

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe.

"Whatsoever doth make Manifest is Light!"—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A MEMORY OF KEATS.

We received the other day from a friendly correspondent a copy of the historical and descriptive Guide to the house once occupied by John Keats at Hampstead—now open to the public and containing a museum of relics of the poet. To one who is a lover and student of Keats and familiar with his homes and haunts the little book, with its many illustrations, was especially welcome. It was pleasant, too, to see in it the name of an old friend and contributor to *LIGHT* as the giver of one of the pictures of Keats on the walls of the house. A reference to the fact that the violet was Keats' favourite flower, reminds us that some ten years ago—more or less—we reproduced in *LIGHT* a strange story, given in the London newspapers, of a visit to the grave of Keats in the English cemetery at Rome by a clergyman who, with a companion, saw, while looking at the tomb, a curious appearance of violets that came and went with a kind of twinkling luminosity. He gave a lengthy description of the vision. We are sorry we are unable to trace it at the moment. It is well worth repeating. If we can light upon it after further search, we will print it again.

* * * *

LAWYER AND HEALER.

Thinking lately on the great lawyers who have borne their testimony to the reality of supernormal phenomena we recalled the fact that George Milner Stephen, the famous spiritual healer, was himself a lawyer and a member of that family of lawyers of whom Mr. Justice Stephen was perhaps the most eminent. We find in *LIGHT* of January 1st, 1887 (that is forty years ago), an allusion to the arrival of Mr. Milner Stephen and of his methods of healing, which consisted simply in the laying on of hands. This was supplemented, "if at all, only by administering magnetised water, or using some vehicle for magnetism to the patient." The account given mentions that Mr. Stephen was born in 1812, and refers to his long and honourable career in Australia, where he was for some years a member of Parliament. He certainly left some "footprints on the sands of Time," and we hope to see his example followed in this matter of healing, which to us is one of the most valuable and vital of spiritual gifts, and it is one which a lawyer may possess equally with a doctor or a parson. For these things come by the grace of God and not by the election of men.

MEDIUMSHIP: THE HYBRID VARIETY.

In the year 1853 Andrew Jackson Davis published in his book, "The Present Age and Inner Life," a table of mediumship describing every type of mediumistic gift, its scope, its peculiarities and its limitations. It is a wonderful classification, and had it been generally studied and observed an infinite number of perplexities and mistakes would have been avoided. We refer to the matter for the purpose of calling attention once more to Davis's description of what he calls "Psychologic Mediumship." That type of mediumship abounds in possibilities of error and illusion, because of its continual oscillation between real spirit-influence and the influences of the material world, so that the product is often a hybrid mixture of the two. As Davis says, "It is characterised by lights and shades, illuminations and uncertainties, promises, prophecies, visions, ambiguities and contradictions." We have seen much of this kind of mediumship in which some dazzling piece of evidence which astonished and gratified the enquirer was followed immediately by something so nonsensical or delusive as occasionally to lead the enthusiastic but uninitiated investigator to throw up the whole subject in disgust. We cannot get rid of this "psychological mediumship"—it has its uses—but we can at least understand it and carefully sift its truths from its falsities. When any region of research has been carefully charted for us it is the crassest folly to neglect the chart in favour of blindly "muddling through."

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS FUND.

At Christmas, 1923, we originated this little fund to relieve various cases of distress among Spiritualists which come under our notice from time to time. This Fund has been kept in existence ever since, under the title of "LIGHT Benevolent Fund," assisted by private donations, and several painful cases of need have been alleviated. The Fund is handled with the greatest care, a full account of receipts and disbursements being kept; it is used with discretion, and in many cases, with special tact and privacy out of regard for the feelings of those benefited. All donations will be acknowledged in our columns; cheques and money orders should be made payable to the Editor of *LIGHT*, and sent to 16, Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7.

We acknowledge with many thanks the receipt of the following donations:—

(Amount previously acknowledged: £156 16s. 0d.)

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ANNE JEFFERIES.

A Story of a Cornish Medium.

By F. E. LEANING.

The story of Anne Jefferies, in the fragmentary form which is all that one comes across, had always struck me as being one of the silliest little narratives that ever got tacked on the fringe of Spiritualism. I knew, of course, that Cornwall was the home of fairies and folk-lore, of west country wizardry, of strange enchantment in woods and coast-ways; that phantom beasts roamed its moors and phantom ships sailed round its headlands, and that visions of strange lights mingled with unusual natural phenomena; mock-suns, for instance, and lunar rainbows, giant hail-stones, the aurora borealis, and earthquake shocks in the mines. And there is also one quite real and badly-misused ghost, whose story I hope to tell some day. Cornwall is one of the richest counties in England in all these things. But I drew the line at Anne Jefferies, and (from ignorance) threw her, so to speak, into the waste-paper-basket of oblivion. Thence she had only been drawn out occasionally, to be held up to scorn. Brand, in his famous "Antiquities," gives her half a page of sneering allusion beginning with her seeing fairies and ending with her in jail as an impostor; Keightley, in his no less famous "Fairy Mythology," gives her four lines, and her name is not even in the index. This is all that the reading public get of Anne, and any just view of the poor girl is rather more lost than the proverbial needle in the haystack. It is right that this should be remedied on the date which, if Anne were a famous person, would be called her tercentenary. For she was born in 1626, three hundred years ago.

It was the custom in those days in Cornwall and elsewhere to place friendless orphans in the care of respectable people of the working class to bring up. When they were old enough they served the family so responsible for their care, and Anne and her brother were placed out in this way, Anne being in a farmer's household of the name of Pitt, in the parish of St. Teath. There was a son of about nine or ten, away at school at the time the story really begins, and a baby girl, Mary, and various servants and farm hands. Thomas Christopher and Francis Heathman were two of them. Anne seems to have been a sickly girl, but useful, good, and amiable, if not very intelligent. She could neither read nor write, but very few girls of that class did, either then or for long after. In 1645, when she was nineteen, occurred that curious scene in the arbour, where she was seated knitting, and "there came over the hedge, of a sudden, six persons of a small stature, all clothed in green, which frightened her so much as to throw her into a great sickness." She went into convulsions, and was, apparently, delirious for a long time. It took her the greater part of a year to recover, and she was not quite responsible for her actions then; at any rate it was the habit of the family to humour her lest she should fall into fits if "crossed." But she was a devout attendant at Church always, where she listened with great attention to all that went on.

The next incident in Anne's career is told in graphic detail. In the August of 1646, the year following Anne's first seizure, Mrs. Pitt discovered one afternoon that she had not enough meal to "set" her dough for the evening baking. There was no one to send, so she locked up the house, being afraid to leave Anne by herself in it (because of fire?) and persuaded the unwilling girl to go into the garden, while she set off to walk to the mill. Her errand done, she was on the way back when an inexplicable accident befell her. "In a plain way" she suddenly fell, and hurt her leg so badly that she had to lie where she was, till a neighbour riding by saw her plight and managed to convey her home on his horse. As soon as she arrived there was confusion enough, all the hands coming back, the house full, and bustle and talk, while orders were given for a man to ride off the eight miles into Bodmin to get Mr. Lob, the surgeon. In the meanwhile, Anne was pressing and teasing "to see the leg." Mrs. Pitt refused at first, but not to put her out, at last satisfied her. Anne declared that she could heal it; that there was no need for the surgeon; that by the blessing of God, she herself would make the pain cease. All the time she was stroking it gently; and Mrs. Pitt had to admit that it grew less painful every minute. At last it was decided that the man should unsaddle the horse, at any rate for the present, and Anne should have her way.

The curing of Mrs. Pitt's strained leg by what would be called magnetic passes, was the beginning of Anne Jefferies'

career as a healing medium. The thing was talked about; her fame grew, and from far and wide people came to her to be cured of all distempers, sicknesses, and sores. They came not only from Land's End, but even far-off London. "She took no monies of them nor any reward; yet had she monies at all times, sufficient to supply her wants. She neither made nor bought any medicines or salves, that ever I saw or heard of," says Moses Pitt, who writes the account, "yet wanted them not as she had occasion." She had the usual medium's premonitory sense, for she would tell what people would come to her several days before they came, where they would come from, and when they would reach the farm.

Mixed up with all this recognisably psychic activity is a curious element of something else. Anne declared that her friendly "small persons," or fairies, regularly visited her, always in even numbers, but never more than eight; that she danced with them (and in fact she was seen dancing in the orchard, though no one else saw the fairies), and that they gave her a silver cup for little four-year-old Mary. This it was not considered safe to accept, and it was returned. She said also that on the occasion of her being put in the garden to await Mrs. Pitt's return, the fairies had come and asked if it was against her will; which she admitted that it was. And that they then said "she (i.e., Mrs. Pitt) should be sorry for it." Hence the accident. Now common sense would dismiss this as the fancies of a sick girl; one rather feeble-minded, also, to begin with. But with psychic people we ought never to leave quite out of sight the hidden side of things. At the same time, to admit that agencies may attend the psychic who visit with misfortune any who, however innocently, offend their charge, is to bring a sinister shadow across life at large. People who oppress or unjustly attack mediums may be observed to be unfortunate afterwards, it is true; but all our troubles in life, if we only knew the whole truth, may be of the nature of retribution.

