

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATSOEVER DOTHTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.'—Paul.

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### NOTES BY THE WAY.

Psychology is to many a dry study, but, as a branch of philosophy, its bearings upon some of the problems of psychic research cannot safely be ignored by serious students of Spiritualism. It is true that the theories of the one occasionally come into conflict with the facts of the other, but they may and frequently are mutually helpful. Professor Wilhelm Wundt's 'Introduction to Psychology' (George Allen and Co., 3s. 6d.) may be commended as a valuable work for the beginner, its author being a distinguished authority on the subject. The popularity of the book in Germany is said to be phenomenal, and its translation into English (by Mr. Rudolf Pinter) leaves little to be desired. The chapter on 'The Laws of Psychical Life' is of especial interest. Professor Wundt dismisses the conclusions of that materialistic psychology which denies the existence of special laws for our psychical life solely on the ground that physical law is merely a psychological reflex of physical combinations representing sensations joined with certain cerebral processes. He pleads for the actuality of mind, the recognition of which is essential to a coherent idea of the phenomena of life physical and psychical. He does not accept the old vitalistic idea of soul by reason of the fact that—

it tries to explain the unity of life only by postulating an all-embracing idea of purpose or use in place of a causal explanation of phenomena such as is now demanded.

The book marks a distinct advance in psychology of the academic type.

'The Gates of Knowledge,' by Rudolf Steiner (Theosophical Publishing Society, 3s. 6d. net.) is a sequel to 'The Way of Initiation' by the same author. The purpose of the book is to serve as a guide to those who essay the 'Path of the Higher Knowledge,' and it lacks nothing in the way of clearness of thought and expression. For these qualities some acknowledgment is due to the editor and translator, Mr. Max Gysi, who has performed his work excellently in every respect. The author divides the Path of Knowledge into four preliminary stages: (1) Material Knowledge; (2) Imaginative Knowledge; (3) Inspirational Knowledge, called also Knowledge of the Will; (4) Intuitive Knowledge; and certainly the grades follow each other logically enough, and the nature of each is described with the skill of the analytical thinker. Many of the statements made concerning the nature of the higher planes of consciousness to be passed by the seeker after occult knowledge on Theosophical lines can, of course, only be taken on trust by those who are not in a position to check

them. But the author writes with an air of assurance. Thus, concerning genius, we are told:—

Of course, externally many a genius appears to have been born suddenly 'out of nowhere' in some mysterious way; but it only appears so on account of materialistic superstition; the occult scientist knows that the condition of genius which arises in a man's life as if out of nothing is simply the result of his training on inspirational lines during a former life on earth.

The matter to us is not so easy of solution. In fact, Dr. Steiner's explanation appears to savour of that materialism which he contemns. Genius, to our thinking, is something abnormal and not altogether desirable in the face of the ideal of an all-round development of individual life. The potencies of the invisible world acting on receptive minds appear to us quite capable of explaining the phenomena of genius and other examples of highly-developed faculty either apparently inborn or appearing suddenly in a given life. Sir William Barrett has recorded many instances of consummate skill in art exhibited sometimes late in life by persons with no artistic gifts, and we have seen no reason to fall back on the theory of antecedent lives to explain such cases. We are, however, in full agreement with the author where he says:—

Intuition in occult science is nothing vague or uncertain, but a lofty method of cognition, full of the most luminous clearness and indubitable certainty.

Assuredly intuition has nothing to do with what often receives that name in popular speech. On the whole we found the work thoughtful and informing, and to Theosophical students it should prove a helpful study. As we have shown, we do not accept all its conclusions, but there are many paths to the great Goal.

The life and character of Shakespeare are rapidly becoming what it is fashionable to term a 'legend.' We know so little of the great dramatist that the subject affords almost unlimited scope for theory and speculation on the part of persons who seem to suffer from a complete privation of the sense of humour. A perfect tissue of fancies has been woven around the plays, and we learn from some authorities that they are only explicable on an occult basis. Now it is not inconceivable that the genius which produced such monumental work may have come into unusually close relations with the inner side of life; but genius in itself is supernormal, and attempts to explain it in terms of psychical phenomena show, to our thinking, a lack of imagination on the part of the theorists. The powers of the embodied soul are not so easily gauged that it should be necessary to call in the machinery of occult forces to explain them when expressing themselves at the highest. It is notorious that Shakespeare with all his powers threw very little light on the problems of the future life—a fact not without significance.

We have been led into these reflections by the perusal of an article in 'The Co-Mason' for July, entitled 'Was Shakespeare an Aquarian?' The writer (Esther Wood) enters into an interesting speculation concerning the

astrological influences which presided over the birth of the Bard, and argues that he was born under the sign Aquarius, which we believe Astrology places under the rule of 'the melancholy planet' Saturn. Astrology aside, however, we were impressed by the acceptance on the part of the writer of the article of the idea that Shakespeare *was* Shakespeare and not one of the many disguises of Lord Verulam—a notable fact in any disquisition on Shakespeare's works from the occult standpoint. To our thinking that very impersonalness—the utter absence of any instinct of self-revelation—which makes the life of the poet so great a mystery—was one of the main causes of the greatness of his work. The personal note is generally a small one. The heights are never reached by self-absorption. Shakespeare was sublimely indifferent to the claims of a curiosity which was concerned with such matters as where he lived, how he wrote, his political and religious faith, and his favourite article of diet. It may even be, as we heard a Shakespearean scholar remark recently, that he was unconscious of the greatness of his writings. We are content to accept him as an example of the powers of an incarnate soul, without dragging into the problem any theories of 'occultism,' and in saying this we do not overlook some curious and significant allusions in his sonnets.

'Fellowship in Work,' by A. L. Pogosky (C. W. Daniel, Limited, 6d. *net*) is a pamphlet issued in connection with the movement carried on by the International Fellowship of Workers. The author is one of those progressive minds who, feeling keenly the evils of the time, are anxious 'to re-establish justice, manhood, happiness, the poetry of life.' So we have articles on 'The Perversion of Work,' 'The Misuse of Machinery,' and a plea for a return to the old handicrafts. In the essay on 'Service: the Inspiration in Work' Madame Pogosky makes an apt reference to Mrs. Mary Boole's book, 'The Message of Psychic Science,' in which she

speaks of the wonderful healing power of work, and explains how, during the process of work, we in reality receive a vital force from the unseen.

And the author continues:—

Any one of us, surely, has had the experience of this beneficent influence of work, when we worked not for self, but inspired by the idea of serving someone else, a friend, or society at large. We recollect this experience almost with envy—those moments when the body drooped with fatigue, and the spirit rejoiced and ascended.

The practical side of the author's ideas is well shown in the articles on 'Vegetable Dyes' (with useful hints on an interesting form of work) and 'Industrial Colonies.' The pamphlet is obviously the result of much thought and experience and we cordially commend it.

In 'Education as Service,' by J. Krishnamurti (Alcyone), issued by the Theosophical Publishing Society, New Bondstreet (cloth, 1s. *net*), the author makes many thoughtful suggestions as to the attitude of the teacher—the spirit in which he should teach and the methods which he should employ—as well as regarding the relations which should exist between teacher and pupil. Many of the ideas propounded are already being acted upon, more or less fully, in the Children's Progressive Lyceum movement, and in many schools in this country. As far back as 1882 Dr. J. Rodes Buchanan eloquently pleaded for the new education, by which he meant moral teaching, training and influence, and we agree that 'religion and morals must not only be taught as subjects but must be made both the foundation and the atmosphere of school life, for these are equally wanted by

every boy, no matter what he is to do later in life.' The little book is one that is calculated to do good and should be stimulating to both teachers and pupils, and it would be this quite apart from the reincarnational element which seems to be rather dragged in. There seems to be a discrepancy, too, between the statement 'All who know the truth of reincarnation should realise that they are members of one great family, in which some are younger brethren and some elder,' and this other assertion: 'He [a father] will never forget that though his son's body may be young, the soul within is as old as his own and must therefore be treated with respect as well as affection.' It seems also that the emphasis on age in this last passage is putting the obligation in the wrong place. 'Every piece of work must be done *religiously*—done with the feeling that it is a sacred offering to be laid on the altar of the Lord' is nearer the mark.

#### SPIRITUAL PRAYERS.

(From many shrines.)

A PRAYER BY THE REV. ARTHUR CHAMBERS AT THE GRAVESIDE OF DR. F. GARDNER.

Almighty and Eternal Father, in Whom we live and move and have our being, and unto Whom all those whom we call 'dead' do *live*; we commend to Thy Fatherly love and care our dear friend whom Thou hast lately called into Higher Life and experience. Grant that, in that World of Light and advancement into which he has passed, all that is good and noble in him may be expanded and developed. Grant that anything weak or imperfect in him may be eliminated. Outpour upon him Thy Divine Spirit, that he may grow to a full knowledge and love of Thee, until he shall become the spirit of a just man made perfect, and be finally numbered with Thy saints in glory everlasting. We ask this, Eternal Father, in the name of Thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### A SPIRITUALIST'S IDEALS.

The editor of 'The Spiritualist Messenger,' the organ of the Yorkshire Union of Spiritualists, in the September number of his journal says:—

I want to see finer churches; I am anxious that Spiritualism should have a brighter setting; I want to see the abolition of slum dwellings, the sweater's den; I want clean, healthy homes in which families may dwell; I am anxious to have eliminated from our present life all the forces that crush the poorest and deny equal opportunities for all; I want to break down the false estimate the world has of men. All these things I want and more than I have space to write of. Aye, and I will do more than say I want them, I will try to work for them. But I recognise that my work must be chiefly on the spiritual plane. Unless we can change the spiritual outlook, unless the spirit feels its needs and its relationship to others, until the spiritual oneness is realised, we cannot hope for the greatest good. Good will be wrought as our spirits grow, as our interior life develops, and it must be our business as Spiritualists to compel men to see that we must work from within, we must get on the plane where things are made, that really it is easier to make things right in the workshop than to alter them afterwards. Get men to think right, to think spiritual thoughts, and then spiritual blessings will follow. Think spiritual thoughts and the spiritual life will appear, and the spiritual life will not tolerate for itself the evils hitherto endured. But more important still, the spiritual life will never seek to impose those evils upon another. Love is the greatest law of life, love is the highest expression of the spiritual life, and the greatest commandment ever given was: 'That ye love one another.'

#### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

SPIRIT HEALING.—Daily, except Saturdays, Mr. Percy R. Street, the healing medium, will attend between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., for diagnosis by a spirit control, magnetic healing, and delineations from the personal aura. For full particulars see the advertisement supplement.



## THE VOICES, 1912.

BY VICE-ADMIRAL W. USBORNE MOORE.

*(Continued from page 430.)*

The following account is by a lady who only attended one private séance with Mrs. Wriedt. She was a perfect stranger to the psychic, to me, and to the inmates of the house. On this one occasion only did she enter Cambridge House. The 'conditions' could scarcely have been worse, for the psychic was suffering at the time from a great feeling of annoyance; consequently I felt quite sure that the lady had drawn a blank, but I did not like to write and ask. To my great surprise and relief I received a spontaneous letter from her on August 16th telling me that she had been most successful. I can only conclude that she must herself possess some psychic power which nullified Mrs. Wriedt's mental state. Here is her epistle:—

Dear Admiral Moore,—I am reading your account of Mrs. Wriedt's séances every week in 'LIGHT' and think it may interest you to know that the one I had with her on the day I saw you at Wimbledon was most convincing. When in the train on my way home from Wimbledon, remembering what you say in your book, I took full notes of what had occurred and wrote the account out in full as soon as I reached the house.

Seven of my people—my father, mother, son, daughter, cousin, a nephew, and a very old friend—came to me, one after another, without a break, all giving their names. My mother said, 'I quite thought — (mentioning my husband by his abbreviated Christian name by which all the family know him) was coming over to us last week. I hope he won't get knocked about like that again.' (He had a very bad fall from his horse the week before.) My daughter said she was looking after her brother (a son I have in Canada), and gave a pet name by which she always called him. My nephew gave his Christian and surname. At first I could not quite catch it; then he said, 'Oh, auntie, auntie, you remember me; I was on the "Worcester" [training ship], and was drowned afterwards.' Then he gave his name again quite clearly, and what he said was quite true.

My husband's cousin gave both his names. I said, 'I know who you are quite well; but you did not know me in life, so how do you know who I am?' He replied, 'I was at my sister's yesterday when you called, so knew then who you were.' I said, 'That is true; but I did not stay there, for I was coming here.' He returned, 'I followed you to the next house you called at, and there heard you were coming here to-day, so thought I would let you know I was alive.' I considered this showed most convincingly how our friends on the other side of life are able to be in touch with us if they wish, as all he said was perfectly true.

I forgot to mention that after my nephew had been, 'John King' (who is an old friend of mine) said, 'Oh, I am glad you knew that boy; he was just crazy to come and speak to you.' My old friend, who came last, said, 'I see you sometimes.' I replied, 'I have been able to convince two of your old school-fellows of the future life lately.' He rejoined, 'Yes, you had — with you yesterday' (this was correct; the gentleman named, one of the two, came to supper with us the previous evening). Then 'John King' said: 'This is all we can do; now I am coming home with you.'

I hope I have not bored you with this long account, but knowing the interest you take in Mrs. Wriedt's work, I venture to send it. . .

My correspondent has excellent reasons for concealing her identity. So far from her letter boring me, I am sure that your readers will consider this narrative as one of the most interesting and valuable testimonies ever yet given to the world in support of their belief in the next state.

A neighbour of mine writes the following:—

I had two private sittings with Mrs. Wriedt this year, both in the afternoon. I had sat with her once last year in a large general circle of eighteen people, when Admiral Usborne Moore was one of the sitters. On that occasion I brought with me three friends, two men and one woman. One of the men was a barrister, a member of Parliament, and an officer in the Territorial Force; the other was an Admiral in the Navy. These men did not wish to be known, and I foolishly introduced them to the psychic under false names. As far as I was concerned this séance was a failure, as I became ill and had to leave the room in the middle of it. I was told later that two books were taken from the bookcase by some unknown power and flung on to the knees of the member of Parliament. One was 'The History of Her Majesty's Army'; the other, I think,

was some legal book. This much is necessary to explain what follows.

My first séance this year did not much impress me. I was over-anxious and nervous and feel I may have suggested names instead of waiting for my spirit friends to give them. However, there could be no mistake about my brother, who came singing; he was very fond of singing in life and would warble all day long. My guide also made himself known unmistakably.

On the second visit my mind was more prepared for the phenomena and I was strictly cautious in my talk to the spirits who came. The following manifested: My guide, my father, mother, brother, a cousin and a friend; also (much to my surprise) my father-in-law, Canon Hamilton. All gave their names without any suggestion from me. It is not worth while relating all that passed but there is one evidential fact which should be specially mentioned, as it relates to the séance of last year. Canon Hamilton visited me for the first time on this occasion. When in life he was Vicar of a parish in County Galway; he was an ultra-strict evangelical parson of the old-fashioned school. The slightest departure from the truth, even in joke, was hateful to him. When the voice first came I said, 'Who are you?' Answer: 'I am Charley's father' (Charley is the name of my husband). Question: 'What, Canon Hamilton?' Answer: 'I am.' He then scolded me for what happened at the séance of last year and spoke of his strong objection to my introducing the two gentlemen under assumed names. He went on to say that he assisted in putting the books on the knees of the M.P., and that he, on that occasion, had influenced me so unpleasantly that I had to leave the room. His tone, in speaking, was that of severe reproof, precisely as it would have been in similar circumstances when he was alive.

I must add one incident in my conversation with my mother. She asked me, 'What have you got of my jewellery? I hope you took some.' I told her what articles I had appropriated, when she appeared satisfied. During the last year or two of her life it was my mother's hobby to dwell upon the division of her trinkets among my sisters and me.

My brother came singing as before and talked of what had occurred at the previous sitting. When on the earth plane he was a strong psychic. I mentioned this and he exclaimed 'Yes, and I am a medium here.'

(Signed)

A. M. BUCHANAN HAMILTON.

With regard to this lady's admission about the séance of last year, I remember 'John King' telling me, on the morning following, that two gentlemen had come under false names, and that he picked out two books from the library on 'Majesty and Law' and placed them on the knees of one of them 'to show him he was known for what he was' (*sic*).

(To be continued.)

## SPIRITUALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA.

On the night of July 31st, prior to the departure of Mr. and Mrs. Nordica for England, the Johannesburg Mission of Spiritualism held a social meeting in their honour in the Masonic Hall, Jeppe-street. About one hundred guests, including many old Spiritualists, attended, and an excellent musical and elocutionary programme was rendered, followed by refreshments and dancing. During the evening the president, Mr. E. Withycombe, spoke of the spiritual work Mrs. Nordica had done in Johannesburg during the past sixteen months, and also of the services Mr. Nordica had rendered to the Mission as a magnetic healer. He then presented to Mrs. Nordica, on behalf of the executive and members of the committee, an illuminated address; and a diamond and emerald ring on behalf of her students and well-wishers as a symbol and token of their appreciation of her valuable services to the cause of truth. Mr. Quance presented her with one of his oil paintings. Mrs. N. Hawkes, in a suitable speech, also made a presentation to Mr. Nordica, on behalf of his clients and friends. Mr. and Mrs. Nordica made suitable replies, thanking the donors and all present for their sympathy and good wishes, and expressing the hope that the Mission would be increasingly successful.

TRANSITION OF MR. WILLIAM THEOBALD.—On September 7th, shortly after the decease of his beloved wife, Mr. William Theobald passed to spirit life at The Hawthorns, Hornsey-lane, N., aged seventy-seven. His mortal form was cremated at Golder's Green on Wednesday last. Mr. Theobald was a member of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and a reader of 'LIGHT,' from their commencement. We tender our sincere sympathy to the bereaved family.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Professor Schaefer's address at Dundee was referred to on Sunday last by the president of the Dundee Spiritualist Society, Mr. J. M. Stevenson, who pointed out that the question of the origin of life was insignificant as compared with that of survival after death. He claimed that, since we are alive, and are conscious of our individuality, and are desirous of more knowledge, it is of the first importance that we should investigate what lies before us (not behind), and ascertain whether we shall exist as our individual selves after death, and if so, how best we can equip ourselves for such an existence. What matters it how life originated if, even after the longest life, death annihilates us, and, as Professor Schaefer affirmed, we are immortal only in our descendants? Unless we continue our life, our conscious individual selves, with more mysteries to solve, old friendships to renew and further progress to make, it were better never to have had a conscious existence at all—but, thanks to natural laws, the continuity of life beyond the grave *can* be, and *has* been, abundantly proven.

Dr. A. R. Wallace does not agree with those amiable people who talk of the possibility of 'immortality in the flesh.' He says: 'Death is absolutely necessary to the process of development through evolution. One of the Cambridge men, who is reliable, therefore, in his mathematics, calculated that if a certain small organism were allowed to multiply steadily with nothing to prevent it from increasing, in a little over a hundred years it would have produced enough living matter to fill up the whole known universe. That, you see, proves the necessity of death. Here, again, we see the existence of an antecedent mind, which so constituted matter that it could not be immortal. If living matter had been immortal from the beginning, development would have stopped.'

In a vigorous letter in the 'Christian Commonwealth' of the 11th inst., with reference to Mr. Robert Blatchford's assertion that nobody knows anything on those vast subjects, the nature and inner causes of matter and energy, life and mind, Dr. Wallace says: 'My friends Sir William Crookes and Sir W. F. Barrett have been students of psychical phenomena about as long as I have, and, like myself, the longer they live and the more they know of it the more convinced they are that "the survival of man after death" is as well established as a large portion of what we term "science." Yet this is one of the things which our friend Blatchford declares that "nobody knows."'

'The Buffalo (N. Y.) Evening News' reports that the Rev. Dr. E. A. Pace, of the Catholic University, Washington, U.S.A., recently claimed that telepathy is now an established fact, and declared that 'its recognition is bound to become one of the great agencies in re-establishing man's faith in matters spiritual after the terrific onslaught of materialism during the past century.' 'The growing belief in telepathy is an evidence that the human mind will not accept materialism. Just when the material seems to be on the point of crushing and blotting out all that is spiritual in the life of man, there come these new evidences that there is something higher in us than blood and brain, that there is a spirit which can communicate with other spirits and behold distant visions without the aid of the senses or of any connecting media. Wireless thought, telepathy, is just the spirit freeing itself from the bonds of the material.'

