

Lady Caithness and Her Connection with Theosophy

By Joscelyn Godwin

Lady Caithness was born María Mariátegui in 1830, the only daughter of Antonio José Mariátegui, of Santa Catalina, Macuriges, Spain. One obituary stated that she was of Creole origin,¹ but without corroboration this seems improbable. In 1853 she married a general, the Conde de Medina Pomar,² by whom she had one son, Manuel María Medina de Pomar y Mariátegui, born 1854. The Conde died in 1868. In 1872, the widowed Condesa married the 14th Earl of Caithness, thus becoming the Countess of Caithness. When her son Manuel came of age in 1875, Pope Pius IX created him Duque de Pomar. The title was recognized and confirmed to him and his heirs by King Alphonso XII, after the king returned to Spain from exile in 1875. In 1879, Pope Leo XIII extended to the Condesa/Countess by letters patent the title and rank of her son. She was henceforth both Countess of Caithness and Duquesa de Pomar. She also held the Grand Cross of the Order of Noble Ladies of María Luisa of Spain, and the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.³ Lord Caithness died unexpectedly of a heart attack in the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, on 27 March 1881, and was buried in the Royal Chapel of Holyrood Castle, Edinburgh. There was no issue from this marriage, and in 1889, after the death of Lord Caithness's son by his first marriage, the peerage became

dormant. (The present Lord Caithness—the 20th Earl—is descended from a collateral line.) Lady Caithness died in Paris on 2 November 1895, of heart disease.

Little is known of Lady Caithness's early life. A writer in *Light* stated that she spent a brief but very gay period after her teenage marriage in Madrid society; that she was left a widow very early, with one son, and then accompanied her father as he went to live in England.⁴ Allowing for the customary abbreviation of her age (she was married at 22 or 23 and widowed at 37 or 38), this is probably accurate. The political context for her emigration is as follows. The Conde de Pomar died in the same year as the Spanish Revolution of 1868, which sent Queen Isabella II into exile. Isabella went to live in Paris, while Prince Alphonso was educated in Vienna and at the military school of Sandhurst, England. Since it was the generals who had held the reins of power under Isabella, the Condesa de Pomar, as a general's widow, must have cast her lot with the exiles. Her father apparently did the same. As far as is known, she never returned to Spain.

The first public appearance of the Condesa is in a letter solicited by the London Dialectical Society for their *Report on Spiritualism*. This important collection of interviews and let-

ters was gathered during 1869 and 1870 and published in 1871. The Condesa's undated letter, twelve pages long, is signed "M. de Medina Pomar."⁵ Here she states that for five months she was a "medium" even when alone, receiving clear communications. This power suddenly quitted her, and never returned. If it had been self-deception, she would have continued, as there were no other changes, either physical, mental, or in her beliefs. Since that time she had held many séances with friends in her house, and had been told remarkable things; many communications were in Spanish. She had frequented séances elsewhere, including some with D. D. Home. The spirits all told her that they continue to grow in knowledge and goodness through reincarnation, which accorded with her own deep conviction. She was confident that "spiritism" would become triumphant, and that reincarnation would be accepted by all.

The valuable statement that I have summarized here shows that on her arrival in England, the Condesa lost no time in becoming involved with spiritualism. Moreover, she belonged to the "spiritist" wing of the movement: a recent French coinage (*spiritiste*) for those who believed in reincarnation, as opposed to the *spiritualistes*, who did not. The spiritists were followers of Allan Kardec, whose *Livre des Esprits* (1857) was an epoch-making event in the history of the movement. The spirits who communicated through Kardec's mediums taught, with one accord, that the human spirit returns to many different bodies in the course of its evolution. The spirits who spoke through other mediums denied this: spirits are only human once, they said,

then they continue their evolution on other planes and in other worlds. The debate over this issue filled the pages of the spiritualist (and spiritist) journals of the latter nineteenth century. Lady Caithness's reincarnationist position was clear from the start, and it never wavered. She was devoted to Kardec, translating his works into English and publishing them in England and America at her own expense.⁶

As may be imagined, James Sinclair, the Earl of Caithness (1821-1881), was not a typical Scottish laird, only happy when shooting things. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society and the inventor, among other things, of "a steam carriage for travelling on macadamised roads, a gravitating compass which came into general use, and a tape-loom by which a weaver might stop one of the shuttles without interfering with the action of the whole."⁷ He was also a photographer, illustrating W. Menzies' *History of Windsor Great Park* in 1864. His own writings were gathered in *Lectures on Popular and Scientific Subjects* (London, 1877; 2nd ed., 1879).

Lady Caithness shared her second husband's interests, with a slant of her own. In the field of photography, she had a large collection of "spirit photographs," produced at séances and showing various dead and living people.⁸ During a visit to the United States in the winter of 1873-1874 she investigated an "electromagnetic machine" invented by Mrs. Elizabeth French of Philadelphia. It applied a low electric current to the head, following the belief that the nature of disease could be found from "cranial diagnosis" and treated through gentle electrification.⁹ The Caith-

nesses also went to Harvard to meet the zoologist Louis Agassiz, see his museum, and engage him in philosophical conversation.¹⁰ This American journey was devoted to making contact with the most prominent figures in that uniquely late-nineteenth century world, where spiritualism and science still seemed to be potential allies. They included Judge Edmonds, Robert Dale Owen, Dr. John Gray of New York, Mrs. Conant, Emma and William Britten (who ran an electromagnetic practice in Boston), and Professor Henry of the Smithsonian Institution.¹¹

When and how did Lady Caithness meet the famous medium, lecturer, and historian of spiritualism, Emma Hardinge Britten? In her first book, *Old Truths in a New Light* (1876), Lady Caithness mentions a conversation about elementary spirits that she had had with Emma “a few years ago.”¹² Perhaps they met during the Dialectical Society’s investigations, to which Emma also contributed. But Emma reminisced in 1895 that “she called on me in London, I think twenty years ago.”¹³ If Lady Caithness’s version is correct, Emma, with her many comings and goings across the Atlantic, may well have been the person who encouraged her friend to visit the East Coast, and who obtained introductions to the spiritualists.

In June, 1874, Lady Caithness began her writing career with “The Life and Works of Allan Kardec,”¹⁴ in answer to a request for all she knew about him. At about the same time, her precocious son, the Count of Medina Pomar, published his first novel, *The Honey-moon* (London: Trübner, 1874), soon followed by *Through the Ages*, a novel of reincarnation. Up to now, the main, if not the only English

proponent of the doctrine had been Anna Blackwell, a journalist who lived for many years in Paris and reported on the French political and intellectual scene.¹⁵ Now Lady Caithness and her son, the most socially prominent people in the movement, were lending their weight to it. Reincarnation quickly became the subject of heated debate among the British spiritualists; their conference held in August at the Crystal Palace was the scene of violent polemics against the idea.¹⁶

During the following months, *The Spiritualist* reported the movements of the Caithness’s like a gossip column. It records their intention of spending the winter of 1874-75 in Italy;¹⁷ a reception given in their London residence (Portland Place) for immensely important and titled people plus Edward Maitland;¹⁸ a great party given for the Count of Pomar’s coming-of-age in the Earl’s ancestral seat, Barrowgill Castle.¹⁹ This fortunate family also owned a property in Hertfordshire.²⁰ They were certainly a catch.