Anne's fairies were not merely hallucinatory impulses; they brought about objective effects. For instance: "She forsook eating our victuals, and was fed by these fairies from that harvest time till the next Christmas Day," when she came and ate roast beef with the family. We recall that Schlatter the Healer also fasted habitually, and so did Father Vianney; these people belong to an exceptional order. And again, Anne's fairies were intelligent enough to read, though she could not. Certain clergymen had busied themselves after their wont with the simple girl, telling her that her unseen friends were evil spirits, and that she should not obey them when they called her; that is, should not retire to her own room, as she was in the habit of doing, when they had need to instruct her. That evening, Moses Pitt says, "My father, with his family, sitting at a great fire in his hall, Anne also being present, she spake to my father and said, 'Now they call,' meaning the fairies. We all of us urged her not to go." This happened a second time; but the third time she went. None heard the call but herself. "She returned with a bible turned down at a page, for the fairies had said, 'What, has there been some magistrates and ministers with you saying . . . that it was all the delusion of the devil? Pray desire them to read that place of Scripture (I. John, iv, v. 1), 'try the spirits,' etc.'"

One afternoon, however, as she was milking, the fairies told her there was trouble before her, but she was to fear nothing, and go with the constable. Poor Anne! John Tregeagle, J.P., not only sentenced her to Bodmin Jail for three months, where she was to be imprisoned without food, but forbade her to return to the friendly house where she had been reared. She was sent to a widow at Padstow, "where she lived a considerable time and did many great cures," and finally married William Warren, steward to Sir Andrew Slanning. She lived to be seventy, but resolutely refused in her old age to give any account of her experiences, "for she said she had been questioned before justices, and at the sessions, and in prison, and also before the judges of the Assizes, and she doth believe that if she should discover such things now she should be questioned again for it." We cannot blame her.

The account which I have quoted is printed in C. S. Gilbert's "Historical Survey of the County of Cornwall," vol. i., pp. 107-114.

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THE MEDIUM'S POINT OF VIEW.

SITTERS, IDEAL AND OTHERWISE.

"Perhaps the worst type of sitter," said a well-known medium to me recently, "is the pseudo-scientific person. I do not mean the genuine scientist," he added, "but I refer to the person possessing a faint smattering of scientific knowledge, coupled with an overweening sense of the importance of his own opinions."

I nodded sympathetically. Though not a medium myself I have met the type frequently.

He continued: "One sitter, a pompous individual, consulted me on a certain occasion. I described a younger man in spirit life. The details were quite clear to me. I described them to my sitter, and added: 'This is your son!' He agreed as to the identity but remarked disparagingly: 'It was merely a case of telepathy!' Then he added by way of justification: 'Of course I take a purely scientific view of all this. I have read Richet's book!' I need hardly add that beyond perusing one book he had read nothing whatever about the subject, and his scientific knowledge was confined to a few chemistry lessons at school when a boy. He admitted as much to me in the course of conversation."

"Another difficult type of sitter is one who, for some obscure reason, denies all knowledge about the communicating spirit, even when obviously and unmistakably convinced as to identity. These people seem to imagine that an attitude of persistent denial, a determination to admit nothing and agree to nothing, somehow constitutes a 'test' of the medium's genuineness. A certain lady of this type consulted me recently. I saw beside her, clairvoyantly, a man whom I knew to be her dead husband. He gave fullest information about himself, and also details as to his passing out. My client started and her face betrayed the fact that the description had caused her some deep emotion. She persisted, however, in denying all knowledge of the visitor. I insisted, however: 'He says you are now wearing something which belonged to him.' Again a flat denial."

"At last I terminated the interview. It seemed useless to continue. She then burst into tears and admitted that the description exactly fitted her husband who had died in precisely the circumstances which had been described. I then asked if it were true that she was wearing anything which had belonged to her husband; again a denial. I then pointed to a heavy signet ring on her finger. 'That ring was your husband's!' I said confidently, and she answered unblushingly: 'Yes. How did you know?'

"There are sitters also who imagine themselves to be so well-known that their names and the details of their lives must be common property. Consequently they discount any information given by the medium on the ground that such information is common knowledge. One such, a woman who was a complete stranger to me, paid me a visit. She gave no name and I asked for none. I was able to describe her husband, together with certain intimate details. The lady's lip curled in derision as I gave this description; then she said, 'What is the name that he gives?'

"I answered: 'I get a picture before me of a river with two bridges across.' She rose impatiently and made for the door. 'Everybody knows,' she said acidly, 'that I am Mrs. Bridges and that my husband died in exactly the circumstances which you pretend to describe through spirit communication.' Needless to say the lady was completely unknown to me. I might add that the name was not 'Bridges' and I have slightly altered the symbology. I naturally do not wish you to identify the lady."

"One type of sitter that I regard with special aversion is the weak-willed credulous individual who lacks all initiative in the practical affairs of life, and who cannot embark upon the smallest and least important enterprise without consulting 'the dear spirits.' I always try to discourage these 'séance-mongers.' Spirit intervention was never intended as a substitute for personal endeavour and individual responsibility. Yet—it may sound unbelievable—I have actually eaten a dinner, the menu of which, I was solemnly assured, had been 'selected by the spirit friends'!"

"Then there are sitters, now happily disappearing, who consult mediums in order to track down a missing will or who try to find the location of a lost birth certificate or some document which will enable them to obtain unclaimed property. I have had experience of such, and have been offered large shares in the missing wealth in return for my successful co-operation."

"How do you deal with such clients?" I asked. The medium smiled. "I discourage them!" he said significantly.

"Do you ever get the 'inspired prophet' type?" I asked.

He laughed aloud. "You mean the individual who claims to be chosen as a 'Great Leader of Spiritual Truth'?" he said. "Yes, these poor self-deluded folk do, on occasions, pay me a visit. Fortunately they are rare. The type of person who believes himself to be selected by high spirit beings to 'Spread the Light' or to act as a 'World Teacher' illustrates what Dr. A. J. Davis calls the 'psychological state.' This kind of harmless lunatic can be found, of course, in every walk of life, and has no particular connection with the Spiritualist movement."

I suggested at this point that there were sitters of a very different category with whom results of a satisfactory and probably uplifting character would be obtained. The medium cordially agreed. It was a great privilege and occasionally an inspiring experience, he said, to sit with certain types of client. The best results came with men and women who had seen much of life and who had faced the rough-and-tumble of existence. A genuine sufferer, one who had passed through a bereavement with sorrow, but with an unbowed head, occasionally obtained dramatic and unquestionable proofs of identity. The sentimental, overwrought and self-pitying individual generally obtained less satisfactory results.

An excellent sitter, he added, is the average soldier or sailor. This type of client has usually "knocked about the world" and faced realities, having been accustomed to deal with the facts of life and death in a practical way, and is rarely surprised or shocked at anything.

"What about the Psychological Researcher?" I enquired.

He smiled. "I am always ready to receive him," he said. "provided he is the genuine article, and not merely an ignorant amateur."

DANEGO.

A PSYCHICAL STORY.

[From the Life of Samuel Drew, M.A., a celebrated religious writer of his day. Published by his son in 1835.]

There were several of us, boys and men, out about twelve o'clock on a bright moonlight night. What we were engaged doing I do not exactly remember. I think we were poaching, but it was something that would not bear investigation. The party were in a field adjoining the road leading from my master's to St. Austell, and I was stationed outside the hedge, to watch and give the alarm, if any intruder should appear. While thus occupied, I heard what appeared to be the sound of a horse, approaching from the town, and I gave a signal. My companions paused, and came to the hedge where I was to see the passenger. They looked through the bushes, and I drew myself close to the hedge, that I might not be observed. The sound increased, and the supposed horseman seemed drawing nearer. The clatter of the hoofs became more and more distinct. We all looked to see who and what it was; and I was seized with a strange, indefinable feeling of dread, when, instead of a horse, there appeared coming towards us, at an easy pace but with the same sound which first caught my ear, a creature about the height of a large dog. It went close by me, and, as it passed, it turned upon me and my companions huge fiery eyes that struck terror to all our hearts. The road where I stood branched off in two directions, in one of which there was a gate across. Towards this gate it moved; and without any apparent obstruction, went on at its regular trot, which we heard several minutes after it had disappeared. Whatever it was, it put an end to our occupation, and we made the best of our way home.

I have often endeavoured, in later years, but without success, to account, on natural principles, for what I then heard and saw. As to the fact, I am sure there was no deception. It was a night of unusual brightness, occasioned by a cloudless full moon. How many of us were together I do not know, nor do I distinctly, at this time, recollect who the men were. Matthew Pascoe, one of my intimate boyish acquaintances, was of the party, but he is dead, and so probably are the others. The creature was unlike any animal I had ever seen, but from my present recollections it had much the appearance of a bear, with a dark shaggy coat. Had it not been for the unearthly lustre of its eyes, and its passing through the gate as it did, there would be no reason to suppose it was anything more than an animal perhaps escaped from some menagerie. That it passed through the gate without pause or hesitation, I am perfectly sure. Indeed, we all saw it, and saw that the gate, from which we were not distant more than twenty or thirty yards, was shut. The bars were too close to admit the passage of an animal of half its apparent bulk, yet this creature went through without effort or variation of its pace.