The tendency of the age is towards the development of the inner self, and the realisation that evolution works from within outwards. Men are learning to listen to the voice of God in the soul—the Christ within—and to prove their trust in, and love to God, by trusting the mental, moral, and spiritual nature with which He has endowed them. Those powers are for use; they must be relied upon, trained and employed for self-government and self-fulfilment, spiritually as well as physically and mentally. Just as it is necessary to make a man sober before he can think clearly, just as fear must be exorcised before he can judge impartially and act sanely; so, too, is it necessary to cease to rely on outside agencies and rely upon one's own inner self. Each one must learn to think, to understand, to decide, to act, and to act wisely; and this can only be done when the spirit is awake, self-reliant, and rejoicing in its inherent power. Then it will understand Life and Love—rejoice to do the Will of God.

Dr. A. T. Schofield evidently agrees with the idea that to make a good start is half the winning of the battle, for in his work on 'Studies in the Highest Thought,' he says: 'Never turn the handle of your bedroom door and face the world day by day until your heart is saturated, satisfied with the loving-kindness

of God. Then you will go out and be a credit to your Father all day; otherwise you will probably be a disgrace. . . . With regard to nerve patients, I find that one of the finest things for them is to have breakfast in bed, and the reason of this is because it means a satisfied physique before facing a cold world. In the same way we need a satisfied spirit before facing the day's work, a heart full of the loving-kindness of the Lord.' In other words, we might say that it is well to cultivate the spirit of thankfulness, of appreciation, of courage, and of affirmative good cheer, and then carry the sunshine of a bright spirit with us into all the affairs of life. 'It is better to smile than to weep.'

Dr. J. H. Jowett, writing in 'The Christian World,' says that there is 'nothing soft and effeminate about the life that pleases God. It is not a lean character, pinched, ascetic, and anæmic. It is vigorous, full-blooded, and holy. When we think of pleasing God we must not think of a mooning detachment, a melancholy withdrawal to the sideways and byways of life. It is life in the main streets. It is life in manifold and varied interests. It is a life lived in all the jostling associations with our fellow men. The life that pleases God is not pale and colourless. It is "life in the light," the wearing the pink of robustness. Piety is not invalidity; it is winsome strength.' This is good, wholesome spiritual teaching.

## LOVE-LINKS BETWIXT TWO WORLDS.

Our first inclination as we began to glance through the proof sheets of Mr. L. V. Witley's forthcoming book, 'Love from Beyond the Veil,' was to chide the author for a lack of delicacy in inviting everybody into his confidence in a matter which one instinctively regards as sacred—viz., the mutual sympathy and affection existing between husband and wife. Ordinarily we do not recognise that we have any right, nor do we feel any desire, to read another man's love-letters; and though writing was not the means of communication in this instance, but only its ultimate expression, much of the book consists of what may fairly be described as the equivalent of love-letters—being messages exchanged between a devoted wife on the other side and her husband on this. Were she still on this plane we imagine that he would hardly show to some casual acquaintance the tender correspondence that passed between them in the days of their courtship. When a man voluntarily lifts the curtain that hides his dearest and most intimate soul-experiences, the spectator is tempted by that very fact to wonder how far what he is invited to look on at is real life, and how far it is simply a play performed (perhaps unconsciously) for his enjoyment. But we should be doing Mr. Witley a grave injustice if we entertained such a thought in his case. Here is no play, but something which is intensely real to the writer, and which we believe only the deepest sympathy with, and desire to bring comfort to, those who have suffered a similar bereavement would have induced him to make public.

Early in his narrative he tells how, through the mediumship of the daughter of Mr. Arthur Holden, of Olton, he first became definitely assured of his wife's survival and of her continued interest in his welfare and that of their child. One of the messages he received through this lady was especially convincing, as, in addition to the promise that if he sat alone with paper and pencil his wife would impress him with what she wanted to say, the medium mentioned the Christian name of his wife and also that of his mother. The statement was also made that in the spirit world his wife bore a new spirit name—a flower cognomen which he recognised as appropriate to her personality, but which he declares was certainly not drawn from himself. This spirit-name was confirmed in a message from his wife, through another friend, many months afterwards. The messages Mr. Witley received through his own mediumship are very beautiful, breathing the truest wifely devotion and full of deep spirituality of thought. Here are two passages illustrative of this latter feature:—

For good or for ill, the inmost desires of the spirit are not simply the expression of desire, but the yearning and the longing actually brings with it its own fulfilment. We see these things so clearly here. The outward circumstances of life are



relatively so unimportant, so changing, so insignificant. The thing that really matters is the attitude of the spirit. He who hates, as the Master said, is already in spirit a murderer, and he who lusts is already unclean in spirit. So also, happily, he who loves is already Godlike, and he whose desires are for purity and holiness is already pure and holy. The thing which counts with us here is the attitude of the spirit to good and to God. With our faces to the light, we have no fear, no dread, no sense of separation from the Divine. God dwells within us and we dwell with God; He is around us in the atmosphere we breathe and with us in the thoughts we think and the love that environs our whole being.

Mother Nature does all her work quietly and without fuss or strain, but none the less effectively and effectually for all that: poise and counterpoise, action and reaction and interaction play their unceasing part, all fulfilling the design of their Maker. And Mother Nature, as you know it, is but the emblem and the expression of the Mother-Heart of the Divine. There are other expressions of this great Mother-Heart of which at present you have no conception. Mother Nature, with all her mystery and all her glory, is but the letter A in God's great alphabet of Life and Being. But from A B C to the last letter—if, indeed, there be any last—the first and final note is the Parenthood of the Infinite and Eternal One; not simply Fatherhood but Motherhood finds its fulfilment and its expression in the heart of the Divine All-Lover.

We think the author is somewhat too lavish in the use of italics, black type, and capital letters. The free employment of such marks of expression is a poor compliment to the intelligence of the reader. The context, as a rule, suggests what words should be emphasised. Perhaps, also, there is rather too much emotion for the ordinary reader; but this book will doubtless appeal to a large class of readers, who will find comfort and help in the author's abounding faith and the inspiring 'messages' which he so freely and frankly offers to them for their consolation and service. Regarding these he says:—

On April 21st I was aware that a message would come, but I was entirely unconscious of what it would be, beyond the first sentence. On April 26th I had no idea at all that any message would be impressed upon me: as a matter of fact, I was very busy, in another direction, and I did not *want* any message to come; nevertheless I was led to put aside what I was doing and to write two crowded quarto pages. Both these impressions are indited in clear, straightforward style; they are perfectly easy to read, and are practically *without alteration or addition*: together they comprise more than 2,500 words.

The subjects of the messages are not such as I should dream of dealing with voluntarily; and, apart from this, the language and style are altogether above and beyond my ordinary capacity. I can but coincide with the belief of a friend in whose judgment in regard to literary matters I have every confidence—that there can be but one explanation, namely, that the messages *are* the outcome of inspiration from and by a spirit dwelling in the unseen.

Not only the inception of this experience, but the whole tenor of it, is in harmony with the fact that my sainted wife is acting upon me. There is nothing incongruous in the representation which she gives of her work and her environment; I am fully conscious that in the earth-life the innate capacity of her spirit never found its full manifestation. She herself never had any idea of the depth of her instinct for motherhood and ministry such as has since been revealed to her.

I affirm, further, (1) that my wife's messages are essentially *feminine*, and (2) that there is no difficulty in tracing the *identity* of the personality of my wife, as delineated in the foregoing pages, with the manifestation of her spirit as expressed in and through her messages. Naturally, development is to be perceived; the life of the spirit is being lived upon a higher plane of being; but the individuality itself is *identical* with that which formerly lived in this world.

#### MRS. WRIEDT'S SEANCES.

The Rev. Charles Tweedale has sent us a valuable communication in which he not only demonstrates the utter absurdity of the alleged 'exposure' of Mrs. Wriedt at Christiania, as published in 'The Frankfurter Zeitung,' but also relates his own remarkable experiences with her, which, together with the evidence of so many other witnesses, conclusively prove, if testimony can prove anything, the genuineness of the phenomena occurring through her mediumship. We shall print Mr. Tweedale's article in next week's 'LIGHT.'

#### NOTES FROM ABROAD.

The 'Psychische Studien' for July is of more than ordinary interest. Dr. Johannes Clericus deals with the phenomenon of spirits leaving the burnt impress of their hand on cloth or any other material. He cites one authentic case which gains added importance from the fact that the doctor had himself occasion to inspect the cloth in question, and found that, although it was yellow with age, the burnt impress of a perfect hand could be clearly traced on it. Dr. Clericus remarks that such supernatural occurrences ought to give to the most obdurate sceptic plenty of food for thought.

Colonel Peters continues his discussion on Dr. Julien Ochrowicz's remarkable experiments in radiography. We refrain from alluding further to it, as Miss Dallas is dealing with the subject in 'LIGHT.'

Professor Willy Reichel contributes a translation of 'Charles Dickens and the Philosophy of Spiritualism,' by Mrs. Annie Bright, and B. Meissner concludes his reply to the question whether it is possible that the logical desire which attracts the modern soul to science, and the psychological desire which leads it to faith, can be united in one higher synthesis. He sums up by saying: 'God is an absolutely pure spirit, although He will remain for ever incomprehensible to us. We only now begin to understand His works since we have obtained the certain belief that spirit triumphs over matter—the spirit which is an eternal emanation of the divine Spirit of God Himself. Having recognised this grand truth, the world has become all the more beautiful. Religion, by expressing it more or less dimly, has saved mankind from materialism, but science also, sustained by high aspirations, has contributed its full share to this noble work. We may, therefore, safely assert that science and religion need not clash. The study of occultism shows us how to unite them in one higher synthesis.'

We hear at present much about figures and their influence on our individual life. It may, therefore, be of interest to read what 'L'Echo du Merveilleux' has to say about the number *three*: 'The number three seems to exercise a strange influence over man and his destiny. In olden times it was considered a sacred number—a symbol of the Trinity. More recently we find that Bismarck, the celebrated German Chancellor, to whom religious considerations can certainly not be attributed, had a firm belief in the mysterious influence of this number, round which, as he asserted, his whole life revolved. "I have served three sovereigns," he remarked, "I have provoked three wars, and I have signed three treaties of peace. During the Franco-German War three horses were shot under me, and I was thrown three times. I have arranged the meeting of three Emperors, and through my influence the triple alliance was concluded. In my private life the number three dominates as well. I bear three names, on my coat-of-arms are emblazoned three oak-leaves, and I have had three sons. Finally," he added, with dry humour, "the caricaturists invariably portray me with only three hairs on my otherwise bald head."'