In that same summer of 1874, the physicist John Tyndall took on the spiritualist craze in his Presidential Address to the British Association in Belfast. This provocation led Lady Caithness to embark on her first and probably her best book, *Old Truths in a New Light* (published 1876). Although much of the book is quotations from all manner of sources, ranging from scientists to spirit communications, it has a solid backbone of spiritual conviction. One of the book’s main purposes, is, as one would expect, to argue the case for reincarnation and to name all the eminent people through the ages who have believed in it. A second purpose is to point out the ultimate

unity of all religions, via the study of the symbolism and the esoteric doctrines that they share. A third is the hoped-for reconciliation of science with the spiritual. Lady Caithness shows familiarity with the Anglo-French movement in comparative religion around 1800, citing Charles Dupuis, Constantin Volney, Jacob Bryant, Samson Mackey, Maurice's *Indian Antiquities*, Sir William Drummond, Godfrey Higgins; also some of their later offshoots, such as the Masonic writings of George Oliver and Kersey Graves's *The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviours*. While most of these writers were occupied in demolishing the structure of dogmatic and exclusive Christianity, Lady Caithness is a rebuilders. She is a Christian, without a doubt, and a Catholic at that; but the Bible and the Christian sacraments are for her symbols, not to be taken at their exoteric or face value. Here is an illustration of her Christology:

A high fluidic, or rather *sidereal* Spirit, such as Christ, the Guardian Ruler of our planet, could not assume flesh and blood, although He could assume the *appearance* from the material elements in the atmosphere, and take upon Himself the "*likeness*," but not the nature, of man; for, reversing the saying of St. Paul, "Incorruption cannot put on corruption," but *being* the heavenly, He could *bear the image* of the earthly at pleasure, for the time being, and could disappear and "convey himself out of their midst," when in a crowd which sought to stone him to death, and from the sepulchre, which could not contain His *incorruptible* body.²¹

One powerful ground of reconciliation between science and the spiritual was the theory of evolution. For Lady Caithness, as for

other spiritists and, later, Theosophists, evolution fitted perfectly with the doctrine of reincarnation, the main difference from Darwin being that its cause was seen as the divine will, rather than the hazards and chance mutations of an ungoverned universe. For her, everything in the cosmos is in perpetual evolution through more and more spiritualized states of matter. Every one of us has lived innumerable lives in the animal kingdom. We enter humanity as the crudest savages and progress to higher races, learning through repeated births the lessons of cooperation and kindness that are taught in their noblest form by Jesus. Eventually we are ready to close our human chapter and to continue our history in less materialized states of existence.

Old Truths in a New Light bears the imprint of the American spiritualism that Lady Caithness had recently investigated, and is full of unattributed "spirit communications" that seem to come from there. More specifically, it bears witness to the influence of Emma Hardinge Britten. For example, there are several pages that tell of a pre-Adamic angel, Osiris or Orisses, who founded the Order of Melchisedec and planted the seeds of Freemasonry.²² "Oress" was the name of a pre-Adamic angel who gave messages to the spirit circle of the Koons's in Ohio during the 1850s, and whose portrait adorned the title-page of Emma's *Modern American Spiritualism*.²³ Far from believing the dogma of the commonplace spiritualists, that all communications are from the spirits of dead humans, Lady Caithness allows for a universe crammed with such angelic beings and with elemental spirits, who through the ages have had intercourse in various forms with

humanity. She reproduces Emma's eyewitness account of the "spirits of the mines" in Central Europe.²⁴ Emma was also knowledgeable about the skeptical mythologists (Dupuis, Volney, Drummond, etc.), and used their work to deny Christianity its claims to uniqueness; her *Six Lectures on Theology and Nature* (Chicago, 1860) had used this as their starting-point.²⁵ At the same time as Lady Caithness was working on *Old Truths in a New Light*, Emma was preparing for publication a very similar book entitled *Art Magic*, published in New York early in 1876.²⁶ Both books expand the spiritualist world view with the infusion of ideas from the Hermetic tradition and from Oriental philosophy. Both are opposed, on the one front, to dogmatic and fundamentalist Christianity, and on the other, to scientific materialism. Lady Caithness was part of a movement.

The next year, 1877, Lady Caithness published a slighter, more accessible work, *Serious Letters to Serious Friends*.²⁷ This contains letters that outline the main concerns of *Old Truths in a New Light*. She remarks, in the sixth letter, that the Church is eventually going to have to accept the doctrine of reincarnation, but that it is always the last to receive any new truth, such as that of the moving earth or the six "days" of creation.²⁸ She also expands her remarks in *Old Truths* concerning the French medium or researcher J. B. Roustaing, whose *Les quatre Evangiles expliqués* she admired as going much further than Kardec; and the "very advanced thought" of Anna Blackwell, published in the monthly *Human Nature*.

I must at least record the rumor that Lady Caithness had already met H. P. Blavatsky. During June 1873 Blavatsky was in Paris, stay-

ing with a cousin at 11, rue de l'Université and friendly with Kardec's disciples the Leymaries. The anti-Theosophist Narad Mani is the sole source for any connection between them. He writes: "une élève de Swedenborg et de Boehme, lady Caithness, créée Duchesse de Pomar en 1879 par le pape Léon XIII, et magnifiquement entolée par Mme Blavatsky, avait avancé à celle-ci 25,000 francs pour les premiers frais d'établissement" [of the Theosophical Society].²⁹ Nothing Narad Mani writes should be taken at face value; but H.P.B. did have a large sum of money when she came to the United States in July 1873 that she was unable to spend for her own support.³⁰

The Spiritualist, during the same years as it chronicled Lady Caithness's activities, was bringing to the British public the first news of H.P.B., first from Cairo,³¹ then from New York.³² Both H.P.B. and Henry Olcott contributed to the magazine in 1874-1875, yet neither of them is mentioned in *Old Truths in a New Light*. If Lady Caithness had met H.P.B. on her American tour, she would surely have mentioned the fact—unless one subscribes to the deeper sort of conspiracy theory, according to which Lady Caithness was one of H.P.B.'s "secret chiefs" on the material plane. I prefer the idea that up to 1876 Lady Caithness simply did not realize that H.P.B. would become important.

By that year, according to another unsubstantiated rumor, Lady Caithness was a member of the New York Theosophical Society.³³ Be that as it may, it was another movement altogether that next attracted her attention and affection. In 1878, she met Edward Maitland and Anna Kingsford.

Maitland's name has been mentioned before, as one of the London spiritualists invited to the Caithness's reception. His form of mediumship was automatic typing, which was partly responsible for two books, *England and Islam* (1876) and *The Soul and How It Found Me* (1877). By now he had entered into a Platonic partnership with Anna Kingsford, the wife of a clergyman who had taken it into her head to study for a medical doctorate in Paris. She, too, was a medium, receiving her "illuminations" in sleep and under the influence of chloroform. The two of them had studied the "solar myth" of Dupuis and Drummond, tried to research Hermetic philosophy in the British Museum, and were developing much the same attitude towards Christianity as Lady Caithness: that its essence was not historical and unique but esoteric and universal. Maitland was in correspondence with her by August, 1878.³⁴ In September, he happened to meet the Duc de Pomar, who took him and Kingsford to see Lady Caithness, then on a visit to Paris. She lent the two mediums books of Jacob Boehme and Eliphas Lévi, greatly expanding their views: up till then, Swedenborg was the only modern authority they had read.³⁵ Soon Lady Caithness was writing to them in glowing terms, praising Maitland's books and calling Kingsford an "inspired Pythoness" with a great part to play in the "New Dispensation dawning."³⁶ Their spirit guides gave permission for Lady Caithness to hear some of their revelations in progress on the true nature of Christianity, which would later be published as *Clothed with the Sun*.³⁷

Maitland hoped that if Lady Caithness were to move to Paris, as her intention seemed

to be, she would provide moral support for Kingsford, always troubled by the hostility of the masculine world and by her intense sensitivity to the sufferings of animals.³⁸ Although they kept their intellectual independence (not, for example, believing everything that Lévi wrote), they received doctrines that appealed greatly to their friend: that there is no vicarious atonement, but that each soul works out its own destiny through reincarnation; and that there was a coming Messianic event in feminine form.³⁹ Lady Caithness was becoming increasingly feminist herself, and seems by 1879 to have separated from her husband. After several exploratory visits to Paris, she settled there in 1880, taking a house that used to be an embassy at 51, rue de l'Université. Almost immediately, her friends' apartment lease expired, and she took them in, in time to celebrate Kingsford's long and hard-earned doctorate.⁴⁰

On 27 July 1880, Lady Caithness asked the spirits for advice concerning an arbitration suit she was engaged in with the trustees of her husband's estate. A message was received from "Francis St. Clair," upon which Lady Caithness remarked that she had never heard of him: he must be from the Rosslyn branch of the family, as the Caithness branch was spelt "Sinclair." She was surprised, in any case, that his sympathies were not on her husband's side.⁴¹ I do not know anything more about the affair. On 27 March 1881, the Earl died in New York, and Lady Caithness was left free, and, thanks to her multiple legacies, rich beyond the dreams of avarice.

