

# Light:



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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATSOEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!'—Paul.

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*For further particulars see p. 26.*

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## CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way .....	25
L.S.A. Notices .....	26
The Search After God .....	27
Life Within and Without the Veil. By L. V. H. Witley .....	27
Dr. A. R. Wallace's Birthday .....	28
Woman's Prior Claim .....	28
A Successful Social Gathering .....	29
The Coming Kingdom .....	29
The Faith of Fénelon .....	29
Hypnotism and Healing .....	30

Are the Phenomena of Spiritualism in Harmony with Science? By Dr. A. R. Wallace .....	31
Psychic Investigation, with Illus- trations. An Address by Mr. H. Biden Steele .....	32
Some 'Inspirational' Drawings .....	34
The Passing of 'Merely' and 'Only' .....	34
The Fifty Best Books on Spirit- ualism .....	34
Ought we to Pray for Rain? .....	35

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

'The Hibbert Journal' for January fully maintains its reputation as a magazine which reflects the best thought of the time. Amongst the more noteworthy articles are, 'Intellectualism and Faith,' by Principal Forsyth; 'Marriage and Divorce,' by the Bishop of Carlisle; 'Modernism and the Catholic Consciousness,' by George Coore; 'The Civic University,' an address delivered to the citizens of Bristol, by Viscount Haldane; and 'Consciousness as a Cause of Neural Activity,' by Professor D. F. Harris. In the first-named article Principal Forsyth has some penetrating criticism on 'cleverness,' and commenting on the 'healthy dread of Intellectualism' which exists in the British mind he remarks:—

But suspicion of the clever is a great quality rightly taken. Judgment is a greater gift than ability. The world is neither to be understood nor managed by sheer talent, logic or knowledge. The greatest movements in the world have been irrational, or at least non-logical. And the irrationality of the world, the faith of a principle which flows underneath reason on the one hand, and of a power which rises beyond it on the other, and even seems to reverse it, has done more to keep religion quick and deep than any sense of the world's intelligent nature or consistent course.

We have more than once in these columns endeavoured—at the risk of being misunderstood—to enforce the point that the intellect is a highly limited faculty, very apt to be tremendously over-rated. And we are glad to have our argument reinforced by the witness of so distinguished an authority as Principal Forsyth who well testifies that 'it is not with truth that our intellect has chiefly to do, but with reality.' And reality he describes as being in the nature of action. In a word, truth is seen and grasped by the soul, which sets the intellect, as its servant, to carry out the expression of it in the material world. We have met many brilliant intellects whose influence for good on the world was far smaller than that of seemingly dull, slow minds backed by depth of character, firmness of purpose and solid sagacity. In all great spiritual movements the men who really matter are not so much the volatile, alert minds—although their value is not to be despised—as those who, realising to the core the sacredness of the truth they have espoused, stand like bulwarks, neither to be shaken nor driven back by the batteries of hostile intellects or the caprices of the hour.

Another item in the 'Hibbert' which engaged our attention was the article on 'Consciousness and Neural Activity,' by Professor Fraser Harris, who notes the waning power of physiological materialism. Remarking on the

men of eminence in the medical world who have protested against the excessive materialism in physiology, he cites the testimony of Dr. Haldane, F.R.S., of Oxford, who declared that 'the conceptions of physics and chemistry are insufficient to enable us to understand physiological phenomena.' And he adds:—

Another Oxford teacher, Dr. MacDougall, does not hesitate in his 'Physiological Psychology' to treat of the soul not as a metaphor, or as some effete notion of pre-scientific days, but as a real existence.

The soul as 'a real existence!' We are indeed moving ahead. But what a strange revolution it will be if Science, having finished its warfare with Theology, is at last in a position to present its old enemy with a new and reasonable conception of the soul not as a 'metaphor' or something only visible to the eye of faith, but a living reality! That would be a magnificent revenge. After all it is not Science and Theology that are at variance. It is only the falsities in each that create a feeling of antagonism—faithless reason disputes with an unreasoned faith!

'Speaking Across the Border-Line,' the remarkable book mentioned by the Rev. Arthur Chambers, Vicar of Brockenhurst, in his recent address to the London Spiritualist Alliance, consists of a series of messages claimed to have been received by the author from her husband in 'the world beyond.' The volume contains a 'Foreword' by Mr. Chambers, and a Preface by Mr. James L. Macbeth Bain. Of the communicator we are told:—

John, from whom these letters came, was a Scotsman, and gloried in his nationality. Extremely reticent in the expression of his deeper feelings, he was a very Highlander in his genial nature, and filled with love and hospitality.

He was, in short, a man of the strong, clear-headed, yet sensitive and artistic type, of which the Scottish nation presents many examples. The messages are marked by much devotional feeling and the communicator gives a great deal in the nature of description of life as it presents itself to him in the interior world. We should like to quote liberally from the book—so full of interest and suggestiveness are many of the letters—but even if space permitted it would hardly be fair to the author. The letters are published that they may be of comfort to sorrowing souls, a mission which they are well qualified to fulfil. The author (perhaps in the circumstances we should say, editor) is F. Heslop, and the book is published at 2s. 6d. net by Mr. Charles Taylor, Warwick-lane.

'The Inferno,' by August Strindberg, the Scandinavian author and dramatist, is a sombre book, although, as a record of the life of a victim of morbid introspection developing at last into paranoia—a form of brain disease—it should have a strong interest for those who study the psychology of disease. There is no doubt about the great genius of Strindberg, to whom Ibsen once alluded as 'one greater than I,' and perhaps the painful delusions from which he suffered are referable to that madness which is proverbially allied to 'great wits.' There have been many

smaller men who have suffered from the 'fixed idea,' but few to so great and terrible a degree as Strindberg. He conceived the belief that he was really living in Inferno—one of Swedenborg's hells. Almost everything and everybody he encountered appeared at last to have some malignant purpose directed especially against himself. To some extent a real psychical element obtruded itself. He relates several examples of verified dreams and visions. But his mind was undoubtedly in a diseased condition, and we prefer the psychology of health.

'Initiation into Philosophy,' by Emile Faguet (Williams and Norgate, 2s. 6d. net), is a useful work for the beginner. It consists of a series of graphic sketches of the great philosophers and their systems from the time of Thales down to Comte and Renan. The translator, Sir Home Gordon, has done his work admirably, and the book lacks nothing in lucidity, while the teachings of various schools of thought referred to are ably summarised. We confess to a feeling of disappointment at the absence of Swedenborg from the list of philosophers. Surely he was as worthy of a place in the galaxy as Crates, Hume or St. Anselm, and certainly as philosophy approaches more closely the realm of interior principles, the importance of Swedenborg's work (however much his conclusions may be disputed) will be recognised and take its assigned place.

In going through the book we were struck by the variety of the English genius which produced successively the 'sensualist' Locke and the 'idealist' Berkeley. David Hume receives attention, although that sceptical Scot's claim to be a philosopher may be fairly questioned. 'David Hume believes in nothing,' says M. Faguet—a simple but not a satisfying philosophical system. But we dispute the tense. David may believe in something by this time, however much he once doubted!

In a recent issue of our American contemporary, 'Reason,' we observe that the editor, Dr. Benjamin F. Austin, Pastor of Plymouth Spiritual Church, in the course of an article on 'The Spiritual Reading Course,' mentions the following as text-books suitable for the beginning of a course of reading in the literature and philosophy of Spiritualism:—

'Researches into the Phenomena of Modern Spiritualism,' SIR WM. CROOKES.

'The Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse,' ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

'The Laws of Mediumship,' HUDSON TUTTLE.

'Immortality,' DR. J. M. PEEBLES.

'Encyclopedia of Bible Spiritualism,' MOSES HULL.

These, it appears, were the books chosen (for the first year of a four years' reading course) by a Committee of nine members appointed at the Minneapolis Session of the National Spiritualist Association. It took the Committee some months to arrive at this list, and we can well imagine that it needed a great deal of deliberation to select the books, for the literature of our subject presents almost an embarrassment of riches. We cordially commend their choice, and as they have yet to choose the remaining three years' programme, we may hope to see included such books as 'Human Personality,' by F. W. H. Myers, 'Psychic Philosophy,' by V. C. Desertis, and 'The Survival of Man,' by Sir Oliver Lodge, to name but three.

TRANSITIONS.—On December 6th, 1912, Mrs. Head, of West Norwood, passed to spirit life after a brief illness, and on December 28th Mrs. M. A. Edlin also passed through the death change. Both ladies were sincere Spiritualists, members of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and frequently attended the psychic class and other meetings.

## LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, SUFFOLK-STREET, PALL MALL EAST (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING, JANUARY 30TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY

REV. LUCKING TAVENER

ON

'The Spiritual Life as Expressed in Greek Art.'  
(With sixty lantern illustrations.)

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock, and the Address will be commenced punctually at 7.30.

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Hon. Secretary, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

Meetings will also be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on Thursday evenings:—

Feb. 13—Mr. J. I. Wedgwood on 'A Theosophic Conception of the Invisible Worlds.'

" 27—Mrs. Despard on 'The Spiritual Aspect of the Woman's Movement.'

Mar. 13—Miss Estelle W. Stead on 'What Spiritualism Means to Me, and Some Messages Received.'

" 27—Mr. E. W. Wallis on 'Spiritual Emancipation by the Elimination of Fear.'

Apr. 10—Mr. Angus McArthur. (Subject to be announced.)

" 24—'Cheiro' on 'Hands of Famous People.' With lantern illustrations.

May 8—Miss Felicia Scatcherd on 'Psychophasms and Skotographs': psychic pictures produced in darkness.

MEETINGS AT 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday next, January 21st, Mr. A. Punter will give clairvoyant descriptions of spirit people at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee, 1s. each to Associates; Members free; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each. 28th, Mrs. Cannock.

PSYCHIC CLASS.—On Thursday next, January 23rd, at 5 p.m. prompt, address by Mr. Robert King, to be followed by discussion.

FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.—Members and Associates are invited to attend the rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Friday afternoons, from 3 to 4, and to introduce friends interested in Spiritualism, for informal conversation, the exchange of experiences, and mutual helpfulness.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday next, January 24th, at 4 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience relating to life here and on 'the other side,' mediumship, and the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism generally. Admission 1s.; Members and Associates free. MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing one friend to this meeting without payment. Visitors should be prepared with written inquiries of general interest to submit to the control. Students and inquirers alike will find these meetings especially useful in helping them to solve perplexing problems and to realise the actuality of spirit personality.

SPIRIT HEALING.—Daily, except Wednesdays and Saturdays, Mr. Percy R. Street, the healing medium, will attend between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., for diagnosis by a spirit control, magnetic healing, and delineations from the personal aura.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—On January 22nd (Wednesday next), and 29th, Evening Meetings will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., at 8 o'clock, at which Mrs. Minnie Nordica will give clairvoyant descriptions. Admission 1s. each.

