

THE TWO WORLDS

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO

SPIRITUALISM, OCCULT SCIENCE, ETHICS, RELIGION AND REFORM.

No. 60.—VOL. II. [Registered as a Newspaper.] FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 1889.

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ALOFAS

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Bacup.—Meeting Room, at 2-30 and 6-30: Mr. G. Smith. Sec. 137, Hartley Terrace, Lee Mill.
Barrow-in-Furness.—82, Cavendish St., 6-30. Sec. Mr. Holden, 1, Holker St.
Balby Carr.—Town St., Lyceum, at 10 and 2; at 6: Mr. Bush. Sec. Mr. J. Armitage, Stonefield House, Hangingheaton.
Batley.—Wellington St., 2-30, 6. Sec. Mr. J. Graison, Caledonia Rd.
Beeston.—Conservative Club, Town St., 2-30 and 6: Mr. Champion. Sec. Mr. J. Robinson, 32, Danube Terrace, Gelderd Rd., Leeds.
Belper.—Jubilee Hall, 10, 2, Lyceum; 10-30 5-30: Mr. Wylden. Sec. Mr. H. U. Smedley, Park Mount.
Bingley.—Oddfellows' Hall (ante-room), 2-30 and 6: Miss Hartley.
Birmingham.—Ladies' College, Ashted Rd., 6-45. Séance, Wednesday, 8. Sec. Mr. A. Cotterell, Board School, Oozells St., 2-30 and 6.
Bishop Auckland.—Temperance Hall, Gurney Villa, at 2 and 6. Sec. Mr. E. Thompson, 3, Sun Street, St. Andrews' Place.
Blackburn.—Exchange Hall, 9-30, Lyceum; at 2-30, 6-30. Sec. Mr. Robinson, 124, Whalley Range.
Bradford.—Walter St., Hall Lane, Wakefield Rd., at 2-30 and 6: Mr. J. Armitage. Sec. Mr. Poppleston, 20, Bengal St.
Otley Rd., 2-30, 6: Miss Musgrave. Sec. Mr. M. Marchbank, 129, Undercliffe St.
Little Horton Lane, 1, Spicer Street, at 2-30 and 6. Sec. Mr. M. Jackson, 35, Gaythorne Road.
Milton Rooms, Westgate, 10, Lyceum; 2-30 and 6: Mr. Kitson. Sec. Mr. E. Kemp, 52, Silk Street, Manningham.
St. James's Lyceum, near St. James's Market, Lyceum, 10; 2-30, 6: Miss Pickles. Sec. Mr. Smith, 227, Leeds Rd.
Ripley St., Manchester Rd., 2-30 and 6: Mrs. Connell. Sec. Mr. Tomlinson, 5, Kaye Street, Manchester Rd.
Birk St., Leeds Rd., 2-30, 6. Sec. Miss Hargreaves, 607, Leeds Rd.
Bowling.—Harker St., 10-30, 2-30, 6: Miss Tetley. Wednesdays, 7-30. Sec. Mr. J. Bedford, c/o Mrs. Peel, 141, College Rd.
Horton.—55, Crowther St., 2-30, 6. 21, Rooley St., Bankfoot, 6.
Brighouse.—Town Hall, 2-30 and 6: Mrs. Wallis. Sec. Mr. D. Robinson, Francis St., Bridge End, Raistrick.
Burnley.—Tanner St., Lyceum, 9-30; 2-30, 6-30: Mrs. Hellier. Sec. Mr. Cottam, 7, Warwick Mount.
 102, Padiham Rd., Wed., Healing. Tuesday & Thursday, 8, Circle.
Burslem.—15, Stanley St., Middleport, at 6-30.
Byker.—Back Wilfred Street, 6-30. Sec. Mr. M. Douglas.
Oleckheaton.—Oddfellows' Hall, 2-30, 6. Sec. Mr. W. W. H. Nuttall, 19, Victoria Street, Moor End.
Colne.—Cloth Hall Buildings, Lyceum, 10; at 2-30 and 6-30: Mrs. Yarwood. Sec. Mr. E. Christian, End St.
Owms.—Lepton Board School, 2-30, 6: Mrs. J. M. Smith. Sec. Mr. G. Mellor, Spring Grove, Fenay Bridge, Lepton.
Darwen.—Church Bank St., 11, Circle; 2-30 and 6-30. Sec. Mr. G. W. Bell, 30, Marsh Terrace.
Deesbury.—Vulcan Road, 2-30 and 6: Mrs. Stansfield. Hon. Sec. Mr. Stansfield, 7, Warwick Mount, Batley.
Eccleshill.—Old Baptist Chapel, 2-30, 6-30: Mrs. Beardshall.
Exeter.—Longbrook St. Chapel, 2-45, 6-45. O.S. Mr. Hopkins, Market St.
Felling.—Park Road, 6-30: Mrs. R. Peters. Sec. Mr. Lawes, Crow Hall Lane, High Felling.
Foleshill.—Edgwick, at 10-30, Lyceum; at 6-30: Local Mediums.
Glasgow.—Bannockburn Hall, 36, Main St., 11-30, Mr. Russell; 6-30, Mr. D. Anderson, Trance. Sec. Mr. Drummond, 80, Gallowgate.
Halifax.—1, Winding Road, 2-30 and 6: Mr. J. H. Taylor. Sec. Mr. Feugill, 12, Bracken Hill, Pellon.
Heckmondwike.—Assembly Room, Thomas St., at 10-30, 2-30 and 6: Miss Harrison. Sec. Mr. J. Collins, Northgate.
Hetton.—At Mr. Richardson's, at 6: Local Medium. Sec. Mr. J. T. Charlton, 29, Dean Street, Hetton Downs.
Heywood.—Argyle Buildings, 2-30 and 6-15. Sec. Mr. E. H. Duckworth, 88, Longford Street.
Huddersfield.—3, Brook St., at 2-30 and 6-30: Miss Caswell. Sec. Mr. J. Briggs, Lockwood Road, Folly Hall.
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Keighley.—Lyceum, East Parade, 2-30 and 6: Mrs. Crossley. Sec. Mr. J. Roberts, 5, Bronte Street, off Bradford Road.
 Co-operative Assembly Room, Brunswick Street, 2-30 and 6. Sec. Mr. A. Scott, 157, West Lane.
Lancaster.—Athensium, St. Leonard's Gate, at 10-30, Lyceum; 2-30 and 6-30: Local. Sec. Mr. Ball, 17, Shaw Street.
Leeds.—Institute, 23, Cookridge St., 2-30, 6-30: Miss Harris. Sec. Mr. J. W. Hanson, 22, Milford Place, Kirkstall Rd.
Leicester.—Silver St., 10-30, Lyceum; 8, Healing; 6-30: Mr. Barradale. Cor. Sec. Mr. Young, 5, Dannett St.
Leigh.—Railway Rd., 10-30 and 6. Sec. Mr. J. Stirrup, Bradshawgate. Newton St., 2-30 and 6.
Liverpool.—Daulby Hall, Daulby St., London Rd., 11, 6-30: Mrs. Britten; Discussion, at 3. Sec. Mr. Russell, Daulby Hall.
London.—Baker St., 18, at 7: Mr. R. Harper.
 Camberwell Rd., 102.—6-30. Thursday, 8.
Camden Town.—143, Kentish Town Rd., Tuesday, at 8: Mr. Towns.
Canning Town.—125, Barking Rd., at 7.
Cavendish Square.—18A, Margaret St., at 11. Wednesday, 2 till 5, Free Healing.
Dalston.—21, Brougham Rd., Wednesday, 8, Mr. Paine, Clairvoyance.
Euston Road, 195.—Monday, 8, Séance, Mrs. Hawkins.
Hampstead.—Warwick House, Southend Green: Developing, Tuesdays, 7-30, Mrs. Spring.
Holdern.—Mr. Coffin's, 13, Kingsgate St. Wednesday, at 8.
Islington.—809, Essex Road, N., 6-30: Spiritual Meeting. Wednesday, 7-30, Séance, Mrs. Wilkinson.
Islington.—Wellington Hall, Upper St., 7. Tuesday, 8.

Kentish Town Rd.—Mr. Warren's, 245, Thurs., 8, Séance, Mrs. Spring.
King's Cross.—184, Copenhagen St., corner of Pembroke St., 10-45, Enquiry Meeting; 6-45, Mr. Lees, and Anthems by "Nickless family." Sec. Mr. W. H. Smith, 19, Offord Rd., Barnsbury, N.
Marylebone.—24, Harcourt St., 11, Mr. Hawkins, Healing; 7, Mr. Hooker. Tuesday, Mrs. Wilkins, 8, Séance. Saturday, Mrs. Hawkins, 8, Séance. Sec. Mr. Tomlin, 21, Capland St., N. W.
Mortimer Street, 51.—Cavendish Rooms, 7: Mr. T. Hunt, "Is Spiritualism of the Devil?"
New Cross Rd., 475.—7: Mrs. Spring. Thursday, 8.
New North Road.—74, Nicholas St., Tuesdays, at 8, Mrs. Cannon, Clairvoyance, personal messages.
North Kensington.—The Cottage, 57, St. Mark's Rd., Thursday, 8: Mrs. Wilkins, Trance and Clairvoyance.
Notting Hill Gate.—9, Bedford Gardens, Silver St., 11, Healing, Mr. Goddard, sen.; 3, Séance, Mr. Goddard, jun.; 7, Mr. Portman and others.
Peckham.—Winchester Hall, 33, High Street, 11, Mr. R. Harper; 7, Mr. J. Humphries; 2-30, Lyceum. 99, Hill St., Tuesday, 8, Members' General Meeting. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. Wilkins, Séance. Saturday, 8, Circle. Sec. Mr. Long.
Stepney.—Mrs. Ayers', 45, Jubilee St., 7. Tuesday, 8.
Stratford.—Workman's Hall, West Ham Lane, E., 7. Sec. M. A. Bewley, 3, Arnold Villas, Capworth Villas, Leyton, Essex.
Lowestoft.—Daybreak Villa, Prince's St., Beccles Rd., at 2-30 and 6-30.
Macclesfield.—Free Church, Paradise Street, at 2-30 and 6-30. Sec. Mr. S. Hayes, 20, Brook Street.
Manchester.—Co-operative Hall, Downing Street, Lyceum; 2-45, 6-30: Mr. Tetlow. Sec. Mr. Hyde, 89, Exeter Street, Hyde Rd.
Collyhurst Rd., 2-30, 6-30: Mrs. Stansfield. Monday, 8, Discussion. Sec. Mr. Horrocks, 1, Marsh St., Kirby St., Ancoats.
Mezborough.—2-30, 6. Sec. Mr. Watson, 62, Orchard Terrace, Church St.
Middlesbrough.—Spiritual Hall, Newport Rd., Lyceum, 2; 10-45, 6-30: Professor Magus, and on Monday. Sec. Mr. H. Brown, 56, Denmark Street.
Sidney St., at 10-30 and 6-30. Sec. Mr. T. Benyon.
Morley.—Mission Room, Church Street, at 6: Miss Tetley. Sec. Mr. Bradbury, Britannia Rd., Bruntcliffe, near Leeds.
Nelson.—Public Hall, Leeds Rd., 2-30 and 6-30: Mr. Holmes. Sec. Mr. F. Holt, 23, Regent Street, Brierfield.
Newcastle-on-Tyne.—20, Nelson Street, 6-30, Alderman Barkas, "The Problem of the Age—If a man die shall he live again?" Sec. Mr. Sargent, 42, Grainger Street.
North Shields.—6, Camden St., Lyceum, 2-30; 6-15: Mr. T. Morgan. Sec. Mr. Walker, 10, Wellington St., W. 41, Borough Road, 6-30: Mrs. Scott.
Northampton.—Oddfellows' Hall, Newland, at 2-30 and 6-30. Sec. Mr. T. Hutchinson, 17, Bull Head Lane.
Nottingham.—Morley House, Shakespeare St., 10-45, 6-30: Mr. B. Plant. Sec. Mr. J. W. Burrell, 48, Gregory Boulevard.
Oldham.—Spiritual Temple, Joseph St., Union St., Lyceum 10, 2; 2-30, 6-30: Mr. Schutt. Sec. Mr. Gibson, 41, Bowden St.
Openshaw.—Mechanics', Pottery Lane, Lyceum, 9-15 and 2; 10-30 and 6: Local. Sec. Mr. Page, 14, Lord St.
Parkgate.—Bear Tree Rd. (near bottom), at 10-30, Lyceum; at 6-30. Sec. Mr. Roebuck, 60, Rawmarsh Hill, Rawmarsh.
Pendleton.—Co-operative Hall, at 2-30 and 6-30: Mrs. Green. Sec. Mr. Evans, 10, Augusta St.
Plymouth.—Notte St., at 11 and 6-30: Mr. Leeder, Clairvoyant.
Portsmouth.—Assembly Rooms, Clarendon St., Lake Rd., Landport, 6-30.
Ramsbottom.—10, Moore St., off Kenyon St., 2-30 and 6: Mr. Standish. Thursday, Circle, 7-30. Sec. Mr. J. Lea, 10, Moore St.
Rawtenstall.—10-30, Lyceum; at 2-30 and 6: Mr. Swindlehurst. Sec. Mr. W. Palmer, 42, Reeds Holme Buildings, Crawshawbooth.
Rochdale.—Regent Hall, at 2-30 and 6. Sec. Mr. Dearden, 2, Whipp Street, Smallbridge.
 Michael St., 2-30 and 6. Tuesday, at 7-45, Circle.
 28, Blackwater St., 2-30, 6. Wed., 7-30. Sec. Mr. Telford, 11, Drake St.
Salford.—48, Albion St., Windsor Bridge, 2-30 and 6-30: Miss Hollows and Mr. Buckley. Wednesday, 7-45, Local. Sec. Mr. T. Toft, 321, Liverpool St., Seedley, Pendleton.
Scholes.—Mr. J. Rhodes, 2-30 and 6. Silver St., 2-30 and 6.
Saltash.—Mr. Williscroft's, 24, Fore St., at 6-30.
Sheffield.—Cocoa House, 175, Pond St., at 7. Sec. Mr. Hardy. Central Board School, Orchard Lane, 2-30, 6-30. Sec. Mr. Anson, 91, Weigh Lane, Park.
Stelmanthorpe.—Board School, 2-30 and 6: Mrs. Wade.
Slaiithwaite.—Lath Lane, 2-30, 6. Sec. Mr. Meal, Wood St., Hill Top.
South Shields.—19, Cambridge St., Lyceum, 2-30; 11, 6: Mr. R. Grice. Sec. Mr. Graham, 18, Belle Vue Ter., Tyne Dock.
Sowerby Bridge.—Lyceum, Hollins Lane, 2-30 and 6-30: Mr. Johnson. Sec. Miss Thorpe, Glenfield Place, Warley Clough.
Stonehouse.—Corpus Christi Chapel, at 11 and 6-30. Sec. Mr. O. Adams, 11, Parkfield Terrace, Plymouth.
Sunderland.—Centre House, High St., W., 2-15, Lyceum; 2-30 and 6-30. Wednesday, 7-30. Sec. Mr. J. Ainsley, 48, Dame Dorothy St., Monkwearmouth.
 Monkwearmouth, 8, Ravensworth Ter., 6: Mr. Hoey.
Tunstall.—13, Rathbone St., at 6-30. Sec. Mr. Pocklington.
Tyldesley.—Spiritual Institute, Elliot St., at 2-30 and 6. Sec. Mr. A. Flindle, 6, Dartington Street.
Walsall.—Exchange Rooms, High St., at 6-30. Sec. Mr. T. Lawton.
Westhoughton.—Wingates, 2-30 and 6-30: Miss Walker. Sec. Mr. J. Fletcher, 344, Chorley Rd.
West Pelton.—Co-operative Hall, at 10-30, Lyceum; at 2 and 5-30: Mr. Hoperoft. Sec. Mr. T. Weddle, 7, Grange Villa.
West Vale.—Green Lane, 2-30, 6: Mr. Bradbury. Sec. Mr. Berry.
Whitworth.—Reform Club, Spring Cottages, 2-30 and 6: Mr. Plant.
Wibsey.—Hardy St., at 2-30 and 6: Mr. Peel. Sec. Mr. G. Saville, 17, Smiddles Lane, Manchester Road, Bradford.
Willington.—Albert Hall, 1-15, 6-30. Sec. Mr. Cook, 12, York St.
Wisbeck.—Lecture Room, Public Hall, 6-45. Mr. Burkill.
York.—7, Abbot St., Groves, 6-30: Mr. and Mrs. Atherley.