In the 'Journal du Magnetism' M. Lancelin gives an affirmative reply to the question 'Can future events be predicted?' He quotes the case of the old Hebrews and Egyptians who possessed schools for prophets. 'Clairvoyance,' he says, 'can be developed just as well in our days, provided the subject is endowed with the inborn gift for it; otherwise every effort will be futile.'

We have received a book by 'Sédir,' entitled: 'The Mystic Forces and the Conduct of Life.' In it the author discourses on the same eternal themes on which he has lectured for many years: 'The Mystic Forces,' 'Spirits,' 'Prayer,' 'The Master,' 'The Temptations of Christ,' &c. Every chapter breathes the highest aspirations expressed in a poetic and cultured style. And yet we are rather doubtful whether, on the whole, this book will appeal to many of our readers, although we are confident that all will appreciate what 'Sédir' has to say on prayer: 'Prayer is a heavenly desire, a mystic conversation with the Divine Spirit. It is in itself a grace, and, at the same time, the source of all graces. It is a grain deposited in the soil of eternity, it is more precious than all masterpieces combined, it is grander than the world in all its beauty, and—may we say?—more powerful than God Himself. Be not scandalised at this assertion, but remember that we leave here the world of reason to enter the luxuriant spheres of love!'

In another chapter we come across this original statement: 'Any prayer which you may have uttered in the nocturnal silence and solitude of your chamber has been heard and retained by the objects around you. That they have a memory has been proved by psychometry. Your books, the flowers and trees in your garden feel your presence, and have a dim understanding of what is passing in your mind.'

F. D.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST MARTIN'S LANE,  
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## Light:

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### LIFE AND THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

Some of the wise men of the British Association, if they have not yet succeeded in producing life by chemical synthesis, have managed to stir the national thought into activity. It is a good thing to ruffle the surface of complacent faith occasionally, and to put believers in the spiritual nature and destiny of man on the defensive.

Life began in the colloidal slime. The progenitors of mankind were a sort of squirrel-like creatures maintaining an athletic existence in primeval groves—their 'family tree,' so to speak. Ergo, all sorts of things. Religion, poetry, philosophy? Mere questions of chemical reactions. A soul—a future life? Of course not; how in such circumstances could it be possible?

When Rabelais was confronted with some piece of sophistical reasoning it was his pleasant habit to say, 'Prutt!' by which he meant 'Stuff and nonsense!' We say 'Prutt!' on this occasion—playfully, of course, and without animus.

How long has the chemist—the physical scientist—been an authority on religion and psychology? Only since the ignorance of passive thinkers installed him in that capacity. Judging by the comments of the newspapers of the day on the deliverances of the representatives of Physical Science at Dundee, the thought of the time is less submissive to the voice of authority than it used to be. There is a note of something hardly distinguishable from impatience in some of the articles we have read, and the reason is not far to seek. The advanced journalist is a scientist of life in the larger sense. His view of existence is not bounded by the four walls of a laboratory. He has seen and experienced much that his sober thinking tells him is not to be explained away by any reference to test tubes or physical science theories. He is—for the most part—'on the side of the angels,' and that, in spite of experiences on the sordid side of existence that might well tempt him to accept a belief in colloidal slime as the base of all things.

Here and there from the weaker brethren have arisen plaintive notes of doubt and bewilderment. They have felt the solid earth slipping from under their uncertain feet. But some of these writers are young and callow. It will do them good to be startled into thinking for themselves, and discovering that the garment and the wearer are not precisely the same thing, whatever the chemist may say to the contrary. The sturdier thinkers are not to be disconcerted by any doctrines concerning 'the life of man and the soul in him' as a matter of chemical formulæ. They know life and, like Mr. Mould, they are not to be caught with chaff. They have also gathered experience in 'specialisation,' and know the risks of accepting the verdict of the 'Sporting Editor' on questions concerning Literature and the Drama. They take their medical opinions from

Harley-street, but not their theology. So much, then, for the verdict of the Press, which, to our thinking, is an excellent and significant sign of the times.

There is no reason, therefore, for any qualms of soul concerning the most materialistic conclusions from Dundee. We may even take a warm interest in the possibility of producing a scrap of living matter by chemical synthesis. When we begin to be afraid of any discovery—or expected discovery—of physical science, it will be time to 'take stock' of our position and examine our foundations.

We have sometimes wondered at the antagonism that is supposed to exist between the idea of life as held by the materialist and as held by the Spiritualist. There is no real line of cleavage—the latter is simply an enlargement of the former. Why is it so difficult to believe that Nature may perpetuate her work in the production of man by building up within his physical framework a body of more refined material designed to carry on the machinery of consciousness on a higher plane of evolution? Why so much talk of 'supernatural interposition'? There is nothing supernatural about it. Surely this life we live to-day is no more improbable—or probable—than the life which the Spiritualist holds is lived on a higher (physically higher, at any rate) grade of existence. If the physical scientist retorts that he has no evidence of it—well, that is his misfortune; it is not our fault. The truth is that the issue has been tremendously clouded by generations of false theological teaching, and the average scientist (there are some brilliant exceptions) has never entirely broken away from it in spite of his show of fierce independence. It is not in the least necessary to associate a life after the dissolution of this mortal body with any special and arbitrary fiat of the Deity. We think if the materialist could rid himself of this prepossession, he would find his way easier and clearer. It is he and not Nature or Science that has imposed the limitation, and his attempt to set up a boundary is rather suggestive of Mrs. Partington and her mop, or of King Canute.

A certain scientist many years ago essayed an investigation of psychical phenomena, but subsequently withdrew from the inquiry for the reason (given with admirable candour) that it might upset the philosophy of a lifetime. If it could, then so much the worse for the philosophy. But the idea of a future life does not rest entirely on what are called supernormal phenomena, which in themselves (upsetting as they may be to strictly limited ideas of the nature of life) are capable of varying interpretations. Its bases are larger than that. It rests on the deeper consciousness of humanity. Many of the writers who have refused to accept the findings of Professor Schaefer were inspired neither by experience of psychical phenomena nor by a desire to champion revealed religion. It was simply that they revolted as reasoners against the attempt to reduce human life to a mechanical basis. Man may have begun his earthly pilgrimage as an anthropoid ape, but he is an ape no longer. The same power that carried him from ape to man may, with little greater expenditure of progressive impulse, carry him from man to angel under equally natural conditions. He was wont to receive with trembling submission the ordinances of the Church, but now even Science enthroned delivers its bulls and rescripts in vain when they conflict with his reasoned convictions. He draws a distinction between life as he knows it and life as observed under the microscope.

But what means this outburst on the part of Science in the direction of the old materialism that we had hoped and believed was so largely a thing of the past? Is it not suggestive of the charge of the 'Old Guard'—the last desperate effort to retrieve the fortunes of the day at what may be the Waterloo of materialism?



## THE PROGRESS AND PURPOSE OF SPIRITUALISM.

A Paper by DR. J. M. PEEBLES, read by Mr. A. E. BUTTON at the International Congress held at Liverpool on Sunday and Monday, July 7th and 8th, 1912.

This is emphatically an age of investigation and profound research. The great tidal waves of human thought, feeling, purpose and progress are sweeping over the world, carrying invaluable treasures, constituting strata that future archæologists, historians and psycho-interpreters will decipher and tabulate as the marvellous achievements of this wonderful century. The noblest ideals gradually ultimate into realities. The universe knows no loss. Cicero, born 106 B.C., said: 'They whose minds scorn the limitations of the body are honoured with the frequent appearances of the gods. Their voices have been often heard, and they have appeared in forms so visible that he who doubts it must be partly bereft of reason. . . I dare not myself say anything in opposition to the oracles, nor do I approve of others treating them lightly.' The illustrious Lucan, born 38 A.D., said that 'the greatest misfortune of our age is to have lost that wonderful gift of heaven, the oracle of Delphi, which became silent when the kings and the warriors feared the verdict of the oracles.' Spiritualism in its different phases was denominated 'oracles' during the palmiest days of Greece and Rome.

The seers of Syria, the Nazarenian apostles, the earliest Christian fathers, were gifted with prophecies, visions and trances. Paul enumerated, among the graces that characterised the Early Church, 'the discerning of spirits.' All through the ages of antiquity there were spiritual phenomena which, like silvery threads of prophecy, affirmed that, though man died, he should live again. But these rifts in the clouds, these manifestations, not being understood, were considered either as demoniac or as astounding miracles. At length, in the providence of God, under the ministrations of angels, there came from the higher life what is now denominated Modern Spiritualism, which Lord Brougham pronounced 'a rain-cloud in the skies of scepticism no bigger than a man's hand.'

From seemingly minutest causes there often spring the mightiest results. Newton's falling apple revealed the measureless and mighty law of gravitation. In a Bethlehem manger lay concealed spiritual causes that in a few centuries shook Pagan Rome to its very centre, substituting the cross for the Roman Eagle, with the alleged words, 'By this, conquer.' And so that muffled telegraphic tapping in the Fox Sisters' home furnished the key which opened the door and demonstrated a future conscious existence beyond the grave, thus transforming faith into knowledge and hope into a blessed fruition. The good news spread like flashing sunbeams of light, with irrefragable proofs that there were no dead—that graves and tombs were empty, that the white feet of our arisen friends were pressing the evergreen shores of the summerland, and that their tongues were musical with the songs of immortality.

At all this inviting effulgence of light the materialist sneered, the creed-bound sectarist scoffed, Papal Rome thundered the decree, 'This is the work of the devil,' and the public press, ever a reflector instead of an educator, echoed the words, 'Legerdemain' and 'fraud.' Relentless persecutions followed. These were bitter, unjust and merciless. Some, like myself, were mobbed; others were imprisoned and families were temporarily divided, and the public considered the phenomena a fresh outburst of witchcraft. Little did the persecutors realise that these momentous phenomena, these heaven-sent messages, were from their beloved friends—were from spirits, and angels, and gods—living witnesses of truth; and little did they realise that no truth ever perishes—it is error that dies amid her worshippers.