This was of only limited importance, in view of the fact that the world was fast coming

to an end. Eliphas Lévi, basing his calculations on the *De Septem secundeis* of the Abbot Trithemius, had prophesied the end of an age for 1879, but most authorities favored 1881 as the crucial year. The latest of these was Piazzzi Smyth, Astronomer-Royal for Scotland, whose study of the Pyramid of Cheops traced the course of human history through the galleries of that monument, concluding that 1881 would mark the beginning of the "last things." Smyth cited an interpretation of Daniel 8.14 that gave the same year for the "cleansing of the sanctuary."⁴² Kingsford and Maitland were familiar with Lévi's interpretation of Trithemius,⁴³ and in June 1880, Lady Caithness gave them Smyth's and other books on the Great Pyramid.⁴⁴ The three friends became passionate devotees of the idea of an imminent New Age.

The new spiritualist journal *Light* greeted the year 1881 by saying that no one had a good word for it, from Mother Shipton to the Great Pyramid; the editor noted that every land was near crisis, and that there was a great searching of the heart in theology and religion.⁴⁵ Later in the year *Light* reported on an inspirational discourse, "The End of the World, 1881," by Walter Howell, a Manchester medium.⁴⁶ In Calcutta, the Brahmo Samaj under their leader Keshub Chunder Sen was celebrating a "new dispensation" that Sen proclaimed as equal to Christ's. Nearer home, a Mrs. Girling said that she was Jesus returned, and had the stigmata to prove it.⁴⁷ These were only a few of the symptoms of a general apocalyptic atmosphere.

Towards the end of the crucial year 1881, Lady Caithness contributed three articles on

the topic to Emma Hardinge Britten's magazine, *The Medium and Daybreak*. The first, "The Fourfold Constitution," says that the Second Coming is feminine, and that its manifestation may be very silent and unobtrusive.⁴⁸ We may also expect to see Michael stand forth; but for some people, unprepared for the great event, it will be "a sell" and they will be unaware of the new Heaven and Earth.⁴⁹ (According to Trithemius, the archangel Michael was due to take over the world's direction from Gabriel at this juncture.) An interesting anecdote tells of a discovery in 1879 of some old papers left behind by a Danish gentleman who died in America: they turned out to be by the sixteenth-century astronomer Tycho Brahe and to contain a prophecy relating to 1881 as the end and beginning of a cycle, marked by great events.⁵⁰

A correspondent wrote to ask for more. Lady Caithness obliged with the two-part article "1881===1882."⁵¹ She speaks in mystical terms of "the Bride" as a new order of Being, the manifestation of the Sons and Daughters of God, and a more perfect race.⁵² She expects that "the coming of the Bride, 'the Lamb's Wife,' the advent of the Feminine or Wisdom Principle to animal humanity, will in due time bring about the birth of the Divine Human," as so clearly predicted by the Great Pyramid's builders.⁵³ In the second part she tells of the initiation of "a Lady" in a castle in northern Scotland. A Minister had told this lady (obviously the writer herself) to stay at home and sew, and ignore these spiritualist doctrines. "Do you think you're a second Daniel?" he said. She rushed out of the house and on to the cliffs, in sight of the Island of Hoy, where

a rainbow was visible. As she gazed at it, a voice said loudly: "Tell him your mission is GREATER than that of Daniel." She had often tried to fathom the meaning of those words.⁵⁴ Lady Caithness also relates the vision of a friend whom she calls "M": a vision of angels and a system of colors. She says that this friend has often received manifestations from the archangel Michael, who is coming to destroy materialism.⁵⁵ In closing, she reveals that the six-pointed star, made from intersecting red and blue triangles, is the most fitting symbol of the New Dispensation and its heavenly marriage, and as such is the emblem of the "Star, or Christ Circle," to which certain chosen spiritualists have been called.⁵⁶

The friend "M" was Anna Kingsford, whose mystical name was Mary. (She believed that she had lived as Mary Magdalene.) Her and Maitland's illuminations had by now been gathered into a doctrinal work, *The Perfect Way*, which they just failed to get published before the end of the pivotal year. It came out early in 1882, again bringing the subject of reincarnation to the forefront of spiritualist debate. Kingsford had now clarified the issue by explaining the fourfold constitution of the human being, thus making it possible to argue more cogently about exactly what was supposed to reincarnate, or not. Lady Caithness was unambiguous in her praise of this book, "which embodies the latest, highest, and most important revelations given to humanity, constituting a new Gospel."⁵⁷ Maitland and Kingsford modified this claim, explaining that *The Perfect Way* was not supposed to supersede Christianity, but to rehabilitate and reinterpret it for the new age. It attempted to marry

science and faith; Buddhist philosophy with Christian love. The historical Jesus was an irrelevancy: rather, Christ is the "hidden man of the heart," continually born, crucified, resurrected, ascended, and glorified.⁵⁸ This annoyed some of the Christian spiritualists, in particular Dr. George Wyld and Mrs. Penny. They protested that they were not prisoners of a crude historicism, being fully in accord with the doctrine of the Christ within, but that this was not sufficient without a personal relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ.⁵⁹ Obviously this was a religious, not a philosophical matter, and as such unanswerable.

After 1881 had passed, Lady Caithness and her friends did not hesitate to assert that the world had in fact ended. Edward Maitland even published a book (which I have not seen): *How the World Came to an End in 1881* (1884). Lady Caithness promised that "as soon as the Heavenly Marriage is consummated, the Divine Child, or Son of God, may be expected to be born. In other words, the new order of Being, the Divine Humanity, or Manifestation of the sons and daughters of God, not as of one, but as of many, will be due; and this more perfect race is destined first to humanize, and finally to divinize the earth."⁶⁰ This obscure pronouncement belongs within the theory of universal progress, already mentioned as it appeared in *Old Truths in a New Light*. Lady Caithness believed that all creatures are on their way up the ladder of spiritualization, but that a part of the human constitution (the body) has fallen back to the animal level, in order to be able to exercise free will.⁶¹ The world that was ending was the material plane, to which the souls that were aware of their spir-

itual nature would now no longer be bound, with the results that her last words describe.

For all her admiration for Anna Kingsford, Lady Caithness was not exclusive in her devotion and patronage. For example, almost in the same breath as she praised *The Perfect Way*, she called another inspired writing, John Pulsford's *Morgenröthe*, "that most lovely, perfect, and holy of books."⁶² Most importantly, her energies were now directed increasingly towards the Theosophical Society, which had interested her for some time. H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott had been in India since 1879, and news of their work was filtering into Europe. It was known that they were now Buddhists, and that Olcott had written, with native approval, a *Buddhist Catechism*. Was Buddhism atheistic? Was it compatible with Christianity? With spiritualism? These, beside reincarnation, were the chief subjects of debate in the highbrow spiritualist press (which mainly means *Light*) during 1881 and 1882. But the greatest fuss was over the Mahatmas.