NATIONAL LABORATORY OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.—Mr. A. E. Mundy, M.A.M.E.E., whose previous interesting lecture on the subject of light, illustrated with practical experiments, will be remembered by many of our readers, has prepared a new series of novel and brilliant demonstrations illustrating the wonders of ultra-violet rays, X-rays, invisible infra-red rays, etc., many of which demonstrations have not yet been shown to any audience. These experiments will be shown at a forthcoming lecture entitled "Some Further Experiments in Light, Visible and Invisible," to be held on Tuesday, January 18th, at 16, Queensberry Place, S.W.7. Susan, Countess of Malmesbury, will take the chair. The lecture and demonstrations will have special application to psychical research, and the question of illumination of the séance room by fluorescent vacuum tubes will be dealt with.

A CHRISTMAS TREE FOR THE CHILDREN OF TWO WORLDS.

By R. H. SAUNDERS.

To say that the interest in this little yearly function was well sustained in the Spheres is to put the case mildly, for reference to the "next Christmas Tree" was made by the spirit children in January, 1926, and at many subsequent sittings up to October the little ones had something to say, and suggest, in connection with it, and from October to a week before Christmas, one half of the power developed at sittings was devoted to the subject. I appear to have created a Frankenstein creature which is going to pursue me until I, in my turn, become a spectator the other side!

I have long realised that our spirit friends are with us, cognisant of what we do and say, far more than is imagined, but this year has been a revelation in this respect. Take the tree itself as an instance. I told the florist I wanted a tree like the one I had last year, and I saw it for the first time when delivered. But I was told by a spirit who has taken charge of the spirit children ever since our little service has been held, "We were with you when you ordered the Tree, and kept in touch with the florist until he had selected the tree. He fixed on one we did not like. We wanted it larger than that of last year, because of the greater number of toys, and we impressed the man to substitute the one we liked." The very day I was told this, I called on the florist, who said, "I've just sent your Tree home. I had some thought of sending you this one (pointing to a tree in the shop), but on second thoughts I sent a bigger one." Little did he imagine his "second thoughts" were of spirit origin!

Then the toys: I made purchases at various shops, and in no single instance disclosed to anyone what I had done, yet I never failed to hear of it from the spirit children, who were satisfied, on the whole, with what I had bought. But in one case I was mildly reproved. I had, a few days previous to my sitting, got some furry toys, dogs, cats, rabbits, etc., and one of the spirit children who has never failed to manifest each Christmas, said "We see'd you buy the toys, but we must have Wilfred."

"Wilfred!" exclaimed Mrs. Cooper, "what Wilfred? What's his other name?"

It passed through my mind that the child might refer to the adventures of "Pip and Squeak," which form so important a feature for children in a daily paper, and I said to Mrs. Cooper, "I shouldn't be surprised if she means—"

I was interrupted by the child, who readily sensed what was in my mind. "Yes, that's it. I means the Wilfred printed about, but it must be a big one—long ears—the one you've got isn't big 'nuff." So the spirit children read the daily papers!

The response to the request inserted in *LIGHT* for a card from those whose little ones had crossed over was remarkable. I had letters from all parts of England, Wales and Scotland—from far-away Stromness, Sweden, France, and the United States. One came from a remote town in France and contained stamps for toys—no name, or address (beyond the town) was given, so I can only acknowledge through *LIGHT*. And here again striking proof was given of the spirit's knowledge of, practically, all that is taking place. "We have seen every card sent, and read every accompanying letter," said the spirit, who has always followed our services with the keenest interest; "it is pathetic but very sweet, to see with what tenderness and love the parents speak of these dear ones, now happily with us. You have had a letter from one whose two children came to us during the bombing raids in the war. The poor wee things were sent into the spheres by misapplied science. The bombs mangled their physical bodies, but released their souls, unimpaired and perfect, and they will be at the service."

This is a remarkable test of the ability of spirits to read letters. The letter referred to was in a pile of letters at my home, and I had not mentioned a word to Mrs. Cooper of the incident.

At one sitting, the spirit child Isabelle manifested. "We've had a meetin' in the Kindergarten, an' I've got to tell you about the toys," she said.

"Oh! I suppose you are spokeswoman, then."

"Yes," in a tone of importance, "I've spokezum, 'cos they asted me!"

At the very outset of our sitting, before we had even settled down into our places, and in bright light, Nada, the Hindu Guide, greeted us. As on previous occasions, directly the room was darkened the pleasant hubbub of childish voices was apparent; at first two or three conversing together, and then the chatter of I can't say how many little ones. The Guide's voice was occasionally heard. "Now, now, don't get excited. Stand back, all shall see

in turn," and then to us, "These wee ones, now spirits, are children of earth, and act just the same, in these cases, as children do with you, yet with this difference, they are instantly responsive to admonition."

One of the earliest individual voices to emerge out of the din was that of Ruby. An envelope addressed to her, the contents of which were unknown to me, was on the Tree, and the child told us what was inside, and said, "Mummie didn't send that 'cos she thinks I'm dead-ed, but I'm not. Auntie sent it." The child then gave the name, a foreign-sounding name, although the child's English was perfect.

"Were you born abroad?" I asked.

"I was born across the water—in Ireland. But it isn't really my Aunt."

A child named Isabelle came with a rush, and in a voice of childish exultation said, "I've spokezum—Auntie Mary told me what to say, but I've forgot!" She was to represent others, and in her excitement forgot the part—verily like an earth child!

Then a sweet little voice said, "I'm Svea!"

"Why!" I exclaimed, "there's a card for you, dear, in a foreign language."

"Oh, I can read it. I'm six years—Mammie wrote it."

"And I had a letter"—I began, when the child interrupted.

"I know all 'bout it. I read it, from Auntie it was. Please let them know I saw it."

Not one of our group had the faintest idea of this letter. It was a test, as, indeed, was every manifestation we had.

At this juncture a disaster occurred which I feared would bring the sitting to an end. As all those who sit with Mrs. Cooper know, her mediumship has been developed with music and linking of hands, and when the musical-box suddenly broke down, I felt greatly disappointed. Mr. Morris broke the circle, and sweated away on the floor trying to put things right, but no more help came from the musical-box. Nada's voice was heard. "We shall do the best we can, great help is being given here," and from that moment the manifestations and voices went on without the slightest interruption—indeed, seemed more wonderful than ever. The finest manifestation I have ever seen was then given us. A huge light of silvery sheen flashed on the circle, and lit the room up like bright moonlight. It then subsided into dull silver without any rays, in shape like a great pear, and in the bulbous part appeared an unmistakable masculine hand, with fingers extending and contracting, and a deep, earnest voice said, "From my own beautiful Sphere I come to witness the happiness of these children. This sweet service attracts us, even as the children. God bless all here."

Then another light came and with it a materialised hand, a girl's hand this time, and the voice of Doreen came, "Do you see the ring on my finger?" I said I did, but could not distinguish what kind. "Is it a jewelled ring?" I asked. "No," was the reply, "a plain gold band." Then a baby's hand appeared, quite a tiny fist.

A child's voice rang out, in a tone nearly hysterical. "That's my toy." An adult voice said, "Very well, dear, you shall have it." "But he wants it, and Mummie sent it—I saw her write my name." We then heard several voices speaking, and in a few seconds the matter was adjusted, for the voice of the child who cried out so, said "Yes, he can have it, then."

We sang a carol, and a soprano voice of great beauty and power harmonised, and ultimately dominated the room, and at the finish said, "I promised I would sing you something composed in the Spheres, both words and music, but the power present does not permit it."

A child who passed away in America manifested. "I'm Dorothy," she said. "I wondered what toy to label for you, dear. Your mother sent—" Again I was stopped.

"I know. I saw the letter. I impressed you to mark the toy for me, because I saw one like it at Mrs. Cooper's house. I like 'Dismal Desmond,' but Mrs. Cooper's is larger. Let Mummie know I came, please."

The toy was that of a dog with long pendant ears and had received, I find, the cheerful name of "Dismal Desmond."

It is difficult to recall all the names of the children, and what was said as, at times, several spoke together, but I have the following in my notes:—Pat, Ronald, Jim (or Jimmy), Ada, Sybil, George, Sylvia, Solbert, Nella, Sadie, Rose, Aline, Paul, Maude, Vera, Joe, Irene.

Several messages came from adult spirits, but these were of the briefest kind, as they knew it was really a children's gathering, and many private chats which would be of no general interest. Despite our musical break-down there could not have been, at the utmost, but a few seconds' interval between the manifestations, and, occasionally two, or more, were proceeding simultaneously. What we should have got had no disaster happened I can but conjecture; as it was the phenomena were wonderful.

Mr. Morris was making one of his spasmodic attempts to set the musical box going when a powerful masculine voice came singing in a capital baritone voice,

"A life on the ocean wave,

A home on the rolling deep."

"Begorrah, I found a home there right enough. [This was Mr. Morris' sailor brother, who was drowned when

rounding Cape Horn, many years ago.] That box, Archie, wants boiling, like the puddings! Mr. Saunders [addressing me] let all know, every man Jack, that every kiddie whose name was sent was there, and a jolly sight more. Every toy on the tree has been taken, and they will soon be away to play with them in the kindergarten."