To the standard of this blessed truth of spirit phenomena and angelic ministries, that in principle were fraternal and cosmopolitan, there soon flocked independent and heroic souls upon whose foreheads heaven's angels have inscribed, for their unswerving loyalty to truth, the fadeless words, 'True and faithful.' Thinking of those royal-souled pioneers and their fervid hand-claps and heart-cheering words, my soul feels partially empty and my eyes fill with tears. Blessed are all holy memories.

Pure love is truly changeless, and unselfish friendships are as abiding as the stars.

How impressive the words of Israel's prophet, 'One generation passeth away and another generation cometh'! Many to-day are doing yeoman service for spiritual truth. The masterly utterances and the inspirations of these noble men and women will never die.

Inspired by heavenly intelligences, an inquiry into the subject was organised, in 1868, by the Dialectical Society of London, at which the testimonies from many unimpeachable witnesses put Spiritualism upon a solid, immovable foundation, against which the gates of Hades could not prevail. Wisely did the illustrious A. R. Wallace state years ago: 'My position, therefore, is that the phenomena of Spiritualism in their entirety do not require further confirmation. They are quite as well proven as any facts in science.'

Only last Sunday Father Bernard Vaughan, an eminent Roman Catholic authority from London, as press-reported in Los Angeles, before an audience of three thousand, said that

Joan D'Arc, the Maid of Orleans, was, while in the garden with her father, suddenly enveloped in a flame of light, seeing a well and clearly defined form standing by her of some sainted hero who seemed to have a message for her. Other forms appeared, which proved to be St. Michael, St. Margaret and St. Catherine; these messengers for two years urged her now and then to carry out an assigned mission, which was to raise the Siege of Orleans and set the Dauphin on the throne. Angels attended her on this mission. When disappointed, she was strengthened by their ministries. So long as there is an open door beyond the stars, one may be disappointed, but never discouraged.

This may be authoritative Church teaching, but we pronounce it one phase of Spiritualism. Possibly, however, this may be the point where the extremes, Roman Catholicism and Spiritualism, meet. Roman Catholics and Protestant Christians alike must accept the well-attested facts of Spiritualistic phenomena or die. 'Without a vision,' exclaimed the old prophet, 'the people perish.'

Summoned as a speaker a few weeks since to the funeral of Dr. Dowling, who, in his superior state, traversing the higher ether spheres, collected notes from the Akashic records of Christ's life, I found present five preachers, every one of whom in his remarks expressed the glories of Spiritualism. The Rev. C. C. Pierce, a Baptist, went so far as to state that not only the casket and the corpse, but the doctor's spirit was present, listening to the services! And just recently, the eloquent Dr. Martin, of St. Louis, in a sermon, said, 'Remove the prophecies, the visions, and trances of the apostles and other spiritual marvels from our Bible, and it is little more than lumbering rubbish, for it is the spirit that giveth life.' These brave words, illustrating the trend of Christendom, waking from its ecclesiastical slumbers, show that the churches are coming our way. God, through evolution, says to every movement: Advance, unfold, grow, or die. Undoubtedly, limiting Spiritualism to the bare fact of conscious converse with the invisible immortals, there are more Spiritualists in the churches than those registered in the ranks of Spiritualism.

The Rev. Dr. R. J. Campbell, of the London City Temple, writing of his tour through America, says:—

I found the widest difference of theological opinions among the preachers. At Los Angeles we had a large gathering of ministers in the Congregational Church, when, during a lively time of questions and answers, involving heresy, one of the very orthodox ministers asked, 'Do you believe in a personal devil?' The question was greeted with a roar of laughter from the ministers present. It appears that the questioner was a very orthodox brother. As soon as the laughter subsided, I replied, 'Yes, sir, lots and lots and lots of them.' There was another roar of laughter, and curiously enough he seemed quite satisfied with my reply.

This reminds us of our attending a Baptist Convention to distribute Spiritualist literature, and listening to a sermon on the parable of 'the rich man and Lazarus,' the former 'lifting up his eyes in torment.' During a spirited controversy after the discourse, I said to the preachers around me that when in Palestine I had eaten grapes in hell. This called out a shout of derisive laughter. 'Hold!' I exclaimed. 'Turn to the ninth

chapter of St. Mark's Gospel, and you will read of a hell-fire where the worm was never to die and the fire never to be quenched.' Certainly they admitted this, it being Scripture. 'Very well,' I continued: 'This hell fire was, in Christ's time, in the valley of Hinnom (Gehenna), lying just outside the walls of Jerusalem, where the city offal was burned and called "hell-fire." Since that time this Hinnom valley has been cultivated and planted with vineyards, purpling with luxurious grapes. Of these I partook, and so literally ate grapes in the hell of the Bible.' At these startling words some of the preachers smiled, others laughed. Now then, when ministers can laugh at the Rev. Campbell's 'lots of devils,' and at my fruitarian luncheon in hell, the world must not only be thinking, but moving in rapid strides towards a liberal and undefiled religion, one of investigation and brotherhood.

It should be proudly considered that Spiritualism is no longer on trial, but a rigidly proven fact, a most enchanting philosophy, and the resurrected wisdom-religion of all the historic ages; and is so acknowledged by Oriental adepts, by the more advanced in psychic research, and by the most learned savants of all countries. Spiritualism demands, on the rational grounds of merit, the candid attention of every sane thinker, demands the rights and privileges of all just jurisprudence, the same respect from the journalistic press that is accorded to all religious movements; and withal, it demands the inspiring, soul-uplifting commendation of the Christian pulpit, because, demonstrating the gospel which its exponents preach, it is endowed with, and exercises, the very spiritual gifts which Jesus the Christ declared should follow those who believed in Him. Therefore it may be truthfully stated that Spiritualists, under all skies, who conscientiously and reverently live the true spirit of Spiritualism, are the real, heaven-approved Christians of this century. And so the Christianity of the Palestinian Christ, the 'Harmonial Philosophy,' and true spiritual Spiritualism, are rational religious synonyms, based upon the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, the ministry of spirits, and the impelling law of evolutionary progress—all tending to the incoming of that long-prophesied millennium, that universal religion of brotherliness, of international arbitration, of justice mellowed with mercy, symbolised by the beautiful banner on which is inscribed the white dove of peace, floating and waving in splendour the wide world over. Be sure this consummation, so devoutly desired and prayed for, is measurably in the distance.

(To be continued.)

**SPIRITUALISM AT EASTBOURNE.**—We are glad to learn that an effort is about to be made to undertake propaganda work at Eastbourne some time next month. It is proposed to hold a large public meeting under the auspices of the Spiritualist Southern Union, and the promoters are anxious to receive the co-operation and support of local Spiritualists and of all who are interested in the subject. Letters should be addressed to Mr. H. Everett, 9, Buckingham-place, Brighton. If possible a society will be organised, and every effort will be made to establish a strong spiritual centre in the town. Probably a similar course will be adopted at Hastings if a sufficient number of sympathisers can be found.

**TRANSITION OF MR. JONAH CLARKE.**—I regret to announce the sudden call to the higher life on Tuesday, the 3rd inst., of Mr. Jonah Clarke, of 20, Grosvenor-road, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Mr. Clarke was taken seriously ill on the 1st inst., and the medical attendant advised an immediate operation for appendicitis. After the operation complications set in, and Mr. Clarke became gradually weaker and passed quietly away at 1 a.m. on the Tuesday. A large circle of friends and Spiritualists attended the interment on Thursday, the 5th inst., at St. Andrew's Cemetery, Newcastle-on-Tyne, the services being conducted by Rev. A. Hall, M.A., Unitarian minister. Mr. Clarke was an ardent worker in the cause of Spiritualism, having been vice-president of the Nottingham (Mechanics' Hall) Society, president of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society, and president of the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union. Our sympathy goes out to his dear wife, the well-known platform worker and medium, and to his son and daughter, who, whilst mourning the loss of his bodily presence, are comforted with the conscious knowledge of his continued loving care and tenderness.—J. E. WALTON.

## LIFE INVOLVED BEFORE IT IS EVOLVED.

It is many years since Professor Tyndall made his famous declaration at Belfast that he found in matter 'the promise and potency of every form of terrestrial life,' and now Professor Schaefer has a vision of a chemical production of life; but, as Sir Oliver Lodge says, 'at present the whole subject seems in the region of speculation rather than that of demonstrable fact'—just where it has ever been. Some day the material basis of life may be produced by chemical means, but that will not prove that life has been originated in the process, nor will it, as Sir Oliver has indicated, explain the nature of life, 'if we understand by the term "life" that which interacts with matter in order to produce vitality.' As Gerald Massey once said, when referring to Professor Huxley's protoplasm:—

The devil of it is that when you have  
Your protoplasm perfect, life is there  
Already with its spontaneities,  
And all its secret primal powers at work.

Nor can you have your matter unmixed with mind.

. . . no particle of protoplasm  
Panting with life, like a bird newly caught,  
As with a heart-beat out of the Unseen,  
But comes with all its secret orders sealed  
Within it, safe as crumpled fronds of fern  
To be unfolded in due season.

As was to be expected, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace does not agree with Professor Schaefer. In an interview, published in 'The Daily News' of the 7th inst., he points out that the Professor 'begins by stating that the problems of life are essentially problems of matter, and that we cannot conceive life in the scientific sense as existing apart from matter.'

He puts down what he could conceive and could not conceive as the datum, without any attempt to prove it. Take, for instance, Crookes and myself. We have studied the subject of psychological phenomena for forty years, and we know pretty well that there are phenomena of which these men are absolutely ignorant, which prove the existence of life without matter, as it were—certainly without ordinary matter—so that vitiates all his reasoning right away.

After claiming that there is no such 'directive agency' in the formation of crystal as is apparent in the growth of living cells, Dr. Wallace declares that 'all that the chemist can do is to experiment with dead matter.'

He cannot subject living matter continuing to live to his chemical processes; therefore all he gets is the production of dead matter, and the Professor says that is the same as living matter. He repeats again and again that, when you have got the same matter, the same chemical substance, all you have got to do is to produce it chemically, and then it will have all the properties of living matter. This is the very one thing they have not gone the slightest step towards.

