr. Bataille's' work; it seems to comprehend almost every country in the world, and to put in motion all the really vital force which exists in universal Masonry itself. Of this organisation Albert Pike was the 'acknowledged head.' But 'high' Masonry (by which seem to be understood 'the so-called "high grades"') is not Palladism itself; the ruling spirits in it are for the most part Palladists, and belong to the theurgic 'triangles'; but the secret of Palladism is, or was, well kept from the majority composing the known high grades. As to ordinary English Masonry, no one supposes that to be infected with Palladism; it is as innocent as it is insipid. The contention is that as soon as Masonry becomes really interesting and mystical it tends to Palladism, the Palladists being those who have discovered or developed its ulterior significance. It is only the English who long endure mere formalism and conventionality, in contented ignorance of the life and logic of rites; the rest of the world wants ideas and the consequences of ideas. Our innocence is largely due to our superficiality. Even in England, however, Palladism exists, according to my authorities. In the latest number of Miss Vaughan's 'Mémoires,' for instance, we have a hearsay account of a Luciferian murder in London in the

year 1891—hearsay, but good hearsay, if Miss Vaughan herself is to be trusted. And it was in London that Miss Vaughan constituted the Independent Palladist Federation, with a view to reforming what was sinister and repugnant in the ritual and practice of the triangles.

As to 'Africanus Theosophicus,' he need have been at no pains to discover that 'Dr. Bataille' is a Catholic, or to prove the fact from the single passage quoted; the fact is formally declared at the opening of his work; every reader of my papers in 'LIGHT' knows it from the preliminary statement. Your correspondent seems to suppose that Catholics are the aggressors in the war with Masonry; the case is just the reverse. Palladism has for its principal aim the downfall of the Church; as for Protestantism, with its hundreds of sects and designations, it is at no trouble about that, not seeing any occasion to interfere with already active processes of disintegration and transformation. For Palladism, Christianity, as an organisation, means the Church all over the world which has the centre of visible unity at Rome, and which is therefore 'the enemy.' Is the tone of your correspondent's denunciation of that Church altogether in accordance with the amiable Christianity he insists upon? In the spirit of reviling and 'venomous cursing,' indeed, Rome has always been more than equalled by her foes. Moreover, there is a great difference between formal and solemn condemnations by such an authority as the Church, charged, as it believes, with tremendous interests, and mere irresponsible vituperation. In the 'African's' remarks I cannot easily recognise that sweetness, with its attendant candour, and freedom from exasperation, and from suspicion based on nothing but prejudice, which should be associated with the light of a 'Christo-Theosophist.'

In conclusion, let me correct my remarks in last week's 'LIGHT,' concerning 'the mystery of Miss Diana Vaughan,' by the admission that my inference to her discredit, and to the discredit of the evidence I had before adduced, seems to me now to have been too hasty and too general. I owe to Madame de Steiger the suggestion, which ought to have occurred to myself, that in the false identification of Eirenæus Philalethes with Thomas Vaughan, Miss Vaughan may be herself quite innocent, that she may really have inherited the document asserting that identification, the deception dating further back. And within the past few days I have been shown a French book of the date 1741, proving that the mistake was current at least as early as that. This book, Dufresnoy's 'Histoire Hermetique,' gives the name of Eirenæus as Thomas de Vagan, and also gives the date of his birth as 1612, the year assigned to that event by Miss Vaughan's documents, which fix it by reference to the date of the Dutch acquisition of Manhattan—the future site of New York). There is a curious mystery in the whole matter. There might just conceivably be two Thomas Vaughans, adepts and contemporaries, but the brother Henry and Jesus College in addition are quite too much to be swallowed by way of coincidence.

It seemed to me also, at first, that 'Dr. Bataille' must stand or fall with Miss Diana Vaughan. But that by no means entirely follows. Therefore it is, that, in the earlier part of this letter, I have felt myself still able to refer to the evidence concerning Palladism as in the main, and provisionally, valid.

C.C.M.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

WE hope our correspondents will be as indulgent with us as they can. Their kind communications will have as early attention as possible, but just now we have more matter in hand than we know how to deal with.

COMMUNICATIONS acknowledged—From General Lorrison; J.L.; 'Edina'; W.K.; J.G.O.; R.L.; Aicha Hai; R. Cooper; Madame De Steiger; Newton Crosland; A. U. Zanne; 'Quæstor Vitæ' ('Spiritualism in New York'); Rev. W. R. Tomlinson; E. W. Dinning (Waukegan, Ill., U.S.A.); K.A.B.; A.W.; M.M.B.; O.J.; 'Aleph'; W.H.E.

THERE are natures in which, if they love us, we are conscious of having a sort of baptism and consecration; they bind us over to rectitude and purity by their pure belief about us; and our sins become that worst kind of sacrilege which tears down the invisible altar of trust. 'If you are not good, none is good'—those little words may give a terrific meaning to responsibility, may hold a vitriolic intensity for remorse.—GEORGE ELIOT.