MRS. WRIEDT'S SEANCES IN SCOTLAND.—In next week's LIGHT we shall commence a series of articles by Mr. James Coates, in the course of which he will give the personal testimony of the sitters at the seances which were held at Rothesay last autumn with Mrs. Wriedt. The phenomena experienced and the proofs of spirit identity that were given to the sitters were very striking and convincing; hence these reports will be a valuable addition to the evidence already recorded.

## THE SEARCH AFTER GOD.

One of the most depressing calamities that ever darkened Christendom was and is the notion that belief in God is belief in an external and limited personality—the humanising, in fact, of God. A devout agnosticism would have been better than the present imaginary exhaustive knowledge. There is more wisdom in the old Hebrew cry, 'Who by searching can find out God?' than in all the defining creeds ever written. God is too great, and too deeply hidden in the mystery of His mode of being, to warrant the ordinary confessions of faith, which are too often disclosures of ignorance or exhibitions of arrogance.

William Law, though a thrilling believer in God, saw behind all our verbal egotisms when he wrote:—

Atheism is not the denial of a first Omnipotent Cause, but is purely and solely nothing else but the disowning, forsaking, and renouncing the goodness, virtue, benevolence, meekness of the Divine Nature that has made itself self-evident in us as the true object of our worship, conformity, love, and adoration. This is the One True God, or the Deity of goodness, virtue, and love, &c., the certainty of Whose being and providence opens itself to you in the self-evident sensibility of your own nature, and inspires His likeness and love of His goodness into you. And as this is the only true knowledge that you can possibly have of God and the Divine Nature, so it is a knowledge not to be debated or lessened by any objections of reason, but is as self-evident as your own life. But to find or know God in reality by any outward proofs, or by anything but by God Himself made manifest and self-evident in you, will never be your case either here or hereafter.

This is the purest conceivable Spiritualism—the evidence for God in the inner self, and the discovery of Him in the Holy of Holies of the soul. The humblest woman whose love is her life and whose home is her shrine is really nearer to God than the greatest 'divine' whose life is spent in constructing propositions and proofs that can only end in words.

Intensely spiritual, too, was Law's conception of 'Salvation' which the theologians have so largely presented as a 'transaction' external to the soul, an 'act of pardon,' or the transfer of righteousness or of penalty, with the culprit only looking on and accepting. Almost fierce is Law's searching protest:—

Salvation is a birth of life, but reason can no more bring forth this birth than it can kindle life in a plant or animal. You might as well write the word flame upon the outside of a flint, and then expect that its imprisoned fire should be kindled by it, as to imagine that any images or ideal speculations of reason painted in your brain should raise your soul out of its state of death and kindle the Divine life in it. No! Would you have fire from a flint its house of death must be shaken and its chains of darkness broken off by the strokes of a steel upon it. This must of all necessity be done to your soul; its imprisoned fire must be awakened by the sharp strokes of steel, or no true light of life can arise in it. All nature and creature tell you that the heavenly life must begin in you from the same causes and the same operation as every earthly life, whether vegetable or animal, does in this world.

## 'LIGHT': 'TRIAL' SUBSCRIPTION.

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?

MRS. PLACE-VEARY.—After a successful mission in South Africa Mrs. Place-Veary is on her way home by the s.s. 'Commonwealth,' and will probably reach London on the 27th inst. She will be pleased to meet all her old friends, and meanwhile sends them her good wishes for the New Year.

## LIFE WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE VEIL.

BY L. V. H. WITLEY.

## VIII.

## BEAUTY.

John Richard Green, the historian, once wrote:—

What seems to grow fairer to me as life goes by is the love and peace and tenderness of it; not its wit and cleverness and grandeur of knowledge, grand as knowledge is, but just the laughter of little children, and the friendship of friends, and the cosy talk by the fireside, and the sight of the flowers and the sound of music.

We tend to regard the historian as a dry-as-dust being, immersed in an ocean of facts and figures to the exclusion of romance and imagination (although some in these degenerate days will even aver that history itself is mainly a matter of romance, if not imagination!); but in the confession I have just quoted Green clearly shows that his calling had not dwarfed all his finer instincts; and he gathers together a whole posy of beautiful things—love, peace, tenderness, laughter, friendship, talk, flowers, music. It would seem, from his language, that he was a good way advanced on life's pilgrimage; and the two interesting points to note about his testimony is, first, that the things he holds precious are simple, everyday experiences open to one and all, high and low, old and young; and second, that their attractiveness does not lessen, but deepens, as life passes.

The question arises, What place do these beautiful, yet simple and universal, things hold in what we call the after-life? Hans Christian Andersen, whose life-work lay in a very different sphere from that of John Richard Green (and whom the children who read the fairy stories of the one and the history of the other would, if they were consulted, canonise equally with St. Nicholas, *alias* Father Christmas), when within a few weeks of passing into the sphere of reality, said: 'Oh, how happy I am! How beautiful the world is! Life is so beautiful! It is just as if I were sailing into a land far, far away, where there is no pain, no sorrow.' When he arrived at that 'far, far away land,' to which he felt conscious of sailing, was he the less, or the more, ready to say, 'How beautiful this world is! Life here is so beautiful!'

To me, one of the freshest features of my wife's messages is her clear, unflinching testimony to the place occupied by beauty in her environment. This is the more surprising to me, as, although beauty, from my boyhood's days, has always had its charm, I have always seemed to rejoice in it with a kind of fear and trembling, because, with my Puritan ancestry and upbringing, I had the feeling that associated with beauty there was something akin to sensuousness if not sensuality. My wife's testimony is therefore the more striking because it runs athwart my own thinking and experience; and it is helpful not only in giving colour and glory to my conceptions of the life beyond, but in enabling me to rise above the Puritanical fear of beauty and to enter more unreservedly and more deeply than before into the possession and the enjoyment of the beautiful.

To the ancient Greek the same idea, if not the same word, underlay 'the good' and 'the beautiful.' The Hebrew tended to contrast the two ideas; yet it was a Hebrew who wrote, 'Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us'; and four times in the Old Testament we get the expression, 'the beauty of holiness.' I am interested to find, from my English dictionary, that our word 'beauty' comes from the same root as the Latin *bonus*, signifying 'good.' Another allied word is 'bountiful.' From all this we may surely deduce, among other things, that there is no necessary connection between ugliness and goodness, and that if it be going too far in the opposite direction to regard 'the beautiful' as in every case the synonym for 'the good,' there is no sufficient reason why 'the good' should not stand for 'the beautiful.'

Charles Kingsley uttered the memorable words, 'How beautiful God is!' Could we but gather home to our hearts some conception, however inadequate, of 'the beauty of God,' we should find it easier to trace manifestations of His beauty in our everyday life and surroundings. Ultimately all beauty is

not only the gift of God, but His expression of Himself. The term, 'the grace of God,' warped and confined as it has been during the centuries by ideas theological and polemical, nevertheless carries within it, not simply the thought of the *graciousness* of God, but the suggestion of the *gracefulness*, and, therefore, the beauty of God. Surely it is a huge mistake to hug the ugly and to bar or ban the beautiful, especially when we fancy that in so doing we are rendering God service and strengthening our spiritual life.

Curiously enough, the word 'beauty' appears nowhere in the New Testament (Authorised Version), and the word 'beautiful' is made to proceed once only from the mouth of Jesus. No one can study the Gospels, however, without noting how he recognised and welcomed beauty, in nature, in human character, and in God. If it be not agreed that he evolved or evoked beauty of character in those with whom he came in contact, it will, at least, be admitted that he sought for and discerned such beauty, either latent or actual, in some of those whom the foremost religious people of his day regarded as reprobate and 'accursed.'

'God must love poor folk, or He would not have made so many of them,' Abraham Lincoln once said. I am not sure that, in these Socialistic days, this dictum would meet with unquestioned acceptance; but when we think of the many blossoms born to perish unseen by any eye but the Divine, of the beauties in Neptune's domain hidden from human sight, and of the gracefulness and attractiveness we observe everywhere around us, in sky and earth, in insect and animal life, and in the human face and form and character, we cannot but believe that beauty has no insignificant place in the Divine heart and no small part in the Divine economy.

If it appears to my readers that I am labouring this point unnecessarily, I may fall back upon the authority of Mr. Walter Crane, who confirms my own youthful notions hinted at above when he says, 'The love of beauty has not generally been credited with being a great moral power.' I am very glad that Mr. Crane goes on to plead for a grasp of a more adequate conception of beauty, 'as the spirit of love, harmony, and unity, which comprehends in itself the sense of order, proportion, and fitness,' and in this sense he claims that beauty has 'a very important moral and intellectual bearing.'

In the most helpful book I ever perused on prayer ('The Prayer Quest,' by W. Winslow Hall, M.D.), I was surprised, yet glad, to come across this plain word of counsel: 'Let us cultivate unceasingly our sense of any sort of beauty that appeals to us. No matter whether it be beauty of woodland or cloud, of gesture or feature, of music or fabric or verse, of thinking or doing or loving or adoring—all beauty, of whatsoever kind, may be ministrant to prayer.' Remembering, therefore, that as we contemplate and appreciate and love the beautiful, the beautiful will reflect itself upon us and enter more and more into possession of us, shall we not do well to cherish beauty wherever and however it finds a place in our environment, to surround ourselves, as far as may be, with things which speak of grace and charm, and to fill our consciousness with beautiful thoughts and aspirations and our lives with beautiful deeds?

That in the Beyond beauty will be one of the elements which will add greatly to the consummation and the completeness of life, is clear from the following, which I take from my wife's 'Messages from the Unseen':—

Do not imagine that it is only by the medium of the physical eye that it is possible to see beautiful flowers or sunny skies. Here we have beauty and fragrance and harmony such as in our wildest dreams we could not have conceived. Here there is everything to delight heart and spirit, indescribable beauty—yet without any sense of cloying.

Beauty here being, like everything else, a purely spiritual thing, is inexpressibly more beautiful than the ephemeral beauty with which we were familiar in the earth-life. . . . Everything is more beautiful here—deeper, fuller; the very language we use is full of music and of harmony and beauty.

Beauty, though perceived by or through the eye and the body, becomes ultimately a spiritual perception and possession. Beauty, did I say? Ah me, beauty with you, while entrancing, is too often but for a day, or week; but here, beauty abides. It seems to be inherent in the very nature of things; beauty so exquisite that I cannot put any adequate expression of it into

any language that I could move you to use. Exquisite, yes; ethereal, yes; eternal, yes; yet with no sense of palling nor of sensuousness: full, rich, deep, glorious, its waves seem to roll in upon us and over us until there seems something in our inmost spirit which answers to and partakes of it.

Your dear mother lays her hands upon you in blessing, hands not now seared and scarred by hard and rough work, but beautiful hands. For those hands in the earth-life performed many, many kind acts, and ultimately kindness is beauty, for there is nothing more beautiful in the universe of God than a loving heart, just because a loving heart mirrors and expresses the innermost heart of the Divine.