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CONTENTS.

The Rostrum.....	85	Another Phase of the Fox Tactics..	91
The Improvisatore; or, Torn Leaves from Real Life History—Part I. . .	86	Spiritual Fragments	91
Poem—A Letter to Isaac Watts in Heaven	88	Lyceum Jottings.....	92
Prophetic Sentiments	89	Chronicle of Societary Work	93
"The Two Worlds" New Departure	96	Prospective Arrangements	95
		Passing Events.....	95
		Sunday Services	11.

THE ROSTRUM.

A CHRISTMAS ORATION.

Given on the 25th of December, 1888, at the Co-operative Assembly Room, Downing Street, Manchester, by EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

ONE of the most impressive ideas that arises from the name of the day, in the eventide of which we are now met, is the recollection that millions of human beings have united, in different parts of the world, in scenes far removed from each other, for one common purpose, and that, to rejoice and make this one day a festival season. Should you ask the keen observer of life and its issues for what cause so many people, strange to each other, have united in a Christmas commemoration, he would answer that at least two-thirds of the celebrants act in obedience to the customs of their fathers and forefathers, and have little or no interest in the alleged meaning of the festival. Enquire of the spiritualists why the people rejoice at this time, and they will tell you there is a deep esoteric meaning involved in the day. Nature, on the one hand, proclaiming the resurrection of the new year from the death of the old, and the Great Spiritual Father, in his providence, uniting many millions of the race, standing on the same plane of civilization, in the bonds of ONE COMMON IDEA, the result being the acknowledgment of the Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man.

There is yet another idea that underlies the celebration of Christmas, and this is, the teachings of theology, and as these involve several startling and complex propositions, it needs must be that we now elaborate them somewhat at length. We are the more disposed to adopt this course, as most, if not all the countless millions that celebrate Christmas, whether from custom or under a religious impulse, do so as the outcome of the theological teachings we are about to investigate, and the question of whether these are true or false is, therefore, a most important one. Millions of pounds are expended annually, and thousands of costly buildings have been erected, kept shut up, and held so sacred, that they can only be opened for about six hours each week, and all to teach these same theological ideas.

When we remember the vast multitudes of starving, homeless, and outcast, that the wealth devoted to theological purposes would feed, shelter, and rescue from crime, we consider we have the right—nay, it becomes a solemn duty for us to question the authenticity of the theological ideas that are promulgated at such an enormous cost, it is to this task then that we first propose to devote our attention.

Theology teaches that the God it worships made the universe in six days; the sun, moon, and stars, simply to light the earth, and then placed man alone, in a garden, where all his wants were supplied. Man, observing that all the other living creatures were in couples, male and female, wisely suggested to his Creator the duty of making him in couples, male and female, also. The Creator obeying the behest of his creature, manufactured out of the male, a female companion.

The God of theology having then made all things to suit himself, pronounces upon them the verdict that they are very good, but lo! as soon as inquisitive investigating

woman enters upon the scene, all things turn out very bad. The Creator says there is a tree in the middle of the garden which—whosoever eats thereof shall surely die. A certain talking serpent arises who, it seems knows better than his Creator, and assures the woman that the fruit of the tree will not cause whosoever eats thereof to die—but rather to grow exceedingly wise. Under such inviting counsels as these, the woman *does* eat the fruit of the tree, and gives to her less astute male companion to eat also. God thereupon curses them both, drives them forth from the garden to labour and sorrow; and pronounces upon them and all their posterity, a curse which renders it impossible that they can do any good thing, or ever again please him. This is the first act of the theological drama which underlies the celebration of Christmas.

The next, any man of common sense could have foreseen, though the God of theology could not. It is this: The ban which renders man incapable of doing any good thing, begins to work, and the human race to multiply, but under the curse of original sin from which they cannot escape, they sink lower and lower, until their Creator loathes them, and telling Noah that it repents him at his heart that he has made man, he determines to destroy him by an universal flood, only reserving to himself eight of the original stock to re-people the earth. Had God forgotten that the eight of the original stock left were still under the curse? Any shrewd mortal would have remembered it, but the deity according to theology seems to have forgotten it.

The result is inevitable. The very patriarch whom this God had personally counselled with becomes "drunken with wine," and his descendant, Ham—a still worse sinner—becomes the father of a still more accursed race. And so the fall works, age on age, century on century, until the God of theology devises a scheme for reconciling the creatures he has made to himself and atoning to *himself*—for the failure of *his own* creation.

This scheme is, to send down a God or a part of his own Godhead upon earth; to be born as a man. To become the father and a hitherto innocent woman the mother of this God, to cause his own creatures to betray and murder him, and then, when he has been put to a shameful death, *those that believe this scheme in its entirety are excused from all sins past, present, and to come, and at death go straightway to heaven; and those that disbelieve in it—no matter how their sense of religion, reverence, justice, or morality may be shocked—go straight to an everlasting burning hell, a torture to which no living man of any heart or feeling would condemn a worm for one minute, but to which the God of theology is alleged to condemn countless millions of every generation of his creatures for ever and ever!!!* Oh, horrible, impious, and insane blasphemy of the sacred name of God!!! And it is to celebrate the one grand central idea of this scheme; to teach that the "Saviour" of mankind from the original curse, and the penalty of all sin, past, present, and to come—was born on the 25th of December, that the day is held sacred, and that solemnities are performed, and thousands of sermons are preached, promising—to those, and to those only who believe in all this—perfect immunity from the consequences of the blackest of sins, from the monsters that shed human blood, to the "sweaters" that live in luxury out of the tears and toil of half-starved and half-dead labourers.

Friends, it is time that this scheme was analysed, and a more reverent, religious, and truthful colour given to the noble celebration of Christmas day. In the first place the question arises, and should logically be answered—where does this theological scheme come from? We reply—standing upon a perfect mountain of historical and traditional proof—

from the first of all theologies, the most ancient astronomical religion, of which the sun's annual passage through the twelve zodiacal signs formed the foundation, and gave rise to all the fasts, feasts, and ceremonials observed thousands of years before the Bible of the Jews was written. This scheme, perpetuated in allegorical scriptures, has been adopted by Christians in the letter, and in so literal a sense, as to destroy all reverence for a Supreme Being—annihilate his wisdom, insult his power, turn his love into horrible injustice, open heaven to the blood-stained and infamous, and condemn the wise, learned, and good, to the fires of eternal destruction.

We do not desire to trespass upon you at this time by rehearsing all the details of the ancient astronomical scheme. It is enough that the sun—deemed rightly and truly the source of life and light—was the central figure; the twelve signs of the zodiac were the correspondences of the twelve months' annual change through which he travelled; and the mid-winter day, or the 25th of December, was celebrated as the death of the old, and the birth of the new sun of a fresh year, and hence the sign of salvation from darkness, famine, the horrors of winter, death, and the grave.

At some future period, or in response to the invitation to answer questions, we will elaborate this scheme more fully; meantime, we now affirm—and that without the slightest chance of authentic denial—that Christmas Day was ever held sacred—even before India and Egypt became nations—by the wandering Aryans as the annual birthday of the sun. They lighted bonfires on every high hill in virtue of this celebration. The day on which the sun crossed the autumnal equinox was also celebrated as his "crucifixion" between the two evil months of November and December. The day on which he crossed the vernal equinox in the spring was held sacred as his Passover, or rising from the tomb of winter, and has been adopted by Christians as their Easter, whilst the three months of summer, dating from the grape harvest, when the sun "manifested his glory" by turning water into wine, was the season when he worked miracles, fed the multitude with loaves and fishes, and conferred all manner of blessings upon the famished and winter-spoiled earth. All this, an external, ritualistic Church has materialized into a literal Messianic creed; and whilst burning, killing, and rooting out the first worshippers of the powers of nature as "heathens," they have made *their* doctrine the foundation of the Christian's own idolatrous faith. To sum up all that remains of true and religious value in the festival of Christmas, we would say, although it bears no relation to the real history of the gentle Nazarene, it perpetuates his gracious name, and reminds us of a teacher who declared that all God's laws and commandments were fulfilled in the words—"A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." It reminds us of the fact that one of the best, purest, and most inspired of teachers assured men that the kingdom of heaven was not to be won by mere words, but by deeds of mercy, love, and humanity; and that inasmuch as we did these things to the least of God's creatures, we did it unto God, and inasmuch as we failed to do this to man, we failed to do it unto God. What an impulse then to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, and break the captive's chains, does the word "Christmas" become to all who bear in mind the teachings of him whom the period professes to honour! Again, when we hear of Christmas, and see its holly berry symbols decking our houses, we are reminded of him that said, "The works that I do ye shall do likewise." Also of his solemn words, "Those that believe in me these signs shall follow."

Then comes the enumeration of the many spiritual signs which every Christian ought to give, or *they are no Christians*, and the ten thousand spiritual signs which have been poured out in this our age, and which—if we needed any other sanction than God's will, the author of all power and glory—you, the spiritualists, could point to, as evidence that you are the only true believers in, and followers of, Christ Jesus' words now upon the face of the earth. There are yet a thousand other reasons why spiritualists should honour Christmas Day as much as any other form of believers.

The day has only just passed when the sunlight ceases to diminish, and for many succeeding months the lengthening days give increased opportunities for useful labour, increased warmth, light, bloom, and plenty upon the face of the earth. The mid-winter day, too, is indeed the death of the old—the annual celebration of the birth of the new. Nature, then, with her ten thousand voices, celebrates the season, and each returning Christmas-tide is the assurance of an

annual resurrection from cold, darkness, sorrow, and death.

In memory of the sweet and loving teacher of a pure and natural religion—not of an immoral, clumsy, and impossible theology—we would urge you to rejoice and celebrate Christmas even as HE did—by feeding the hungry and healing the sick. In remembrance of the great Spiritual Exemplar whose name this day bears, we would congratulate you, that your ranks are full of those who can do as he did—give sight unto the blind, health to the sick, and bring the light of immortality to the hopeless. Above all, we bid you cast your eyes upon the setting sun of to-morrow, and behold! every gold and purple line in the western sky shall become resolved into the glorious legend—"There is no more death!" We would have you listen to the tones of glad festivity that ring out from the voices of happy children and the well-spread tables where the aged and helpless are enjoying at least one plentiful meal, and see how man has answered the pathetic appeal—"Feed my sheep—feed my lambs!" and still again, we would have you listen to the voice of the new-born year re-echoing the song of suns, stars, systems, earths, and human souls, as they chant in one sublime and universal chorus—"I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore."

THE IMPROVISATORE; OR, TORN LEAVES FROM REAL LIFE HISTORY.

BY EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following passages from the life of a lady whose history appeared—to those who knew her best and most intimately—an insoluble problem, is now made clear, and all the weird environments of her strange career are explained, in the light of modern spiritualism.

Although there are *most forcible* reasons why the transcript of this narrative should be so written as to veil completely the identity of the principal personages concerned, the author is bound to say, that the circumstances, no less than the *dramatis personæ*, are drawn from REAL LIFE, and presented in the pictorial garb of *incognito*, without one shadow of fictitious colouring.

Nevertheless, the leaf thus torn from the page of life history, the author has clothed in her own form of expression, and illustrated with her own sentiments. Some anachronisms will be found in respect to time and place, and this has been deemed expedient in order to maintain the strict promise rendered to those still on earth, whose feelings and interests might suffer from identification with the personages of the narrative.

With these exceptions, the story presented is precisely what its title claims for it, namely—

THE IMPROVISATORE; OR TORN LEAVES FROM LIFE HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

LA GABRIELLE.

"ALL the world" (at least, that minimum portion of it included in the operatic world) must remember "La Gabrielle." The public career of this brilliant star, under a different cognomen, has been said and sung, commented on, and wondered at, and—*forgotten*, just as the fashionable and artistic world would have done in gazing on a blazing comet whose lustre for the time being distanced all attempts at comparison, but whose meteor-like flight through the heavens left little tracing of its wondrous beauty in its track.

La Gabrielle, the orphan child of a poor Italian musician and a French *danseuse*, had been in very early childhood adopted by an excellent widow lady who had herself been an actress, and retired on her marriage with a gentleman of independent means.

The singular beauty of the little orphan, and the promise of rare distinction growing out of her wonderful voice and histrionic talents, induced her kind protectress to educate her for the operatic boards, where her remarkable gifts and high artistic training soon enabled her to take rank on the very pinnacle of operatic sovereignty.