"I doubt if there are more than fifty, Billie—they can't all have one."

"If you had fifty thousand toys, it wouldn't be enough to give each child here present one," said Billie Morris, "but this replica, this spiritual counterpart of the toys will be enjoyed by children in turn."

A sweet, soft female voice came. "Let those whose faithful hearts prompted those messages of love know that they have been received—every one—ah! not a single hair stroke has been unobserved. It is impossible to estimate the number of children who, in their thousands, have had such a happy time—the cargo of love in this little room is immense—it is very precious to us, and will be taken to the Spheres. We want the parents of these dear ones to know that they cannot sit down to write the very word 'Love,' or the name of their little ones, or even to give a passing loving thought to them without its being instantaneously recorded in the Spheres."

Aid, the ancient Egyptian Guide of Mrs. Cooper, whose voice is rarely heard except at the end of a sitting, and then only in "Power gone," astonished us by a short speech given in so powerful a voice that it could be heard rooms away. "We found the power much depleted. We were deprived of the vibrations from the musical box, and had difficulty in giving you phenomena, but have been helped by many North American spirits—God Bless all here."

There were some Japanese wind bells on the tree, and at intervals during the sitting these were manipulated in such a manner as to produce the sound of real bells, and they rang out in the most melodious way, keeping time to any carol being sung. The tree was some eleven feet high, and firmly fastened to a projection in the ceiling, and would need considerable force to move it, yet it swayed about as freely as though it were unsecured. Evidences of intelligent forces at work were given in generous manner, and our spirit friends provided, unasked, tests in all phases of psychic phenomena, partial materialisations, beautiful spirit lights, etherisations, disclosing contents of sealed envelopes, "reading" sitters' thoughts, spirit singing, detachment of toys from the tree, psychic breezes in a room where all draught was excluded, and, above all, a variety of spirit voices which could only be paralleled in a big romping Christmas party on earth.

So ended our Christmas 1926 gathering.

THE PERSIAN POET'S FAREWELL.

The following poem is taken from a free translation of the original, as given in Palgrave's "Travels in Western Arabia." All that is known of Ahmed-el-Ghazallah is, that he was a renowned poet of the ninth century. Just before his death he said to the Disciples, "Fetch me a fair white garment, for I must appear in the presence of my King." When his followers returned with the desired raiment they found him lying on the earth in the slumber of death, with the scroll of the following verses in his hand:—

"Tell thou my friends when weeping
To breathe no sigh;
Tho' here my body's sleeping,
That is not I.

In life immortal hovering,
Far away I roam;
This was but my house, my covering,
But not my home.

This was but the cage that bound me,
The bird has flown;
This was but the shell around me,
The pearl is gone.

Thanks and praise to God be given,
Who hath set me free;
Now for evermore in Heaven
Will my dwelling be.

There I'll stand, His face beholding,
With His angels bright;
Present, future, past unfolding,
On the scrolls of light.

I am now a deathless spirit,
All your ways I view.
Lo, the portion I inherit
Is reserved for you."

THE LIFE BEYOND: ITS NATURALNESS.

Mrs. C. A. Dawson Scott, novelist, and Founder of the P.E.N. Club, whose remarkable book "From Four Who are Dead," was reviewed in *LIGHT* last year, sends us the following extract from some later script:—

June 25th, 1926.

You are troubled over the objectivity of our existence and the subject is not one easy for you to understand.

We are not as your friend puts it, "disembodied spirits," though we certainly think of ourselves as spirits. That hardly means what he takes it to mean; for you must remember that here, as on earth, the majority use terms without defining them. Moreover, they do not trouble over how they came here or what they are. They accept with simplicity the fact that they *are*, and seldom question.

Instead of calling ourselves spirits it would, perhaps, be better to say we are "continued life" or "life in another form," or, better still, "continued consciousness." The beginning of life—life inherent in the slime on the primeval seas and rocks—was instinct with the possibilities which have resulted in our present existence. Unless you grasp that you will fail to see that our existence is the inevitable though unexpected result of those beginnings.

The world could not have been different from what it was and is.

We do not yet know what forces resulted in life; nor do we fully realise the powers and aptitudes of developing consciousness.

It has functioned by means of a gross form of matter; its energies have been controlled by this matter; its development hindered.

Casting off the body like a cloak, consciousness now functions by more delicate means. That bony brain-pan which prevented the organ from developing fully has been done away with; and consciousness controls—not altogether but to a much greater extent—the substance through which it functions here. By so doing it is enabled to develop more of its inherent possibilities.

What is also of great use to us in our development is the different rate of vibration to which we are subject; different, I mean, from your earth-vibration. It unfortunately adds to the difficulty of communicating with you, but otherwise is valuable to us.

I would like to add that I have not always known what I am now saying. You people are inclined to think of us as having more knowledge, intelligence, wisdom, than we have. We, too, are only beginners and students.

June 26th, 1926.

I am listening to your thoughts.

If your friend [a sceptical inquirer] would look on the continuance of life as a fact, his mind would show him the scientific reasons for it. He is thinking in terms of superstition and the supernatural; whereas our existence is normal—an ordinary fact which has been misrepresented. People say "the sun rises" because they wrongly observe a fact. The same is true of the continuance of life in these conditions.

The conditions are different. That difference can be studied. A mind, such as his, is capable of making valuable observations and deductions. It could do original work on this subject—for the work hitherto done has been done by untrained minds. The result is muddle and chaos.

We on this side are anxious to give information, our difficulty is to find the minds capable of receiving it.

Man has always guessed at a future, has suspected consciousness to be indestructible. He has covered that dim knowledge with strange superstructures, but the knowledge has been their root.

(Mrs. D. S.: You don't think it sprang from his fear of darkness and the unknown?)

I think his belief in a future life was instinctive, part of him. It may have become apparent to observers as a manifestation that seemed due to fear. But I think you have to go further back for its origin.

(Mrs. D. S.: You don't think man's mentality was shaped and conditioned by his circumstances?)

Oh, of course, partly; in fact, a very great deal; but allowance must be made for another factor—the urge that resulted in life and carried life up to consciousness and is carrying consciousness.

You don't seem to realise that that urge is the origin of the world—that incomprehensible urge because of which matter took shape and eventually had being.

Matter is indestructible. Consciousness is indestructible. It changes its form, but it survives.

In order that you may use your own judgment and initiative, you are left in silence, but silence does not mean loneliness. For each man dwells in the busy life of many worlds. The world of physical sense is closely interpenetrated by the world of spiritual consciousness, and that world again by yet another world of even higher sense perception, and so on height above height of mental life, within and within.

—"THE WAY OF ENLIGHTENMENT."

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THE HUMAN COMEDY.

A letter in a London daily paper contributed for
several of us to the gaiety of the festive season. It
was from a medical man who said that most apparitions
are due to "Purkinje's Spectre," a technical phrase
having reference to the reflection of light rays in the
eye. He was promptly answered by a correspon-
dent, writing from a London club, who observed that
"it is extraordinary that intelligent people can believe
such a hypothesis," and who, after delivering himself
of some severe reflections on materialistic people,
pointed out that "psychic materialisations have been
seen thousands of times in broad daylight by perfectly
normal people." Of course; and equally the reality
of psychic phenomena has been proved over and over
again by scientists of the first order.

It is all very funny, and all part of the human
comedy. It is quite easy to grow indignant over the
Rip Van Winkles who, having been asleep for a num-
ber of years, are unaware that the world has changed
a great deal during their slumber, and who, on
awaking, talk in a drowsy fashion of things that were
once existent, but remain so no longer. No doubt
"Purkinje's Spectre" remains, but it does not explain
everything in the way of spectres and apparitions, or
even a quarter of these manifestations. Of course the
"reflection of light rays in the eye" may have a con-
fusing effect on the mental as well as the physical
vision. That is how we might explain the theory when
it is put forward as accounting for the belief in ghosts.

Lately we were reading an account of the blunders
of the theologians, when they opposed the discoveries
of scientists. It was a long and damning indictment
—denial of the rotation of the earth, of the stars and
planets as suns and worlds, right down to the denials
of the records of geology, the circulation of the blood,
and the opposition to the use of chloroform as an
anæsthetic. After a long record of such imbecilities
on the part of Theology, the scientists gained the day,
and proceeded in their turn to enact the part of clowns
and buffoons. We need select but one instance—the
treatment of hypnotism on its first appearance in the
form of mesmerism. It was a hasty verdict and had
to be revised afterwards.

It is better to laugh than to grow angry over these
things. We have heard them denounced often enough
with fiery indignation and tremendous denunciations,
either of Religion or of Science, as being responsible.
But it was not Religion and not Science that was to
blame—it was simply poor human nature, always
under the impression that it has grown up and knows
everything, although very undeveloped, very wilful and
very childish.

As time goes on it will see and abolish its chief
stumbling blocks—"fixed ideas," systems, doctrines,

preconceived notions about life. Those things lead to
the "closed mind," to the rejection of new truths and
fresh discoveries without examination, as being opposed
to the doctrine or the system whatever it may be. Such
things obstruct the progress of man. But they can
never stop it. The stream of Life flows on and
through and over all obstacles. And realising this the
philosopher can well afford to indulge in smiles, know-
ing that "ever the Truth comes uppermost and ever
is justice done."