#### DR. A. R. WALLACE'S BIRTHDAY.

As our readers already know, our 'grand old man,' Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace (O.M., F.R.S., LL.D., and D.C.L.) was 'ninety years young' on the 8th inst. Among the many letters and telegrams which he received that day was one from the London Spiritualist Alliance, worded as follows:—

Heartiest congratulations. May yours be the next 'Wonderful Century.'

The next morning's post brought the secretary of the Alliance a card, on which, in firm, clear handwriting, more like that of a man of fifty than one of ninety, was written:—

Many thanks for kind congratulations of my Spiritualist friends.—ALFRED R. WALLACE.

A valuable article on 'Are the Phenomena of Spiritualism in Harmony with Science?' was written by Dr. Wallace in 1885, and published in the 'Boston Sunday Herald,' Mass., U.S.A. It was given in 'LIGHT' on May 30th of that year, and as it is unknown to the bulk of our present-day readers, we have decided to commemorate the doctor's birthday by reproducing it this week. (See page 31.)

Although it was written nearly thirty years ago, Dr. Wallace's article is as true and as valuable as it was then, and will well repay careful study. As it is 'just the thing' for putting into the hands of critics and inquirers, we have printed an extra supply of this issue of 'LIGHT,' in the hope that many of our readers will desire to 'pass it on.'

#### WOMAN'S PRIOR CLAIM.

'In no field of scientific research has there been a greater revolution in specious assumption than in the relative position the female factor holds in the natural law of evolution. . . . Woman, to play her true part in the cosmic scheme, must know the basic facts of her existence.' So writes Frances Swiney in 'Woman and Natural Law' (6d. net, C. W. Daniel, Ltd., 3, Amen Corner, E.C.), preparatory to calmly dethroning 'man, proud man,' from the pedestal of vaunted superiority which he has for ages considered himself entitled to occupy. The male, it appears, is a mere afterthought of Nature! 'The feminine is the primary and fundamental basis of existence from which all proceeds in organic evolution. . . . The first male, the first son of the mother, was ever virgin-born. . . . Biology proves that fertilisation is not a necessary adjunct of reproduction, but is, on the contrary, in reality "a method of the female organism proper to further variations of type and diversity of chemico-physics,"' the writer quoting, in this connection, the statement of Mr. Henry R. S. Dalton that 'the masculine is but a means or mode put forward by the feminine, to be recalled after being used, as a tool is laid aside by the worker.' While, therefore, there is sex differentiation, there is 'only one sex or organism proper, the female.' 'Life, growth, development, and reproduction are solely feminine properties.' Towards the conclusion of her argument the author says:—

Man is dimly conscious that the race is entering on a crucial phase of human development. And he is right. The super-senses are being added to the normal with which we are familiar. Telepathy, clairaudience, clairvoyance, psychometry, and many other psychic faculties are being evolved generally in the race. Hence it is that, if the civilisation of the West is not to go down into the depths, the mothers of mankind must insist upon a return to the Natural Law, to a recognition of the supremacy of motherhood, the divine mission of womanhood. The truth must be fully understood, with all the admission involves, that 'the woman has her prior claim upon life and all its forms, simply because she is the type.'

## A SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL GATHERING.

The proceedings of the present Session of the London Spiritualist Alliance were opened on Thursday afternoon, the 9th inst., with a most successful social gathering. The Rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane were crowded with the Members and Associates, who all seemed bright and happy—as befitted a New Year meeting. The conditions were very harmonious, and a cheerful, optimistic feeling prevailed which gave Mrs. Nordica a fine opportunity to exercise her clairvoyant powers, of which she availed herself to the full. Mr. H. Withall, Chairman, said that they had met principally to have the pleasure of wishing one another 'a happy New Year.' They knew something of the power of thought to influence people at a distance, and any real desire on their part for the happiness of another was bound to have a result. Although the term 'New Year' was an arbitrary one, it was associated with the promise of Spring and with the making of good resolutions. Wherever they went they were conscious of a lack of joy in the world; sadness and lack of interest were visible everywhere in the faces of the people they met, and the fact that those faces were seen in carriages as well as among the throng of pedestrians showed that surroundings of wealth had nothing to do with happiness. He thought that the thing to do was to endeavour to bring a little more happiness to others; and it was well to think of and be thankful for our own blessings. Here Mr. Withall told a pathetic incident related to him a few days before by a friend. This gentleman, being present at an entertainment given at Guy's Hospital to the children of the out-patients, was chosen to act the part of Father Christmas and present the prizes. After all was over a little boy came up with his mother and said, 'Please, Father Christmas, may I feel your face, because I am blind?' The child's pathetic request quite upset the gentleman, partly because he had never realised so much how great a blessing sight was, and partly because his own vision was threatened with the oncoming of cataract. There was another sight for which a great many people were longing, the sight which gave the knowledge of the continued existence of their friends in the beyond. Spiritualists had that knowledge, and ought to be happy in its possession; but, at the same time, they ought to be sympathetic with those who had it not. They need not force the subject on them, but by means of a little suggestion and a willingness to enter into their point of view, they could gradually bring them round. That afternoon Mrs. Nordica had kindly promised to give some clairvoyant descriptions in place of Miss MacCreadie, who had injured her wrist. In spite of her accident, however, Miss MacCreadie felt that she *must* be present on such an occasion, and she would say a few words at the close.

Mrs. Nordica gave a series of remarkably successful descriptions, in the course of which she alluded to the presence in the room of Mr. E. Dawson Rogers and Mr. George Spriggs, and said that they predicted that the year would be phenomenal in the history of the Alliance and of 'LIGHT'; that more members would be enrolled and a greater measure of success achieved than had been the case for some time—in short, that the outlook was a very bright one.

At the close Miss MacCreadie, in acknowledging the great kindness she had received since her accident, and in expressing her gratitude and pleasure at being able to be present and to wish all the friends a happy New Year, stated that during the meeting she had been permitted for a short time to use her clairvoyant faculty. Besides Mr. Rogers and Mr. Spriggs, she saw Mr. Shipley, Mr. Page Hopps, and Mr. Lucking, who stated that 'LIGHT' would advance 'by leaps and bounds' during the year; they were all joining to make it successful, and they were going to send a combined message through a medium. Miss MacCreadie bespoke sympathy and encouragement for all mediums. After a few words by Mr. J. A. Wilkins relative to the meeting of the Psychic Class on Thursdays, at 5 p.m., this most enjoyable gathering was brought to a close.

In their fear of being misled by mediums, many of the public willingly submit to be duped by those who profess to expose mediums, but who, in reality, only reveal, to those who know the facts, their own impudent self-assurance and ignorance.

## THE COMING KINGDOM.

'The Commonwealth' for January contains the second of two articles by our esteemed contributor, Miss H. A. Dallas, on 'The Kingdom of God and the Coming of the Son of Man.' Miss Dallas points out that various sayings of Jesus show that his conception of the kingdom was that of a 'present spiritual order and condition which, working from within outwards, is destined to come at last into manifestation in this world.' But the kingdom was not only an interior spiritual condition; it was also 'the proclamation of a new fellowship, the breaking down of barriers between the material and the spiritual.' Summing up her conclusions, Miss Dallas says:—

We believe that Jesus proclaimed 'an order of transcendental experience,' and that He declared it to be even *now* in our midst, working as leaven in the lump, as salt in the midst of a world of sin. That He came to bring the forces of that transcendental life into closer union with humanity, to break down the barriers so that here, whilst still in the flesh, we may become the instruments through which spiritual beings, emancipated from our limitations, may operate more effectively than they had hitherto done for the salvation and uplifting of the whole race. From that world of unseen potencies emanate earth's noblest aspirations and ideals; thence come our best reforms, our struggles for peace, our indomitable determination to be workers together with God in the redemption of the race. Never, perhaps, has this determination been so strong and active as to-day, and never has the influence of Christ's ideal of universal brotherhood been so widely acknowledged. If the coming of the kingdom has been here rightly interpreted, we may account for the inspiring impulses and the 'times of refreshing' that come upon mankind, in the words of George Herbert: 'O mighty love! Man is one world, and hath another to attend him.' And we should think of that other world as 'no strange land,' but peopled with presences, some of whom are already familiar to us. For centuries vast multitudes of aspiring souls have been passing from this earth, soaring higher and higher on the great spiral of ascent, entering more and more fully into the realisation of the presence of the Lord, purified by His influence and becoming one Spirit with Him. They must have grown more and more capable of transmitting the light in which they live and move and have their being. Is it conceivable that we below shall not be enriched out of their abundance? In our struggles towards progress have we not too much forgotten 'the traffic of Jacob's ladder, pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross'?

## THE FAITH OF FENELON.

In 'LIGHT' for September 21st, 1912 (p. 450) we quoted some truly Spiritualistic thoughts given expression to by a great Frenchman whose memory is held in high esteem by his fellow-countrymen, both for his noble character and the charm of his writings—viz., Archbishop Fénelon. A correspondent sends us the following further excerpts from his collected works:—

'Why should we weep for the departed, who no longer bewail themselves, and from whose eyes the Comforter has for ever wiped away the tears? The loss which we deplore is our own. This self-compassion for the weakness of human nature is pardonable. But faith in Christ makes us sure and certain that we shall very soon be re-united to those who, to our outward senses, seem to be gone for ever. Live by faith and be not misguided by flesh and blood. In the bosom of the Eternal, the central home of all, you will again find the friend who has vanished from your eyes.'—Vol. I, p. 490.

'How I wish I could come and see you. But what though? God draws us together and unites us. In the spirit I am in the midst of you all.'—Vol. I, p. 520.

'Many mystics supposed that passive contemplation was supernatural, because they beheld therein truths which had not passed through the senses and imagination. All this grand mystery vanishes as soon as one recognises, with St. Augustine, that intelligence and ideas which have not passed through the senses can teach us without any miracle. This passive contemplation resolves itself into a simple process, which has nothing of the supernatural about it.'—Vol. II, p. 31.

ERROR.—By a strange inversion of words near the bottom of page 15 of Miss Dallas's article last week on 'Symbolism and Science' she is made to speak of 'a study of my own automatic speaking and writing' instead of, as it should be, 'my own study of automatic speaking and writing'—a very different thing.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
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### HYPNOTISM AND HEALING.

In no department of modern science has the revolt from materialism been so marked as in the science of healing. As Dr. Lloyd Tuckey remarks in his Introduction to the volume before us,\* 'the subject of psycho-therapy is in the air' just now; and certainly there are few medical men better qualified to discuss the question than Dr. Crichton Miller, the author.

In his opening chapter Dr. Miller takes a general survey of the progress of the idea of hypnotism as a curative agent. It has, he affirms, gone into the third of the three phases through which Agassiz declared every scientific discovery must pass:—

First, it is contrary to Scripture; second, 'it is not really new'; third, the public has always believed it.