We first present La Gabrielle to our readers at the age of nineteen, as she sat in her sweet suburban home in old Brompton, a spot where, some fifty years ago, the hum of busy London life melted away into that sense of luxurious repose which belongs to the environment of shady lanes, embowered walks, and perfumed flower gardens.

Turning off from the main road into a long green lane, shaded by over-arching horse chestnut and fragrant lime trees, you arrive at a gate which leads by many a mazy turn through wildernesses of flower beds and clustering shrubberies to a grassy terrace, adorned with fine statues and vases of choice blossoms. Win your way through the really small domain which nature and art have combined with cunning skill to weave into labyrinths of seemingly large extent, and you stand before the open French windows, whose tinted hues reflect the sunlight in rainbow glory upon the summer parlour within.

Cottage and garden, boudoir and lawn, were all in keeping, all eminently artistic, beautiful and replete with the appliances of taste and luxury.

Choice books, pictures, flowers, and musical instruments everywhere proclaimed the inmates' sympathy with art. A fairy palace it was, needing only the sunlight of an illuminated soul to make it a reflection of the homes of the blest. Half concealed by the clustering roses and star-eyed jessamine that trailed their perfumed wreaths over the house and swept by the summer air through the open windows, lay in masses on the floor of the room, stood a couch, whereon reclined the mistress of this fair domain.

We have said La Gabrielle was beautiful, and the portraits of the operatic queen, with her wealth of sunny chestnut locks, large, lustrous eyes, and faultlessly chiselled features, bear testimony that the then reigning queen of opera was no less the peerless royalty of beauty. Fancy her now, as the sunlight, seemingly imprisoned in her golden curls, lights up her beautiful home, so entirely in keeping with her beautiful self, but fancy what you will, you never could understand why one surrounded with all that heart could desire, or the most luxurious fancy could covet, should still be unhappy and restless; unhappy because the petted and spoiled child of fortune had nothing to find fault with, and restless because she had nothing to wish for.

By her side sat Mrs. Martin, the quiet, gentle protectress of Gabrielle's childhood, and now the sharer of her brilliant home and fortunes. Gabrielle really worshipped her mother by adoption, but as she was the nearest person just then whom the weary beauty—flattered and almost idolized into selfish petulance—could vent her ill humour upon, she had been labouring with an assiduity worthy of a higher aim to stimulate the placid composure and amiability of her companion into some sympathy with her own restlessness.

"Mother!" she cried for the twentieth time within an hour, "why don't you pity me? Why have you no feeling for me? Only think of it! Here am I—*prima donna assoluta*, as they choose to call me—condemned to act with a great gawky creature who presumes to fix his big Italian eyes upon me with a leer of admiration, and to whine out in his horrid pipe of a falsetto voice '*Anima Mia*,' with such a dead set at unhappy me, that no one can mistake the presumptuous monster's meaning. Now mother, dear, just attend to me! If Signor Luigi does not find me a new tenor before the next opera is produced, I'll flit off to San Carlos, and break up Luigi for the season. There, what do you say to that, mother?"

"Say, child?" replied Mrs. Martin quietly, "that it's no wonder poor Pasco admires you, because you know everybody does that, and I have no doubt but if you say it's best to go, that it is so."

"Oh! mother, do listen," cried the beauty in a fresh paroxysm of disgust, as the remote sound of a street organ reached her sensitive ear. "Is it not dreadful that I should be thus invaded in my peaceful home by these cruel itinerants? Mother, I tell you for the hundredth time since this room was fitted up for me, now quite a week ago, that I shall either have to change my boudoir to the depths of some lone forest, or be driven to some foreign land where these wretched grinders will not be allowed to disturb my repose."

"I fear, my child," replied Mrs. Martin gently, "you must not go to San Carlos then. Your poor father, like yonder grinder, sang his way into public notice in the streets of Milan, and you will have to fly a long way, dear one, before you can escape the appeal of the poor wanderers who ply their art in the streets for bread."

"I am a fool, a brute, an ingrate, dearest, wisest, and best of mothers," sobbed the impulsive creature, springing from her couch and falling upon her mother's neck. "Oh, forgive me, mother, and I'll tell you what I will do to make up for my hard-heartedness—there, there, mother, don't let either of us cry, it does so spoil the eyes—I'll just go and

beg the organ-grinder's pardon, and give him a shilling," and off she sprang, flitting through the open French window before her more sober companion could collect presence of mind enough to stop her. Darting along the shrubby paths, Gabrielle found herself leaning on the green gate which separated her domain from the quiet road, ere she realized that the organ-grinding nuisance had passed away, giving place to a sound which vibrated with very different effect upon her astonished ears. That which now arrested her attention was the tone of a man's voice singing in the road a strange and unfamiliar air, but with a fuller, sweeter, and more touching cadence than she, with all her artistic experience, had ever listened to before. "Good heavens! what a delightful voice," she exclaimed involuntarily; "surely it comes from heaven direct; and what an exquisite air he intones! Who can he be?"

Lost in measureless admiration, the lady never stirred until her eyes fell upon the tall, gaunt, woeful-looking form of the itinerant musician. His pale and haggard face was nearly concealed by an untrimmed mass of black beard and hair, from out of which his large, mournful dark eyes gleamed in strange contrast to his white, thin features. He held in his hand a little instrument of the lute kind, and this he played in harmony with his voice, and with far more effect than such an instrument seemed to promise. Never did heavenly strains proceed from such an unprepossessing looking source; but Gabrielle's high-strung expectations were changed into positive terror, as the wild-looking youth caught sight of her, for, uttering the one word "Eulalie," he sprang forward and motioned as if he would have taken the hand with which she was about to open the gate. Her hasty retreat produced a corresponding movement in the singer, who, after gazing at her for a moment with the most piercing scrutiny, humbly doffed his rusty hat, and was turning away with a murmured apology, when Gabrielle, addressing him in Italian, requested him to repeat his song. Without another word the itinerant touched his instrument and poured forth strain after strain of wild, lovely, unfamiliar melodies, and that in a voice so exquisitely pure and pathetic, that Gabrielle fairly forgot the earth, the scene, and the singer himself in the delight and astonishment with which she listened. Indeed, she was only recalled to herself when she heard the voice of her mother suggesting that, as the poor stranger looked weary and the heat of the day must render the dusty road oppressive, he had better come in and partake of some refreshment.

After the wanderer's feast of song had been rewarded with a generous *douceur* and a meal of bread, meat, and milk, he yielded to the gentle matron's kind invitation to stay and rest himself beneath the shelter of a wide-spreading oak, while he no less cheerfully responded to the fair *prima donna's* eager questionings concerning himself, and his wonderful musical acquirements.

His father, he said, though an Italian born, had been a soldier in the hated Austrian service, and died ere he, the singer, could remember him; but of his widowed mother, in her lonely cottage in the depths of the Calabrian mountains, of her tender love for him, and her precious counsels, he never seemed weary of talking.

He spoke much, too, of his mother's brother, a venerable priest, in whose house the widow and her son had dwelt ever since he could remember. This good uncle, he said, was the patriarch of a wild and half-savage mountain region, the people of which were very poor, but who looked up to him, their priest and their friend, as the father of their district.

It was in the free air of the Calabrian mountains and the companionship of his sainted mother and reverend uncle, that the singer had passed the chief part of his young life. His occupation had been divided between study pursued under his uncle's tuition, and the hunting and fishing expeditions by which he helped to maintain his dear relatives.

He intimated that the peasants of his district from far and near would assemble at his home to hear him sing, and that sometimes the reports of these rude musical *fêtes* would attract strangers and *diettanti* from the distant towns.

The mountaineers called their singing idol "The Echo of Paradise," and they gladly lingered round him, through the long summer nights, as he chanted to them songs of the stars, the loveless moon, or the charms of their own sweet mountain home. The day came at length when the rich tones of the mountaineer were heard for the first time in one of the city churches. His pious uncle was most desirous to educate the young man for a priest, but before any definite step could be taken in this direction he was, for

unately or otherwise, induced to assist in the choir at a church where his uncle's services were temporarily required. Here his magnificent voice and enthralling style of singing attracted the attention of a shrewd operatic impresario who happened to be present. The mountain singer was sought out, and the professor, by dint of unlimited promises of fame, fortune, and honour, succeeding in inducing the unworldly uncle and mother to part with their idol, while he on his part was enraptured with the glorious anticipation of winning a fortune wherewith to endow the blessed mother and build his beloved uncle a church of his own in the heart of their sublime mountain stronghold.

Something of all this, in the most modest and unassuming way, the itinerant narrated, but when he came to the parting scene whereat the shrewd musical speculator had succeeded in wiling the poor youth away from his home, his voice grew husky, and his self-possession utterly failing, he could only articulate, "Oh, my mother! my home! my beautiful, peaceful home! farewell! farewell!" His auditors wept with him, and in fancy beheld the old priest and the forsaken mother, their forms melting away in the blue mists of the mountains, as they waved their last farewell to the wanderer. But why this abject poverty—this desertion? Where was the master who had lured him away? "Dead," he answered; gone down in the fatal wreck which befel the Santa Cecilia, one sad night, when, on the iron-bound coast of England, he and all the crew but two sailors and the poor Italian had perished. "I heard their death-shriek," he said; "I heard the farewell of the only friend I had in this strange foreign land; I heard him cry, 'Farewell, Ernest! farewell for ever!' and then, oh, Heaven! he sunk in the whelming waves never to rise again."

"Santa Cecilia the ship's name! Your own, Ernest! Then your master must have been Jerome Luigi," cried La Gabrielle, breathlessly.

"The same, my lady, but how should you know?"

"My manager at the Opera is that Jerome Luigi's brother, and has told me many stories of the wonderful singer whom he was intending to bring with him from the Calabrian mountains. Jerome Luigi's death and all the sad details of the wreck are familiar to us, but we thought you had perished, with the rest of the ill-fated vessel's crew, three months ago. Three months! and you, poor unfortunate, have been all that time wandering about, friendless and alone, in a foreign country! Oh, heavens! what you must have suffered!"

Here the singer would have interposed to explain how many good people had been kind to him, and what wonderful Providence had guided and helped him to London, where some invisible monitor prompted him to believe his destiny awaited him, but Gabrielle, between bursts of tears at the stranger's imaginary woes and expressions of delight at having found him, could scarcely listen to him.

In her usual impulsive way she despatched a messenger with her carriage to the residence of Signor Luigi, requesting his *immediate* attendance on a matter of *urgent* importance. Then, to beguile the time until her messenger could return, she implored her new acquaintance to sing again. Her gentle mother remonstrated, pleading the wanderer's fatigue and recent emotion, but the excited *cantatrice* would take no denial. "Just one song," she said; "one little song, signor—what name did you say?"

"Ernest Rossi, lady."

"Yes, yes, I remember. Well then, Ernest—pardon me—Signor Rossi, I mean—all I ask is that you will just sing me again that delightful cavatina that you first sang when I came out to the gate."

"Alas, signorina, I can never repeat anything I sing. Give me a theme, and I will make a song upon it at once; but except the church masses, which I know so well, I can never sing twice alike."

"How? Do you then compose as you sing and play? And about the poetry?"

"Oh, the *words*, lady, are hardly worth the name of poetry; but it just comes to me as I go on. I don't know how—but it comes."

"Why, this is better than all," said La Gabrielle, in an ecstasy of triumph. "At last I have found a real improvisatore. Oh, what glorious news for Signor Luigi! His brother's splendid mountain singer is found. Poor Pasco shall go back to Switzerland to sing the *Ranz des Vaches* to the sheep and goats. The Grand Opera will have a new tenor after all—and—"

"The Earl a new rival," murmured Mrs. Martin, in a low aside to her daughter.

"Oh, never mind him, mother," cried the impulsive girl. "But see! as I live, yonder comes Luigi up the garden walk." Then darting out through the open window, she seized the hand of the stately manager, who was advancing to meet her, crying, in the same breath with which she welcomed him, "Joy, Signor Luigi! At last we have found a real Italian improvisatore!"

(To be continued.)

A LETTER TO ISAAC WATTS IN HEAVEN.

In Boston, Mass., the 5th of March,
Of eighteen eighty-seven,
Addressed to Rev. Isaac Watts,
Abiding now in Heaven:

Most Honoured Sir: If I were sure
As mortals can be here,
That all these questions I would ask
As to this mundane sphere,

Would neither trouble you, nor cause
Unpleasant thoughts to rise
Concerning scenes you passed below,
When only human wise;

If I were sure, I say, that naught
Could mar your state of bliss,
I'd ask if *that* world justifies
The thoughts you had in this.

That, too, not in a jesting way,
But with a sober mind,
Befitting one whose frame is dust,
Whose spirit eyes are blind.

I'd like to ask if it is true—
As some good brother penned—
That "Congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths have no end"?

Why, now the people find it hard
To stay in church two hours!
And here's a verse which makes that seem
Beyond their utmost powers:

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun."

To form a congregation thus,
For endless years and years,
Would, seems to me, make heaven far worse
Than this brief "vale of tears."

Another one describes the bliss
Of that bright heavenly clime,
By telling us, in these few lines,
How we shall spend our time:

"In rapturous awe on Him to gaze,
Who bought the sight for me,
And shout and wonder at His grace
To all eternity."

Instead of making heaven bliss,
Such fate I would deplore—
To simply gaze with wondering,
And *shout* for evermore.

The same good brother kindly has
Some further details shown,
About the rows in which we'll stand
Around the central throne:

"The angel powers the throne surround,
And next the saints shall stand,
Each one in whitest robes arrayed,
And palms in every hand."

The further the description goes,
The more it seems to me
That I'd prefer to stay on earth,
With less monotony.

But speaking of the earth suggests
Another train of thought:
Would you still teach, as once you did,
That *this* world counts for naught?

"A vale of tears by care o'ercast,"
"A strife," "A fleeting show";
Again, "A howling wilderness,"
"A dreary vale of woe."

It seems to me these lines I find
Are sad to contemplate:

"And oh! how dreadful is this place,
God's house and Heaven's gate!"

To put these thoughts together thus
Seems strange indeed to me—
As if God's house and Heaven's gate
Could very dreadful be!

And in a hymn you wrote yourself,
I find the dreary line:

"There's nothing here deserves my joys,"
As if 'twere man's design.

Of many thoughts I mention one
That makes our lot seem drear:
"His soul disdains on earth to dwell,
He only sojourns here."

I quote another verse of yours,
The thought of which is fair,
But, carried out, would almost make
The world "a rigid stare."