Professor Schaefer's claim that, when the chemist succeeds in building up a compound of the elements which he says represents the chemical basis of life it will without doubt be found to exhibit the phenomena which we associate with the term 'life,' is regarded by Dr. Wallace as 'absolutely unfounded. There is not the slightest proof of it.' As for his 'assumption that all the changes which take place in growth and reproduction are chemical,' Dr. Wallace says:—

He gives no proof whatever, and the difficulties and the differences are so radical and so enormous that the whole thing is really absolutely worthless. . . The two things, growth and reproduction, are without parallel in any chemical process certainly, and none of these men makes the slightest attempt to get over the difficulty. . . All the directive power which enables the cell to go through a marvellous series of changes and developments, not one of which can be explained by any mechanical or chemical process, they ignore. Professor Schaefer's assertions are so bold that they catch the public ear and the public fancy, but they are entirely valueless.

Continuing, Dr. Wallace claims that:—

The chemist never goes into the ultimate cause; he does not deal with the directing power. In the atom there have been shown to exist countless minute things every part imbued with force. Whence comes the force? I maintain you cannot explain



the smallest portion of dead matter without a series of forces which imply mind, which imply direction. . . Professor Schaefer never attempts to give any idea of how feeling, sense, the power of perception can possibly arise out of dead matter. He says distinctly it arises from the nervous system. He would produce a nervous system, but is it likely that the nervous system, which is a machine for the manifestation of consciousness, should produce consciousness? Huxley said that life is a cause and not a consequence of organisation. It is not organisation that produces the life, as is assumed all through Professor Schaefer's lectures. If you assume that the directing power is essentially a spiritual power, then you can understand all this, but without it you cannot understand it. . . All the forces of life are directed in a way that is utterly distinct from chemistry. Anything chemistry can do is quite beside the question. In chemistry only certain things will produce certain results. In life the most diverse things will produce the same results. One man may feed entirely on animal food; another entirely on vegetable. The machinery is the same, yet this same machinery so differently fed produces identical results in bone, muscle, nerve, skin, hair—everything. The organism is like an enormous engine, but an engine which can reproduce itself. There is the direct power.

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## THE TRUE MISSION OF SPIRITUALISM.

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By MRS. ANNA NORDING, OF COPENHAGEN.

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Among the many papers read at the International Congress at Liverpool in July last, was one written by Mrs. Anna Nording, of Copenhagen, and read by Mr. J. Henley, of Manchester, dealing with 'The True Mission of Spiritualism.'

Mrs. Nording expressed her sincere regret at her inability to be present and participate in the proceedings of the Congress, and then proceeded to deal with her subject. Referring to 'Spiritism,' she said that it is not in itself a religion, but an impartial and scientific search for and propagation of truth respecting the mysteries of man's psychic life. All who admit this may be included in the term Spiritists, but 'Spiritualists' must be spiritually-minded persons. Psychical investigators she classified as being those who are willing to admit the psychic and phenomenal powers of man, but who may not believe in a hereafter. Continuing, Mrs. Nording said that she regarded 'Spiritualism' as a most important world-movement, whether as a form of research, or as an aid to spiritual progress, and she looked upon everyone within its ranks as a missionary. Since 'union is strength,' differing opinions should be laid aside for the sake of the greater good, and attention should be concentrated upon the eternal truths of the Spirit. Everything in the world being subject to change, including dogmas and religions, room must be found for independent thinkers. All may agree that God is One and that all creation is subject to the law of development. Those who desire and work for universal human brotherhood should respect each other's rights and endeavour to secure concord and unity of spirit. Since Theosophists and Spiritualists are alike working to secure the spiritualisation of the world, and have so much in common, they should respect each other's point of view, and work harmoniously for their one common object. As no one can possess the whole of truth, we can all learn from each other. Personally, Mrs. Nording regards reincarnation as a truth, but she thinks that, although many Spiritualists do not believe it, all could at least agree that development is an eternal process; that God has many roads, that all roads lead to the same goal (union in God), and all religions will ultimately merge into one: The Religion of Truth and Love. To those who believe this, the making and maintenance of peace and the attainment of brotherhood will be the chief aim.

The mission of Spiritualism is to spread abroad the knowledge of the fundamental truths of the spirit, especially among those who are materialistic and irreligious, not only by words but by letting the light shine through actions and by personal example. 'With God for man' is the motto of the Danish Spiritual Mission, and to give effect to this aim every effort should be made to assist the poor, the ignorant, the toiling masses of mankind, so that their unrest and discontent will give

place to better and more harmonious states of mind as the result of improved education and environment. In short, a social work—for peace, for total abstinence, and for universal fellowship—awaits Spiritualists, who, of all men, are perhaps the best able to carry it forward effectively. We, who have a conception of spirit life quite different from that which is ordinarily entertained, ought to be able to give our fellow-men a new view of the evil effects of war by convincing them that the slain enemy is not dead, but living, and, if he is animated by intense revengeful feelings, may be able to hurt us even more than when he was in the body. It ought to be the aim of Spiritualists to help forward all good causes, to remove old prejudices and abuses, and to build up new ideas regarding the treatment of criminals, lunatics, and, indeed, of all who are diseased, unbalanced, and unfit. Much good has already been done through the labours of healing spirits and mediums, and this curative work is a means of arousing and retaining the interest of the people. We know the dangers and demoralising effects of intemperance and the power that it gives to the dark entities on the other side to influence harmfully those who are becoming degenerate under its sway. We know, too, the potent force of spiritual suggestion, and the help that can be afforded from the other side to those who need consolation, encouragement, strength, and inspiration to truer and purer living, and this is a sphere of labour in which great good can be accomplished. The mission of Spiritualism is especially to the bereaved who are in despair because they have no hope of meeting again their loved ones; no certitude regarding their well-being in the other life. It is a pity that some inquirers into Spiritualism exclude all religious considerations, and regard the inquiry exclusively from the scientific and research point of view. To one who urged that we should show the proofs first, and that the rest would be sure to follow, she replied: 'Your words seem rational, but while the grass is growing the horse will starve! You forget, provided you believe in the soul, that this soul—your spirit's body—requires food and care as well as your physical form, and religion provides the food it needs. Spiritualism not only encourages research, but it works for the growth of spiritual life—it supports every effort to obtain evidence and to afford to materialistic and sceptical thinkers demonstrations of its truth and it seeks to establish faith on the firm foundation of knowledge of spiritual principles—of eternal verities. This work involves the discovery, development, and protection of mediums. Here, again, the spiritual aspect must be recognised, for mediums need to be brought to a right understanding of the nature of their gifts, so that they will 'magnify their office' as servants of God, working for truth and humanity, and realise that when they love one another and their work, they will be well shielded. Instructive, explanatory lectures should be given by competent teachers for the benefit of those who, without knowledge, undertake to experiment in séance work, and thus run many risks. The necessity that all should 'try the spirits' and ask for proofs of identity cannot be too frequently or too emphatically presented.

After referring to the state of the movement in Denmark, and the need for greater unity and tolerance, Madame Nording urged that the main thing to be done was for each one to show in motive and conduct the spirit of the Christ; this, she thought, was the mainspring of all spiritual life.

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## 'LIGHT': 'TRIAL' SUBSCRIPTION.

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As an inducement to new and casual readers to become subscribers, we will supply 'LIGHT' for thirteen weeks, *post free*, for 2s., as a 'trial' subscription, feeling assured that at the termination of that period they will find that they 'cannot do without it,' and will then subscribe at the usual rates. May we at the same time suggest to those of our regular readers who have friends to whom they would like to introduce the paper, that they should avail themselves of this offer, and forward to us the names and addresses of such friends, upon receipt of which, together with the requisite postal order, we shall be pleased to send 'LIGHT' to them by post, as stated above?

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Several communications intended for this issue of 'LIGHT' are unavoidably held over until next week.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

*The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views which may elicit discussion.*

## Was Buddha Agnostic ?

SIR,—Allow me to thank Mr. Constable for his courtesy in replying in 'LIGHT' of August 17th to my request for his authority for the statement that Buddha replied, 'I do not know,' to the question, 'What follows on the extinction of delusion?' I thought that my inquiry would bring its reward, and I have not been disappointed. I cannot think that the sense of the passage which Mr. Constable has quoted in full from 'Buddhist Essays' was correctly given in his first reference to this subject. 'Abandon the question, brother! I cannot grasp the meaning of the question,' is very different from 'I do not know,' for the latter statement implies ignorance, while the former implies that the question is unnecessary and should not be asked.

In the discussion of these deep themes it frequently happens that questions arise which only ignorance can ask, and which wisdom cannot answer. In refusing to answer this question, Buddha acted the part of a wise man. Probably Mr. Constable will himself acknowledge, on maturer consideration, the inadequacy of his paraphrase.

It seems to me, however, that we are treading on dangerous ground when we talk about the survival of personality in Nirvana. Nirvana in Buddhism is associated with such very negative statements that one feels that the conception of even a glorified personality receives no justification. Especially does this appear after reading such extremes of negation as are to be found in, say, 'The Diamond Cutter' (see 'Sacred Books of the East'). This talk about a glorified personality seems to me to spring from that desire which appears ineradicable in the hearts of all Europeans, even the most mystically-inclined among them, for the retention of personality *in perpetuo*, by which is meant, apparently, the feeling of 'I,' or the sense of identity. And yet it is just this sense of 'I' which the Buddhists and many Hindoos describe as the great illusion. This feeling of 'I,' they say, is the same in all. How, then, can we be different from each other? In reality, we are the same spirit. It springs from mentality. How, then, should it exist to that consciousness which transcends mentality? Identity implies separateness, which again implies a plurality of beings. How, then, can there be identity in the Absolute, of which even unity cannot be predicated? The fact is, it seems to me, that however distasteful to us may seem this renunciation of personality, it is just this which is denied in Buddhism. Yet our prejudices would seem to be merely the result of insufficient analysis. Even some of our own deepest thinkers, as Tennyson and Edward Carpenter, have left it on record that in their moments of most exalted spiritual consciousness this necessity for the retention of the 'I' appeared to dwindle away.