It is certainly true that there is a general disposition on the part of the public to regard hypnotism as something in which it never entirely disbelieved. Perhaps (as Dr. Johnson would have said) it is 'no very cynical asperity' on our part to suggest that one reason for this attitude is that hypnotism is a convenient compromise. We have experience of a public which accepts the truth of telepathy with suspicious readiness because it gains thereby a convenient 'explanation' of certain phenomena the spiritual origin of which is contemptuously denied. The small truth is accepted as a defence against the larger one. So no doubt in the healing science, hypnotism is received as a 'guard' against the larger idea of man as a spiritual being.

That, however, is a 'note by the way.' To return to our book, we are struck not only by its clear, sound reasoning, but by its impartial quality. Dr. Miller notes that in therapeutic matters the public is prone to accept unsatisfactory evidence of cure and shows a disposition always to argue from the particular to the general. The medical profession, habituated to scientific thinking, in resisting this tendency to credulity goes to the other extreme by denying the reality of cures effected by unorthodox methods. Thus a lady who has suffered for years from spinal neuralgia and is now perfectly well may declare that she was cured by wearing a fiddle string tied round her little finger. The doctor who is told of it is amused and incredulous. Yet, as Dr. Miller points out, the absurdity of the alleged remedy is no ground for doubting the fact of the cure, for

the evidence of pre-existent disease is one thing, the evidence of restored health is another, and the question of the remedy

that was effective is a third distinct and independent problem. The evidence which we accept as valid of disease we must also accept as valid of cure.

We hear much of imaginary pains and imaginary cures in such a connection, and our author makes a distinct point when he says that, pain being a subjective symptom, if a patient honestly believes he is suffering pain he is certainly right. The pain is real enough to him, however lightly it may be dismissed by others as 'imaginary.' Similarly when he is relieved of the pain—by whatever agency—he is cured, so that to talk of the cure as 'imaginary' is beside the mark.

In his remarks on faith healing Dr. Miller shows himself a shrewd observer. The capacity of faith to cure, he points out, rests not on the nature of the belief but on the intensity of it. And he is drily humorous in his comment that the cures—indisputable and remarkable—wrought at Mecca, at Lourdes and at Boston do not afford a grain of evidence in favour of Mahomet as the only true prophet of the reality of the appearance of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes, or of the claims made on behalf of Mrs. Eddy as divinely inspired. And he adds that

if proof be needed for this assertion, it can easily be had by confronting a devout Roman Catholic with the fact of cures wrought by Eddyism or a zealous Christian Scientist with the triumphs of Lourdes.

We are disposed to emphasise this point as a corrective to much doctrinal narrowness. Sectarian bitterness should have no place in the divine art of healing.

Dr. Miller's book is everywhere instructive, and this is especially the case in its treatment of the subject of hypnotism, on which the author is an acknowledged authority. In the chapter on 'The Psychological Aspect' he makes some valuable contributions to the old controversy on the subject of mind and matter. Thus he points out that the brain is an 'associating machine,' not a 'generator of ideas,' and on the question of the sub-conscious mind we note with satisfaction his dictum that 'the mind is one.' He bids the reader dismiss, once for all, the conception of two separate minds. This idea of unity, indeed, in its deeper aspect is at the core of the question. Health, whether of the individual or the community, is a question of 'wholeness.' Separateness, disunity, discord—these are disease.

Altogether the work is one that should be invaluable to all healers who aim to treat disease on psycho-therapeutic lines, and certainly in adopting these methods it would seem that healing agencies are following the tendency of disease itself. For, with the growing complexity of life, modern maladies show a tendency to take psychical forms. There is, for example, that widespread evil, neurasthenia—practically unknown to our robust forefathers—and Dr. Miller is doubtless right in defining neurasthenia as a disease of *psychic strain*. The maladies have grown subtle, and the curative agencies must correspond if they are to be effective.

In our last issue we dealt with the subject of Mesmerism in its general aspects, and we described it as 'the emission of influential thought.' Dr. Miller treats it (as hypnotism) in its quality of a remedial agent, and a study of his book emphasises the great truth of the unity of life in all its relationships. The higher evolution is forcing mankind *volens volens*—willing or unwilling—away from the brute into the thought-world of the mind, the reason-world of the soul. And whether we call their influences inspiration, hypnotism, suggestion, telepathy, imagination or illusion, they remain a great unity, a mighty fountain whose waters will heal and bless all life with their beauty and fertility when we understand and apply them.

\* 'Hypnotism and Disease.' By HUGH CRICHTON MILLER, M.A., M.D. (T. Fisher Unwin. 5s. net.)

## ARE THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM IN HARMONY WITH SCIENCE?

By ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, O.M., F.R.S., LL.D.

Life is the elaboration of soul through the varied transformations of matter.—'Spiritual Evolution.'

It is a common, but I believe a mistaken, notion that the conclusions of science are antagonistic to the alleged phenomena of modern Spiritualism. The majority of our teachers and students of science are, no doubt, antagonistic, but their opinions and prejudices are not science. Every discoverer who has promulgated new and startling truths, even in the domain of physics, has been denounced or ignored by those who represented the science of the day, as witness the long line of great teachers from Galileo in the dark ages to Boucher de Perthes in our own times. But the opponents of Spiritualism have the additional advantage of being able to brand the new belief as a degrading superstition, and to accuse those who accept its facts and its teachings of being the victims of delusion or imposture—of being, in fact, either half-insane enthusiasts or credulous fools. Such denunciations, however, affect us little. The fact that Spiritualism has firmly established itself in our sceptical and materialistic age, that it has continuously grown and developed for nearly forty years [now sixty-five years], that by mere weight of evidence, and in spite of the most powerful prepossessions, it has compelled recognition by an ever-increasing body of men in all classes of society, and has gained adherents in the highest ranks of science and philosophy, and, finally, that despite abuse and misrepresentation, the folly of enthusiasts and the knavery of impostors, it has rarely failed to convince those who have made a thorough and painstaking investigation, and has never lost a convert thus made—all this affords a conclusive answer to the objections so commonly urged against it. Let us, then, simply ignore the scorn and incredulity of those who really know nothing of the matter, and consider, briefly, what are the actual relations of science and Spiritualism, and to what extent the latter supplements and illumines the former.

Science may be defined as knowledge of the universe in which we live—full and systematised knowledge leading to the discovery of laws and the comprehension of causes. The true student of science neglects nothing and despises nothing that may widen and deepen his knowledge of nature, and if he is wise as well as learned he will hesitate before he applies the term 'impossible' to any facts which are widely believed and have been repeatedly observed by men as intelligent and honest as himself. Now, modern Spiritualism rests solely on the observation and comparison of facts in a domain of nature which has been hitherto little explored, and it is a contradiction in terms to say that such an investigation is opposed to science. Equally absurd is the allegation that some of the phenomena of Spiritualism 'contradict the laws of nature,' since there is no law of nature yet known to us but may be apparently contravened by the action of more recondite laws or forces. Spiritualists observe facts and record experiments, and then construct hypotheses which will best explain and co-ordinate the facts, and in so doing they are pursuing a truly scientific course. They have now collected an enormous body of observations tested and verified in every possible way, and they have determined many of the conditions necessary for the production of the phenomena. They have also arrived at certain general conclusions as to the causes of these phenomena, and they simply refuse to recognise the competence of those who have no acquaintance whatever with the facts to determine the value or correctness of those conclusions.

We who have satisfied ourselves of the reality of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism in all their wide-reaching extent and endless variety are enabled to look upon the records of the past with new interest and fuller appreciation. It is surely something to be relieved from the necessity of classing Socrates and St. Augustine, Luther and Swedenborg, as the credulous victims of delusion or imposture. The so-called miracles and supernatural events which pervade the sacred books and historical records of all nations find their place among natural phenomena and need no longer be laboriously explained away. The witch-

craft mania of Europe and America affords the materials for an important study, since we are now able to detect the basis of fact on which it rested, and to separate from it the Satanic interpretation which invested it with horror and appeared to justify the cruel punishments by which it was attempted to be suppressed. Local folk-lore and superstitions acquire a living interest, since they are often based on phenomena which we can reproduce under proper conditions, and the same may be said of much of the sorcery and magic of the Middle Ages. In these and many other ways history and anthropology are illuminated by Spiritualism.

To the teacher of religion it is of vital importance, since it enables him to meet the sceptic on his own ground, to adduce facts and evidence for the faith that he professes, and to avoid that attitude of apology and doubt which renders him altogether helpless against the vigorous assaults of Agnosticism and materialistic science. Theology, when vivified and strengthened by Spiritualism, may regain some of the influence and power of its earlier years.

Science will equally benefit, since it will have opened to it a new domain of surpassing interest. Just as there is behind the visible world of nature an 'unseen universe' of forces, the study of which continually opens up fresh worlds of knowledge often intimately connected with the true comprehension of the most familiar phenomena of nature, so the world of mind will be illuminated by the new facts and principles which the study of Spiritualism makes known to us. Modern science utterly fails to realise the nature of mind or to account for its presence in the universe, except by the mere verbal and unthinkable dogma that it is 'the product of organisation.' Spiritualism, on the other hand, recognises in mind the cause of organisation, and, perhaps, even of matter itself, and it has added greatly to our knowledge of man's nature by demonstrating the existence of individual minds indistinguishable from those of human beings, yet separate from any human body. It has made us acquainted with forms of matter of which materialistic science has no cognisance, and with an ethereal chemistry whose transformations are far more marvellous than any of those with which science deals. It thus gives us proof that there are possibilities of organised existence beyond those of the material world, and in doing so removes the greatest stumbling-block in the way of belief in a future state of existence—the seeming impossibility, so often felt by the student of material science, of separating the conscious mind from its partnership with the brain and nervous system.

On the spiritual theory man consists essentially of a spiritual nature and mind intimately associated with a spiritual body or soul, both of which are developed in and by means of a material organism. Thus the whole *raison d'être* of the material universe—with all its marvellous changes and adaptations, the infinite complexity of matter and of the ethereal forces which pervade and vivify it, the vast wealth of nature in the vegetable and animal kingdoms—is to serve the grand purpose of developing human spirits in human bodies.