"My willing soul would stay," you write,
"In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

A world of people singing hymns,
And doing naught besides!
I'm sure such idleness would cause
More crimes and suicides.

But then again I read a hymn,
That promises more fair;
"Our day is spent in heavenly bliss,
Our night in praise and prayer."

But sad would be the people's health
Who worked through all the day,
And then, throughout the livelong night,
Sat up to sing and pray.

"How vain are all things here below,
How false and yet how fair!"
Did you find nothing you could trust?
Was everything a snare!

It's fortunate for present good,
That all of human kind
Were not possessed in these details
With such a turn of mind.

For all these reasons I inquire,
Were such men in the right?
Would you and they still teach the same,
Endowed with present light?

In closing now, I humbly hope
I've given no offence;
With true respect I write, and make
To wisdom no pretence.

So now I'll send my note with all
The speed the post insures;
And, my dear sir, inscribe myself,
Obediently yours.

ONE ON THE "ANXIOUS SEAT."

—Banner of Light.

PROPHETIC PRESENTIMENTS.

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF M. DE TALLEYRAND.

A REMARKABLE ANECDOTE.

DR. SIGMOND received from the widow of M. Colmache, the private secretary and friend of M. de Talleyrand, the following remarkable anecdote:—

One day, in the presence of the minister, the conversation had turned upon the subject of those sudden warnings which have been looked upon as communications from the world of spirits to man: some one observed, that it would be difficult to find a man of any note who had not, in the course of his life, experienced something of the kind.

"I remember," said Talleyrand, "upon one occasion, having been gifted for one single moment with an unknown and nameless power. I know not to this moment whence it came; it has never once returned, and yet upon that one occasion it saved my life. Without that sudden and mysterious inspiration I should not have been here to tell my tale. I had freighted a ship in concert with my friend Beaumetz. He was a good fellow, Beaumetz, with whom I had ever lived on the most intimate terms; and in those stormy times, when it needed not only friendship to bind men together, but almost godlike courage to show that friendship, I could not but prize most highly all his bold and loyal demonstrations of kindness and attachment to me. I had not a single reason to doubt his friendship. On the contrary, he had given me, on several occasions, most positive proof of his devotion to my interest and well-being. We had fled from France; we had arrived at New York together, and we had lived in perfect harmony during our stay there. So, after having resolved upon improving the little money that was left by speculation, it was, still in partnership and together, that we freighted a small vessel for India, trusting to all the goodly chances which had befriended us in our escape from danger and from death, to venture once more conjointly to brave the storms and perils of a yet longer and more adventurous voyage. Everything was embarked for our departure; bills were all paid, and farewells all taken, and we were waiting for a fair wind with most eager expectation, being prepared to embark at any hour of the day or night, in obedience to the warning of the captain. This state of uncertainty seemed to irritate the

temper of poor Beaumetz to an extraordinary degree, and, unable to remain quietly at home, he hurried to and from the city with an eager, restless activity, which at times excited my astonishment, for he had ever been remarkable for great calmness and placidity of temper. One day he entered our lodging, evidently labouring under great excitement, although commanding himself to appear calm. I was engaged at that moment in writing letters to Europe; and looking over my shoulder, he said, with forced gaiety, 'What need to waste time in penning those letters? they will never reach their destination. Come with me, and let us take a turn on the Battery; perhaps the wind may be chopping round; we may be nearer our departure than we imagine.' The day was very fine, although the wind was blowing hard, and I suffered myself to be persuaded. Beaumetz, I remembered afterwards, displayed an unusual officiousness in aiding me to close my desk and put away my papers, handing me, with hurried eagerness, my hat and cane, and doing other services to quicken my departure, which at the time I attributed to the restless desire for change, the love of activity with which he seemed to have been devoured during the whole period of our delay. We walked through the crowded streets to the Battery. He had seized my arm, and hurried me along, seemingly in eager haste to advance. When we had arrived at the broad esplanade—the glory then, as now, of New York—Beaumetz quickened his steps still more, until we arrived close to the water's edge. He talked loudly and quickly, admiring in energetic terms the beauty of the scenery, the Brooklyn heights, the shady groves of the island, the ships riding at anchor, and the busy scene on the peopled wharf, when suddenly he paused in his mad, incoherent discourse—for I had freed my arm from his grasp, and stood immovable before him. Staying his wild and rapid steps, I fixed my eye upon his face. He turned aside, cowed and dismayed. 'Beaumetz,' I shouted, 'you mean to murder me: you intend to throw me from the height into the sea below. Deny it, monster, if you can.' The maniac stared at me for a moment; but I took especial care not to avert my gaze from his countenance, and he quailed beneath it. He stammered a few incoherent words, and strove to pass me, but I barred his passage with extended arms. He looked vacantly right and left, and then flung himself upon my neck, and burst into tears. "'Tis true, 'tis true, my friend! The thought has haunted me day and night, like a flash from the lurid fire of hell. It was for this I brought you here. Look! you stand within a foot of the parapet: in another instant the work would have been done.' The demon had left him; his eye was unsettled, and the white foam stood in bubbles on his parched lips; but he was no longer tossed by the same mad excitement under which he had been labouring, for he suffered me to lead him home without a word. A few days' repose, bleeding, abstinence, completely restored him to his former self, and, what is most extraordinary, the circumstance was never mentioned between us. MY FATE was at work."

It was while watching by the bedside of his friend that Talleyrand received letters which enabled him to return to France; he did so, and left Beaumetz to prosecute the speculation alone. The Prince Talleyrand could never speak of the preceding event without shuddering, and to the latest hour of his existence believed that "he was for an instant gifted with an extraordinary light, and during a quick and vivid flash the possible and the true was revealed to a strong and powerful mind," and that upon this the whole of his destiny hinged. "This species of momentary exaltation," says Dr. Sigmond, "which is not again repeated, but is remembered with the most vivid impression, is what is more immediately known by the name of *fantasia*:" in France and England it is named *presentiment*.—*Dr. Forbes Winslow's Psychological Journal*.

APPROPOS of Canon Wilberforce's remark that "the only thing Christianity needs just now is Christians," the *Christian World*, of London, says: "We are beginning to see the futility of discussions of doctrinal theories concerning matters incapable of definite solution, and which if they were solved would minister no grace to men. A large portion of the energy of the Church has long been expended upon them, but during recent years Christianity has found a new development, or has reverted to the ways in which its first and greatest triumphs were won."

MAKE golden stairways of your weaknesses.—*Edwin Arnold*.

OFFICE OF "THE TWO WORLDS,"
61, GEORGE STREET, CHEETHAM HILL, MANCHESTER.

The People's Popular Penny Spiritual Paper.

TERMS TO SOCIETIES.

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THE TWO WORLDS.

Editor:

MRS. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

Sub-Editor and General Manager

E. W. WALLIS.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 1889.

"THE TWO WORLDS" NEW DEPARTURE.

WE have great pleasure in calling the attention of our readers to the large amount of extra matter we are enabled to present in this number, and to further assure them, that this is only a specimen of the plan by which we purpose in future to give, not only an increased quantity of reading matter, but to meet the continually increasing demand for space in our Societary and Lyceum reports. Instead of spiritualism being "crushed," and "dying out," as has been confidently predicted by those whose "wish has been evidently father to their thought"—we have been of late so much embarrassed for space, in which to record the doings of the many new societies that are arising on every side, that we have been obliged to appropriate another page to "the Societary chronicle," and this of necessity would have diminished the amount of reading matter, had not the Directors determined to *increase* the same, by having all the "long primer," or largest form of type, set "solid," (*i.e.*) the lines much closer together, and an additional page of "brevier," or small print.

It must be needless to add, that these changes will add considerably to the weekly cost of printing our journal, and all that we hope is, that the additional value of a paper already so popular and offering such an increase of valuable matter—will induce our friends and patrons to assist our efforts by taking fresh shares, announcing the paper and its many attractions from their platforms, and sending in orders for such an increase in the number of their copies, as this new departure seems to warrant.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The number of notices and prospective arrangements consequent upon the Christmas festivities, no less than the necessity for substituting a lighter form of literature than usual—in keeping with the season—must plead our apology for seeming to neglect our many correspondents and questioners. Kindly exercise patience with us, friends. Each one's turn will come, that is, when the contribution is written *especially for this paper*, and in harmony with our resolve to ignore all personalities. The necessity for these restrictions must be apparent to every reasonable mind. For example: we frequently receive letters almost the verbatim copy of those which appear in the columns of our cotemporaries. This is equally unnecessary and unjust. We do not desire to absorb the matter due to other journals, nor to repeat such matter *ad nauseam*. We would willingly repeat important notices, whether appearing in other papers or not, but must decline to do so in favour of mere personal views or experiences. Again: we have received from a correspondent at South Shields, the duplicate of a letter sent to another paper, charging fraud upon a certain physical

medium, at a certain séance, but offering no *proof* of the alleged fraud, except his own opinion. A later mail brings us two accounts of the same séance, written in glowing words of eulogy, and offering totally diverse views from that of correspondent No. 1. Which are we to believe? We answer, neither, until the most convincing test proofs of one position or the other accompany the letters received. We can neither consent to praise or blame on the strength of opinion *only*. Tests, so far from "degrading" or "injuring mediums," serve to strengthen and PROVE their claims, when they are founded on fact. It is only the trickster that fears them, only the deceiver that is *liable to die right out*, when a human hand interposes in the midst of prepared machinery. *Verbum sap.*

Another proof of the difficulty in which an editor is placed, whose sole purpose is to inform the public of genuine truths, and nothing but truths, is to be found in dealing with the reports of the last London Confederation of Spiritualists. In this case we were kindly and respectfully requested to give a fair report of the meetings held under that name and title. Being unable to attend any such gathering, and depending solely on the reports that might be sent by a really worthy and respected correspondent, we promised space to such reports, and on receiving them found them well written, simple, frank, and apparently given in all good faith. In this spirit they were published, but in a totally reverse spirit we have perused several letters from other London spiritualists, roundly abusing the said Confederation, its doings and its members, together with not a few severe criticisms on the Editor for publishing the report in question.

Friends all, whilst we cheerfully devote as much of our space as possible to the insertion of well written and apparently truthful reports, or statements, as the case may be, we shall steadily, as in the past, now and henceforth decline to represent either cliques, parties, controversies, or internal dissensions.

Some few years ago, a set of highly influential and educated Japanese gentlemen came to New York, in the suite of the ambassador sent by the Japanese Government to treat with that of the United States on some questions of national policy. Deeming that the presence of a large assemblage of *heathens* in a Christian city was a very favourable opportunity for the exercise of their favourite proclivities for conversion, a great many ministers of different Christian sects waited upon the chiefs of the embassy, and begged them to accept and read their various tracts, all tending to expound their various doctrines. To all and each of these pious missionaries it was announced that the tracts should be studied through an interpreter, and a day should be set apart to receive the missionaries, when the ambassadors and men of distinction would give through their interpreter their views upon the points of faith set forth. When the grand day of reception arrived, and several ministers in their robes, more than one bishop, and any number of denominational preachers, were assembled, the distinguished *heathens*, ranged in their several seats of dignity, spoke as follows, through their interpreter:—

"Gentlemen,—In our country we believe in one God, one heaven for the good, and one place of punishment for the bad. We believe in spirits and angels, who come and inspire and teach us when we are wrong, and set us right if we are willing to be taught. This is what *we all* believe in, and shall continue to believe until we are taught better.

"You, gentlemen, believe in many gods, many ways to heaven, and many hells; you believe in many ways to live, and please your many gods. Take back your books then, gentlemen; your many gods, and many ways of pleasing them, cannot be all true, and we cannot find out which is the only true one. Go! AGREE AMONGST YOURSELVES, and when you are all determined on what is true, come and teach us; until then, our religion is one, yours are many, and we, therefore, will none of you."

If our spiritualist friends cannot apply this advice to themselves, we fear we shall be obliged to follow the example of the *heathens* and prefer to write of, and teach SPIRITUALISM pure and simple to listening to the thousand and one methods of interpreting it adopted by litigious dissentients—in a word, go and agree amongst yourselves, and then come and tell us what you have to say.

Finally, good friends all, with the new year, new hopes, new possibilities, and new inspirations from the realms of love, truth, and spiritual light, let us all forget our petty differences; come "together with one accord," and then—

and then only—may we hope that minds as varied as the nations of the earth are numerous, may all speak the common language of a common humanity, and unite to DO GOOD here, so that we may win heaven hereafter.

ANOTHER PHASE OF THE FOX TACTICS.

TRUTH and justice compel us to renew a theme as repulsive to the mind of every true spiritualist as it is disgraceful to the parties most nearly concerned. To show the women bearing the now odious but significant name of "Fox" can play double—and mean to do so—if the English spiritualists are dupes enough to help them in doing so, we commend to our readers the careful perusal of the following two documents. The first is a correspondence quite recently published in *Light*. The second, reprinted from the *Golden Gate* and several other American spiritual papers, will amply serve to show the worth, honesty, and truthfulness of Fox No. 2!

No. 1.

THE FOXES AND THEIR FOXINGS.

The *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research contains this paragraph. We reproduce it without comment:—

"The Fox Sisters, now Mrs. Kane and Mrs. Jencken, who in 1848 were the heroines of the 'Rochester Knockings,' with which the movement called Modern Spiritualism began, have been confessing to reporters of American newspapers and to American public audiences that their performances have been fraudulent from the beginning, and that the raps were made with their toes. But little weight can be attached to what such people say on one side or the other, but they seem to have given experimental demonstration of their capacity to make raps in this way, and what they now state is entirely in accordance with the results obtained by investigators as early as 1853, as well as with facts alleged by a connection of the Foxes in 1851."

We add a letter received from Mrs. Cottell, at whose house was held that séance of which so much has been made, and we do not think it necessary to add any word of comment.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

"10th December, 1888.

"SIR,—I have just got a letter from my friend Mrs. Kate Fox Jencken, and as it contains some remarks about the conduct of her sister Margaret, it is, I deem it, only fair that what Mrs. Jencken says should be known as widely (if possible) as the damaging and untruthful statements that have, I believe, been made unwittingly even by spiritualists and in spiritual papers, to my great grief.

"For deeming and knowing the manifestations through the Fox girls to be true under test conditions, it is painful to find Mrs. Kane untrue to herself, and doubly so in the case of Katie, who, notwithstanding a grave and painful fault, I know to be a good and true medium. I send you an extract from Mrs. Jencken's letter, which you are at liberty to use as you like, and I trust you may see your way to explain matters in *Light*. Too much damage has already been done to her. I was much pleased with what you said at the Alliance gathering, and thank you for it. I always have *Light*, so shall hope to send a line to exonerate Katie. With kind regard, yours faithfully, "E. A. COTTELL."