Theosophists had long known that the Society was overseen by advanced human beings, "the Brothers" or "the Masters," who, since the move to India, were said to be based in the Himalayas. In 1882 Lady Caithness urged Maitland and Kingsford to be open to the Theosophical Society and its orientalism, telling them that she believed in the Himalayan Brothers and that they should not ignore them.⁶³ Incredibly enough, a lightning campaign was mounted that resulted in Kingsford's election of President of the London Theosophical Society on 7 January 1883, with Maitland as co-Vice-President (with George Wyld). Kingsford wrote Lady Caithness on 8

June that she was changing the name to "the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society," that she wanted to make the Lodge really scientific, and to study especially the Western Catholic Church.⁶⁴

On 28 June 1883 Lady Caithness became President of a newly-founded "Société Théosophique d'Orient et d'Occident" in Paris. I have described elsewhere⁶⁵ her involvement in the complicated world of early French Theosophy, so therefore will not repeat any of that material here although it is essential to her story. On 15 March 1884 she received H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott at her house in Nice, the Palais Tiranty, where they stayed for two weeks, then arranged accommodation for them at 46, rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs in Paris.⁶⁶ If we discount Narad Mani's story of the 20,000 francs, this was the first meeting of Lady Caithness with H.P.B., and a thoroughly enjoyable episode in the latter's troubled life. Lady Caithness invited Russian émigrés to meet her friend, so that H.P.B. had her first opportunity in ten years to chat in her native tongue. The luxurious surroundings contrasted pleasantly with conditions in India and on the steamer. There is no doubt that the two aristocratic, cosmopolitan ladies liked each other. Here is H.P.B., writing to Sinnett about Lady Caithness (whom she knew as the Duchesse de Pomar):

The Duchess is not such a friend of Mrs. K[ingsford]. and M[aitland]. as you might think. She has unbosomed herself to Olcott and me. She is their *victim* rather. She has paid for publishing their *P. Way* given them her ideas, and they never so much as thanked her or acknowledged it. They are

ungrateful. Now she is *our*, not *their* friend.
But she seems in awe of the divine Anna.⁶⁷

While Kingsford and Maitland were involved in schisms within the London Lodge, ending with the foundation of their "Hermetic Society" on 9 May, H.P.B. was holding discussions and attending Lady Caithness's Société Théosophique d'Orient et d'Occident in Paris.⁶⁸ In the autumn of 1884 Lady Caithness went to England and attended several séances with William Eglinton, a medium who specialized in producing messages written on sealed slates.⁶⁹ Eglinton's mediumship seemed so unimpeachable, and the messages he produced so plausible, that he was used during this period as an authority on vexing questions, such as the status of the Theosophical Mahatmas.⁷⁰

Kingsford and Maitland had no high opinion of the latter. Our truth, Kingsford wrote to Lady Caithness on 12 May, is far in advance of H.P.B. and her gurus.⁷¹ As soon as she had attained the Presidency of the London Lodge, Kingsford had tried to deflect its interest from the Mahatmas and their spokesman, A. P. Sinnett. Now she renamed it the "Hermetic Lodge," which Lady Caithness joined;⁷² then, since no Theosophist was allowed to belong to more than one lodge, constituted it as an independent "Hermetic Society."

1884 was a year of crisis for the Theosophical Society, as is amply documented elsewhere. Lady Caithness resigned from it in September, but apparently more as a formality so that she could run her "Société Théosophique d'Orient et d'Occident" independently. She would be in and out of the Society again

within a year. True to the title of her group, she now wrote a two-part work called *Théosophie universelle*, the first part subtitled *La Théosophie Chrétienne*, the second *La Théosophie Bouddhiste*.⁷³ Here are some of the essential points from Part I:

The infallibility of the Roman Catholic Church assumes that the Pope is always in a certain state of consciousness that the Adepts tell us of. [20]

The Church is indispensable to counter worldliness and egotism; its mission is not finished yet, but it must be regenerated. [25]

The Jewish Messiah is the mystic and divine being represented by the Initiates of all nations. [29]

The historical Christ is the precursor of the mystic and esoteric Christ. For the universal Theosophist, Jesus is a Christ, whereas for the Christian Theosophist, he is the Christ. [30]

Hercules is the *spiritual* sun that accomplishes the twelve labors. [52]

The Sun, of which the visible sun is an emblem, sends an Avatar (Messenger, Savior) every 600 years. The third such since Christ is imminent. [55-56]

When the sun is in Taurus, all incarnations are thought of as incarnations of Buddha; when in Aries, all are thought incarnations of Cristna. [57]

Sir William Jones proved that Dionysus, Rama, and the zodiacal Ram are one person, and that the first Buddha was Woden, Bacchus, and Fo. [61]

The interior spiritual life is contained in the science of Astro-Masonry. Hercules' labors in the sky are what the spiritual soul in humanity must do and suffer. [167-168]

It is the same blend of esoteric Christianity—the realization of the Christ within—with the comparative mythologists of the Enlightenment (Dupuis, Higgins), as we have seen in *Old Truths in a New Light*. The second part, on Buddhism, credits Gautama with formulating the first general system of Theosophy, contemporaneously with the more limited, national teachers Lao Tse, Confucius, Zoroaster, Daniel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Habbakuk, Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Xenophanes. [3] Its goal, the same as that of Brahmanism, is the annihilation of the lower self. [14] "Nirvana is the manifestation of the absolute, the latent divine soul, which when manifested is known as the divine Spirit." [17] The rest of the short book is largely a summary in French of extracts from Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*.

At the end of 1886, Lady Caithness launched her own monthly journal, *L'Aurore* (the dawn).⁷⁴ In the second number, her son the Duc de Pomar contributed "La Philosophie Bouddhiste, réduite à sa plus simple expression."⁷⁵ Lady Caithness turned to a third type of theosophy, "La Théosophie Semitique."⁷⁶ Naturally she could not countenance the nationalistic god of the Jews, but that was merely their exoteric side. For the Jewish mystics, the Mosaic Law had a completely different, occult significance. Philo Judaeus, who knew this, taught a practically Christian doctrine and prepared the way for Christ.⁷⁷ No doubt there were conversations on this topic with Kingsford and Maitland, who visited Lady Caith-

ness in October 1886, and stayed at the Palais Tiranty for three days in the winter, on their way to Italy.⁷⁸ Two years before, the young scholar Samuel McGregor Mathers had dedicated to them his translation of Knorr von Rosenroth's *The Kabbalah Unveiled*. Lady Caithness, however, had other Israelite connections in mind. She had now become engaged in the "British Israel" movement, an extremely strong and widespread phenomenon of the period. This held that the British and the Anglo-Americans were the Lost Tribes of Israel, and that through these peoples Israel had at last fulfilled its mission of bringing the Gospel to the Gentiles.⁷⁹

Another major book, over 500 pages in length, appeared early in 1887: *The Mystery of the Ages*.⁸⁰ It was a plea for a non-sectarian "occult Theo-philosophy." Lady Caithness says that although *theo-sophia* may have become rather too exclusively identified with the Theosophical Society, the Society makes no exclusive claim to it: there are theosophists worldwide, in all religions (xiii). She advises the perusal, if not the study, of the following: Hermes Trismegistus, Iamblichus *On the Mysteries*, the *Tao-te-King*, Upanishads, *Bhagavad-Gītā*, *Lotus of the True Law*, *Dhammapada*, *Zend Avesta*, Rumi's *Mesnevi* (but not the Koran), Plutarch, Thomas Taylor's translations, material in *The Platonist*, Philo, the Kabbalah, the Apocrypha, Origen, Saint Victor, the Gnostics, Alchemists, and Rosicrucians (21-22). Tribute is paid to the Mahatmas of Tibet, "regarded as incomparably the highest of such associations [of adepts]" (185), and the Theosophical doctrine of Rounds and Races is summarized from Sinnett. There is a lot about

the 600-year Naronic Cycle and its avatars, derived from Godfrey Higgins; on Dupuis ("a treasure to the true Theosophist" [431]) and his successors, with their astral and solar interpretation of religion. *The Perfect Way* is praised. There is not a bad word for anyone, not even the Church, still necessary as "God's window," though "obscured by the dust of ages and hung over with spiders' webs" (349). The one topic conspicuously absent is reincarnation. Probably Lady Caithness did not want to deter the large class of potential readers who would have been offended by it.