The world-life not only lends itself to the production, by gradual evolution, of the physical body needed for the growth and nourishment of the human soul, but by its very imperfections tends to the continuous development of the higher spiritual nature of man. In a perfect and harmonious world perfect beings might possibly have been created, but could hardly have been evolved, and it may well be that evolution is the great fundamental law of the universe of mind as well as of matter. The need for labour in order to live, the constant struggle against the forces of nature, the antagonism of the good and the bad, the oppression of the weak by the strong, the painstaking and devoted search required to wrest from Nature her secret powers and hidden treasures—all directly assist in developing the varied powers of mind and body and the nobler impulses of our nature. Thus all the material imperfections of our globe, the wintry blasts and summer heats, the volcano, the whirlwind and the flood, the barren desert and the gloomy forest, have each served as stimuli to develop and strengthen man's intellectual nature; while the oppression and wrong, the ignorance and crime, the misery and pain, that always and everywhere pervade the world, have been the means of exercising and strengthening the higher sentiments of justice, mercy, charity, and love, which we all feel

to be our best and noblest characteristics, and which it is hardly possible to conceive could have been developed by any other means.\*

Such a view as this affords us, perhaps, the best attainable solution of the great world-old problem of the origin of evil; for if it is the very means of creating and developing the higher moral attributes of man, those attributes which alone render him fit for a permanent spiritual existence and for continuous progression, then the mere temporary sin and misery of the world must be held to be fully justified by the supreme nature and permanent character of what they lead to. From this point of view the vision of the poet becomes to us the best expression of the truth. We, too, believe that

All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;  
All Chance, Direction which thou canst not see;  
All Discord, Harmony not understood;  
All partial Evil universal Good.

Finally, these teachings of modern Spiritualism furnish us with the much-needed basis of a true ethical system. We learn by it that our earth-life is not only a preparation for a higher state of progressive spiritual existence, but that what we have usually considered as its very worst features, its all-pervading din and suffering, are in all probability the only means of developing in us those highest moral qualities summarised as 'love' by St. Paul and 'altruism' by our modern teachers, which all admit must be cultivated and extended to the utmost if we are really to make progress toward a higher social state. The modern philosophers can, however, give no sufficient reason why we should practise these virtues. If, as they teach us, not only our own lives end here, but the life of the whole human race is sure to end some day, it is difficult to see any adequate outcome of the painful self-sacrifice they inculcate, while there is certainly no motive adduced which will be sufficiently powerful to withdraw from selfish pleasures that numerous class which derives from them its chief enjoyment. But when men are taught from childhood that the whole material universe exists for the very purpose of developing beings possessing these attributes, that evil and pain, sin and suffering, all tend to the same end, and that the characters developed here will make further progress towards a nobler and happier existence in the spiritual world, just in proportion as our higher moral feelings are cultivated here—and when all this can be taught, not as a set of dogmas to be blindly accepted on the authority of unknown ancient writers, but as being founded on direct knowledge of the spirit world, and the continual actual reception of teachings from it, then indeed we shall have in our midst 'a power that makes for righteousness.'

Thus, modern Spiritualism, though usually despised and rejected by the learned, is yet able to give valuable aid to science and to religion, to philosophy and to morals. Not only does it offer us a solid basis for a solution of some of the profoundest mysteries of our being, but it affords us a secure hope, founded not on reason and faith only, but on actual knowledge, that our conscious life does not perish with our physical body. To all who will earnestly inquire it gives:—

The deep assurance that the wrongs of life  
Will find their perfect guerdon! That the scheme  
So broken here will elsewhere be fulfilled!  
Hope not a dreamer's dream!  
Love's long last yearnings satisfied, not still'd!

As it is almost solely by the personal recommendation of 'LIGHT' by our friends, and by their passing on of copies to persons known to be open-minded, and more or less interested in psychic subjects, that we are able to add to the number of our readers, we are heartily grateful to all those appreciative souls who stood by us faithfully during the past year and helped to increase our circle of readers. We desire to be light-bearers to a much larger number of truth-seekers than we have been able to reach hitherto, and if, during the coming twelve months, our friends both far and near will kindly continue to assist us, we shall undoubtedly establish a new record in the usefulness and progress of 'LIGHT.'

\*This argument applies, of course, to other worlds and systems, all of which, on the spiritual hypothesis, either have been, or will be, the scenes of the development of human souls.

## PSYCHIC INVESTIGATION WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

By H. BIDEN STEELE.

An Address delivered on Thursday evening, the 12th ult., to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, Mr. H. Withall, vice-president, in the chair.

(Continued from page 21.)

The sitters should, if possible, consist of an equal number of both sexes. This is desirable, but not essential, it being much more important that the different temperaments should be equally balanced, and here is where the success of the circle is first tested. There are certain rough and ready rules to gauge the temperaments, and in default of anything better the sitters can, to begin with, be divided between those who are fair and those who are dark. Alterations in the positions can be made, of course, as the sittings progress.

One of the most debateable points in connection with circles now arises—*viz.*, the question of light. There are those who favour holding sésances in total darkness. Personally, I do not like this at all. It is unnatural for a number of people to sit in total darkness for a length of time. It creates a spirit of uncertainty, suspicion creeps in, and, apart altogether from the strain to the eyes and to the nerves, few people would be satisfied with manifestations received in the dark and be ready to accept them as genuine. At the same time, it is realised, of course, that a brilliant light is not conducive to the production of phenomena. Exactly why this should be is a matter for fuller and future consideration; but, as a rough hypothesis, we can take it that the actinic rays from a white or yellow light are so active as to prevent any other waves of power from operating. Personally I have found that the majority of people do not object to a dull red light, which is of just sufficient power to enable each person in the room to distinguish the other sitters and the positions they occupy.

Some experimenters suggest lights of other colours, and, had we time, we might with profit go into the vexed question of vibrations and the way in which the various sitters would be affected by the various tints. Some, we know, find a green light restful and satisfactory, others a blue; but we can only speak from personal experience, and, as has already been said, we find a dull red light eminently satisfactory.

There is, perhaps, one point in connection with the circle upon which all will be agreed, and that is that a carpeted floor is not advisable. It not only prevents the sound of the tapping of the table from being heard, but it interferes with the generating power, in addition to which it detrimentally affects the gliding movement of the table. A boarded floor, perhaps, is the best, but this is somewhat cheerless. A good way out of the difficulty is to have a square of linoleum, which can be placed over any carpet or other floor-covering for the purpose of the circle. It must, however, be made a stringent stipulation that neither the table nor the linoleum should be used on any other occasion or for any other purpose than that of the circle itself.

One has heard of metal tables being used, but wooden ones are usual and are best; though, if the conditions are violent, the table is liable to be broken. Recently a control of a circle has been vexed and the table has been broken on two separate occasions—right through the solid leg where no flaw or crack was to be seen. At one circle where this occurred the sitters determined to have a metal table. They had a mischievous control, and he at once challenged them by saying: 'I can't break it—but I can bend it,' and bend the leg he did. But this class of control and phenomena is undesirable and of little service.

The table should be of solid wood; whether square, oblong, oval or round does not seem to matter, except that an oval or round table would appear to be more likely to keep the power from escaping. It can have three or four legs, is better unpolished, and should be of a hard wood and put together without nails. One of the best physical mediums always uses, I hear, a deal-topped table. Each should ascertain for himself what is the best to use. I always use a mahogany

table—with results which are all that can be desired—and for obtaining rapping phenomena I believe a hard wood to be the best.

You will notice that there is a kind of underlying suggestion that the conditions observed in respect to electrical forces can be recognised in connection with psychic forces. And who, indeed, is brave enough to draw any line of demarcation between them? What is known of either? Doubtless many of you have heard of the professor who, while giving an earnest address on electricity to a class of students, exclaimed, raising his voice in his fervour, 'Who can tell us what electricity is?' The loudness and suddenness with which the question was asked caused one student, who had been quietly slumbering, to wake with a start, and thinking he was being addressed, he replied, 'I can, sir.' On the Professor turning an inquiring look in his direction, the now fully awakened student realised his mistake and added: 'I did know, sir, but I have forgotten.' 'Ah!' said the Professor, 'what a misfortune! I've met the only man who ever knew what electricity is, and—he has forgotten!' (Laughter.)

Having gathered our circle together and prepared everything, it would be wise for us to remember that the smallest detail is worthy of attention—that, for instance, a cane-seated or wooden chair is far preferable to an upholstered one. If, indeed, our sitting could be made *ideal*, I would like to go to the great length of guaranteeing not only that the room, the table, and the floor-covering should be exclusively kept for the circle, but that the chairs also should be so kept, and, further, that each sitter should have his or her own chair and exclusively use it.

The opening of the circle being arranged for, it will be left to the discretion of the leader as to whether anything of the nature of incense should be used or not. Few people object to it, and it is very pleasant. Imperfectly as the effects of perfumes are understood, it is generally realised that certain perfumes have certain effects on certain persons. Very few ladies will change their favourite perfume for any other, and if the matter were gone into more fully it would be found that some very good reason exists why they should affect the particular perfume which they prefer, and that the same has a certain relation to them and a certain very definite effect on their existence. Is there anything that more rapidly carries our memory back to a particular scene or happening than a sudden waft of some perfume connected therewith?

There is another aspect of the question which has a very much wider bearing, namely, as to how and in what manner the burning of certain incense is able to influence the spirit people. Much has been heard of the magic rites of certain sects among whom the burning of certain combinations of perfumes is used to 'call up' certain individuals. Some of you in this room have probably experimented in this way. I have a recollection of a curious incident which occurred when I had been asked to arrange a sitting, and a peculiar form of incense was given me to burn. I had no objection to using it, but no sooner had the sitting commenced and the incense been lit than the medium became controlled and very alert, sniffing the air in a peculiarly fervent way. A very positive individual came through and, taking command, explained as the reason of his presence that he had been attracted by the particular odour, which, curiously enough, happened to be one to which he had been accustomed in India, as it had been used in the Temple to which he was attached. The first remark he made when he got through was 'The smell of the priests stinketh in my nostrils.' (Laughter.)

If it is possible we should arrange that our room be comfortably warm. It is impossible, of course, to have a fire, because of its inconvenience and the influence of the light rays; and if nothing in the nature of a steam radiator be available, the only way out of the difficulty will be to warm the room up in advance by means of a fire and then rake it out before the sitting begins.

A very curious fact will be noticed with regard to the effect that the atmospheric conditions have upon the circle. A fairly crisp night is undoubtedly the best, and spirit lights are always more brilliant and distinct where the air is dry and frosty, whereas a muggy, warmish, damp night appears to upset

everything. Of course one of the reasons for this can be readily understood, because these very conditions are those which would tend to make the sitter lax and inattentive.

It is not necessary that any professional medium should be present; it will probably be found before a circle has progressed very far that there is some medium present, and, if not, that there is some potential medium who will almost immediately develop.

The question of the introduction of music is one for individual taste and especially as to whether it shall be of a religious or semi-religious nature. *Good* music undoubtedly helps—it stimulates, it harmonises and it vibrates in rhythmic waves. But how often do we, or can we, get good music? Too often we get maudlin hymns droned out in discord by unwilling voices, blending neither in key nor in time, and with mumbles instead of words. A general feeling of unhealthy irritation must ensue. No music at all is better than inharmony. Is there one of you here to-night who has attended for the first time a Spiritualistic circle or gathering where such a performance has been given and has not left it with a feeling of disgust and nausea and a half-determination to have nothing more to do with Spiritualism?