"Carlyle House, Cheyne Row, Chelsea."

[Copy.]

17th November, 1888.

"My dear Mrs. Cottell,—I would have written to you before this, but my surprise was so great on my arrival to hear of Maggie's exposure of spiritualism that I had no heart to write to any one.

"The manager of the affair engaged the Academy of Music, the very largest place of entertainment in New York City; it was filled to overflowing.

"They made \$1,500 clear. I have often wished I had remained with you, and if I had the means I would now return, to get out of all this.

"I think now I could make money in proving that the knockings are *not* made with the toes. So many people come to me to ask me about this exposure of Maggie's that I have to deny myself to them.

"They are hard at work to expose the whole thing, if they can; but they certainly cannot.

"Maggie is giving public exposures in all the large places in America, but I have only seen her once since I arrived.

(Signed)

"K. F. JENCKEN."

No 2.

MRS. KATE FOX-JENCKEN'S DEBUT.

It was noted recently in the *Banner of Light* that Mrs. Kate Fox-Jencken had it in mind to enter the field as an "exposer" of spiritualism, as an adjunct to C. W. Starr—a noted "Professor" in that line. The initial entertainment, we are informed, came off in the manner which might have been expected, and spiritualism has nothing to fear from her further performances.

Regarding this debut of Mrs. Jencken in a new rôle, a correspondent writing from Rochester, N.Y., under date of November 23rd, states:—

"The Kate Fox-Jencken 'exposé' in Rochester was a failure. A small audience attended, and the receipts could not have paid expenses. Starr himself is too well known here by spiritualists and other people, and scarcely any one had faith that Mrs. Jencken could expose anything. She performed, I suppose, in about the same way as did Maggie in Boston and New York.

"Mr. Starr told his slim audience that he judged Rochester people had rather be humbugged by spiritualism than to come out to hear him tell the truth and expose it. Himself and Mrs. Jencken left the morning after the performance—for some more inviting field, I suppose.

"The statements published in New York are, as you know, false from first to last. Mrs. Underhill's book is correct. I was familiar with all the early facts and investigations. E. W. Capron is strictly accurate in his relation of the early proceedings."

Another correspondent reports as follows:—

"Kate Fox-Jencken and the renowned C. W. Starr gave a painful exhibition in Rochester, on Thursday night, Nov. 15th, in the Lyceum Theatre. I say painful—I should perhaps substitute the word pitiable. But it was both painful and pitiable to see a woman stand before an audience and make the confession that for forty years she had been engaged in trifling with the tenderest, holiest emotions of the human soul. How utterly flat their efforts are falling. Scarcely a ripple of interest was created in Rochester by Kate's effort, and Margaret's, in Boston, ended in a fizzle."

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

FRESH TESTIMONY THAT THE DEAD STILL LIVE.

HAD a person who was living on earth one hundred or even fifty years ago been told facts that are transpiring to-day—facts that are common to-day—you could not have made him believe that such things could be possible. Even Franklin could not have foreseen what wonderful developments were about to take place in the uses of electricity. Had Fulton been told what advancement would be made in the power of steam, he would have said it cannot be. Had Daguerre been informed what great improvements were going to take place in the line to which his whole life was so deeply devoted, he would have doubted. And when we take even a casual glance at the great unfoldments that have taken place during the last fifty years, we feel almost appalled at its magnitude; and still the world moves; still new developments are being made on every hand, and who can foresee what will transpire on "the morrow"?

When a much-esteemed friend of the Editor's, Captain J. H. McMillen, was in Boston, last fall, he was told by the spirit of his first wife that if he would go to a certain place that she would be there and would sit for a portrait. He did as directed. The artist was an entire stranger to him, and he gave him no information either of himself or family, but simply said he came there for a portrait. In less than two hours, and in the presence of Captain McMillen and his wife, the artist drew a crayon likeness of his former wife, who died in 1850. The picture is life size and is readily recognized by old acquaintances of the family. This was so fine that Captain McMillen and his wife took five other sittings, each time getting fine crayon pictures of their children and members of their family. The first was a portrait of a son of Captain McMillen, by his first wife, the mother dying when the child was only eight days old—the boy dying at twelve years of age; the third picture was of a son by his present wife, who died at the age of ten years. Then there came two other pictures of children by his present wife, and lastly, a portrait of Mrs. Barton, the mother of his present wife, and readily recognised by Mrs. McMillen as being a correct likeness of her mother. These pictures are very fair works of art, all full sized, and when

we take into consideration that only a little over one hour was devoted to such pictures, and the fact that the likenesses are all correct, and that the spirits through the artist informed the parties who they were, and all about themselves, it becomes truly wonderful, and we are led to exclaim, what next?—*Golden Gate*.

TRANCE REVELATIONS.—It appears from an exchange that there is a man named William Salisbury living in East Rockport, a suburb of Cleveland, Ohio, who insists that during a trance he paid a visit to heaven. He describes it as an improved earth, divided into planes, of which he visited seven. He describes the people and face of the land in all details. He insists that he saw John Quincy Adams on the fourth plane; George Washington, Voltaire, and Lord Bacon in the fifth; Dr. Chalmers, Marie Stuart, and Queen Elizabeth in the sixth; and other great men in the various planes. He denies his affinity to spiritualism, and says he passed six days and seven nights in the journey. He was in a trance of some kind during the time, and his case baffled the physicians. He has lived there for the last seventeen years, was formerly a resident of St. Louis, and servant to Henry West, the traveller, of that city. He is sixty-five years of age, and of good repute.

IN a late number of the *Revue Spirite*, an account was printed of some remarkable séances held at the house of Mr. Stanhope T. Speer, M.D., Douglas House, Alexandra-road, St. John's-wood, through the mediumship of a gentleman in private life who does not wish his name to be published. Most of the spirits gave their names and proved their identity; also the extracts they gave from their writings were found, after laborious search in the British Museum Library and elsewhere, to be true. Hence there is evidence that spirits can give teaching through this medium, free, to a large extent at all events, from colour from his own thoughts; consequently, the "spirit teachings" obtained through his mediumship, may be assumed to be to a considerable extent reliable. It is proper to state that these communications are selected in chronological order from a mass which has been given continuously for some years past. Many of the originals are of such a personal nature that they are necessarily omitted, otherwise no change is made. The communicating spirits are many: each gives his name and details of his earth-life very fully. These facts, in all cases unknown to the medium previously, have been invariably found to be correct in every particular. The handwriting, peculiar to the communicating intelligence, is always preserved, and the individuality remains throughout the same.—Ed. T. W.

LYCEUM JOTTINGS.

SCENE AT A HOLIDAY OCCASION.

"ONLY LOOKING ON!"

THE music and patriotic speeches were over with the day; but the boys gathered at evening around a bright bonfire in the street, laughing and chattering, adding fresh fuel and stirring it to a brighter blaze. The cheerful light—and perhaps the warmth also, for it was a cool night—attracted one unlike the others of the group. A bare-footed, ragged boy drew near and hovered on the outer edge of the company for a few minutes, but presently made his way nearer to the fire, and stood beside it in evident enjoyment.

Then the largest, roughest boy in the crowd suddenly discovered him.

"Hollo, tatters! where did you come from?"

The boy tried to draw back, but he was too late.

"Bare feet and such a cap as that! Well, you're too fine entirely. Don't you know that kind of a cap is better roasted?" and a quick blow sent the faded head covering into the fire.

Its owner made a faint effort to recover it.

"That was cruel, Jim," said one of the boys, faintly. The others said nothing, and one or two laughed.

The forlorn stranger drew back, escaped from the group and sat down on the doorstep at a little distance, drawing his ragged sleeves across his eyes to wipe away the tears of anger and grief. A pitying, indignant little face looked down upon him from an upper window, and a pair of childish eyes that had watched the scene grew tearful in sympathy, and then brightened with the hope of comforting. Lily hurried away and was back in a few minutes with an out-grown cap of her brother's, a package of sandwiches, that she had coaxed in the kitchen, and a bright silver half-crown of her own. She put the articles into the cap, fastened a string to it, and lowered it softly toward the boy on the steps, dropping the end of the string as it reached him.

"Why, Lily, what are you doing?" asked a voice, as she drew back.

Lily shook her bright hair and looked up at her brother.

"Doing what that great preacher said this morning. He said, 'Let some of your blessings fall into the laps of those who haven't so much;' and I did. It fell right straight into his lap, and I expect he

didn't know whether it came from a window or from heaven, for he looked up quick and queer, and said, 'Thank you!' and then ran away."

Guy laughed, and Lily's face looked reproachful.

"You were there by the bonfire all the time. O, Guy, I don't see how you could do it."

"Why, I didn't knock his cap off," said Guy, "it was Jim Gregg; he's a rough fellow always. I didn't do anything or say anything; and the other fellows didn't either."

"That was just the trouble," said his aunt, gravely. "I, too, watched the whole thing from the window, Guy; and if I were going to talk to boys on a day like this, I should care less about urging them to join this or that political party than about warning them against belonging to the great party in this world—those who only stand and look on. I believe they are responsible for the larger share of its evils. They do not help any good cause; they only look on and do nothing. They never hinder a wrong cause; they only watch and say nothing. O, Guy, did you ever think how our Lord's parable makes the final condemnation rest, not upon actual transgression, but upon omission? 'I was a stranger, sick and in prison, and ye did it not to me.' They only looked on and did nothing." It was the *looking on*, passing on the other side, and *doing nothing*, that made all the difference between the priest and Levite and the good Samaritan of the Gospel.

THE SAILOR'S CONSOLATION.

ONE night came on a hurricane,
The sea was mountains rolling,
When Barney Buntline turned his quid,
And said to Billy Bowling:

"A strong nor'-wester's blowing, Bill;
Hark! don't ye hear it roar now?
Lord help 'em! how I pities all
Unhappy folks on shore now!

"Foolhardy chaps who live in town—
What danger they are all in!
And now are quaking in their beds
For fear the roof should fall in.
Poor creatures! how they envies us,
And wishes, I've a notion,
For our good luck, in such a storm,
To be upon the ocean.

"But as for them who're out all day
On business for their houses,
And late at night are coming home
To cheer the babes and spouses,
While you and I, Bill, on the deck
Are comfortably lying—
My eyes! what tiles and chimney-pots
About their heads are flying!

"And very often have we heard
How men are killed and undone,
By overturns of carriages,
By thieves, and fires, in London.
We know what risks all landsmen run,
From noblemen to tailors;
Then, Bill, let us thank Providence
That you and I are sailors!"

—Charles Dibdin.

THE BABY'S CREED.

I BELIEVE in my papa,
Who loves me—oh, so dearly!

I believe in Santa Claus,
Who comes to see me yearly.

I believe the birdies talk
On the boughs together;

I believe the fairies dance
O'er the fields of heather;

I believe my dolly knows
Every word that's spoken;

I believe it hurts her, too,
When her nose is broken.

Oh! I believe in lots of things—

I can't tell you all the rest;

But I believe in you, mamma,

First, and last, and best!

—Charles H. Luqrin, in "St. Nicholas" for October.

AT THE DOOR.

I THOUGHT myself indeed secure—

So fast the door, so firm the lock—

But lo! he toddling comes to lure

My parent ear with timorous knock.

My heart were stone could it withstand

The sweetness of my baby's plea—

That timorous baby knocking and

"Please let me in—it's only me."

I threw aside the unfinished book,

Regardless of its tempting charms,

And opening wide the door I took

My laughing darling in my arms.

Who knows but in eternity

I, like a truant child, shall wait

The glories of a life to be,

Beyond the Heavenly Father's gate!

And will that Heavenly Father heed

The truant's supplicating cry,

As at the outer door I plead,

"'Tis I, O Father! only I!"

CHRONICLE OF SOCIETARY WORK.

BIRMINGHAM. 92, Ashted Row.—On December 28rd, Mr. Anson's guides spoke on "Individual Responsibility, here and hereafter." On December 30th, in answer to a question from the audience, they gave explanations of the personal surroundings of men, to illustrate which they pictured a princess, beautiful, rich, and good, with everything this world can bestow to gratify the senses, yet in her train they saw sadness and disappointment, and from no cause of her own seeking. Among her spiritual surroundings they saw spirits whom her ancestors had oppressed with the merciless cruelty of tyrants. Thus are the sins of the fathers visited upon the children, the result of which is "Hell" to the ancestors themselves, for however cruel a tyrant may be his love for his children spares them. The individual good each child works during life mitigates the power of these spirits, and spares both ancestors and child as means of redemption.—*S. A. P.*

BLACKBURN.—The controls of Mr. Wallis delivered two able and instructive lectures to good audiences.

BRADFORD. Ripley Street.—The guides of Miss Harrison gave two eloquent addresses to good audiences. The afternoon subject was "The Wondrous Works of God," and in the evening "How do the departed return?" was discoursed upon. Clairvoyance after each discourse was very good, and although there were some present who were very sceptical, they could not deny the facts of spirit return, which were given so correctly, to the surprise of many.—*T. T.*

BURNLEY.—Mrs. Wallis favoured us as usual with two good lectures. Subject, morning, "Sowing and Reaping"; in the evening, "Ring out the false, ring in the true; ring out the old, ring in the new!" which were full of good advice, and will tend to bring men and women more into harmony.—*W. M.*

BURNLEY. Tanner Street.—An excellent tea party on Christmas Day. About 250 sat down. After tea an entertainment was given by the members of the Lyceum, assisted by two or three volunteer friends. Mr. R. Varley presided. A long and varied programme was gone through, the meeting closing about 10 o'clock. The entire cost of the tea and entertainment was covered by subscription from the members and friends; and the proceeds (between £7 and £8) were handed to the building fund.—*R. V.*

CLECKHEATON.—The guides of Mrs. Murgatroyd gave two very good discourses. Afternoon subject, "Spiritualism is no New Thing"; evening subject, "What are Angels?" Both were ably dealt with. Clairvoyance at each service.