Let the reader himself think of his own moments of greatest spiritual exaltation, and he will probably find that in those moments his consciousness of himself was at a minimum. It is true that Buddha promised to be with his disciples after his decease, but this was to be not as a personality (for, according to his own testimony, he was to pass away with that utter and final passing away in which nothing whatever is left behind), but 'in the body of the sacred law.' So, too, before Christ's ascension, he made himself known to his disciples as a personality, but after the ascension as the spirit of truth. This longing for continued personality is, I think, a characteristic of the human stage, being the product of *mental* activity. It is, nevertheless, an illusion, and as we grow in spirituality, we shall gradually transcend it.—Yours, &c.,

V. J.

SIR,—Religion, in its last analysis, is evidently one; a deep divine emotion, whether pronounced Pagan or Christian; yet there has recently been considerable jarring of opinions in the columns of 'LIGHT' concerning the relations, if any exist, between those two great religions, Buddhism and Christianity. Perhaps the pointed words of the distinguished Max Müller may aid in the proper adjustment of this subject. The words are these ('Introduction to the Science of Religion,' Lecture IV.): 'In no religion has man been drawn away so far from the truth as in the religion of Buddha. Buddhism and Christianity are indeed the two opposite poles with regard to the most essential points of religion.' My varied investigations and conversations with Sri Sumangala, of Colombo, and other Buddhists, intensify the correctness of this position stated by this eminent authority, Max Müller.—Yours, &c.,

J. M. PEEBLES.

Los Angeles.

SIR,—The Christ of the East was only agnostic in so far as was our own when he said, 'No man hath seen God at any time.' 'He that hath seen Me (pure selfless love in man) hath seen the Father'; the *human attribute* of Infinite Being is love. The difficulty of avoiding this 'agnosticism' appears when, referring to this Infinite Being, we needs must use the pronoun. Thus the word 'It' must become 'Him,' which, being *personal*, brings in the old anthropomorphism, with all its insufficiencies.

'The test of a great mind is its humility,' and wisdom's greatest attribute is an intuition of the things it cannot know. Thus does its mind re-become that of a little child and enter the state of heavenly consciousness. The 'selfless self' of Buddhism is the synonym of the 'Father Spirit' of Jesus; it is that real self in all human beings, the 'holy spirit' which dwells in the conscience. 'To thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day thou canst not then be false to any man'—nor to God either; 'inasmuch,' &c.—Yours, &c.,

THOMAS RAYMOND.

SIR,—As I read Mr. Constable's interesting remarks on p. 323 of 'LIGHT,' I am in the middle of the first volume of H. S. Chamberlain's 'Foundations of the Nineteenth Century'—an extremely interesting and suggestive book—and have just come across the following:—

'Christ and Buddha are opposites. What unites them is their sublimity of character. From that source have sprung lives of unsurpassed loveliness—lives which wielded an influence such as the world had never before experienced. Otherwise they differ almost in every point, and the neo-Buddhism which has been paraded during recent years in certain social circles in Europe—in the closest relation, it is said, to Christianity, and even going beyond it—is but a new proof of the widespread superficiality of thought among us. For Buddha's life and thought present a direct contrast to the thought and life of Christ: they form what the logicians call the "antithesis," what to the natural scientist is the "opposite pole."

'Buddha represents the senile decay of a culture which has reached the limit of its possibilities' (p. 184).

'A living death! that is the essence of Buddhism! We may describe Buddhism as the lived suicide. It is suicide in its highest potentiality: for Buddha lives solely and only to die, to be dead definitely and beyond recall, to enter into Nirvana extinction' (p. 186).

'I said that Buddha represented the senile decay of a culture which had strayed into wrong paths. Christ, on the other hand, represents the morning of a new day. He won from the old human nature a new youth, and thus became the God of the young, vigorous Indo-Europeans, and under the sign of His cross there slowly arose upon the ruins of the old world a new culture—a culture at which we have still to toil long and laboriously until some day in the distant future it may deserve the application "Christ-like"' (p. 200).

'The Buddhists recognise no God' (p. 226).

The whole third chapter—indeed the whole book, is most fascinating reading, full of many eloquent passages and much striking evidence of the false teaching of generally accepted history. Quite a startling book in many of its views, and I should recommend Mr. Constable to read it, if he has not already done so.

May I say that the heading of my original letter, 'Buddha an Agnostic,' was not mine but yours, Mr. Editor. And the quotation I gave referred to Buddha as an Atheist—a non-believer in God—not as an Agnostic, a doubter.—Yours, &c.,

Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.

A. K. VENNING

P.S.—'LIGHT' of August 3rd has just come to hand, containing 'V. J.'s' letter. If he prefers to trust Mrs. Besant in preference to Sanskrit scholars like Müller, Burnouf, and Saint Hilaire, I have no objection. But personally, knowing what narrow-minded, shallow, unkind and untrue statements some Theosophists are constantly making about Spiritualism, at the same time that they preach brotherhood and tolerance, I do not place reliance upon what they may say on any subject. I only wish to point out to 'V. J.' that Mrs. Besant, in her lecture as quoted in my first letter, said that Buddha was the *last* great teacher sent to the world by the Masters, thus *ignoring Jesus altogether!*

## 'The Parting of the Ways.'

SIR,—It is with profound regret that the members of the Croydon Society bid farewell to our dear and honoured friends, Mr. W. R. Moores, our late president, and his good wife, on their leaving us for Bexley. We shall miss them very much, and while unitedly wishing them 'God speed,' we pray that other work will be given them to do in the Father's vineyard of love, and that His peace may abide with them always.—Yours, &c.,

JULIE SCHOLEY.

295, London-road, Croydon.



### What was the Explanation?

SIR,—The particulars of the sad death of a little child of six and a-half years, which occurred near Cape Town last week, have come to my knowledge, owing to the fact that at the time my daughter was staying in the house where it occurred, and I send you these few lines because I am curious to know whether any of your readers have ever known of a similar case. The poor little thing had a long illness, during which she was terrified by something right up to the last moment, constantly screaming, and shaking her fist and putting out her tongue at something that she saw, or seemed to see. It seems terrible for a child so young to die in terror. What was the explanation?—Yours, &c.,

A CONSTANT READER.

East London, South Africa.

### The Message of Swedenborg.

SIR,—On reading the leading article in 'LIGHT' of August 17th on 'The Message of Swedenborg,' I was particularly struck with the last paragraph. The last sentence of this paragraph runs: 'And to all of those who have gained for themselves direct confirmation of the substantial truth of his doctrine, this record of his life is full of inspiration and encouragement.' I can quite agree with this statement, but the curious and important point of the matter is that, so far as my acquaintance goes with them, Swedenborgians come, without exception, within the scope of the first sentence of the paragraph. They are the people who 'gird at contact with the unseen world as something unholy—magic, necromancy, or divination.' Swedenborg teaches that the seeking after communication with the spirit world is disorderly, and to be avoided. I should be pleased to have an explanation of Swedenborg's attitude on this matter.—Yours, &c.,  
W. A. B.

### 'What about those Rubies?'

SIR,—I know from letters which I have received from readers of 'LIGHT' that interest has been taken in the correspondence respecting the Rothesay séances with Mr. C. Bailey; consequently a few further comments may be permitted. Apparently your readers are to be disappointed, inasmuch as Mr. Coates's twice promised report, giving interesting details, is not to be forthcoming after all.

Mr. Galloway, of Glasgow, also took up the cudgels on behalf of those rubies, &c., and I thank him for having kept his promise to send me portions of some of the apports. These are before me as I write—part of a bird's nest, said to have been brought from a tree in the garden, a portion of copper ore, one ruby and some ruby sand. What would I not give, what would not any man give, could it be conclusively shown that some of the friends who, perhaps not long since, were busy among us here, had taken an active, intelligent part in putting such evidence before us? The crux of the whole question is, not that there is any lack of such indisputable evidence, but that it is our bounden duty to separate the wheat from the chaff and base our belief on the firm foundation of fully verified and incontrovertible evidence, which, in this instance is, I regret to say, not forthcoming.—Yours, &c.,  
H. BELSTEAD.

18, Broomfield-road, Palmers Green, N.

### Good Healing Work in South Africa.

SIR,—A year ago my husband and I were deeply concerned about our daughter, who was rapidly declining physically, and whose mental state was one of blank despair. God, in His mercy, sent us to Mrs. Nordica, and she was able to give such absolutely convincing and comforting messages that our child's whole mental attitude was changed, and she began once more to take an interest in life. We were then told by our spirit friends that she had spinal trouble, and should undergo a course of magnetic treatment at the hands of Mr. Nordica. (I wish to make it perfectly plain here that no word in the way of inducement with regard to her undergoing the treatment was ever spoken to us by either Mr. or Mrs. Nordica.) She has been treated for a little over four months, and now her back is straight and strong, and her whole appearance is that of a happy, contented girl, who feels that she has work to do in this life.

Readers of this will easily imagine how deeply grateful we are to the kind friends who have done so much for us. They endeavour not only to demonstrate the fact of spirit return, but to uplift and educate the minds of those with whom they come into contact, and to spread the knowledge of great spiritual truths.—Yours, &c.,

OLIVIA BANNATYNE.

Johannesburg.

July 18th, 1912.

### Clerical Invective at Hull.

SIR,—Daily the pressing need for the speedy materialisation of the suggested 'League' becomes more apparent. I have had two stirring letters from Mr. Chas. E. H. Wann, of Hull, who has had the courage to controvert the aspersions of a local curate, the Rev. Maurice Turner, who, on Sunday, September 1st, preached a sermon against Spiritualism, which he dealt with under three 'I's,' namely, 'Infidelity, Insanity, Immorality.' Judging from a condensed report, it is the usual kind of misrepresentation, but the issues are vitalised by a challenge by Mr. Wann, and its acceptance by Mr. Turner, to attendance at a series of sittings.

I trust those few able exponents to whom Mr. Wann appealed will rally to his assistance with presence or pen.

Attacks such as this must be met vigorously, and the speakers pinned down definitely. Passivity is of no avail. Names continue to flow in, and promises of financial support, for the 'League,' once it emerges from the crucible.

Three places cry for help—Tyneside, Hull, and Southport. Must they call in vain?—Yours, &c.,

JAMES LAWRENCE.

387, Shields-road,  
Newcastle-on-Tyne.

### 'Working the Spook Business.'

SIR,—The following letter was sent to 'The People,' but as it has not appeared in that journal, I trust you will kindly print it in 'LIGHT':—

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE PEOPLE.'

Reading your article in to-day's edition, and noting the forced and would-be jocular style of the Pressman, whose offensive 'patronage' of the reader is always so manifest and objectionable, I have been wondering how your writer would have described the 'Transfiguration on the Mount.' Doubtless he would have ridiculed the personalities of those present, for this appears to be his speciality.