Whatever objections may be raised to some of the conditions which I am laying down this evening, there is one which is so essential that it cannot under any circumstances be passed over, and that is that arrangements must be made that the sitting shall on no account be interrupted. In this connection, it is well also to arrange that the room shall be a quiet one. I have in mind the experience of a circle which was held in London in a room next to a billiard-room, with the result that the disturbing effect of the constant clicking of the balls effectually prevented any phenomena being obtained.

In dealing with the question of sitters, it must be remembered that there are two very important classes. One class is very useful indeed, not for the purpose of mediumship, but for aiding the conditions and supplying the power. I might almost refer to persons of this class as 'psychic storage batteries.' If the leader of a circle can get such individuals to sit, the conditions will be advanced far towards success. Persons belonging to the other class should be avoided in every possible way. I might designate them 'psychic sponges,' for they are the individuals who not only do not supply any of the power required, but draw from the sitters present for the purpose of building up their own psychic or physical strength.

An example of this was afforded at one of the first circles I ever sat in. I had for my left-hand neighbour a lady who appeared to be very pleased indeed with the circle, although the resulting phenomena were very small. After we had had several sittings, it was decided that a medium should be called in to ascertain whether the conditions were correct or could be bettered. I had noticed that at the close of each sitting I always felt depleted—to use a common expression, much like 'a piece of wet string'—whereas the lady I have mentioned appeared to be in the best of spirits. In due course our consultant medium attended, and, getting into the conditions of this particular lady, asked her whether she had derived benefit from the circle and why she was attending it, to which the lady candidly replied that she had recently suffered from a severe illness, was convalescent, and that the circle did her so much good that she attended it, hoping to get back her health. It is, of course, apparent to all of you what was happening, and exactly similar instances recorded in the Old Testament may come to your mind. As I have said, sitters of this class should be avoided.

Before we have got our circle in order, we must appoint someone who has some knowledge of such matters and has a strong personality, not only to take control, but to take *absolute* and entire control, for I know of few gatherings where it is easier to create a state of confusion than in a circle, and if such confusion is created, there is an end to all useful manifestation. The person who should be in control must take charge from the beginning, and it must be arranged that all suggestions shall come from him, and all questions for the communicating intelligence be put by him. I find that the best way to arrange this is that, when the table has already given warning, he shall ascertain with what member of the

circle the intelligence particularly desires to communicate, and shall suggest to that sifter that he or she shall take control of the circle while the manifestation takes place. When that manifestation has ceased, the conductor of the circle shall resume charge, again handing it over to the next person with whom the spirits wish to communicate, and so on until the sitting is ended.

If this is carried out properly it will be found that messages will come through as quickly as they possibly can, and that each spirit will indicate the person to whom he wishes to speak, and give evidence of his own identity. Where personal messages are expected and received, it will be found that some fifteen or twenty individualities can, in this way, manifest in an hour.

(To be continued).

### SOME 'INSPIRATIONAL' DRAWINGS.

We have had the privilege of inspecting a series of water-colour drawings exhibited at the rooms of 'The Order of the Golden Age,' 153 and 155, Brompton-road, S.W., which, whether or not they are to be regarded as inspired in any special sense (and in a general sense the true artist's work is always inspired), are full of spiritual beauty and suggestiveness. The artist, a lady, states that she has had no artistic training, though she has always been fond of drawing. She works in her normal condition and in the light—two of the pictures were executed by the light of an oil lamp, the others in daylight—but often some effect is produced which had no place in her thought. Two or three of the drawings recall the ideas and style of composition of G. F. Watts, but whether the likeness is merely due to the influence of the artist's acquaintance with that great painter's work, or to his direct inspiration from the spirit side, it would not be easy to determine.

A very 'Watts-ian' conception is 'The Birth of Divine Love.' The picture shows a white-robed seated woman watching by her babe, while shielding angel forms stand on either side, and faintly seen in the background are two reverential figures looking on with clasped hands. The little group, which might be taken as representing the adoration of the shepherds but probably has a much wider significance, is surrounded by the broad blue circle of Infinity, in which are dim suggestions of a host of cherub faces. The titles of some of the drawings are striking—'The Spirit of Dawn,' 'The Motherhood of God,' 'The Communion of Saints'—and all are treated in a vein of pure and lofty symbolism. The pictures are well worth inspection. Visitors are expected to contribute 6d. towards the funds of the society.

'THERE was a Jap at college in my class, and one day when I was fretting over something I could not afford, he said, in that immensely polite way of theirs, "You I cannot understand. With all American people it so is, even as by Ruskin said was it: whatever you have of it you more would get, and where you are, you would go from. You happy are only when something you get, and never that you yourself are."—ELLIS MEREDITH.

MRS. ANNIE BLEASBY, writing from Maritzburg, says: 'The Spiritualists' Mission, a separate body of workers, started here about June of 1912, is going on very nicely. We have an attentive congregation every Sunday evening, and the addresses, under trance, delivered by our medium, Mrs. Pritchard, are both educational and instructive. Our spirit friends encourage us to continue the work.

ALCHEMICAL SOCIETY.—The first general meeting of the Alchemical Society, which has been formed for the study of the works and theories of the alchemists, was held on Friday, January 10th, at the International Club, Regent-street, W. The hon. president of the society is Professor John Ferguson, M.A., LL.D., F.I.C., F.C.S., and amongst other noted members we may mention Mr. H. Stanley Redgrove, B.Sc., F.C.S., Mr. Arthur Edward Waite, Mr. W. Gorn Old, Mr. Philip S. Wellby, M.A., and Madame Isabelle de Steiger. Mr. Redgrove lectured on 'The Origin of Alchemy.' Alchemists had been condemned as half charlatans, half fools, but he pointed out that though some merited this description, many were men of fine intellect and inspired by noble ideals. Supposing that their theories were utterly wrong, it would still be necessary to account for the fact that they gained almost universal credence.

### THE PASSING OF 'MERELY' AND 'ONLY.'

Never use the words 'merely' and 'only.' They are the 'shut sesame' of fairyland; spells that pale all the wonders. Yes, and the tokens that you do not belong to the age that is here. For this is the day of fairyland, and the dominion of 'merely' and 'only' is passing away. Only those know how good that is who know how dark was that age of 'only' and 'merely' when there was no beyond. Do you remember the poem in Stevenson's 'Child's Garden of Verse,' where the little boy climbs a cherry tree in his own garden and looks 'abroad on foreign lands'? . . . In the age of 'merely' and 'only,' scientists kept climbing a higher and a higher tree, and making stronger and stronger telescopes and microscopes, till it almost seemed as if the whole universe lay bare in the cruel blank light of observation, and there was no place for that little boy's fairyland; but that everything could, with only a little patience, be reduced to tables of matter and motion, schedules of atoms. And then something fairylke happened; the atoms and molecules laughed suddenly, as though, like Puck, they had only been pretending; and there was the unknown again, solar systems of electrons, within each one of them. At the same time, we began to be conscious that the Society for Psychical Research had been making investigations, and that we ourselves, the 'modified monkeys,' 'the merely animals,' were not just ourselves, but the hither side of something more, and the beyond was at home with us, the unfathomable unknown lapped our own threshold. Yet this does not mean that 'the unknown' is synonymous with 'the beyond.' 'The beyond' includes the eternal unknown, but it is 'the unknown' approached in the faith that we can apprehend it, not by climbing higher trees of knowledge, but higher trees of consciousness. . . . To be inheritors of this age of the beyond, we must grow in all things, expand, be more.—E. M. JEWSON, in 'Religion and Fairyland.'

### FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

*Under this heading we propose to devote space to brief letters of inquiry and replies thereto from our readers.*

#### Open-Air Work Suggested.

SIR,—Permit me to ask the secretaries of societies if they do not think that the time is getting ripe for an extensive open-air propaganda on behalf of the science, philosophy and religion of Spiritualism?—Yours, &c.,

DANIEL.

#### The Fifty Best Books on Spiritualism.

SIR,—Spiritualism is like a diamond with many facets, each of which reflects the light according to the angle at which it is held and the point of view of the observer. Hence it is difficult to determine which are the best books, as what one reader will regard as good may not strike another person in the same way or to the same extent. However, I will submit the following list for the benefit of 'Reader,' leaving him to select those which seem to him the most attractive: 'Miracles and Modern Spiritualism,' by Dr. A. R. Wallace; 'Researches into the Phenomena of Spiritualism,' by Sir Wm. Crookes; 'The Survival of Man,' by Sir Oliver Lodge; 'The Dialectical Society's Report on Spiritualism,' by F. W. H. Myers; 'From Matter to Spirit,' by Professor de Morgan; 'History of the Supernatural,' by William Howitt; 'Mrs. Piper and the S.P.R.,' by M. Sage; 'Transcendental Physics,' by Professor Zollner; 'Spirit Teachings' and 'Spirit Identity and the Higher Aspects of Spiritualism,' by 'M.A. (Oxon)'; 'Man and the Spiritual World' and 'Our Life After Death,' by Rev. Arthur Chambers; 'Twixt Two Worlds: The Life and Work of W. Eglinton' and 'Spiritualism, a New Basis of Belief,' by J. S. Farmer; 'Psychic Philosophy,' by V. C. Desertis; 'Shadowland,' by Madame E. d'Espérance; 'Outlines of Investigation,' by T. P. Barkas; 'Concerning Spiritualism' and 'Twelve Lectures,' by Gerald Massey; 'Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism,' by E. T. Bennett; 'Incidents of My Life,' by D. D. Home; 'Gift of D. D. Home,' by Mrs. Home; 'Death a Delusion,' by John Page Hopps; 'Guide to Mediumship' and 'Spiritualism in the Bible,' by Mr. and Mrs. Wallis; 'Extemporaneous Addresses,' by Emma Hardinge Britten; 'Psychic Facts,' by W. H. Harrison; 'Davenport Brothers: a Biography,' by Dr. T. L. Nichols; 'Life Beyond the Grave, Described by a Writing Medium,' by A. Smedley; 'Animal Magnetism,' by Dr. W. Gregory, and 'Philosophy of Mesmerism,' by Bovee Dods (since Mesmerism is a Stepping-Stone to Spiritualism);

'Leaves from my Life,' and 'Immortality: its People, Punishments and Pursuits,' addresses by J. J. Morse; 'Inspirational Lectures,' by W. J. Colville; 'Letters from Julia,' by W. T. Stead; 'Outlines of Spiritualism,' by Alfred Kitson; 'Seen and Unseen,' by Miss E. K. Bates; 'Spiritualism, pro and con,' by E. Wake Cook and F. Podmore; 'Through the Mists,' by R. J. Lees; 'Two Worlds,' by Thomas Shorter; 'Spiritualism: the Open Door to the Unseen,' by Jas. Robertson; 'Man's Survival after Death,' by Rev. C. L. Tweedale; 'Spiritual Science,' by Sir W. Earnshaw Cooper; 'Glimpses of the Next State,' by Vice-Admiral W. Osborne Moore; 'Partial Dematerialisation of the Body of a Medium,' by Professor Aksakoff; 'Evidence for a Future Life,' by Gabriel Delanne; 'Christianity and Spiritualism,' by Léon Denis; 'After Death, What?' by Cesare Lombroso; 'The Homeland of the Soul,' by Rev. J. Spence.