I have not seen Lady Caithness's third large book, *The Secret of the New Testament* (1890). By her own account, it proved that the Second Coming expected by the disciples had occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem, and the final judgment of the Jewish Dispensation "last year" (that is, 1894).

A certain "Mariolatry" now emerges in Lady Caithness's work, which would mark her last years, not perhaps to the betterment of her reputation. The origins are as follows. A few days after her second marriage, she went to a castle [Holyrood House] that had formerly belonged to Mary, Queen of Scots. She felt a presence there, and saw the Queen pass over the tombs of the Caithness family. On another occasion, the ghost of the Queen appeared at the foot of her bed and told her to go to her husband's room, where she found that a fire was starting. There were several more apparitions.⁸¹ Lady Caithness's own account appeared in a booklet, *A Midnight Visit to Holyrood* (1880?), which I also have not seen. Emma Hardinge Britten gave an extract from it in *Nineteenth Century Miracles*,⁸² from which

it appears that only some years later did Mary Queen of Scots begin regular communications, mostly at midnight or outdoors in the Highlands.

The nature of Lady Caithness's relationship to "Marie" was best explained in an interview she gave to *Light* in her last year. "Our life here," she said, "is but one bud of a series put forth in orderly succession by a permanent spiritual parent tree." She and Mary, Queen of Scots are two buds, breaking into leaf and flowering at different seasons, but owning the same parental stem. They are two of a series of successive form manifestations of the same Higher Self. This does not mean that Lady Caithness is a reincarnation of the Queen; "she and I, though exceedingly close in affinity, are separate individualities, and I gratefully acknowledge her inspiration and unceasing spiritual care."⁸³

L'Aurore carried as a regular feature revelations signed "Marie" and attributed to this guide. The skeptical writer of the obituary in *Light* said that Lady Caithness "used to write for hours in a clear plain business-like hand, betraying neither neurosis nor imagination, commissions from Queen Mary of Scotland," and that she had a whole bookcase full of these writings.⁸⁴ One has noticed a certain recurrence of themes in Lady Caithness's own writings. Those of "Marie" treat many of the same themes in a more prolix fashion. But "Marie" was a still more complex character. In Lady Caithness's feminist theology, Man (symbolized in the Bible as Adam) fell through the weakness of his human soul (Eve), but was saved through the power of his Divine Soul (Mary). This Divine Soul is a female principle;

"Man's better half is Woman; this is not only a fact, as exoterically understood, but is also the great *esoteric* truth."⁸⁵ Thus the Mary of the New Testament is rightly depicted as the "Mother of God"—the God within Man.⁸⁶ Once again, this refers to the "quadruple constitution of man," and to the idea that a part of us has fallen into an inappropriately materialized state, from which in this New Age it is being retrieved.

In 1891, Lady Caithness ordered from the sculptor Ringhel a statue of Mary, Queen of Scots, and offered it to the city of Paris for erection in one of the public squares. But it was refused, except for display in a museum. Lady Caithness withdrew the offer and gave the statue to Edinburgh.⁸⁷ Is it there? Or is it the statue shown in a picture of "Holyrood," the Scottish-style séance room in Lady Caithness's last Paris residence, a magnificent house on the Avenue de Wagram?⁸⁸

Not long after her return from Italy, Anna Kingsford died of tuberculosis on 22 February 1888, after declaring that she didn't care if Jesus Christ ever existed: "I die a Hermetist, believing in the Spiritual Gods . . . the Evolution of the Soul . . . the brotherhood of all creatures."⁸⁹ While they would have agreed to this, neither H.P.B. nor Emma Hardinge Britten had time for the Kingsford-Maitland duo. H.P.B. loathed Kingsford, calling her "the divine whistle-breeches," while Emma Harding Britten considered *The Perfect Way* "trash."⁹⁰ Part of Emma's difficulty was that she never could come to terms with reincarnation. Her distaste for the physical world was so great that the idea of returning to a fleshly body utterly repulsed her. After their early

days in New York, there was absolutely no love lost between her and H.P.B., either.

But she remained loyal to Lady Caithness, as well she might to one who welcomed her and her husband on almost annual visits to her houses in Paris and Nice.

H.P.B. also loved Lady Caithness. She wrote, at the end of a tirade against Kingsford, "Oh how inexpressibly higher than her stands in her intuitional knowledge, kindness, and modesty my dear Lady Caithness."⁹¹ And again, after the S.P.R. report, "the poor Duchess has turned out a grand and really *noble* soul with all her little flapdoodles of Mary Queen of Scots and so on. She sticks to me so far and defends me like a lioness."⁹² Countess Wachtmeister wrote to Sinnett on 28 December 1885:

A letter came yesterday from Lady Caithness, kind, warm and loving, it did the Old Lady's heart good and gave it a little cheerful spark of warmth for a few minutes. You will be amused to hear that Lady C. was enchanted with Mr. Sinnett's paper on "the higher life" particularly as it was *Marie Stuart* who inspired him to write it. Fancy Mr. Sinnett becoming a medium!!! I heard in a round about way the other day (not through Theosophists) that Lady Caithness had been holding seances in Nice, and that the King of Spain came to her and said that he was very happy now, because where he now is there are *no women* . . .⁹³

It is fortunate that Lady Caithness never heard of this affectionate but realistic appraisal, for Marie was her one sensitive point. Near the end of her life, she told an interviewer that:

Mr. Maitland, in calling Marie an astral spirit as he did in a letter to me, said a really unkind thing. I was very friendly both with

Mr. Maitland and Mrs. Kingsford, and for some weeks they were my guests whilst the "Perfect Way" was being written; in fact, not only was much of it penned in my house, but the first edition of the book was printed and published entirely at my expense, as I recognized the great value of the work, and felt that for a few hundred pounds it ought not to be lost to the world . . . [But later] I innocently made some unlucky comparison in a letter between Mrs. Kingsford and Mary, Queen of Scots. Mr. Maitland was furious, and rated me soundly for 'daring,' as he put it, to speak of his Anna, an exalted angel of the highest sphere, in the same breath as *my* Marie, saying it would take many ages for an astral like Mary Stuart to reach the altitude of Anna Kingsford.⁹⁴

Edward Maitland was quick to deny this imputation of ingratitude, saying that it was a misunderstanding of a mere difference of opinion.⁹⁵

In 1893, Lady Caithness published a further work on the apocalyptic theme, *L'Ouverture des Sceaux*,⁹⁶ of which the following extracts give a flavor:

The time has come to open the secrets hidden since the beginning of the world, to form a ladder from earth to heaven (1).

The Bible is a strictly mathematical and symbolic book, teaching the stages of the soul's growth through allegorical personalities (5).

A chapter on the Higher Self was inspired by a long conversation with A. P. Sinnett on the occasion of Victor Hugo's funeral (31 May 1885). Her own higher self is Marie Stuart, whose communications are the basis of her spiritual education. Marie has told her that reincarnation is necessary at the earlier stages of human development.(111-112)

Later, when contact with the higher self is achieved, there is no further need for death or earthly life (133).

The "twin souls" theory of the spiritualists and the "guardian angel" belief are imperfect versions of this doctrine of the higher self (130).

The End of the Age, which some date to the end of the nineteenth century, others to 1990, may have already arrived: it is marked by the revelation of the mystery of the Bible, and that is done (178).

The Perfect Way, published in French⁹⁷ and English with our support, is the religion of the new dispensation (184).

As for astral symbolism, it is not enough to reduce religion to the zodiac: the symbols are there in the heavens because they are eternal truths (206).