"AUDITED AND FOUND —?"

There comes a time when one has to form a decision
upon things. It need not necessarily be a final and
irrevocable decision; in fact, absolute finality is not
only undesirable but, practically speaking, impossible.
If unable to weigh up pros and cons for ourselves, we
can at least base some kind of opinion upon the con-
sidered judgment of reputable experts.

These reflections are occasioned by the contem-
plation of certain types of people who hover unrest-
fully around a problem, long after the problem has
been solved. This class of mind is by no means un-
common among the inquirers into psychical matters.
Our inquirer investigates the powers of a certain
medium of proved and unquestionable genuineness. He
receives a communication which, to a trained investi-
gator well versed in the difficult art of weighing facts
and sifting evidence, would constitute adequate proof.
But our vacillating friend cannot make up his mind.
It might have been fraud, hallucination, or the sub-
conscious mind! Not that he knows anything con-
cerning the complexities of the subconscious mind;
but, like "that blessed word Mesopotamia," the word
"Subconsciousness" has a soothing and comforting
effect upon his own subconsciousness.

Or perhaps our friend veers, not towards the over-
sceptical, but in the direction of the super-credulous.
Let us say that a certain medium has been twice
exposed, in circumstances leaving no reasonable doubt
as to his duplicity. Again come the agonised doubts,
the persistent and perversely obstinate re-statements
of a contrary verdict based upon some stale or in-
admissible form of argument. Perhaps it was a
"frame-up"! Possibly it was a mischievous spirit from
another world who wrongfully and reprehensibly placed
the unhappy medium in a false position! Or perhaps
it was bribery, or hypnotism or the "subconscious
mind" or green apples—any wild and wonderful
reason which will serve as a peg on which to hang a
doubt.

What would happen if these good people were per-
mitted to pass their callow judgments upon, for
example, the accounts of a business house? Let us say
that the books are balanced, the vouchers are pro-
duced, and that Messrs. A. B. & C., a firm of chartered
accountants, have audited the accounts and found
them correct. But Mr. D. is not satisfied; E. and F.
have doubts. G., H., and the rest of the alphabet,
look wonderingly at the balance sheet, which (though
they do not quite understand it) appears somehow to
be inconclusive.

The fact that they have never been trained in
accountancy appears of small importance to the wobbly-
minded critics. D. is a cinema actor, E. is a fish-
curer, F. is a chiropodist, G. and H. are teachers of
ball-room dancing. Nevertheless their ignorance of
figures is no bar to their reiterated expressions of doubt
upon matters which have been summed up and dealt
with by trained judges.

For some, to whom time is of small account, these
indecisive flutterings may be a source of interest and
satisfaction. To most of us, with daily burdens, hav-
ing little time to spend upon profitless speculations
and leisurely theorising, there is the practical need for
coming to a decision. We have to make up our
minds, and then pass on to something else.

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JANUARY 8, 1927.

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FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

The "Daily Express" and other newspapers report the telepathic experience of a son (sitting at home, alone), who heard his father's voice call him by name, at a time when the latter was cycling three miles away, and was there killed, in collision with a motor-lorry. The "Daily Express" quotes part of what the son said to its representative:—

"I thought that my father was in the backyard. I had a shock when I found that he was not there. My father's canary died the same evening, and my wife and I regarded it as an ill omen. We heard of the accident soon afterwards."

From an article in "The Quest" by the editor, on "Speaking with Tongues in Early Christendom," we extract a passage concerning the common unconcern about one's own death, day after day, throughout life, although the inevitable end is so frequently thrust upon our attention:—

If we were always dwelling on this thought, for ever imagining death close at hand, we should, most of us at any rate, be rendered quite unfit for work in the world. Nothing in which we are usually so keenly interested would seem worth while. Why, then, are so few obsessed with such a phobia? Presumably, either because the deeper life in the ground of our being imposes a beneficent forgetfulness upon our ephemeral consciousness; or because this greater and wiser life, in which we all share, dowers us with a deep subconscious instinct which knows that the activity of the true man, the work of the spirit in man, is not limited to this earthly existence, and cannot be cut short by the death of the physical body. We all of us thus instinctively carry on.

As human immortality is not determined by Man, but by Deity, and the first principle of Divine Wisdom is Universal Use, there is no mystery to solve in answering the above question of Mr. Mead.

In the same article the general mediumistic phenomenon of speaking foreign languages is dealt with, both in regard to cases when a knower of the language is present and respecting those in which the "tongue" is unknown. Drawing upon personal experience, Mr. Mead writes:—

This is not surprising; for most of us are very poor linguists and quite unable to 'spot' any but one or two languages at most. Moreover it is difficult to record such utterances, so as to submit them subsequently to the judgment of experts. I have myself heard not only simple speaking but sustained conversations in languages quite unknown to the medium, but familiar to one or more of the sitters. I have also heard trance-speaking and singing in languages apparently articulate in every way and fluently poured forth, which were claimed to be tongues no longer spoken. At the same time I have witnessed the automatic writing of lengthy scripts in characters I have not been able to identify or get identified. They were by no means vague scribbles; but the signs or hieroglyphs were finely and rapidly formed by what appeared to be a skilful and practised hand.

Reporting a lecture on Spiritualism, by Professor William McDougall, of Harvard University, in the symposium on that subject at the Clark University, Worcester, Mass., the "New York Times" quotes him as saying that the public keenly wants to know "whether there is a kernel of truth in the widely accepted claims of communication with departed friends":—

Whether each of us, as science tells us, is for ever shut off from his fellows by the distorting and inadequate means of communication provided by sense organs and the muscular system; whether there is not some common stock of memory and experience upon which men may draw in ways not recognised by science; whether at death each of us is wholly exterminated; whether ghost stories are founded on illusion and other forms of error.

There are four types of supernormal phenomena upon which psychics agree—telepathy, veridical apparitions, mediumistic deliverances and psychometry, which is the ability to recite during contact with a strange object facts true of a person connected with the object, yet not inferable from the object itself.

The correspondence in the "Dumfries Courier and Herald" to which we referred recently, has continued, showing how deeply the subject of Spiritualism has penetrated into the general mind. In a recent issue of the journal, "W.H.F." quotes from Fichte, the German philosopher, who speaks of the absolute impossibility of accounting for psychic phenomena, save by assuming the action of superhuman influences or unseen spirit intelligences, and from Lombroso, who said he was ashamed and grieved at having opposed with so much tenacity the possibility of the so-called Spiritualistic facts—"the facts exist and I boast of being a slave to facts."

Writing to the "Manchester Evening Chronicle" in answer to some carping criticisms from a correspondent upon the psychometric experiment which led to a correct forecast as to the whereabouts of the missing Mrs. Christie, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle demolishes his opponent's case with polished but deadly courtesy. It will be remembered that Sir Arthur took a glove to Mr. Horace Leaf, who at once got the name "Agatha," and stated "She is not dead, as many people think. She is alive. You will hear from her, I think, next Wednesday"—the day upon which the missing woman was located.

The hasty critic querulously raises the question of whence the glove was obtained, and quite unnecessarily asks why Colonel Christie was not immediately informed of the prediction. Here is Sir Arthur's reply:—

He begins by asking whence I got the glove. I got it from Colonel Christie.

He then reproves me for not having let Colonel Christie know the result of the experiment and so alleviated his anxiety. My letter ends with the words, "I sent the report on to Colonel Christie that evening."

An occasional word may on this page be directed to the casual reader of LIGHT, who perhaps picks the paper up speculatively from a bookstall. In this service we take an excerpt from Michael Temple's article in "The Referee," headed, "What is a Ghost?" With special reference to the wraiths of persons who have just died, he says:—

It is in the strictest sense of the word unscientific to say that we are so sure that these things do not happen that we decline to investigate the matter at all. If there were only one case or two cases, we might perhaps be entitled to take up the attitude that the inherent improbability of the story is so great that we prefer the much more likely alternative that the witness is either mistaken or is romancing and decline to waste our time over the investigation of a tale which common sense rejects as either a delusion or a lie. But when, as is the fact in this case, evidence is piled on evidence until the instances can be counted not by ones and twos, but by hundreds, we cannot safely take up that attitude, for it is quite impossible to suppose that so many apparently sane and trustworthy people can all be deluded or all be lying.

Passing to a consideration of dream images and their apparent relation to what is commonly regarded as "reality," in the same article Mr. Temple, with wider application, goes on to say:—

If you accept the hypothesis that what the percipient sees is an image formed by his own mind in the same way that it forms images in a dream, but that this projection is due to a real stimulus coming from the "ghost" you get a theory which, as it seems to me, covers all the facts. In the case of appearances . . . which are perceived long after the happening of the event with which they are concerned, it is not even necessary to assume any actual ghostly presence. Thoughts are real things, possibly the only real things there are, and their lingering traces may well suffice to supply the needed stimulus.

I have said that the theory covers all the facts. To that I might add that I have never come across any other that does.