These works are all in the Library of the London Spiritualist Alliance. I hope to be permitted to give some of the best books by American writers in another issue of 'LIGHT.'—Yours, &c.,

STUDENT.

### A Clairvoyant Vision (?)

SIR,—'Niena's' experience may have been a sporadic expression of latent clairvoyance. It is hard to say. One swallow does not make a summer, and one abnormal visual experience does not afford much ground for argument as to whether the thing seen is an optical illusion or an example of real inner vision. If 'Niena' has any further experiences of the kind, and if they prove to have any meaning or significance in relation to her life, it would simplify matters considerably. One could then pronounce on the question with some assurance.—Yours, &c.,

UT PROSIM.

### Astrologers Differ.

SIR,—Mr. Robert Shewan will, I trust, pardon me if I confess to a feeling of amusement at the idea of anyone taking seriously the 'astrology' in 'Old Moore's Almanack.' I like the annual pennyworth of almanack lore. The Phases of the Moon, the Tide Table and the Postal Information are useful and reliable—but the astrology! As the American said, 'I laff.' It is too funny. As to astrology on its *serious* side, it is very far from an exact science, if it is a science at all, and its professors may well differ. But perhaps Mr. Shewan refers to 'Old Moore's Monthly Messenger,' which is not quite the same thing as 'Old Moore's Almanack.'—Yours, &c.,

OBSERVER.

## 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.*

### 'Mesmerism and Suggestion.'

SIR,—Your able editorial on 'Mesmerism and Suggestion' is a timely one in the face of the obvious fact that Psychotherapy generally is coming more and more into vogue. The old question is still often put to us, *viz.*, 'Can hypnotism make a person commit a crime which is naturally repellant to him?' The answer is in the negative, though, in my opinion, it should be modified by the admission that the process, if carried on too persistently and for too great a length of time, does induce a certain amount of slackening of will-power, *unless* at the time of treatment the Doctor as hypnotist 'suggests' to the patient that his will-power will increase rather than diminish. It is my usual custom when finishing a treatment, and while the patient is still under hypnosis, or at least in a quiescent condition, to make this suggestion, adding that he or she will not necessarily be 'under' my 'will-power' or that of anybody else as a result of the treatment; this step I consider important.

Another important point is not to hypnotise at all for the mere sake of so doing; the grounds and reasons for using this method should be clear and obvious. There is a big ethical side in the matter, and the process should only be employed with discrimination, and with due regard to the temperament and complaint of the prospective patient. Above all, the hypnotiser should himself be healthy—mentally, morally and physically.—Yours, &c.,

STENSON HOOKER.

5, Duchess-street, W.,  
Portland Place; and Tottenham.

### Miss Lilian Whiting and 'Cheiro.'

SIR,—I have read with much interest the various references in 'LIGHT' to 'Cheiro,' and should like to add a word of my own experience. It is not too much to say that I owe to his remarkable power as a seer and a diviner of conditions an immeasurable debt of gratitude. Many years ago I found myself at one of those 'partings of the ways' which recur in our human experiences, when the resource on which I had been relying vanished and no other appeared. To put the matter plainly, the journal of which for some years I had been the literary editor was sold and changed in character, and I was intent on finding another similar place in journalism, as my only means of earning a living. At this time I accidentally met 'Cheiro.' He was just then the 'storm centre' of Boston society, who crowded his rooms, waited in throngs on his secretary for appointments, and eagerly secured the ten-dollar-readings (two pounds) to a degree that taxed his time to the utmost. At that moment he was the idol, so to speak, and there were not wanting those who would gladly have paid one hundred dollars a half-hour to induce him to have cancelled his appointments at regular fees, had he not been too honourable ever to break faith with his clients. As I have said, I chanced only to meet him (not having gone for a professional séance), and this is the sequence.

'There is a line in your hand that is lived out,' he said, 'and you are trying to live it over again. This is impossible. As well try to put a chicken back in the shell and make an egg of it again. There is much that is awaiting you, but you are keeping it all away by not letting go the past and turning to the future.' 'I understand exactly what you mean, Monsieur "Cheiro,"' I replied. 'From this minute I will let it go.' Within that year (1894) my first book, 'The World Beautiful' (first series), was published, followed, within the seventeen ensuing years (1911 inclusive) by the other twenty-one works that I have published; and for all the possibilities involved in these, and my fourteen visits to Europe within these years, I feel that I am indebted to this remarkable psychic and seer to an incalculable degree.—Yours, &c.,

LILIAN WHITING.

The Brunswick, Boston.

### 'Ought we to Pray for Rain?'

SIR,—I, for one, have read Mr. Jones's letter with interest and sympathy, and I do not consider that Sir Chas. Lyell's and 'R. H. F.'s' amusing stories have really disposed of the question. Take the case of national calamities regarded as 'judgments,' to use the language of the old school. To consider, as did a Plymouth Sister of my acquaintance, that the orange trees on the island of Madeira were blighted as a punishment for the treatment meted out to a Protestant missionary by the Roman Catholic population; or, as 'The Church Times' did, that a bad harvest was due to the imprisonment of a clergyman for illegal ritualistic practices, strikes me, as it would Mr. Sharpe, as silly. God does not punish in an arbitrary way, nor are His punishments, like man's, vindictive. They are always the consequences of our wrong-doing. They do not interfere with laws, but teach us that there are laws that must be obeyed.

If we believe that all causes are really in the spiritual world, it is perfectly reasonable to believe that a course of evil-doing will generate dangerous forces in the spiritual world that are bound to ultimate in disharmonious and so disastrous conditions in the material world.

'F. R. B.' asks why the farmer should be selected as the sufferer. The very word 'select' shows a notion of God and His dealings contrary to the government by law which he is supposed to be defending. The answer is to be found in the solidarity of mankind—the innocent always suffer with the guilty.

I have lately heard from a fisherman of some very remarkable answers to prayer; prayer for material things; such that we might have thought it irreverent to bring before the Almighty God. The Catholic would turn to the saints for help in such things, and who knows if it were not ministering spirits who brought about the answers to the good fisherman's prayer. It is the prayer of faith that is needed. In a criticism I read of a Christian Science story, this attitude of expectant faith was misunderstood, and the case of the little boy in the 'South African Farm' cited, who prayed for fire to come down from Heaven to ignite his sacrifice on a little altar he had made, and who, I believe, became a sceptic from its non-appearance. Now, there is no law that fire should come down from Heaven, but there is a law that all the needs of God's children should be supplied.

In this connection I should like to call the attention of your readers to a little book, 'Christ in You,' published by the Letchworth Garden City Press, price 2s. 2½d. post free, and also procurable at the Higher Thought Centre, 10, Cheniston-gardens. I do not think there has been a notice of it in

'LIGHT'—though two numbers last summer failed to reach me, and there may have been. It is a little volume of spirit teachings, and I do not think there has been anything so valuable since the 'Spirit Teachings' of Mr. Stainton Moses. It was reviewed in Mr. Bruce Wallace's excellent little monthly magazine, 'Brotherhood' (also procurable from Letchworth) for October. The teachings on prayer are similar to those of Christian Science, which will have none of our Spiritualism. As Dr. Peebles has so convincingly shown that Mrs. Eddy was a medium, may she not have received the truths in her teaching, if they are really more than what she learnt from Dr. Quimby, from 'the other side'?—Yours, &c.,

C. JESSIE VESEL.

SIR,—With reference to the question, 'Should we pray for rain?' kindly permit me to give the following extracts from a sermon preached by the Bishop of Manchester in the Manchester Cathedral in 1887, during the meeting of the British Association.

Dealing with the problem of 'how the regular economy of Nature can possibly consist with a regular economy of prayer,' he observed: 'If prayer interferes at all with the economy of Nature, it must interfere with it fatally, everywhere, and in all future time. . . . Is it, then, according to the Divine will that when we are individually suffering from the regularity of the course of Nature—suffering, for instance, from the want of rain or the superabundance of it—we should ask God to interfere with that regularity? Ought we to pray, expecting that our prayer will be effectual—that God may interfere with the fixed sequences of Nature?'

Trying to realise what would follow if such prayers could be effectual, he pointed out that as everyone would constitute himself a judge of what was best and the order of the world would be at the mercy everywhere of individual caprice and ignorance, 'irregularity would accordingly take the place of invariableness. No man could possibly foretell what would be on the morrow. The scientist would find all his researches for rule and law baffled; the agriculturalist would find all his calculations upset; Nature, again, as in the days of ignorance, would become the master of man.' Turning to the teachings of Jesus, the Bishop found that in the saying 'He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth his rain on the just and the unjust' Jesus not only emphasised the moral indifference of Nature but gave 'as distinct a denial that natural blessings are the special reward of righteousness as was given to that untenable position in the book of Job. . . . Natural accidents and social misfortunes were not to be taken for moral judgments of God.'—Yours, &c.,

W. F. M.

[This discussion must now close.—Ed. 'LIGHT.']

#### Spiritualists' National Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—In submitting my monthly report for December, I wish to thank very sincerely all who have helped to make the collection a success. Whilst it has not reached the desired sum of £100, I believe it is nearer the amount than in previous years. It is made up as follows: 'A Sympathising Friend,' £10; Mrs. J. Butterworth, 10s.; 'A Salford Widow,' 5s.; A. Sutcliffe, 5s.; 'A Friend' (Madras), 2s. 6d.; Mr. H. Marsden, 2s.; 'A.S.', 1s.; R. Driver, 1s.; J. T. Apedale, 2s. 6d.; Southampton Spiritual Church, £3 5s.; Lancaster Society, 15s.; Rawlinson-street, Barrow, 11s. 2d.; Walsall, 8s.; Sowerby Bridge, 5s. 9d.; Blackburn Temple, 5s. 6d.; Colne Society, 5s.; Plymouth, 5s.; Brown-street, Leigh, 5s.; North-street, Burnley, 15s. (omitted in last report); total, £18 9s. 5d. Grand total, £94 18s. 6d. There are still to come in some societies' collections, which were taken on the Sunday named as the day for collection. In wishing for all our kind helpers increased happiness in the New Year, I would like also to thank all the friends whose Christmas greetings came as a ray of sunshine in the midst of hard work.—Yours, &c.,

MARY A. STAIR.

14, North-street, Keighley, Yorkshire.