Jesus is neither a God nor an ordinary man, but the type of our future (224).

In her interview of 1895 Lady Caithness would have more to say about this talk with Sinnett and its consequences:

[Lady C.] Do you know, I was the originator of the idea of the Higher Self, which is one of the corner stones of the Theosophists' doctrine?

[Interviewer] Mr. Sinnett, I thought, claimed the credit for that?

[Lady C.] O, no, he has not hesitated to admit his indebtedness to me for the suggestion. On the occasion of Victor Hugo's funeral, I had a long conversation with him on the subject, and told him my ideas of the rela-

tionship subsisting between me and, as I always consider her, my soul-mother, Marie Queen of Scots. Subsequently, he sent me a copy of the Seventh Transaction of the London Lodge, which embodied, as he said in a letter accompanying the pamphlet, 'an important extension of our occult knowledge concerning the evolution of the soul. It was,' he went on, 'from the point of departure of my conversation with you that my mind was started on the train of thought now worked out in more detail, and confirmed as sound by Madame Blavatsky. Your rose tree is the plant from which my Higher Self has been developed.'

She must also have taken satisfaction that, with the publication of the Mahatmas' letters to Sinnett, the Theosophical Society was obliged to reverse its former position and to embrace the reincarnation theory that she had held all along. No wonder that she felt a personal mission with regard to the Society, as we can see from the events that followed on H.P.B.'s death on 8 May 1891. Lady Caithness heard about it from her spirit guide the day before the papers announced it. H.P.B. came to her a few hours after death to ask that her body not be cremated as directed in her Will, because her ego was not completely disengaged from matter. She had seen the error she had fallen into in recommending cremation, and now had a horror of the procedure because it would cause the loss of the personality. Lady Caithness wrote immediately to the Theosophical Society in London, but it was too late: the cremation took place on 11 May. There was another message, too sad and private to be published. H.P.B. said that she had completely retracted some of the teachings with regard to

spiritualist phenomena. She was not a phantom, but her real ego. Now she regretted her error in not realizing that we can communicate with the real spirits of our friends.⁹⁸ Franz Hartmann wrote a note on this in the next number of *L'Aurore*.⁹⁹ He said that it confirmed H.P.B.'s teachings: that we all have to die, all but our spiritual consciousness known in Theosophy as manas illuminated by buddhi. H.P.B.'s personality was no exception to the general rule, but her lower mind could not tell whether doctrines are true or false, once separated from the higher ego. Lady Caithness added a note to this perceptive comment, saying that it would be best to defer cremation until decomposition begins.

A codicil to the story appeared in *Le Lotus Bleu*, the organ of the Société Théosophique. Arthur Arnould, the president, reported a rumor that the Duchesse de Pomar had seen H.P.B.'s specter, which asked her to take over H.P.B.'s affairs. Arnould emphasized that these affairs were confided in Olcott for Asia, W. Q. Judge for America, and Annie Besant for Europe, while in Paris, he alone, as President of the French Branch, was authorized to speak for the Société Théosophique, the *only* organ of the T.S. in France.¹⁰⁰ There is no other evidence that Lady Caithness ever wanted to take over the Theosophical Society.

Lady Caithness managed her own fortune and organized the large staff of her houses without the aid of a housekeeper. Her success may be measured by the fact that in 25 years she did not dismiss a single servant.¹⁰¹ Her magnificent house on the Avenue de Wagram served her purposes admirably, which were to make spiritualism, Theosophy, and esoteric

Christianity acceptable to people of influence. At the core of her activity was the exclusive Cercle de l'Etoile, whose director was Mary, Queen of Scots. We know nothing of its membership or activity. In the second place, there were weekly séances in her "Holyrood" room. It is curious that, for all her contact with Mary Stuart, Lady Caithness relied to the end on hired mediums: She complained to the *Light* interviewer that developed mediums were very rare in France, but that she had one old lady who was a very good rapping medium, and a young girl who was a writing medium in languages unknown to her. We work with both simultaneously, she added. There was also Georgina Weldon, an excellent medium who would be at the next meeting.¹⁰² Weldon had been the mistress of the composer Charles Gounod; after his death she published a volume of sentimental poems dictated by his spirit, which caused hilarity among his musical friends. The researches conducted through Lady Caithness's writing mediums, perhaps including Weldon, resulted in a small book on the after-death state, *Je me suis éveillé* (1895).¹⁰³

At the next level of publicity, Lady Caithness arranged larger public forums for important visiting figures. Emma Hardinge Britten gave several addresses at the Avenue de Wagram, displaying her specialty, which was to answer questions on any subject, to a rapturous audience. On 13 June 1894 Lady Caithness hired a special venue for Annie Besant, the new President of the Theosophical Society, to address 900 people.¹⁰⁴ Lastly, her house possessed one of the best music-rooms in Paris, where she gave operas with full orches-

tra and Wednesday receptions for hundreds of people,¹⁰⁵ thus keeping up with the *beau monde* that was her natural habitat.

The obituary in *Light* also mentions Georgina Weldon, saying that she arranged an exhibition in "Holyrood" of relics of Louis XVII. This introduces the last passion of Lady Caithness: Karl Wilhelm Naundorff (died 1845), who claimed to be the son of Louis XVI of France, hence heir to the French throne. (In official history, Louis XVII died as a boy of ten in the Temple prison, to be eventually succeeded by his uncle as Louis XVIII.) Coming to France in 1833, Naundorff convinced many courtiers that he was in fact the lost Dauphin, but in 1836 he was expelled from the country. There are still "Naundorffistes" in France who believe that he was what he claimed to be.

The catalyst for Lady Caithness's interest in this figure may have been the letter to *Light* from a certain "TW," which stated that the founder of modern spiritualism was not Kardec but Louis XVII.¹⁰⁶ After the failure of his claim, Naundorff retired to Holland and wrote books following spirit guides, giving out the same doctrines as Kardec would twenty years later: *Doctrine céleste de N.S. Jésus Christ* (1839), *Partie préliminaire de la doctrine céleste* (1839), *Révélations sur les Erreurs de l'Ancien Testament* (1840), and *Solomon le Sage* (1841). These, according to TW, taught the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, reincarnation, final restitution for all men, and the immortality of the soul. It was not surprising, then, that Lady Caithness published a new edition of the second of these books,¹⁰⁷ which does indeed contain these ideas in one form or another along with Naundorff's own pathetic story.

It was said that among the brilliant crowd at the Avenue de Wagram one would meet cardinals “who forgave Lady Caithness her heresies.”¹⁰⁸ If her beliefs were heresy, they did not worry the Church. Her funeral was held in the church of Saint François de Sales, after which she was to be buried in Scotland. The news appalled Emma Hardinge Britten, who wrote to *Light* that Christian burial would have been abhorrent to her friend, whose writings and conversation (said Emma) had not a shadow of Catholicism about them: only spiritualism, spiced with a certain flavor of Theosophic doctrine.¹⁰⁹ But another correspondent, William R. Tomlinson, M.A., disagreed. Lady Caithness, he wrote, was Christian to the bottom of her being, and would have had no objection whatever to Christian burial, having never left the Catholic Church. He cites *Le Secret du Nouveau Testament*, where she writes on the Christian religion as founded on the Jewish Bible, having divine origin and supreme sanction; there is also a chapter in that book on the Divine Feminine, to which the rites of the Roman Church are especially adapted.¹¹⁰

This is a measure of the way in which Lady Caithness was able to be all things to almost all people. It is too soon, at this point of my research, to make a proper summation of her life's work, but the following points can be made. First, there is the obvious factor of the wealth that came to her from her father and two husbands. Every spiritual movement seems to need one or more wealthy supporters—and they are usually women—if it is to make any impact in the world. Lady Caithness must have supported people and publications

in ways we know nothing of. A few mentions in journals show that she could always be relied on for a generous subscription. Among the books which she paid to publish, *The Perfect Way* is probably the most important. Her journal, *L'Aurore*, acted as a “shop-front” in Paris for a broadly based movement of spiritual aspiration, not bound to Theosophy (like *Le Lotus Bleu*) nor to Christian Socialism (like *L'Etoile*). Her aristocratic connections helped to make this movement, and its more sectarian offshoots, acceptable to people of influence in the social, political, scientific, and academic worlds—unlike the “New Age” movement today, which has very little participation from those strata of society.