COLNE.—Mr. Swindlehurst gave two splendid lectures. Afternoon: "The Old and the New." Evening: "The Mythical Christ and the Historical Christ," to fair audiences.—*J. W. C.*

COLNE.—Second annual tea and entertainment on Dec. 15th, in Stanley Street Schoolroom, our hall being too small. Friends from Nelson, Brierfield, and Burnley, attended. An excellent tea was provided and enjoyed. Mr. A. D. Wilson kindly gave his services in song and recitation. The choir sang two glees very nicely. A first-rate entertainment was well enjoyed by a larger audience than we had last spring. The Lyceum children deserve special praise, it was a pleasure to hear their songs, recitations, and dialogues. The gathering was a success socially and financially. A happy gathering on Christmas Day; the room was tastefully decorated. Afternoon: the Lyceum children were regaled with oranges, apples, and sweets; the officers were well repaid for their trouble, as the little ones thoroughly enjoyed themselves. In the evening, nearly all the members of the society met. Mr. Cole (president), pointed to the good results achieved in the short time of the society's existence, and spoke of the necessity for unity. He referred to the new commandment (which is our chief wall text, reaching across the platform), "Love one another." He trusted that in the coming year we should achieve still greater results, but this could not be done without living up to those teachings which the angel-world is ever bringing. Afterwards we went in for a good evening, and were not disappointed; every member had to contribute or pay forfeit. We had variations in the fullest sense of the term.—*E. C., Sec.*

COWMA. December 29th.—Second annual tea party and entertainment. The entertainment consisted of songs, recitations, dialogues, and readings. A vote of thanks to the ladies and gentlemen who took an active part in the tea and entertainment, and also to the young ladies not members of the society, who kindly volunteered to help in our noble work, and to the chairman for his kind remarks, brought an enjoyable evening to a close. December 30th: Mr. C. A. Holmes spoke in the afternoon on "Spiritualistic matters in general." Evening, "The world and its saviours."—*G. M.*

DREWSBURY.—December 28rd. Mrs. Stansfield's guides treated subjects from the audience in a very effective manner followed by brief clairvoyance.—30th, Mr. J. Campion gave two capital discourses from the subjects, "Does the soul live after the so-called death?" and "Consider of it, take advice, speak your mind." In treating upon the latter subject, he pointed out how latterly, in reading the Bible, he had found there were many gross libels upon our Maker contained therein, and as he felt that the truth should be spoken, he made bold to condemn some of these old narratives, though, in doing so, he wished it to be understood he dearly loved the old book for the good it had been the means of accomplishing, and for what it contained in support of true spirit communion. He, therefore, felt it a duty, and insisted that it was the duty of all to "consider of it, take advice, speak your mind." The audience listened in rapt attention to the speaker, who has only recently left the Methodist preachers' plan. Christmas-Day we had a private celebration of our first anniversary, when tea was served, and an entertaining evening was spent. Our public anniversary will be held at Shrovetide, in the Albert Hall, when Mrs. Groom, of Birmingham, will be with us.—*W. S.*

ECOLESHILL.—A pleasant day with Mrs. Russell's guides. Afternoon subject: "Bud, Bloom, and Blossom." Evening subject: "Is Spiritualism the Need of the Age?" A very nice address, followed by clairvoyance with good success.—*W. B.*

FELLING-ON-TYNE.—The guides of Mr. J. Campbell named a child belonging to Mr. J. Cairns, one of our members, after which he gave a good but short address on the subject "Is Jesus Christ the God of the Universe?" which was well handled and received by a full house, all going away highly satisfied; the above is the first child we have had

named in our hall. Our tea and entertainment on Dec. 24th was a great success, the best we have ever had. Dec. 31st, coffee supper, concert, and watch meeting.—*G. L.*

FOLKESHILL.—Dec. 30th. At the usual evening service the controls of Miss Lucy Carpenter, of Coventry, gave three short but interesting addresses. Mr. William Lloyd spoke at the close.—*Cor.*

GLASGOW.—Morning: Messrs. Wilsun and Finlay occupied the platform. Extracts from Theodore Parker's writings were read, dealing with the characteristics and locality of heaven. Evening: Chairman, Mr. G. Walrond, who read some paragraphs (from a book written and published by Mr. Wm. Ross Mackenzie, of Elgin, dealing with the prophetic utterances of Scottish seers. Subsequently Mr. Porter delivered a most eloquent and soul-stirring address on spiritualism and religions in general. He gave a retrospective glance over past history. All religions to be any value must be practical. He particularly urged all spiritualists to advance constructive theories and views, rather than views of a destructive nature. The address was much appreciated, Mr. Porter receiving the thanks of the meeting at the close.—*G. W. W.*

HALIFAX.—Mr. John McDonald was our speaker, and had several subjects chosen by the audience, which were treated in a very intellectual and scientific manner. Two of the most instructive and interesting discourses we have had for some time. On the 31st, he gave a splendid lecture on "Phrenology," and examined a few hands and heads. The meeting was prolonged until ten o'clock. Societies would do well to engage more men of such abilities, they would greatly improve the intellectual body of spiritualists.—*S. J.*

HECKMONDWICK.—Dec. 28rd: Mr. Bradbury gave two very good addresses—"How and Why I became a Spiritualist," and "Spiritualism throughout the Ages." People would believe in the manifestations of two thousand years ago, but would not believe to-day; and yet the same may be seen, if they will only give conditions. Trance, and all phases of mediumship, have been handed down from past ages. Wednesday, Dec. 26th: Annual Christmas tea. About 200 sat down. The following mediums were present:—Mrs. Midgley, of West Vale, Miss Wilson of Keighley, and Mrs. Hoyle, a local medium. The entertainment programme was very well gone through. Part-song by the choir; address, Mr. Wood; song, Mrs. Hoyle; dialogue, "The Sunday Encounter," Misses Ogram; song, Miss Preston; recitation by Miss Midgley; song, Mr. W. G. Bogg; address, Miss Wilson; duet, Misses Stirling and Preston; address, Mrs. Midgley; song, Mrs. Hoyle; recitation, Miss Midgley; comic song, Mr. Stirling; glee by the choir; reading in the Yorkshire dialect, Mr. Ogram; song, Miss Stirling. Mr. Rowling brought a pleasant evening to a close by thanking all friends for their services. Dec. 30th: Miss Wilson discoursed upon "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven!" also christening a little child. Theologians tell us that without the sprinkling of water, and being born again, there is no entering into heaven. We, as spiritualists, deny this, as heaven is within—if we lead a life of practical goodness, and work more energetically in the reformation which has so long been needed for the upliftment of humanity. Evening: While the days are going by, we must let our hearts go forth in love and sympathy, and help to draw others into the ways of peace and pleasantness; be not discouraged with opposition, for truth will prevail. Our new rooms have been a great improvement, and we feel sure that more rapid strides will be made if we join hands in the coming year. Progress depends upon ourselves. We invite all friends who have not joined us, to do so, and investigate thoroughly for themselves, and help to spread the grand and glorious truth. We hope that all sympathisers will, by subscriptions or donations, help to meet the increased expenses we have incurred in removing into our new rooms.

HUDDESFIELD. Brook Street.—Dec. 26. A very successful tea party, about 200 sat down to an enjoyable repast. An interesting programme, in which Misses Milner, Castle, Green and Littlewood, Masters Leonard and Littlewood, Mrs. Green, Messrs. Bentley, Hepworth and Wallis, did efficient and pleasing service. The dramatic sketch, "Chiselling," was ably performed by Miss Walker, Mrs. Briggs, and Messrs. Ibeon, Dixon, and Briggs. Much merriment was caused by the various situations, and a most enjoyable evening was spent. Mrs. Green has given good addresses in her usual pleasing manner, concluding each service with successful clairvoyance; 19 descriptions, 13 recognized. Only a moderate audience in the afternoon, but a large one at night.

LEICESTER.—On Thursday the annual Christmas tea meeting was held at 5 o'clock, when 108 sat down to tea—the largest number we have ever had. At 7-0 an entertainment was given, presided over by Mr. Young, and at 9-0 the room was cleared for dancing, &c. We believe every one thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Sunday, Dec. 30, at 6-30, a good audience listened to our friend Mr. Timson, on "Man's spiritual gifts, punishment, and reward," a very instructive address. Numerous illustrations were given, showing that man has spiritual gifts of a very high order, and that both punishment and reward are not only certain, but that we receive both in this world. As, for example, when we have done wrong, have we not felt condemned? and when we have done good, have we not felt a conscious satisfaction that we have done right? Then, as spiritualists, we ought to show more love, sympathy, and unity in our work, and by going out among the people try and teach them that there is something high and noble in spiritualism, and thus by trying to do good, we should receive our reward.—*J. P.*

LEIGH. Railway Road.—Morning, private circle; in the evening, W. S. Hutchinson gave a reading and his experience of Spiritualism to a crowded and delighted audience—it was highly appreciated.—*J. S.*

LONDON. 9, Bedford Gardens, W.—Several interesting speeches by members, also an exchange of opinion with sceptics in reference to the phenomena of spiritualism. Evening, Mr. Robert Lees gave an impressive inspirational address to a good audience, subject "The Gleaners," as exemplified in Hymn 65 of Spiritual Songs and Hymns. The address was thoroughly characteristic and in harmony with the season. After reviewing our work, failings, and successes of 1888, he gave a telling exhortation to be more sincere and active in 1889, and impressed upon his hearers the necessity of living a life consistent with our holy faith and knowledge of spirit communion.

LONDON. Cavendish Rooms.—Mr. T. H. Hunt's lectures still continue to draw large and respectable audiences. The discourse on "the possibilities of man" was delivered by Thomas Paine. After viewing the various discoveries that have been made, and pointing out the won-

derful results of recent inventions, he explained how man in years to come will be able to utilise psychometry, psychology, clairvoyance, and other faculties of mediumship for general and noble purposes all over the world. The lecturer said there were more attributes of matter in existence than are at present made known, as the intellectual and spiritual forces of man became more developed, so would these hidden forces of life be evolved and man be convinced there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy. Several questions were answered satisfactorily. Some one asked whether the reports were true that were circulated about his (Thomas Paine's) death scene? He replied in the negative, and said that Christians had manufactured the rib story, Jonah and the whale, and other absurd notions, and he was not at all surprised they manufactured lies about him. A beautiful impromptu poem was then given in the farewell of the old year. We hope soon to see the whole lecture in print. Next Sunday, "Is Spiritualism of the devil?"—*C. H. Bradley.*

LONDON. King's Cross, Copenhagen Hall, 184, Copenhagen Street.—Morning: Great meeting, very social. Evening: Mr. Burns lectured on "God," in an excellent manner. He also informed us that he felt much of a progressive influence amongst us, and if we all worked in harmony our little hall would be a success.

LONDON. Marylebone.—Morning: Mr. Hawkins employed his healing power. Master H. Towns exercised his clairvoyant gifts; small attendance. Evening: Mr. Towns, medium. Mr. Goddard, senr., presided. There was a very good attendance, great satisfaction being expressed by the remarkable powers the medium showed by psychometry.

LONDON. Peckham. Winchester Hall.—Mr. Rodger delighted us with a deeply-interesting address on "Geology," which was given in such a manner as to be understood by all. He will address us again on the same subject shortly, when we hope he will have a larger audience. The controls of Mr. J. A. Butcher gave a good, but lengthy discourse, on "To-day—a retrospect and a forecast." Questions were replied to at the close. Members are reminded of the annual meeting on Tuesday next, Jan. 8th.—*W. E. L.*

MANCHESTER. Downing Street.—Mr. J. B. Tetlow answered questions in the afternoon. Evening subject "Phenomenal and Spiritual Spiritualism," from which we had a grand and instructive address, closing with psychometrical readings, which were very good.

MANCHESTER. Psychological Hall.—Dec. 25th: Social tea party and concert held, proving a grand success. An excellent tea was provided, which reflects great credit upon those friends who had it in hand, after which we were entertained in a first rate manner by various friends and members, &c., whom we tendered our sincere thanks. Dec. 30th: Mrs. Smith's guides took for their subject in the afternoon. "Spiritualism, its conditions and aspects." Evening, several subjects selected by the audience were dealt with. The discourses at both meetings were handled in a masterly manner, also numerous clairvoyant descriptions were clearly given, nearly all recognized.

MEXBOROUGH.—The guides of Mrs. Hellier, of Bradford, gave very good discourses. Afternoon, "Was Jesus the Saviour of Mankind?" Well received by attentive audience. Ten clairvoyant descriptions given, seven recognized. A very good meeting at night, and good discourses of about thirty-five minutes. Twelve clairvoyant descriptions given, eight recognized. A very enjoyable day.

MIDDLESBROUGH. Association of Spiritualists.—At the members meeting, at the Spiritual Hall, Newport Road, Dec. 19th, the following were chosen for the ensuing six months:—President, Mr. W. Metcalf; vice-presidents, Mr. E. Gallettie and Mr. W. Shirley; treasurer, Mr. W. Shirley; financial secretary, Mr. J. Telford; corresponding secretary, Mr. H. Brown, 56, Denmark Street; librarian, Mr. Kenwyn; committee, Mesdames Brown, Clark, Colpitts, Lister, Shirley, and Telford; Messrs. Dobson, S. Johnson, Lister, McSkimming, Moffatt, Roeder, and Watts; harmonium player, Mr. J. Clayton; visiting committee, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Clark, Mr. Kenwyn, and Mr. Shirley. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded Mr. and Mrs. Lister for their hospitality to speakers. Thanks were also given to Mr. and Mrs. Clark, Messrs. Brown, Clayton, Metcalf, Shirley, Stirzaker, and Watts.

MONKWEARMOUTH. Ravensworth Terrace.—At 6 p.m., Mr. Weightman, of Newcastle, gave a grand address on "Eternal Heaven and Eternal Hell," which was very instructive. A large audience was present, and twenty-three delineations were given, fourteen being recognized.—*G. E.*

NORTH SHIELDS. Borough Road.—An enjoyable evening was spent with Mrs. White. The guides opened with prayer, and devoted the evening to clairvoyant descriptions, nearly all recognized. A graphic description was given to a stranger of a relative who had to be led about the house for a considerable time before passing on. Ere the control had finished the lady was deeply affected and tears filled her eyes. She admitted it was true to the letter.