#### BATTERSEA LYCEUM SOCIAL.

On January 11th fifty Lyceumists sat down to a bountiful tea. Recitations, songs and games were then much enjoyed. Toys and useful articles were given to the children from a Christmas tree kindly provided by Miss Hayward and her friends, and fruit, biscuits and sweets were distributed. Our sincere thanks are tendered to the following lovers of the children who so generously provided the treat: Miss Hayes, the cake; Mrs. Hall, 2s. and toys; Miss Hayward, 6s.; Mr. and Mrs. Irving-Bell, £1 1s. and parcel of useful garments and toys. The workers also deserve recognition, viz., Messrs. Dimmick and Drew, Miss Nellie Smith and Mrs. Thomas, who superintended the tea.

ANNIE BODDINGTON.

#### SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, JAN. 12th, &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. Imison gave remarkably successful clairvoyant descriptions to a large audience. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided.—*15, Mortimer-street, W.*—On the 6th inst. Mrs. Neville gave well-recognised 'descriptions.' Mr. W. T. Cooper presided. Sunday next, see advt. on front page.

**LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION**: 13B, *Pembroke Place, Baywater, W.*—Mrs. M. H. Wallis gave fine addresses on 'The Joy of Living' and 'Spiritual Realities.' See advt. on front page.

**BATTERSEA PARK ROAD**.—**HENLEY STREET**.—Mr. A. Hough gave an instructive address. Sunday next, Mr. D. J. Davis, J.P. January 25th, at 7.30, social evening; comedy sketch; dancing. Tickets 6d.

**BRIXTON**.—8, **MAYALL ROAD**.—Mrs. Miles Ord gave an address. Sunday next, 7 p.m. Mrs. Neville on 'Psychometry.' Circles: Monday, 7.30, ladies; Tuesday, 8.15, members; Thursday, 8.15, public. Friday, at 7, Lyceum.—G. T. W.

**BIRMINGHAM**.—**CAMDEN-STREET SCHOOLS**.—Miss Coleman gave an address and 'descriptions.' Monday, at 3, ladies' tea-meeting and circle; at 8, Miss Coleman gave psychometric readings. Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis.—W. E. R.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES**.—**ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK**.—Miss Violet Burton gave a helpful address. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., address by Madame Beaurepaire on 'Spirit Messages,' and clairvoyant descriptions. Lyceum every Sunday at 3 p.m.

**CROYDON**.—**ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD ROAD, BROAD GREEN**.—Mr. Gerald Scholey spoke inspiringly on 'The Transfiguration of Jesus,' and Mr. Percy Scholey gave helpful 'descriptions.' Sunday next, Mr. Horace Leaf, address and 'descriptions.'

**PECKHAM**.—**LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE ROAD**.—Morning, address by Mr. Nottcutt; afternoon, Lyceum; evening, fine address by Mr. Fielder on 'The Making of Man.' Sunday next, morning and evening, Mrs. Alice Webb. 26th, 11.30, Mr. Cox; 7, Mrs. Effie de Bathe. Thursday, at 8.15, public circle.

**CLAPHAM**.—**HOWARD-STREET, NEW ROAD**.—Mrs. Mary Clempson addressed a large audience on 'Is there a Personal Devil?' Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Harvey, address and clairvoyant descriptions. 20th, at 3 and 8 p.m., auric readings.—F. C.

**BRIGHTON**.—**MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM)**.—Good addresses were given by our president, Mr. F. Grayson Clarke. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, inspirational addresses and clairvoyant descriptions; questions answered. Tuesday, at 3 and 8, and Wednesday, at 3, clairvoyance; at 8, members.—H. J. E.

**BRIGHTON**.—**HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET WEST**.—Mr. W. J. Tull gave a good address and Mrs. G. C. Curry 'descriptions.' Sunday next, at 11.15 and 7, Mrs. Mary Davies. Tuesdays, at 3 and 8, and Wednesdays, at 3, Mrs. Curry, clairvoyance. Thursdays, at 8.15, circle.—A. C.

**HACKNEY**.—240A, **AMHURST ROAD, N.**—Mrs. Podmore gave an address on 'Religion' and excellent 'descriptions.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Mary Gordon, address and 'descriptions.' 26th, Mr. R. King. 20th, Miss Gibson. 23rd, members only (Mrs. Podmore).—N. R.

**ILFORD**.—45, **THE PROMENADE**.—Miss Morris spoke on 'The Value of Phenomena.' 7th, address by Miss Violet Burton, on 'The Meaning of Life'; questions answered. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., study class; at 7 p.m., Miss Scates. Tuesday, at 8, Mrs. Neville. Friday, at 8.30, members' circle, Mrs. Briggs.—H. W.

**BRISTOL**.—144, **GROSVENOR ROAD**.—Able addresses were delivered by Mrs. J. S. Baxter on 'Duty' and 'Love,' subjects chosen by the audience; and by Mr. Brunt on 'The Subconscious Self.' Sunday next, at 6.30 p.m., service. Monday, at 7, healing; at 8, developing. Wednesday and Friday, at 7.30, circles.—J. S. B.

**HOLLOWAY**.—**GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE ROAD**.—Addresses by Mr. H. R. Morpeth on 'Golden Treasures' and Mr. Horace Leaf on 'A Message for the Ensuing Year,' and several 'descriptions.' 8th, Mrs. E. Webster gave successful readings. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., open; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7, members of Lyceum District Council; 26th, at 7, Mrs. Alice Jamrach.—J. F.

**STRATFORD**.—**IDMISTON ROAD, FOREST LANE**.—Addresses morning and evening by Mr. J. Wrench on 'Our Present Need,' and Mr. A. J. McLellan on 'Our Work on the Other Side,' followed by 'descriptions.' Thursday, 9th, Mr. and Mrs. Hayward, address and 'descriptions.' Sunday next, at 11.45 a.m., Mr. C. H. Dennis on 'The Future of Modern Spiritualism.' 7 p.m., Mrs. Beaumont. 26th, Fellowship Night.

STRATFORD.—WORKMAN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mr. A. Richardson's stirring address on 'The Gospel of the Kingdom of God' was much appreciated. Mr. George F. Tilby presided. Sunday next, 7 p.m., Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn, address.

EXETER.—MARLBOROUGH HALL.—Mrs. Harvey gave an address and 'descriptions.'—E. F.

NOTTINGHAM.—MECHANICS' LECTURE HALL.—Mr. John Lobb gave addresses morning and evening.—H. E.

SOUTHSEA.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—Mrs. Mitchell gave addresses, and Mrs. Farr psychometric delineations.—J. W. M.

STONEHOUSE.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL.—Address by Mr. Friend on 'Kindness,' solo by Miss Gunney, 'descriptions' by Mrs. Pollard, Mrs. Joachim Dennis, and a local medium.—E. D.

CHATHAM.—553, CANTERBURY-STREET, GILLINGHAM.—Mrs. Mary Gordon addressed a crowded meeting on 'Spiritualism,' and gave 'descriptions.'—E. S.

TOTTENHAM.—684, HIGH ROAD.—Mrs. Mary Davies addressed a large audience on 'The Differentiation of Spirit and Soul,' and gave 'descriptions.'—N. D.

KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES'-CRESCENT, N.W.—Mr. Cottrell gave an address and 'descriptions.' 12th, Mrs. Neville, address and psychometric readings.—A. J. G.

DUNDEE.—OPERATIVE HALL, 43, OVERGATE.—Evening, Mr. Ferrier spoke on 'Spiritualism.' Mr. Anderson gave descriptions.—A. E. A.

PORTSMOUTH.—MIZPAH HALL, WATERLOO-STREET.—Mr. and Mrs. Spiller conducted the services. 9th, healing guild, and address and 'descriptions' by Mrs. Rex Luckier.—P.

BRISTOL.—THOMAS-STREET HALL, STOKES CROFT.—Mrs. Powell Williams gave an address and 'descriptions.' 7th, ladies' meeting. 8th, members' circle. 10th, public meeting.—W. G.

BRISTOL.—16, KING'S SQUARE (OFF STOKES CROFT).—Mr. Rudman spoke on 'Christ the Master,' a subject chosen by the audience. 'Descriptions' by Messrs. Thorne and F. Rudman. 9th, a successful social evening.—A. L.

MANOR PARK.—THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.—Mr. Lund gave an address, and Mrs. Lund 'descriptions.' 6th, ladies' meeting, Mrs. Webster. 8th, address by Mr. Britten, and 'descriptions' by Mr. Trinder.—T. S.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHED HALL.—Mrs. Annie Smith spoke on 'Reminiscences,' and 'In my Father's House are many Mansions,' and gave 'descriptions.' Mr. G. Mathison, district visitor, addressed the 'Lyceumists.'—H. I.

SOUTHEND.—CROWSTONE GYMNASIUM, NORTHVIEW DRIVE, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA.—Mrs. Jannach spoke on 'Spiritualism: Is it Religion?' and gave 'descriptions.' Our removal to a new hall has resulted in much larger audiences.—S. E. W.

READING.—NEW HALL, BLAGRAVE-STREET.—Mr. P. R. Street gave addresses on 'The Land of the Lotus' and 'The Greater Psychology.' 6th, Mrs. Street gave 'descriptions' and psychometric readings.—M. L.

PORTSMOUTH TEMPLE.—VICTORIA-ROAD SOUTH.—Mr. D. J. Davis, J.P., addressed good audiences on 'The Value of Life' and 'Do our Dead Live?' 8th, address on 'Sowing and Reaping' by Mrs. Spiller, followed by psychic readings.—J. McF.

SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—Mr. Hawes was the speaker; morning subject, 'New Year's Resolutions'; evening, 'The Necessity for controlling our grief at Bereavement.' Mr. Rundle gave good 'descriptions.'—C. A. B.

MANOR PARK.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STONE-ROAD.—Morning, healing service; evening, address by Mr. Symons on 'Fellowship.' 9th, annual Lyceum Festival and distribution of prizes.—T. B.

PLYMOUTH.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.—Mr. Jepp gave an inspiring address on 'The Soul's Awakening,' and answered questions. 8th, Mesdames Trueman and Summers gave 'descriptions.'—E. F.

WHITLEY BAY.—137, WHITLEY-ROAD.—Mrs. E. H. Cansick gave an address on 'Spiritualism: its Limitations, its Conditioning and its Possibilities.' 8th, Mrs. Scott gave a short address and 'descriptions.'—C. C.

EXETER.—MARKET HALL.—Morning, Mr. C. V. Tarr's subject was 'Psychometry'; evening, Mr. George West spoke on 'Wisdom'; Mrs. M. A. Grainger gave 'descriptions.' 7th, address by Mr. Tarr on 'Moral Freedom.'—H. L.

BOURNEMOUTH.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, TOWN HALL AVENUE.—Morning, address by Mr. Taylor; 'descriptions' by Mr. F. T. Blake. Evening, address by Mr. Blake and 'descriptions' by Mr. A. Panter. 9th, address by Mr. Blake; 'descriptions' by Mrs. Taylor.

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD.—Morning, circle; afternoon, Lyceum; evening, Mr. H. Boddington gave a fine address on 'A Material Heaven.' 8th, successful Lyceum Annual New Year's Tea and Entertainment.—C. D.

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