As for her philosophy, she was obviously ahead of her time in embracing the theory or doctrine of reincarnation, which became a pillar of the Theosophical Society's teaching. In the twentieth century, probably due to increased familiarity with Oriental philosophy, belief in reincarnation, even among Christians, is more widespread than it has ever been in the West. Since the whole doctrine hinges on exactly *what* is supposed to reincarnate, Lady Caithness's contribution to the analysis of the human being, seen as a multiple entity, should be tabulated alongside those of her contemporaries. Most obviously, she believed in a fourfold being, whereas later Theosophy had a sevenfold one. How do these correlate?

Regarding Christianity, Lady Caithness can be seen as a member of two movements: first, the skeptical and humanist Enlightenment of Dupuis and Drummond, which attacked Christian fundamentalism and exclusivity by showing the common ground of its myths with

those of other religions; second, the Christian theosophy of Jacob Boehme's followers, for which the important thing was the meeting with Christ in the heart. Neither movement had anything to offer the established churches. Their reading of the Bible was far too subtle and symbolic to please the Protestants, while neither movement had any need for ecclesiastical machinery. The Catholic Church, however, has always had to put up with independent-minded mystics, and its sacraments and ceremonies interpreted symbolically and even magically, could be made to serve as a support for the theosophic path. That is why Theosophists and occultists, if they are church people, tend towards Catholicism or High-Church Anglicanism. There was no discord between Lady Caithness's Theosophy and her Catholicism, so long as no one started asking awkward questions.

Lady Caithness' concern with apocalyptic happenings might seem more appropriate in our time than in the 1880s. There is material for an article on all the esotericists and prophets who regarded 1881 as a crucial date; Lady Caithness was only the most outspoken of them. It would be worthwhile studying their sources, especially Trithemius's system of world-periods and their angelic rulerships and Godfrey Higgins's explanations of the Naronic Cycle, perhaps as part of a larger study of esoteric theories concerning historical cycles.

Lastly, I must say that Lady Caithness is one of the most likable people I have met in my study of Theosophy. Even what H.P.B. called her "little flapdoodles about Mary Queen of Scots" are charming and eccentric, rather than grimly fanatical like the obsessions of so many

of her contemporaries. She was generous with her purse, but also with her mind, always keen to include and broaden, rather than to shut out and narrow her range of sympathies. Of all the "Great White Sisterhood"—those remarkable women of the later nineteenth century—she was probably the nicest one to know.

* * * * *

Notes

¹ *The London Daily Chronicle*, 3 November 1895, cited in *Light* 15 (16 November 1895): 556.

² French sources customarily spell the name "Pomár." The accent is not present in the Spanish name.

³ Obituary of the Countess of Caithness, *Light* 15 (9 November 1895): 545.

⁴ Note, with portrait, in *Light* 14 (21 April 1894): 187.

⁵ *Report on Spiritualism of the Committee of the London Dialectical Society, together with the evidence, oral and written, and a selection from the correspondence*. London: Longman's, 1871. The Condesa's letter is on pages 338-49.

⁶ Countess of Caithness, "M. Buguet's Spirit Photographs." *The Spiritualist* 5 (24 July 1874): 43.

⁷ *Dictionary of National Biography* XVIII, 298-99.

⁸ "M. Buguet's Spirit Photographs."

⁹ Countess of Caithness, *Old Truths in a New Light* (London: Trübner, 1976), 117, 131.

¹⁰ *Old Truths*, 285-95.

¹¹ *Old Truths*, 285

¹² *The Countess of Caithness, Old Truths in a New Light* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1876), 273.

¹³ E. H. Britten, "The Late Duchesse de Pomar." *Light* 15 (16 November 1895): 556-57.

¹⁴ *The Spiritualist* 4 (June 1874): 290-94.

¹⁵ Anna Blackwell's communication to the London Dialectical Society is one of the longest: see the *Report on Spiritualism*, 284-337.

¹⁶ Report on the conference, *The Spiritualist* 5 (28 August 1874): 100-103. This also mentions the Count de Pomar's novel.

¹⁷ *The Spiritualist* 5 (25 September 1874): 153.

¹⁸ *The Spiritualist* 6 (18 June 1875): 300.

¹⁹ *The Spiritualist* 7 (1 October 1875): 162.

²⁰ *Old Truths*, 293, mentions "our own park in Hertfordshire."

²¹ *Old Truths*, 161.

²² *Old Truths*, 167-71.

²³ See *Modern American Spiritualism* (New York, 1870), 309.

²⁴ *Old Truths*, 280-84. The account first appeared in *The Banner of Light*, Boston, 8 October 1875.

²⁵ See *The Theosophical Enlightenment*, 202-204.

²⁶ See *The Theosophical Enlightenment*, 303-304.

²⁷ I cite the 2nd ed., London: Wallace, 1888.

²⁸ *Serious Letters*, 131ff.

²⁹ Narad Mani, "Nouvelle expérience de magie hindoue." *La France Antimaçonnique* 42 (19 October 1911): 468-69.

³⁰ Henry S. Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*, First Series, 2nd ed.

(Adyar: TPH, 1941), 440.

³¹ J. Peebles, "A Seance on the Great Pyramid." *The Spiritualist* 4 (13 February 1874): 77-78, reprinted from *The Banner of Light*, reports favorably on Blavatsky's société spirite in Cairo.

³² H. P. Blavatsky, "Mediumship of the Eddy Brothers." *The Spiritualist* 5 (25 December 1874): 306, reprinted from *The New York Graphic*.

³³ Obituary by D. A. Courmes in *Le Lotus Bleu*, 27 December 1895: 477. See J. Godwin, *The Beginnings of Theosophy in France* (London: Theosophical History Centre, 1989), 7.

³⁴ E. Maitland, Anna Kingsford. *Her Life, Letters, Diary and Work*, 2nd ed. (London: Watkins, 1913), I, 253.

³⁵ *Anna Kingsford*, I, 276.

³⁶ *Anna Kingsford*, I, 278-79.

³⁷ *Anna Kingsford*, I, 314.

³⁸ *Anna Kingsford*, I, 308.

³⁹ *Anna Kingsford*, I, 324, 334, 335.

⁴⁰ *Anna Kingsford*, I, 368.

⁴¹ *Anna Kingsford*, I, 369-70.

⁴² P. Smith, *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid* (London: Isbister, 1880), 546-51.

⁴³ *Anna Kingsford*, I, 431.

⁴⁴ *Anna Kingsford*, I, 360.

⁴⁵ Editorial in *Light* 1 (15 January 1881): 9.

⁴⁶ *Light* 1 (19 November 1881): 371.

⁴⁷ *Light* 1 (24 December 1881): 411.

⁴⁸ Countess of Caithness, "The Fourfold Constitution.

Modes of Divine 'Love and Wisdom.'" *The Medium and Daybreak*, 9 December 1881. Reprinted London: J. Burns, n.d. I cite the pagination of the reprint.

⁴⁹ "Fourfold Constitution": 18-19.

⁵⁰ "Fourfold Constitution": 19.

⁵¹ Countess of Caithness, "1881===1882." *The Medium and Daybreak*, 31 December 1881, 6 January 1882. Reprinted London: J. Burns, n.d. I cite the pagination of the reprint.

⁵² "1881===1882": 8.

⁵³ "1881===1882": 14.

⁵⁴ "1881===1882": 17-19.

⁵⁵ "1881===1882": 21-22.