Sometimes, indeed very often, psychic influences and even messages are so subtle that the recipient is unable to decide whether they are due to interplay of personal powers, or have an ultra-personal origin. This is well illustrated by David Belasco, in "The Progressive Thinker." Writing of early experiences, he tells of an occasion when he wished very much to join a school picnic, while his mother as intensely desired him not to go, but finally consented. The boy hurried to the dock, where his schoolmates, who had been looking for him, shouted, "Here's Davey! Hello Davey!" Belasco continues:—

I dashed on the boat. The bell sounded. The men placed their hands on the gang plank. Calling to them and raising my hand I ran back on shore. I watched the boat sail away. Then I ran home.

My mother stood at the door. She smiled. "I was waiting for you," she said. "I knew you would come." That day the excursion boat blew up. Half the children aboard were killed. Most of those who remained were crippled.

Mother never explained. She never understood. She said she only knew that she, who had never interfered with my pleasures, did not want me to go on that picnic.

POOR CHILDREN'S TREAT.—Mrs. Alice Jamrach desires to acknowledge the following: LIGHT Benevolent Fund, £1 1s.; Miss Estelle Stead, £1; A. Moger, 5/-; Mrs. Robertson, 5/-.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

BY NEIL GOW.

THE YOUNG SPIRIT VISITS AN ARRIVAL STATION.

The Arrival Station at which the Young Spirit was posted for temporary duty was a huge white marble mansion, surmounted with a shining roof of burnished bronze. It was set in a wide expanse of green lawn, intersected with gravel paths. On reporting for duty he was met at the entrance, by a tall, young man, who introduced himself as the Sub-Receiving Officer. This individual appeared to be about thirty years of age; a small well-trimmed moustache decorated his upper lip; a suggestion of superciliousness in his manner was discounted by a pair of good-natured, thoughtful eyes. His clothes, which were of fastidious neatness, were worn with a touch of swagger.

"Met you at the Armistice show, didn't I?" said the Receiving Officer, with an urbane smile.

The Young Spirit felt distinctly pleased at this friendly welcome. "I don't think I had the pleasure —," he began.

"No!" retorted the other good-naturedly. "You were doing staff work at the time. Naturally you were too much of a swell to take any notice of us Arrival People." He grinned amiably. "Besides," he added, "you Communication Groups always look down upon the Arrival staff."

"Surely not!" returned the Young Spirit, slightly startled at the suggestion.

"Oh rather! The Communication crowd work in two worlds at once. Naturally they feel superior to humble blokes like us, who stick to one world at a time."

The Young Spirit stole a glance at his companion, whose countenance betrayed none of the apparent sarcasm indicated by his speech. "Perhaps a little departmental jealousy —," he murmured politely.

"Oh certainly. The Supervising Board doesn't object to a little mild jealousy between departments. They say it makes the staffs keener on their work. We rather look down on the Communication Group here; slightly earthy don't you know. On the other hand they regard us somewhat in the light that a soldier of the line regards a Staff Officer—you know!—elegant dilettantes clinging on to a soft job!" He broke off, and for the first time during the interview allowed a touch of earnestness to show through the vein of debonair mockery, which had characterised his conversation: "Soft job!" he muttered. "My hat! You ought to see us during a rush hour. Anyhow, come inside and look around."

The Arrival Station, from the inside, had very much the appearance of a well-organised hospital, but without the slightly sinister atmosphere which characterises those institutions on earth. There was the same meticulous, almost exaggerated cleanliness everywhere; broad avenues of corridor, covered with highly-polished linoleum, gave on to an array of white enamelled doors; an occasional orderly, or nursing sister, clad in white samite, hurried past, each bent upon some healing and helpful errand.

"Like to look inside?" enquired the young Receiving Officer, opening a door, revealing a large bare room completely empty, but filled with strange multi-coloured lights which appeared to radiate from the walls, floor and ceiling. A faint buzzing sound, not unlike the noise of a dynamo, accompanied the manifestation, but of machinery or apparatus there was none. "Magnetic Ray Room," explained the cicerone. "Very useful for raising the patient's vibratory rate! They come over sometimes with a low earth vibration, so low that we can do nothing until we have speeded them up a bit." He closed the door and opened another, disclosing a velvet pall of inky blackness, in the centre of which arose a solitary violet flame which leaped and swayed and flickered like a tongue of fire; the effect was like that of a large diamond scintillating in a dark chamber. "Our Tranquillarium," he explained. "Some times they come across in a violent state—raving madmen, chaps killed in hand-to-hand combat. Very busy here during the War, I'm told, but it isn't used very often now."

"I thought," ventured the Young Spirit timidly, "that you people could tranquillise merely by personal magnetism, without the necessity for—er—all this sort of —," he waved his hand vaguely towards the quivering flame, which continued to shimmer and glow in the darkened room.

"True; we can," explained the Sub-Receiving Officer, "but not on what one might call a wholesale scale. The Fourth Sphere crowd can; but then we're only First. Oh! they're frightful swells on the Fourth!" He grinned boyishly. "Come and see the wards," he added, leading the way to a huge sunlit, pine-scented hall, surmounted by a crystal dome supported on fluted marble pillars. All round the hall, upon soft, low divans lay a strange assortment of beings, apparently deep in slumber. Each was dressed in the earth garments worn at the time of passing out of the material world. On one couch lay an elderly

gentleman in frock coat, striped trousers and fancy waistcoat; crushed down on his head was a damaged silk hat. "Street accident!" murmured an orderly, who was hovering himself about the patient on some ministering errand. "Chap in the next bed's going along well!" he said, indicating a young man in pink silk pyjamas, who was breathing regularly in a peaceful and happy slumber.

The Young Spirit surveyed the vast apartment with wonder and interest. There was a quiet, efficient, un-anxious atmosphere everywhere. The costumes of many of the sleeping new-arrivals struck a bizarre note; a kilted Highlander slumbered beside a tall, heavily-built figure clad in the unmistakable blue uniform of a British policeman; on the next couch a young girl lay with closed eyes; next was an aged, white-haired man in a shapeless flannel garment, who breathed regularly, and somewhat stertorously. "Snores like a grampus, the old dear!" sniggered the Receiving Officer. "Wait till he's had his Rejuvenation treatment; you won't recognise him."

The Young Spirit pondered. "I suppose," he said doubtfully, "that I must have gone through an Arrival Station when I came across. Funny, I don't seem to remember anything about it!"

"They don't, usually," explained his companion. "But come along and be introduced to the Chief Receiving Officer. I want her to put you on my job for a bit."

"Why?" queried the Young Spirit.

"Because," returned the other, "as soon as you're ready to take my place, I'm going to apply for leave!"

ANIMALS AND SURVIVAL.

I am an absolute believer in the survival of the spirits of animals under certain conditions, that is of loved, loving, and intelligent pets. I should be very sorry to think that I should never meet my canine and feline friends again.

Some time ago, I and a friend owned a black Manx kitten named Bruce. We lived in a top flat, and he was our only pet, a very jealous one. He objected strongly when a friend brought a small dog to see us, and would not forgive us for hours.

Bruce only lived eight months. He was very intelligent and extraordinarily affectionate. He showed a remarkable knowledge of our movements when absent. On several occasions we went away, and the cat was sent to the basement to live with the caretaker, a Scotswoman and a cat-lover. Though we did not give her notice when we intended to return, we always found Bruce in the flat on our arrival, and the good woman explained that he gave her no peace for about an hour before our return, so that she had to take him up to our rooms.

He fell ill of influenza and was taken to the vet's. About nine o'clock one evening, we called to see him, and were told that he could not live through the night. We said "good-bye" to the sick animal, who was just able to purr feebly and rub against us as he lay exhausted. We then went home, as the vet considered it kinder to Bruce that we should not stay.

We went to bed without seeing the caretaker. Next morning, about eight, she came up to our flat and asked us if we had news of Bruce. We said, No, we feared he must be dead. She said, "He died at midnight." On our exclamation of surprise, she said that she had had no message, but at twelve exactly she had heard Bruce mewing in his usual way at her door. It was not her cat, the voice was Bruce's, and her cat was asleep.

We went round to the vet's and were told that Bruce had breathed his last as the clock struck twelve.

Why he should have gone to the caretaker instead of to his mistresses we do not know. We often seemed to feel his presence for some time after that.

Later, we had a favourite Highland terrier, a most devoted friend, who would have no other owner but ourselves. If sent away or left, he fretted terribly. He died at the age of fourteen in our arms.

Next day we both heard "Jock," who had rather long nails, scratching along the passage, and our maid heard it, too. We have heard him often since, and my friend has seen him; I have only heard him.

We have also felt the presence of his partner, a terrier who had died some years earlier when only seven. Now we have other dogs, they sometimes manifest consciousness of other animals being in the room, quite friendly to them. These we believe to be Jock and the little bitch. Both were pedigree dogs and highly intelligent and devoted.

In life they were extremely sensitive. The bitch had a habit of staying out by herself when on a walk, and if she had not returned after dark, I would feel a sensation of being "called." I would then go out along whichever road or path was indicated, and always I found my dog crouching on the ground a few hundred yards from our house, waiting for me to fetch her home.

I have frequently turned round and addressed these two dogs by name absent-mindedly, since their deaths, feeling them beside me, but found nothing visible.

V. F.

"THE PLACE OF SPIRITUALISM."