There is much fraud to be exposed—where is there not? I feel, however, bound to reply to his account of the interview with J. J. Vango. As I have myself had several interviews with Vango, and that, too, when an absolute stranger to him (with results that, beyond question, satisfied me as to his *bond fides* and remarkable powers as a medium), I am constrained to defend him, and to say that he (Vango) must not be classed among the humbugs of whom many can be found (even among Pressmen). My experiences would greatly surprise your readers, but they are of too private a nature to make known to everybody. I am a man of business, and a man of the world, with vastly more experience (seventy years) of life than your contributor, and I don't think quite a fool. So long as your investigator investigates in his present state of mind, doubting everybody and ridiculing everything, without any real knowledge of Spiritualistic matters, so long will his scoffing and suspicious spirit find what it seeks, for he that seeketh findeth, just what he is looking for. Consequently the visit to Vango brought him nothing except food for his scoffing temperament.—Yours, &c.,

T. K. BELLIS.

15, Bury-street, E.C.  
September 4th, 1912.

### Mrs. Etta Wriedt and Professor Birkeland.

SIR,—With reference to the article on p. 424, headed 'The Alleged Exposure of Mrs. Wriedt,' allow me to add on Mrs. Wriedt's behalf two statements made by herself in regard to the séance in question.

Quoting the 'Frankfurter Zeitung,' you remark: 'Three séances were held, the first and second of which passed off successfully. At the third, Professor Birkeland, one of the committee, "seized Mrs. Wriedt's hands and held them for twenty minutes." In these circumstances no manifestations occurred except a few raps in the trumpet, which are spoken of as "soft explosions."'

Now, Mrs. Wriedt wishes expressly to state (1) that it was at her own request that Professor Birkeland held both her hands, and, in addition, set both his feet upon hers, and that while she was thus in captivity the trumpet was thrown to the ground and moved about, and flowers were given to sitters. Obviously, therefore, whoever did these things, it was not Mrs. Wriedt. By the same token the Professor also may be acquitted.

Again, to quote the article in 'LIGHT': 'The Professor then seized the trumpet and took it to a chemist, who, on examining it, claimed to find "traces of lycopodium and water" . . . that this mixture "occasioned soft explosions in the trumpet."'

Mrs. Wriedt most emphatically declares (2) that it was she herself who insisted that Professor Birkeland should take away the trumpet for examination. And from a private source I have the

additional information that '*Semen Lycopodii L. is incapable of causing an explosion*,' and, furthermore, that '*they have not been able to reproduce the explosion in their laboratory*.'

No one who has ever sat with Mrs. Wriedt could fail to be struck by her absolute readiness to agree to any reasonable suggestion on the part of any sitter. At the sittings at 'Julia's Bureau' Mrs. Wriedt frequently asked the sitter next to her to hold her hands, and, while her hands were thus held, phenomena occurred. Also, 'John King' or 'Dr. Sharp' sometimes asked the sitters all to join hands, Mrs. Wriedt's hand, of course, being held by her nearest neighbour, and while this chain was formed flowers would be given to sitters, often those farthest away from the medium. We did not always know whether this joining of hands was requested in order to give the spirit people more power, or whether to safeguard Mrs. Wriedt from unworthy suspicion (*impossible to those who know her*). Once when we had been asked by 'Dr. Sharp' to join hands in this manner a piece of Cornish granite, about four inches by two inches, from the mantelpiece at the other end of the room, was thrown upon the floor in the midst of the circle, and a picture placed on a sitter's knee. 'John King's' stentorian voice then called out: 'We asked you to join hands so that Mr. V. would not think that the medium had done it herself.'

A lady who was present at the sittings in Christiania has written: 'It is stated by all present, except Professor Birkeland, who is extremely deaf, that two different spirit voices spoke at the same time, while the medium herself spoke very loudly to the Professor. A loud, strong man's voice tried for a long time to give his name, a short word in one syllable of O. After different suggestions, to which the voice answered "No," Mrs. N. suggested Looft, at which the voice shouted, "Yes," and added, "Dr. Looft." Professor Birkeland asked, "Are you Dr. Looft?" The voice answered, "Dr. Emilius Looft." The voice first gave the name "Emilius." Afterwards it tried for a long time to be understood, speaking in an anxious tone, and once shouted so loudly that even the Professor heard it: "Do you not hear?" in distinct, indisputable Norwegian. We all agree to have heard this sentence in Norwegian.'

As it is stated that Professor Birkeland has the disadvantage of being 'extremely deaf,' he is, therefore, hardly an ideal authority to pronounce upon the authenticity of the voices!

With regard to 'traces of water' in the trumpet, that is not surprising, seeing that it was Mrs. Wriedt's custom to rinse the trumpet with cold water before a sitting, as dozens of her sitters can testify. When here she used simply to hold the trumpet under the bath-tap (bathroom facing séance-room), and let the cold water play upon it for a second or two. Most psychics know the magnetic virtues of pure cold water, and many sensitives rinse the hands in cold water immediately before a sitting, in order to get rid of extraneous magnetism. Mrs. Wriedt also put fresh water into the flower vases every morning, but this is a habit even of non-psychics who wish to keep flowers fresh!

In conclusion, having lived for several months under the same roof as this gifted instrument of the higher powers, in constant daily contact with her under all conditions of her work, I wish to add my own testimony to the many which have been given by those not having had this advantage, that she is absolutely above suspicion. She understands the mystery of the intercommunion of the two worlds as little as the rest of us; she is an instrument, nothing more, but always an instrument for good. And she will always be followed by the gratitude and blessings of the many to whom she has been the means of giving the joy of realising that their dear ones are not parted from them, but are living and working near them still, in the 'next state of consciousness' of God's great universe.—Yours, &c.,

EDITH K. HARPER.

#### A Proposal.

SIR,—A friend, residing in the outskirts of London, is anxious to join a circle or a society of earnest, deep-thinking men and women who are sitting for spiritual development. I have advertised in 'LIGHT' without any satisfactory results. I would esteem it a favour if you could assist me in this matter.—Yours, &c.,

M. D. S.

[As we frequently receive inquiries from persons who desire to become members of circles, and from others who wish to obtain suitable sitters, we propose to institute a 'Circle Inquiry Column,' in which, in small paragraphs of two or three lines, for the nominal fee of 1s., inquirers may announce their desires. Replies, addressed to this office, will be forwarded.—ED. 'LIGHT']

#### Spiritualists' National Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—In submitting my monthly report, allow me to thank heartily all those who take a practical interest in our dear old

workers. Donations during August: Mr. Tomlinson, £1 1s.; contribution from Trinidad, £1; Miss Boswell Stone, 5s.; pamphlets, per Mr. Baldwin, 6s.; pamphlets, per G. Magnas, 2s. 2d.; 'Every Little Helps,' 1s. 6d.; 'A Friend' (Madras), 2s. 6d.; 'A Friend, A.V.P.,' 2s. 6d.; total £3 0s. 8d.

To give quickly is to give twice.—Yours, &c.,

M. A. STAIR.

14, North-street, Keighley.

#### SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th, &c.

*Prospective Notices, not exceeding twenty-four words, may be added to reports if accompanied by stamps to the value of sixpence.*

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION—*Shearn's Restaurant, 231, Tottenham Court-road, W.*—Mrs. Cannock gave successful clairvoyant descriptions to a large audience. Mr. G. E. Terry presided.—15, *Mortimer-street, W.*—2nd inst., Mr. A. V. Peters deeply interested a large number of members and friends, nearly all his clairvoyant readings being fully recognised. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided. Sunday next, see advt. on front page.—D. N.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, *Prince's-street, Oxford-circus, W.*—Morning, Mrs. M. H. Wallis spoke well on 'Free Will, as Related to Life after Death'; and her earnest address in the evening on 'The Great Question?' was much appreciated. Sunday next, see advt.—F. W.

HAMMERSMITH.—89, CAMBRIDGE-ROAD.—Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. prompt, short service and circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. Woodrow, address and clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8, Mrs. Podmore, address and clairvoyance.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—Good services, morning and evening. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public service; at 7 p.m., Mr. Feilder; silver collection. Thursday, at 8 p.m., public service. Who will help us?—J. L.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mr. Neville gave an address on 'Seek after the Good,' and Miss Bolton sang a solo. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Madame Hope, address and clairvoyant descriptions. Monday, at 8 p.m., members' circle.—N. R.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn's interesting and instructive address on 'The Soul' was highly appreciated. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., service; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Mary Davies, address and clairvoyance.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—Mr. W. E. Long gave addresses and clairvoyant descriptions; evening subject, 'Intuition.' Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long; morning, 'Visions'; evening, address on 'Science and Spiritualism.'

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mrs. Ellen Green gave good addresses and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Hylda Ball. Tuesday, at 3, working party; at 8 p.m., also Wednesday, at 3, clairvoyance; at 8 p.m., members' developing class.—H. J. E.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Mrs. Annie Boddington gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Maunder (vice-president), harvest address. Circles: Monday, at 7.30, ladies' public; Tuesday, at 8.15, members'; Thursday, at 8.15, public; Friday, at 8, astrology.—G. T. W.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mr. T. O. Todd gave the last of four lectures on 'Science and Religion in Harmony.' Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis: at 11 a.m., on 'Inspiration and Revelation,' questions answered; at 7 p.m., 'The Origin, Nature, and Destiny of Man.'—H.

BRIGHTON.—HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET, WEST.—Mrs. Jamrach gave excellent addresses and well-recognised clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. T. O. Todd. Mondays, at 3 and 8 p.m., also Wednesdays, at 3, Mrs. G. C. Curry, clairvoyance. Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., public circle.—A. C.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE.—Morning, annual general meeting of Fellowship Association. Evening, Harvest Festival. Mr. Horace Leaf spoke on 'The Harvest,' and gave clairvoyant descriptions. Special music by an orchestra under the direction of Mr. Berry. Solo by Miss A. Shead. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., Mr. Connor on 'The Coming Year'; at 7 p.m., Mr. Wrench. 19th, Mr. Savage. 22nd, Nurse Graham.—A. T. C.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Morning, Mr. Williams described the work of mediums he had met; Mr. Abethell gave clairvoyant descriptions. Afternoon, good Lyceum session. Evening, earnest address and convincing clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Podmore. Sunday next, morning, Mr. G. Brown; evening, Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, soloist, Mrs. Dupeé. 29th, Harvest Festival, Mr. E. W. Beard. Tuesday, at 8.15, healing; Thursday, 8.15, circle.—A. C. S.