⁵⁶ "1881===1882": 27-28.

⁵⁷ Marie Caithness, letter in *Light* 2 (19 August 1882): 378.

⁵⁸ "The Writers of the Perfect Way answer their critics." *Light* 2 (23 September 1882): 425.

⁵⁹ George Wyld, "The (Most) Perfect Way," *Light* 2 (14 October 1882): 459-60; Letter from Mrs. Penny, answering Lady Caithness, in *Light* 2 (28 October 1882): 478.

⁶⁰ Letter in *Light* 2 (7 October 1882): 443-44.

⁶¹ *Old Truths*, 277, with diagram.

⁶² Countess of Caithness, letter in *Light* 2 (30 September 1882): 435.

⁶³ *Anna Kingsford*, II, 80.

⁶⁴ *Anna Kingsford*, II, 119.

⁶⁵ *The Beginnings of Theosophy in France*.

⁶⁶ *H. P. Blavatsky: Collected Writings* 6, 2nd ed. (Wheaton: T.P.H., 1975), xxvii.

⁶⁷ *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett* (New York: Frederick Stokes, n.d.), 179. Letter LXXVI, 2 February 1886.

⁶⁸ *BCW* VI, xxix-xxx.

⁶⁹ *Anna Kingsford* II, 216; Lady Caithness, letter to *Light* 6 (16 October 1886): 496, on several séances attended with Hon. Mrs Spencer Cooper.

⁷⁰ See, for example, Wyld's letter in *Light* 4 (24 May 1884): 204-205.

⁷¹ *Anna Kingsford*, II, 187.

⁷² Circular of the "New Hermetic Lodge" printed in *Light* 4 (19 April 1884): 153.

⁷³ Published Paris: Carré/Brussels: Manceaux, 1886.

⁷⁴ There were printer's errors in the numbering of the volumes (two per year). Tome I should be the first seven numbers from December 1886 through June 1887, Tome II July through December 1887, etc.

⁷⁵ *L'Aurore* 1 (1887): 59ff.

⁷⁶ *L'Aurore* 1 (1887): 149ff.

⁷⁷ *L'Aurore* 2 (1887): 388.

⁷⁸ *Anna Kingsford*, II, 283, 305.

⁷⁹ In *L'Aurore* 2 (1887): 636, Lady Caithness credits the British Navy with this task.

⁸⁰ Marie, Countess of Caithness, Duchesse de Pomar, *The Mystery of the Ages, contained in the Secret Doctrine of all Religions*. "Second edition," published London: Wallace, for the Authoress, 1887.

⁸¹ Summarized from *Light* 11 (29 August 1891): 419.

⁸² E. Hardinge Britten, *Nineteenth Century Miracles* (New York: W. Britten, 1884), 205-206, with portrait opp. 206.

⁸³ "Interview with the Duchesse de Pomar, by our special

representative." *Light* 15 (19 January 1895): 31-32, 38. Here: 31-32.

⁸⁴ Obituary of the Countess of Caithness. *Light* 15 (9 November 1895): 545.

⁸⁵ *The Mystery of the Ages*, 34.

⁸⁶ *L'Aurore* 1 (1887): 213.

⁸⁷ *Light* 11 (29 August 1891): 419.

⁸⁸ "The Vice-Regent of Mary, Queen of Scots. The Death of the Duchesse of Pomar," *Borderland* 3 (1896): 81-83.

⁸⁹ *Anna Kingsford*, II, 328.

⁹⁰ Reply to David Lund. *Two Worlds* 4 (20 November 1891): 633-34.

⁹¹ *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky*, 82. Letter XXXIV to A. P. Sinnett, 21 March 1884.

⁹² *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky*, 211. Letter XCI, 20 May 1886.

⁹³ *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky*, 267-268. Letter CXXIII.

⁹⁴ *Light* 15 (19 January 1895): 32.

⁹⁵ *Light* 15 (26 January 1895): 38-39.

⁹⁶ Lady Caithness, Duchesse de Pomar. *L'Ouverture des Sceaux*. Paris: Nouvelle Revue, 1892.

⁹⁷ It appeared in parts in *L'Aurore*, 1886-1889.

⁹⁸ "Mort de Mme. Blavatsky." *L'Aurore* 9 (May 1891): 210-11.

⁹⁹ *L'Aurore* 9 (June 1891): 235-40.

¹⁰⁰ Letter from Arthur Arnould. *Le Lotus Bleu* 5 (27 April 1894): 96, reprinting letter of 6 April to *L'Eclair*.

¹⁰¹ Obituary in *Light* 15 (9 November 1895): 545.

¹⁰² *Light* 15 (19 January 1895): 31.

¹⁰³ "Je me suis éveillé." *Conditions de la vie de l'autre coté communiqué par écriture automatique*. Ed. par la Duchesse de Pomar. Paris: L'Aurore, 1895.

¹⁰⁴ *Le Lotus Bleu* 5 (July 1894).

¹⁰⁵ *Light* 14 (21 April 1894): 187.

¹⁰⁶ *Light* 9 (1889): 518-19.

¹⁰⁷ *Partie préliminaire de la doctrine céleste de NSJC, publiée en 1839 par le fils de Louis XVI, Charles-Louis duc de Normandie*. Editée 1894 par la Duchesse de Pomar. Paris: L'Aurore du jour nouveau, 1894.

¹⁰⁸ Obituary in *Light* 15 (9 November 1895): 545.

¹⁰⁹ E. H. Britten, "The Late Duchesse de Pomar." *Light* 15 (16 November 1895): 556-57.

¹¹⁰ W.R. Tomlinson, Letter to *Light* 15 (14 December 1895): 607.

Communication from Joscelyn Godwin

Joscelyn Godwin wishes to make three corrections to his paper on "Lady Caithness and Her Contribution to Theosophy," which appeared in the last issue. They have been kindly pointed out to him by Leslie Price.

Page 131: *The Spiritualist* was not entirely first with the news of HPB: *The Spiritual Magazine* carried a note about her in Cairo in 1872, as Mr. Price mentioned in *Madame Blavatsky Unveiled*?

Page 133: *The Medium and Daybreak* was not the magazine of Emma Hardinge Britten, but of James Burns.

Page 142: Annie Besant was not president of the Theosophical Society in 1894. H.S. Olcott remained in that capacity until 1907, after which Mrs. Besant became president.

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Theosophical History Website

The *Theosophical History* web site has a new address: <http://www.theohistory.org>. Because of various problems with the old addresses, a change in both address and servers was necessary. It is now hoped that the web site will remain at this address for the foreseeable future. One innovation that the webmaster, Robert Hütwohl, and I are examining is to offer an electronic version of *Theo-*

sophical History. This has arisen because of problems in mail delivery in a few countries. If any reader has such problems, I would be prepared to e-mail the issue in addition to the regular mailing. This would also apply to subscribers who may be in transit or on vacation. Eventually, an electronic version will be placed on the web site for any subscriber who wishes only to receive the electronic version, which would be offered at a reduced rate. I would welcome your comments and suggestions concerning such an arrangement.

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A New Theosophical History Occasional Paper: *The Unseen Worlds of Emma Hardinge Britten: Some Chapters in the History of Western Occultism*

One of the lesser known and ignored founders of the Theosophical Society and one of the prominent figures in Spiritualism, Emma Hardinge Britten (1823-1899) is the subject of a major study by Robert Mathiesen, Professor of Slavic Languages at Brown University in Rhode Island (USA). Dr. Mathiesen writes:

Emma Hardinge Britten (1823-1899) is, for most people, a forgotten figure, who seems to merit no more than a footnote in the separate histories of Spiritualism, the Theosophical Society and nineteenth-century occultism. Only recently, due largely to Joscelyn Godwin and John Patrick Deveney, has her historical importance begun to be reassessed. The present monograph is meant to broaden and deepen