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, in the "Morning Post" of the 31st ult., answers, in his customary clear-cut style, a critical correspondent to that journal who referred, somewhat contemptuously, to the comparative newness of Spiritualism. The obvious retort to this is that the oldest things in the universe were new at one period, and that mere "newness" can scarcely be regarded as a general defective quality. Sir Arthur adopts a somewhat more polished method of reply, and refers to the—at one time—novelty of Christianity. He says:—

If, some seventy-five years after Christ's birth, an average educated Roman or Greek had spoken of the decline of the ancient faiths, he might well have mentioned Christianity in the same way, and yet Christianity was the ultimate victor amid all that welter of creeds, when Jove, Isis, Mythra, and others strove for supremacy.

Continuing, Sir Arthur ventures upon a prophecy, which few (if any) close observers of the trend of modern religious beliefs would regard as extravagant; he also touches upon the question of those human defects which must in some measure attach to all activities of mankind at some period or another. That is to say, incompetence coupled with enthusiasm, dishonesty, and wrong valuations. Here are his words:—

So, also, I prophesy that Spiritualism will most certainly, either supersede or modify every belief which is held to-day. When it is alluded to despitely, as in the instance quoted, it is always because the writer has not understood the subject, and is as far from the real meaning of the movement as Celsus was from that of Christianity. Celsus, so far as we can reconstruct his views from the answer by Origen, could clearly see all the weaknesses and absurdities of the early Christians, which were patent and undeniable. But he utterly failed to realise that a great new standard of ethics had been put forward. So a critic of the same type might point out to-day the weakness of the Spiritualist movement, the fraudulent rascals who hang upon its skirts, the unlettered advocates rascals who hang upon its skirts, the unlettered advocates who present it to the public, the questionable shapes which it has occasionally assumed; but he might entirely miss the great overmastering fact that, when every allowance has been made for these weaknesses, there remains an enormous body of evidence which attests that under correct conditions, mental and physical, one can actually get into touch with intelligences which are outside our own human experience.

I would beg those who read this to get behind all the caricatures and misrepresentations, and to study this matter for themselves. They might find, as so many more have done, that it was the turning point of their lives.

THE MEANING OF RELIGION.

What the scientific mind might term a differential definition or description of Theology and Religion forms part of an article by George B. Warne, M.D., in "The National Spiritualist." His first paragraph quotes an orthodox clergyman of the United States of America:—"As to the faith of our fathers, I haven't much use for it. We know more than any of them. I am for freedom of thought and action, and I apprehend no danger to truth in the full expression of free and modern thought. It is amazing that men should think they must defend God."

Entitled "Does Spiritualism Contain the Essentials of a World Religion?" Dr. Warne's paper proceeds to emphasise the truism that Theology and Religion may, or may not, be in the fullest sense interchangeable, and cites a comparison of the shades of distinction between Theology and Religion by "an eminent American Unitarian":—

A doctrine, however elaborate, does not constitute a religion. Religion describes the feelings and acts of men which relate to God. Theology is a formal statement of man's ideas of the God he worships. Religion is right living towards man and God. Theology is the outer expression of a system of belief about God and His attributes. Religion unites mankind; Theology divides it. Religion is not an end but a means; not a method but a life. It lies more in walk than talk, is not a doubt but a certainty; not a dogma, nor an emotion, but a service. Religion means the conscious relation between man and God and the expression of that relation in human conduct. We may say with Quatrefages: Religion is a belief in beings superior to man and capable of expressing good or evil influences upon his destiny, and the conviction that the existence of a man is not limited to the present life—that there remains for him a future beyond the grave. Religion has its root in the belief, or intuitive feeling, that within us, or external to us, is an intelligent supersensual Power that can affect us for good.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

Mr. George Bernard Shaw, it seems, has been speaking disrespectfully about Christmas, as an institution he would like to abolish. He is said to have "sat upon" the festivities. My pensive reflection is that I would like to have put some holly leaves underneath.

It has been reported that our humorous Welsh friend, Mr. Caradoc Evans, has expressed some philosophic doubts on the subject of psychic manifestations. It will be remembered that one of his experiences was a conversation with his deceased father who spoke in the direct voice. He challenged the communicator to speak to him in Welsh, and the voice at once responded and the conversation was carried on in the colloquial Welsh of Carmarthenshire. No one at the circle knew Welsh, except Mr. Caradoc Evans. It is all set down in Mr. Dennis Bradley's "Towards the Stars."

It looked an impressive test. But Caradoc Evans, it seems, is not satisfied. He thinks that the Welsh spoken by the voice was in some mysterious way supplied by himself. He is indeed reported as saying that "the thoughts of the spirit are always the thoughts of the medium and their dialect the dialect of the medium." Really this is a little too sweeping, and it is not exactly correct. For instance, if Valiantine, the American medium, has any dialect it is "Americanese," not colloquial Welsh.

I am not making any severe reflections on Mr. Caradoc Evans' curious change of front, because, I see that he has unconsciously stumbled on a very deep truth, the nature of which very few people seem to understand, although their experience in daily life ought to furnish them with some hints. To put it roughly rather than metaphysically, all social intercourse, all conversation, must be matter of "give and take." There must be co-operation. White, a man of quick intelligence, full of ideas, meets Brown who is a dull, flabby person and infuses life into him so that Brown temporarily wakes up, is inspired to talk, although all that may happen is that he simply reflects White and gives back feeble echoes of the more positive mind.

This is the kind of thing I have frequently noticed in séances. The spirit communicator, operating always under difficulties of which we know nothing, is often dependent on the rapport established between him and the members of the circle. If the person he addresses is mute and aloof, the spirit is non-plussed, and can say nothing. That is a commonplace to the experienced Spiritualist, who would not, however, be so foolish as to suppose that spirits always reflect the ideas and thoughts of either the medium or the sitters—because they do not, as there are thousands of instances to testify.

What Mr. Evans says is true, but only to a degree, that is to say, it is a half-truth, that bane of people who have not learned to think out their problems. Meantime this question of reflected ideas in the intercourse between man and man or man and spirit holds a very deep secret concerning the nature of personality. Pursuing it, we may easily get into very deep waters. For the present it is sufficient to remember that not one of us can live a completely independent and isolated life. There must be a continual exchange of life and thought and emotion. We must animate others or be animated by them, in different degrees. That is in essence all that Mr. Caradoc Evans' exaggerated and rather reckless statements can be held to convey.

In the "Weekly Dispatch" recently Lord Clifford of Chudleigh related two ghost stories. One of them was the Australian story of "Fisher's Ghost," which is well authenticated. We gave it in LIGHT a year or two ago. The other deals with a murder mystery in a stable and the restlessness of every horse put into a certain stall after the tragedy. Lord Clifford of Chudleigh, however, adds that he does not believe in ghosts, and that it was doubtless indigestion which led people to talk of the place being haunted. Did the horses also suffer from indigestion?

It is really a most difficult thing to write simply, almost as difficult as to be brief and concise, stating an important matter in a few clear words. And there are some readers who do not take kindly either to simplicity or to brevity. If a thing is simple they treat it as negligible—something beneath their consideration. If it is stated briefly it does not stick in their minds. They are apt to estimate the importance of a matter by the length and abstruseness of the books in which it is set forth. "Oh, is that all?" was the disappointed remark of one of these people, when a knotty problem was cleared up for him in a few plain words. "I thought there was much more in it than that!"

D. G.

MARS AND ITS INHABITANTS.

The inhabitants are divided into associated families, and this is the general and customary mode of living among them. There are three extensive families, or nations, upon this planet. But they are governed by common principles; a result of a superior knowledge and sense of justice.

There is a peculiar prominence of the top of the head, indicative of high veneration. The cerebrum and cerebellum correspond in form and size; and the latter extends upwards at the junction of the two brains; which makes them very susceptible of internal and true affection. Their form approaches nearly to that of man on earth, with the exception of its more perfect symmetry. They exhibit a peculiar dignity and a peculiar air of exaltation in all their motions; and these appearances are the reflex and configurations of an inward reality. They are not large; and having a different countenance from men here existing, this deserves particular attention.

I find that the upper part of the face has a lively, yellowish cast, and that radiations, as it were, proceed from the forehead, the eyes, and the flush of the cheeks. The lower part of the face is of a different colour, being rather dark, with a mixture of the above radiations from the interior of their physical constitutions. They have no beard upon their face, but this is a representation of it. And encompassing the lower part of the face, neck, and ears (the back part of the neck being particularly prominent), this darkish substance extends around to the back; where it is joined with the hair of the neck; the top of the head being entirely free from any such appearances.

As to their physical appearance, its beauty is to them inimitable while the same to us would appear exceedingly disgusting and undignified. But the idea of beauty is in them as in us, a result of habitual modes of thought rather than of a knowledge of that which is intrinsically fine and perfect. Therefore the only standard of beauty that can be erected, either on this or any other earth in the Universe, is that which meets the general approbation of society.

Their attitude is modest and perfect; and there exists great delicacy and beauty of form among the females. They do not vary much in stature from the males, but being exceedingly straight, they display perfect symmetry; and there is great affability and courtesy in the manner in which they approach and address each other.