NOTTINGHAM. Morley Hall.—An excellent address through Mrs. Barnes on the "Dying Year" was given to a most sympathetic and harmonious meeting. Christmas tea and sale of work resulted in a net profit of £10. About 150 sat down to tea, and a most enjoyable evening was spent. Strangers who came in were evidently favourably impressed with a spiritualistic gathering.—*J. W. B.*

OLDHAM.—Dec. 23: Miss Gartside and Miss Hollows, in the absence of Mr. Somers through illness, kindly filled our platform, giving pleasing and instructive addresses. Dec. 25: Mrs. Wallis opened a sale of work, and gave a short address, congratulating the society for past successes and wishing us prosperity for the future. Tea was provided afterwards, of which about 150 partook. The entertainment was presided over by Mr. J. B. Britland, and comprised songs, readings, recitations, short addresses, &c., by Misses Meakin, Taft, and Saxon, and Messrs. Barker, Raynor, Warhurst, and Shenton. Mr. Marshall read a financial report, showing that we are in a sound position. Mr. E. Standing presided at the piano. Dec. 30: Mr. W. H. Wheeler lectured on "Man's spiritual possibilities," and "Spiritualism as a practical religion." The lecture bore evidence of much thought, and was delivered with earnestness, winning the approval of large audiences.

OLDHAM. Mutual Improvement.—Dec. 30: Mrs. Wallis delivered a most eloquent and instructive lecture on "The Education Question," and said education should begin at home along with example, which is far better than precept. We tender our most sincere thanks for her

services. Dec. 27: Mr. C. Thorpe lectured on physiology: subject, "Digestion," illustrated with diagrams pointing out the different channels through which the food passes, explaining how the food acts upon the body in its proper course and gives nourishment to the system. We are greatly benefited by such meetings.—*N. S.*

OPENSHAW.—The controls of Mr. W. Johnson furnished the instructions at both services. Subjects as usual were supplied by the audience, and apparent satisfaction was afforded by the manner in which all were dealt with. A good time was spent on Christmas Eve, when upwards of 200 faces put in an appearance in response to invitation to the "old folks' party." The ages of our old friends ranged from 60 to 86 years. Two of the latter age, were presented with a cup and saucer as a memento of the occasion. Full justice having been done to the good things provided, entertainment of another kind followed in the shape of an Ethiopian concert, which showed unmistakable ability, and was fully appreciated; all went home looking thoroughly happy. There was a good sprinkling of members and friends present in addition to the invited guests. The committee desire their best thanks to all those who so kindly came forward to assist in carrying out the arrangements so successfully.

PENDLETON.—Mrs. Butterfield's control in the afternoon made a few seasonable remarks on Christmas. In the evening the control spoke on "Spiritualism, the Light of the Age," and during the address gave some splendid logical illustrations to prove their argument. Fairly good audiences.—*J. E.*

RAMSBOTTOM.—We had a good meeting with the guides of Mr. Fillingham. Clairvoyance very satisfactory.—*J. L.*

RAWTENSTALL.—Our Christmas tea party and entertainment was a success in every respect. Some Lyceum members performed their part exceedingly well; some of the youngest gave recitations in such a manner as would do credit to older ones; the elder members gave some dialogues—the prize Lyceum dialogue, and third Lyceum dialogue, were excellently rendered. Two girls gave "Dolly and the Doctor," which was very amusing. Three lads gave "Three Nice Young Gentlemen," which won the applause of the audience, whilst "The Irish Schoolmaster," rendered by six young men, convulsed the listeners with laughter. The choir have rendered yeoman service; were out all Christmas night, singing beautiful selections from the "Spiritual Harp," and the general verdict is that they were the best set of singers out on Christmas night. They gave several selections at our entertainment with credit to themselves. Dec. 30th, Mr. George Smith's controls dealt with three subjects from the audience in the afternoon, in a very clear manner, and in the evening gave a masterly discourse on the "Philosophy of Control." This gentleman's controls dealt with the subject in such a practical way that any one listening to them must be benefited thereby.—*W. P.*

SHEFFIELD. Central Board Schools.—Mr. A. Kitson, of Batley, lectured on "The Higher Aspect of Spiritualism," which he dealt with in a most intelligent manner. All was well received.—*A. A.*

SKELMANTHORPE.—Miss Mugrave gave two addresses on "Who are the world's saviours?" and "Who and what is God?" Both discourses were much appreciated, each being followed by an impromptu poem on "Success" and "Duty." Both were very well received by the audience.

SLAITHWAITE.—Afternoon, Mr. Hepworth's guides lectured on "Harmony and liberty," which was taken from a motto on the wall. Evening, subject from the audience, "What are the moral teachings of Spiritualism?" This question was ably dealt with, showing very clearly the moral teachings of spiritualism to be the best to bring humanity to a true standard of happiness in this life and hereafter. All seemed well pleased.—Upwards of 120 persons partook of a good tea, provided by the lady members and friends, at the annual tea party and entertainment. After tea, under the chairmanship of Mr. Tiffany, a very good entertainment was rendered by a few members of our Lyceum, assisted by Mr. Green, of Heywood, Mr. Spedding and Mr. Wilson, of Halifax, Mr. Hepworth, of Leeds, Miss Dodson and Mr. Wright, of Slaithwaite. The proceedings consisted of songs, readings, recitations, and dialogues, all of which were gone through in a masterly manner. A hearty vote of thanks was passed to all who kindly assisted us, proposed by Mr. Daniel Meal, and supported by Mr. John Sutcliffe, concluding a pleasant evening with a vote of thanks to the worthy chairman.—*T. B.*

SOUTH SHIELDS.—Morning: Mr. Schutt replied to questions; four were sent up by the audience, and answered in a pleasing and instructive manner. Evening: The controls dealt with "Spiritualism and its Critics," mentioning the rev. gentlemen who go about the country speaking against the subject and holding it up to ridicule, when they themselves do not investigate it, and, at the same time, cannot give proof of their own theories in reference to Christianity.—*J. G.*

SOWERBY BRIDGE.—The choir contributed one of their excellent musical services in good style, quartets and anthems being rendered in a very effective manner. Mrs. Robinson and Mr. Greenwood were very successful in their solos. Miss Thorpe gave a reading, entitled "Ourselves and Others." Mr. Thorpe presided.—*Cor. Sec.*

WESTHOUGHTON.—Dec. 23rd: Mr. J. Fletcher spoke in the afternoon, on "The Origin of Man according to Moses;" and in the evening, on "The Origin of Man according to Darwin." He showed that whilst the former account of man's origin is false, the latter is supported by the great weight of evidence. On Dec. 25th, we had a tea party, when over one hundred sat down to the good things provided. After tea a very successful entertainment was given. Dec. 30th: Mr. P. Gregory gave two addresses. In the afternoon, on "Dust to dust, and ashes to ashes." His evening's subject was "Man-made Gods." He showed that the making of gods by man had been the curse of our race, and that the only hope for mankind is in the destruction of these gods of human creation. We have had an harmonium draw. Winning number, 248.—*J. P.*

WEST VALE.—Mrs. Stanfield gave two very good practical discourses, each followed by successful clairvoyance, to very good audiences.

WISKEY.—Mrs. Ellis's subject was "Take ye thought what ye eat, or what ye drink, or whether ye are clothed." Although labouring under weakness, she spoke well, and gave a few successful clairvoyant descriptions. In the evening, she spoke on "The harvest is great, but the labourers are few." Then Mrs. Benneyson gave clairvoyant delineations, all recognized.—*G. S.*

THE CHILDREN'S PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.

BURNLEY. Tanner Street.—The usual programme, including marching and exercises, was well done. Harmonious session. Attendance 50, leaders and officers 10. The benediction was given by Mrs. Hall's guides. At the annual meeting for election of officers the conductor's report was as follows:—"Fellow-workers in the cause of truth.—It is with pleasure I give you our report, which shows a great march forward since our last meeting. We started with a total membership of 87, and now we have 184, which speaks well for the future of Burnley. We can truly say that 'we fear no foe, with the angel world at hand to bless.' Our expenses during the year have been £8 1s. 11½d., and our income £11 9s. 8½d., leaving a balance in hand of £3 7s. 9d." The following is the list of officers:—Conductor, Mr. W. Mason; guardian, Mr. W. Dane; librarian, Mr. J. Hanforth; treasurer, Mr. T. Chadwick; secretary, Mr. Woodward; musical director, Mr. J. Hanforth; captain of guards, Mrs. Cooper; guards, Mr. J. W. Hartley, Mr. T. Chadwick, and Mr. Edmonson; organists, Mr. J. W. Robinson and Mr. W. Spencer; leaders, 30.—*W. M.*

FOLESHILL.—On Saturday last, a successful tea-party for the children attending the Lyceum was held. Between thirty and forty sat down, and afterwards a short entertainment was given. A variety of games and amusements were also indulged in, and at the close a number of presents from a Christmas tree were distributed.—On Sunday an interesting session of the usual character was held.

GLASGOW.—Monster tea party, Thursday, December 20th. Over 200 sat down to tea, and enjoyed a most pleasant evening's entertainment, contributed solely by the Lyceum scholars. The programme comprised a number of songs and recitations, a cantata, a solo with organ accompaniment, and a dialogue. Universal admiration was expressed by the adult portion of the audience for the unmistakable progress manifested by the little ones in so short a period, for the Lyceum was only commenced in March last—indeed, it is surprising what advancement can be made when everyone is in real earnest, and, beyond doubt, both scholars and teachers mean business. On December 30th, in spite of the frosty, foggy weather, a fair muster of scholars was present. This being an "Excelsior" gathering, the time was taken up by the children in giving from the platform the hymns and recitations learnt by them during the preceding month. This we find to be the most practical method for developing the children's faculties for public speaking. In this respect great progress has been made since opening the Lyceum in March, 1888.—*G. W. W.*

HECKMONDWIKE.—Usual programme. Recitations, Misses Hoyle. Marching and calisthenic exercises. Prayer by Mr. Ogram. Fair attendance; we are improving nicely.—*G. H. C.*

LANCASTER. St. Leonardsgate, December 30th.—Election of officers. The following were elected: Conductor, Mr. Jones; guardian, Miss Annie Taylor; secretary, Mr. A. Bleasdale; musical decorator, Miss Jones; guards, Messrs. R. Lamb and Jeffries; leaders, Messrs. S. Tennant, A. Bleasdale, William Lamb, R. Carnthwaite, J. Quigley, W. Fryers, Misses Alice Bonney, Sarah Ann Bonney, Lily Bonney, Annie Haygarth; assistant leaders, Messrs. John Tennant, J. Quigley, George Watson, W. Tennant, Misses E. Bentham, Nelly Taylor, and Annie Lindsay. On Thursday we had our tea party and entertainment, when 85 children sat down to tea. Afterwards songs, recitations, dialogues, a negro farce, and a temperance sketch. Selections of music were ably given by the choir, under the conductorship of Mr. Jones. Good and appreciative audience.—*A. B. Secretary.*

LONDON. Canning Town, 125, Barking Road.—After singing and invocation by the chairman, reading on "Body, Soul, and Spirit," afterwards a short discourse on "Spiritualism, and how to Investigate," which was much appreciated. A fair, respectable, and harmonious audience, no speaker being present.—*Cor.*

LONDON. 33, High Street, Peckham.—Attendance good. Mr. J. Rogers called and gave some interesting anecdotes, which pleased the children. Recitations were exceptionally well rendered by the following: Misses G. Swain, S. Waters, and V. Fennemore, Masters W. Edwards and W. Amery. Hymns, anecdotes, and recitations all taught love, charity, and purity of living; and the afternoon was quite soul-inspiring and uplifting.—*U. T. C.*

MANCHESTER. Downing Street.—At 10 a.m., usual programme. Misses McTaggart, M. A. Lamb, and Jane Hyde recited "The Three Fairies," from *The Two Worlds* of Dec. 7th. Afternoon: Assembled at 2 p.m., time taken up by singing and reciting.—*W. W. H.*

MANCHESTER. Psychological Hall.—Dec. 30th: Attendance very good. Programme as usual. We still continue to make good progress, both as regard numbers and efficiency.—*J. H. H.*

OLDHAM.—The following officers were elected to serve for the next half-year: Conductor, Mr. W. H. Wheeler, assistant conductors, Mr. J. Chadwick, Mr. C. Garforth, and Mr. W. Meekin; secretary, Mr. Jas. Sutcliffe; treasurer, Mr. W. Foster; musical director, Mr. Richard Wainwright; additional committee, Messrs. E. Brook, C. Thorpe, J. Shenton, and Misses Saxon, Horsman, Bennett, Bowen, Standing, E. Horrocks, and E. Heywood.—*W. H. W.*

RAWTENSTALL.—Recitations by Misses S. E. Ormerod and F. E. Riding. Attendance, 32 scholars and 2 officers.—*H. S.*

SOUTH SHIELDS.—A good muster; 36 members, 7 officers, and one visitor. Musical readings and silver-chain recitations were considered well done. Recitations by F. Pinkney, B. Lowery, L. Pinkney, W. Whitehead, Annie Hunter, and Mary Berkshire. All recited in a pleasing manner. Calisthenics were performed very nicely.—*P. P.*

PROSPECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS.

GLASGOW.—Sunday, 13th January, morning. Annual meeting for the election of officers for 1889, and the audit of accounts. All members requested to attend.

LIVERPOOL. Temperance Hall.—Pastor C. King will (by desire) deliver a series of Sunday afternoon lectures; Jan. 6: at 3 sharp, subject, "The Fox-Kane exposure of spiritualism: Is it true?" Questions will be answered at the close.

LONDON. Garden Hall, 309, Essex Road, Islington, N.—Re-opened, Sunday, January 6th, 1889, with a tea and public meeting. Tickets 1s. Tea at 5-30. Address, at 7 o'clock, Mr. Walker.

LIVERPOOL.—January 8th, annual tea and entertainment. Proceeds to the funds. Tickets 1s. each. Mr. E. W. Wallis will sing two solos.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION.—Mr. E. W. Wallis, sub-editor of *The Two Worlds*, in London. Goswell Hall, 290, Goswell Road, E.C. On Sunday, January 6th, 1889, in the above hall, Mr. E. W. Wallis will deliver two addresses, at 2-30 and 6-30 p.m. Afternoon subject, "The Work before Us;" evening subject, "Spiritualism: its Power, Principles, and Progress." Tea at 5 p.m. for old friends to renew, and new friends to make, the acquaintance of Mr. Wallis. Tickets, 1s. each.—*J. Veitch, Sec., 44, Coleman Road, Peckham.*

LONDON. 18, Baker Street, close to Baker Street Station and opposite the Portman Rooms.—January 6th, at 7, Mr. R. Harper will lecture on "The working autonomy of cosmic systems." Mr. C. C. Massey has kindly presented the society with a copy of his translation of Du Prel's "Philosophy of Mysticism," portions of which will be read.

LONDON. Peckham, Winchester Hall.—Annual meeting, Tuesday, January 8th, at the Society's Rooms, at 8 o'clock. The anniversary services at Winchester Hall, on Sunday, January 27th. The Tea Meeting on Tuesday, January 29th, at Tenham Road Mission Hall, High Street, Peckham.

NORTH EASTERN FEDERATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—The monthly meeting of the Executive will be held at Cambridge Street, South Shields, on Sunday, January 6th, at 10-30 a.m.

SHEFFIELD. Central Board Schools.—Sunday, Jan. 20th, afternoon, 2-30; evening, 6-30. Wednesday, Jan. 23rd, at 8 p.m., Mr. Wm. V. Wyldes.—*A. Anson, Sec.*

WEST PELTON. Co-operative Hall.—Jan. 6, at 2 and 5-30, Mr. John Hopcroft.

Mr. Hopcroft will be in the Newcastle district during January, and letters should be sent for him to c/o Mr. W. H. Robinson, 18, Book Market, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Mr. G. Featherstone, of 72, Netherfield Road, Parkgate, near Rotherham, has open dates he would be glad to fill. He is a good speaker. Terms moderate.

Mr. B. Plant has a few open dates, which he desires to fill. (See card.)

Mr. J. Lomax has open dates he desires to fill. (See card.)

PASSING EVENTS.

With this number we fulfil our promise, and begin our free gift to the readers of *The Two Worlds*, in the shape of additional reading matter equal in extent to an extra page of the smaller type. In making this change we incur expense, which in the course of the year will reach a good round sum, but we anticipate from our readers such a continuance of their kindly co-operation and support as will, by an increased circulation, recoup the outlay.

A happy and prosperous New Year to all, rich in spiritual and temporal blessings, is our heartfelt greeting to all our readers.

The festive season appears to have been taken advantage of by our friends more fully this season than ever before. Entertainments have been numerous and successful. Why not? Spiritualism is a round-face religion, not a doleful gospel of gloom, but one of gladness and cheer, of good-will and good-fellowship. Let us be merry and wise, and rejoice in all good things.

We regret that owing to our going to press earlier than usual last week, we were unable to insert several announcements of New Year entertainments which came to hand too late.

LANCASTER.—The *Guardian* gave a lengthy report of the entertainment held on December 26th, and speaks appreciatively of the performers. (We regret we have not space to reprint it.)

At Glasgow, Mr. Porter advocated *constructive* work by spiritualists. We agree with him. Spiritualism is a practical and reformatory movement.

The friends in Heckmondwike are energetically working for the cause, and appeal for assistance and unity. "Unity is strength." Cultivate sympathy, goodwill, and appreciation, and harmony will then prevail. "Success is certain if energy fail not."

PUNISHMENT AND REWARD.—This subject was dealt with at Leicester. It is worth while to remember that "punishment" implies the infliction of pain or penalty, and "reward" implies a gift. Spiritualism teaches that *consequences follow deeds*, painful or pleasurable, by action of the inevitable law of compensation and retribution. It does not teach of any arbitrary infliction of punishment, or of a prize offered, or reward given, by a capricious deity. Virtue is its own reward and vice its own punishment, because of the results which necessarily follow to the individual and the race.

BURNLEY LYCEUM.—Mr. Mason writes to say he is sorry that there was a mistake in the statistics supplied to us. The number of members now on the books is 184 (the highest number of all); 24 scholars have taken the Lyceum pledge, and 54 have joined the Dicky Bird Society.

NOTICE TO SECRETARIES.—Kindly send in your list of speakers for the month, that we may keep our Sunday services column well filled, and make it the perfect directory it should be. Acquaint us with any changes of officers, time of meeting, or address of hall. Look at the list and see if it is correct.

The Banner of Light makes some cordial comments on the completion of the first year's work of *The Two Worlds*, and expresses the "earnest hope that greater success may attend it in future, and that Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten as its editor may find the generous reward for her labours to which she is fully entitled as a faithful servant of the spirit-world." We are thankful for these words of cheer.

The "Fire Test" publicly given in Middlesbrough, on Sunday evening, December 30th, at the Spiritual Hall, in presence of a large audience. After a powerful address, and while giving some strikingly successful clairvoyance, Mr. John Hopcroft held his hand several times over a lighted gas jet without manifesting the slightest sensation of uneasiness. Mr. Hopcroft stated that it was extremely rare for this phenomenon to be exhibited in public, though it had frequently occurred in private gatherings, through himself and the late Mr. D. D. Home, by the same law that enabled Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to come unscathed from the "burning fiery furnace."

At Oxford, Canon Hall Baynes was sent to prison for four months for obtaining money under false pretences. At Houghton-le-Spring, Jane Langley preferred a charge against James Fitzpatrick that he was the father of her illegitimate son. An order was made by the court that he should pay 8s. a week. We should not refer to this painful case, but both parties were local preachers among the Primitive Methodists. Many letters had passed. Defendant addressed Miss Langley as "Dear sister in Christ," whatever that may mean. When these things occur among Christians little notice is taken, possibly because they occur so frequently.

An old woman named Ann Nunnich recently died at Barrowford, near Colne, it is reported in local papers that "in her life she displayed extraordinary powers of psychology, and was noted for her faculty of seeing visions and conversing with materialised spirits. For twenty years she was the keeper and cleaner of the Wesleyan Chapel. Numberless stories have been told of the deceased having conversed with departed spirits, and of her power of foretelling the death of persons in the village, and several instances are of a very remarkable character. She was always reticent, and only declared the visions which had flitted across her mind to her most intimate friends and relatives. On one occasion, only a few months ago, she declared that she had walked down the village with the materialised form of a young man who died the following day. On another occasion she stated that while in the Wesleyan Chapel she stood beside a boy, who, at the same time, was ill in bed, and conversed with him. In her house had been kept the implements of interment, which, she said, caused her considerable annoyance by the noises (? toe-joint raps) which they occasionally made. She was also supposed to have been able to hear the singing of angels." The above is interesting mainly as indicating the changing thought of the times, which makes it worth while reporting such things, and also the wide-spread existence of normal mediumship.

Mr. J. B. Tetlow writes: "Allow me to thank you for this week's *Two Worlds*. It is a most excellent production and worthy of all praise. The census is good. It gives one a clear idea of our movement. I have added up the membership, and find the numbers to be 3,118 for the societies reported. If we had returns from all the societies I feel satisfied the membership would top 5,000. With internal foes and foes external this is an excellent result. Then we have the Lyceum, with its 2,638 members. These are figures worthy of all consideration, and a power to give us hope and consolation for the future. The Lyceum is the true basis of spiritualistic propaganda, and the hope of the future. See Sowerby Bridge, how useful the Lyceum is there. Let us work on bravely, for the good time is coming apace."

The Two Worlds has met with a most cordial reception from the spiritual press abroad, and in this country with one noteworthy exception. Many of our articles have been reprinted entire by our American contemporaries with due acknowledgement, also by the *Cornubian and Redruth Times*. We are proud of this fact, which indicates the value of the work we are doing.

Mr. Milburn, of Newcastle, writes: "The new Lyceum tale has found many admirers, and the Lyceum corner in *The Two Worlds* is well utilized by our scholars." [We heard the second prize Lyceum dialogue rendered by two bright little maidens at Brook Street, Huddersfield, on Bank Holiday, and it seemed to be highly appreciated by the large audience.]

PSYCHOMETRY AND THE INQUISITION.—Mr. J. Hocker, of St. John's Wood, London, writes: On Sunday evening, Mr. Towns gave the second of his experiments in psychometry, to a good audience. Among other articles sent up was a portion of a brick, brought by your correspondent from Antwerp some three or four years ago. It was, with several similar pieces, forming part of the wall of a dungeon in a building once occupied by the holy Inquisition. The guide shows the way by the aid of lighted candles down to these terrible chambers, where, in the "good old times," man and woman were done to death by the professed followers of Him who is said to have gone about doing good. Visitors are shown a ring in the ceiling of one of these gloomy cells, by means of which and a rope the victims were hauled up by the thumbs or ankles. The guide also points out a small leaden pipe through which water was allowed to drop slowly on the head, till madness ensued, and other horrors which I shrink from writing. Mr. Towns turned this fragment about in his hands and seemed rather mixed as to its nature and origin. At length I told him it was a piece of brick. That was all the cue he got. From that moment all the facts dawned upon him, and he succeeded in relating them one by one as accurately as if it were his property and not mine. He gave such an impressive description of the scenes enacted in these fearful apartments that it suggested the idea of some supernatural characters engraved on its surface, and that he was deciphering them by a sense of touch so vivid, that my blood curdled in my veins. Many other remarkable experiments were made with gloves, &c., and it is evident that if he cultivates this faculty it must result in the most astounding revelations.

Mr. Gerald Massey has met with much appreciation in Boston, and held a successful course of lectures there. We trust he will continue to receive the recognition and support which he so well deserves. He is doing a noble work, and is thoroughly outspoken; although so far ahead of the masses. May the angels guide and prosper him.

SPIRITUALISM AND RELIGION.—A paper under the above heading by Mr. Morell Theobald and Dr. R. M. Theobald was printed in *Light*, December 1, 1888, which presents some valuable thoughts, but is in some respects (in our opinion) calculated to do considerable harm. The authors claim that Spiritualism "makes the future life, to which religious motives so largely point, a solidly ascertained fact." . . . "These spirit touches . . . bring the mind into close proximity with the invitations and monitions of Religion, and make the Divine whisper, 'Come to me,' more audible and more articulate." . . . "Spiritualism is a handmaiden to Religion, as we have claimed elsewhere, in that it not only mitigates, but, in a sense, abolishes death." . . . "No better service can be offered to religion than this, by which the shadowy realm becomes full of light, and the nearest Presences that people it are those which are consecrated and endeared by the sweetest memories of home and of earthly friendship and love."

In view of the above claims and admissions, it seems strange that Messrs. Theobald should have penned the following unfortunate sentences: "The facts of Spiritualism then, in individuals, may be held as simple matters of knowledge without making any deep impression on the character. We do not expect that anyone, simply as a Spiritualist, should be benevolent, or unselfish, or honest, or truthful, or pure, or devout, or reverent, or in any way interesting or attractive."

While the following passage, in the hands of an opponent of the Ashcroft type, taken from its context and cast upon a screen before a large and prejudiced audience by the aid of a lantern, is most misleading and damaging: "A Spiritualist may be an unprincipled liar, an eager, grasping self-seeker, a grovelling sensualist, an unscrupulous swindler, a profane, godless scoffer; in fact, a pernicious rascal of any conceivable type." Think what must be the feelings of persons who read that sentence and are assured, "Oh, no; Thomas Ashcroft did not say that, but a prominent London Spiritualist!" Think, too, of the difficulty Spiritualists have to reply to such statements, and meet and explain the meaning of such extracts!

But, apart altogether from the unwisdom of moulding bullets for our enemies to use against us, we deny the accuracy of the statement save only from the very narrow view taken by the authors.

How can it be true that "Spiritualism makes the future life, to which religious motives so largely point, a solidly ascertained fact," without the knowledge of that fact exerting some uplifting and spiritualizing influence? If, as stated, "These spirit touches do bring the mind into close proximity with the invitations and monitions of religion and make its call more audible," we fail to see how, having such "spirit touches," a Spiritualist may be an "unprincipled liar," &c. If "no better service can be offered to religion than this," which Spiritualism renders by making the other world real and revealing that our loved ones live there, how can it be true that a Spiritualist can be "a pernicious rascal of any conceivable type?"

The man who simply admits the fact (as a fact) that spirits can communicate with their earthly friends may be a spiritist, but, to our thinking, is not a spiritualist. How can Spiritualism be the handmaiden to Religion unless it has power to arouse the spiritual nature and exercise a religious influence?

Spiritualism is the very basis of religious systems, viz., the revelation of the immortal world. Religion, *per se*, is neither Christian, Buddhist, or Mohammedan. Religion is natural—is feeling and life. Religion was, is, and always will be—because man is a spiritual being with religious possibilities. Religion is the expression of the spiritual side of man, and does not depend upon systems, priesthoods, or facts. But the cultivation of the religious sentiment, perceptions, intuitions, and strivings, and the embodiment of these in deeds of love, goodness, philanthropy, and self-sacrifice, depends largely upon the knowledge or belief of the individual.

Unless Spiritualism is a moral power and a religious teacher we have no use for it. We cannot conceive how any sane man can know its facts without feeling that "Life is real, life is earnest," and having his whole nature stirred with purer thoughts and loftier ideals.

HEALING THE SICK.—"Mrs. Smythe, of 68, Cornwall Road, Bayswater, W., cannot speak too highly of Mrs. Hagon's ability to cure special diseases, having suffered since a child, and being constantly under medical treatment by many doctors. She consulted Mrs. Hagon as a last resort, was under her treatment for three months, about two years ago, and has not consulted a doctor since, having been in better health than ever in her life before, and feels that she cannot thank Mrs. Hagon sufficiently for her kind attention."—Mrs. S. C. Hill, of 18, Lypford Road, St. Peter's Road, E., writes, having suffered from cancer in the breast for nine weeks, caused through a blow some twelvemonths before, I was under the treatment of two doctors, but received no benefit—in fact, I was sinking fast. Finding they could do me no good, they held a consultation, and came to the conclusion that I must have my breast off, and if the breast was taken off, they thought I should not survive five days. A friend happened to call at the crisis, and she persuaded me not to go under the operation. She said she knew a lady who treated and completely cured her from an illness she had suffered from since childhood. I had a consultation with this lady (Mrs. Hagon), and from the first hour of her treatment found relief and continued to improve, until, at the end of four weeks my breast was cured. I should like this to be made public for the benefit of other sufferers."—[We have received the above letters, and think it right that such cures should be made known. We point to the grand and good work which is being accomplished by Mrs. Hagon and others, such as Mrs. Goldsbrough, Mrs. Hawkins, and Messrs. Younger, Wakefield, and Hawkins, besides dozens of private healers. In answer to the question "What is the good of it?" we say, "Come and see. The sick are healed, the sad are strengthened, the sorrow-laden are comforted, tears wiped away from mourners' eyes, the sinful are admonished, and the good gladdened by the light of angel ministry!" No wonder spiritualism is spreading rapidly!]

AN OPINION SHARED BY MANY.—Mr. A. Kitson, in the course of a kind letter, says: "I have just been reading Mrs. Britten's excellent leader in this week's issue, and like its thoroughly lady-like and candid tone. I feel sure it [*The Two Worlds*] will not be allowed to die a natural death while it is kept so clean and pure."

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