—From "Nature's Divine Revelations," by
ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

A SUCCESSFUL SEANCE:

We print the following extracts from a report of a successful sitting with Mrs. Baylis, as recorded by Miss E. Boyd Sime:—

I should like Mrs. Baylis to receive public credit for a wonderful séance at 4, Tavistock Square.

Miss Huxtable, my brother, and I were the only sitters, and we had perfect harmony to help results. Mrs. Baylis's hands were held all the time by Miss Huxtable. We all had different sized hands touching us at the same time. The trumpet moved about and banged the back of my chair, at the same time hands were touching us. We had the names of five relations shouted out (direct voice, not through the trumpet) also the name of Miss Huxtable's child guide. This childish voice addressed me by name, certainly not known to Mr. or Mrs. Baylis. . . .

My friend saw the faces of her mother, father and Topsy. My brother and I saw first, our mother, her lips moved, and I heard "Mother"

After the séance the medium's brooch was found pinned and clasped in the lapel of my brother's coat.

E. BOYD SIME.
J. BOYD SIME.
F. M. HUXTABLE.

TRANSITION OF MRS. ELIZABETH BIRD.

Mrs. Elizabeth Bird, at one time a well-known private medium, passed away on Wednesday, the 29th ult., in the home of one of her nieces at Redhill, Surrey, at the great age of ninety-six. The family of Mr. Edmund Dawson Rogers, second President of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and Mr. Withall, its late Vice-President and Treasurer, counted Mrs. Bird among their dearest friends, and in the palmy days of her mediumship had many sittings with her. She possessed a wonderful power of picturing the scenes and incidents she witnessed on the other side, and some of her descriptions, taken down at the time, were marked by a striking vividness and beauty of diction. She had also the gift of travelling clairvoyance, and several instances occurred in which she correctly described events that were happening at the time in far distant parts of the globe. Some of Mrs. Bird's psychic experiences are embodied in a series of sketches she wrote nearly fifty years ago in the name of Lisette Earle, entitled "Between the Lights." The book is in the library of the L.S.A.

D. R.

SPIRITUALIST COMMUNITY SERVICES.

SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

The Rev. George Vale Owen, speaking at the Grottrian Hall, London, on Sunday morning last, discussed three questions which had been submitted to him. He had been asked if there were an age limit in the next world. We have not yet been told definitely, said the speaker, what is the substitute there for our conception of time. There is, of course, in the sequence of events, something analogous to time; possibly the word "duration" might be substituted. A child there does not grow older in the sense that we understand, but develops and progresses by natural stages towards perfection. Our earthly words were quite inadequate in dealing with the life beyond.

Answering the question "Where is the Spirit World?" the lecturer said it is nowhere, and at the same time it is everywhere. It interpenetrates this world, in fact the whole universe, just as air and light would fill a room at the same time, the one not displacing the other. We cannot at present actually prove the existence of the Ether. We can, however, deduce its existence, and in the same way we can deduce the interpenetration of the spirit world within this world, and further, we can accept on this subject the word of our spirit friends.

The third question, "Shall I see Jesus Christ when I go over?" said the lecturer, was one it was difficult to answer definitely as our spirit friends seem to say they have not found it possible to see Him, although it is permitted to see His radiance. To those who are humble and work for the good of others, and for the love of humanity, it will be permitted to see one of the wondrous manifestations of the Christ; these had been called "the Presence Form" or the "Beatified Vision." M. J. C.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.

THE HOMES OF THE DEAD.

On Sunday evening last an interesting address was given by Mr. A. Vout Peters at the Æolian Hall, London, W., on the subject of "Dead Men's Homes."

When one passes from the trials and infirmities of this life, said the lecturer, one goes to a home in the next sphere of existence. This is, in every sense of the word, a home—a house. Those who have closely investigated this subject can affirm quite definitely that spirits do not float around in a misty way, neither do they spend their existence on golden clouds. The Book of Revelation speaks of the streets of the New Jerusalem; one can scarcely have a street unless there are houses.

The question naturally arises as to how and by whom these homes are built. You and I, said Mr. Peters, are building our homes in the hereafter now; the kind and character of the home we shall occupy will be determined by one's mental and spiritual efforts on this side of the border. Each will go to his own environment; no one will go to uncongenial surroundings. Those who visit us in our new sphere of existence will be able to decide from the appearance and character of the house we occupy in the celestial world, what kind of life we have lived on earth.

Later Mr. Peters gave some striking examples of clairvoyance.

R. E. H. F.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"THE THREE TRUTHS."—(The Chalice Press, 18, Erskine Road, E.17.) 2s.

A small, well-bound, well-printed book of teaching based on the idea of the necessity for spiritual realisation.

"THE DOOR OF BEYOND." By Gladys St. John-Loe. (Duckworth, 5/- net.)

Had I not known the author of this book to be a woman, I might have been pardoned for concluding that the name of Gladys St. John-Loe was a *nom de guerre* concealing the identity of a male writer. There is not much "half-tone" about the volume; the word-pictures are painted with a full brush and vivid pigments. There is a clear-cut directness of statement, and an economy of words which one associates, quite erroneously I fear, with masculine authorship. "Psychic novels" usually do not interest me. This one did. The phantom comrade which continually haunts the sensitive and introspective Julian, turning him aside from the grosser paths of life, is a striking conception. The latter part of the story, where the body of the wife becomes obsessed by the spirit of a jealous and erotic rival, is a little less convincing, and strikes a morbid note, though concluding upon a happy and healthy key. Mrs. St. John-Loe possesses imagination and a concise vividness of expression.

A. C.

NEW BOOKS RECEIVED.

"True Irish Ghost Stories." By Seymour and Neligan. Humphrey Milford. (7/6.)

"THE DOOR OF BEYOND."—By Mrs. St. John-Loe. (Duckworth and Co., Ltd.) 5s. net.

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Fri., Jan. 14th, at 8 p.m. ... MRS. ANNIE BRITTAIN.

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" " 6.30 p.m. ... MR. ERNEST MEADS.

Wednesday, January 12th, 7 p.m. ... MRS. T. BISHOP ANDERSON.

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At 6.30 p.m. ... MRS. CHAMPION DE CRESPIGNY.

Wednesday, January 12th, 7.30 p.m. ... MRS. ANNIE PATTERSON.

(Clairvoyance.)

Special.—Friday, January 14th, Recital, by MRS. LESLIE JONES, Mystic Poem, "Towards the Light," with accompaniment of Organ and Violin.

Wednesday Services at 7.30 p.m.

Worthing Spiritualist Mission Church, Grafton Road.

Sunday, Jan. 9th, 11 and 6.30, Mr. Ernest Beard; Jan. 13th, Mrs. Lucy Smith.

SUNDAY'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—January 9th, 11.15, open circle; 2.45, Lyceum; 6.30, Miss Jessie McKay.
January 12th, 7, Mme. M. Collins.

Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High-street.—January 9th, 11, service; 6.30, Miss Lilian George. Wednesday, 7.30, at 55, Station-road, public circle.

Croydon.—Harewood Hall, High-street.—January 9th, 11, Mr. Percy Scholey; 6.30, Rev. G. Vale Owen.

Shepherd's Bush.—73, Becklow-road.—

Peckham.—Lausanne-road.—January 9th, 7, Nurse Giles. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. M. Crowder.

Bowes Park.—Shaftesbury Hall, adjoining Bowes Park Station (down side).—January 9th, 11, Miss Eva Clark; 7, Mr. W. North. January 12th, 8, Mrs. Vidal Diehl.

Richmond Free Church, Ormond-road.—January 9th, 7.30, Mrs. A. Boddington, address and clairvoyance. (Doors close 7.40.) January 12th, 7.30, Mrs. Roberts, address and clairvoyance.

L.D.C.—Debating Section.—144, High Holborn, W.C.1.—January 10th, 7.30, Rev. G. Ward, "Modern Spiritualism."

Bournemouth Spiritualist Mission, Charminster-road (opposite Richmond Wood-road), Bournemouth.—Sundays, at 11 and 6.30, address and clairvoyance. Local clairvoyant, Mrs. W. G. Hayter.

Croydon Spiritualist Church, New Gallery, Katharine-street.—January 9th, 6.30, Mrs. M. Crowder.

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Public Meetings for Psychometry and Clairvoyance.

Monday, January 10th, at 3, Psychometry, MRS. ANNIE JOHNSON.

Tuesday, Jan. 11th, at 7.30, Clairvoyance, MISS GRACE COLLYNS.

Thursday, Jan. 13th, at 7.30, Clairvoyance ... MRS. O. HADLEY.

Séances for Normal and Trance Clairvoyance.

Monday, January 10th, at 7.30 ... MR. GLOVER BOTHAM.

Wednesday, January 12th, at 3 ... MR. ALBERT TAYLOR.

Public Lecture.—Saturday, January 15th, at 8 o'clock, "The Nature and Value of Psychic Experience" ... MR. GLOVER BOTHAM.

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Mondays ... MRS. CANNOCK.

Wednesdays ... MR. GLOVER BOTHAM.

Thursdays ... MISS GRACE COLLYNS.

Fridays ... MRS. ANNIE JOHNSON.

Fridays (Automatic Writing) ... MRS. CANTLON.

Circles for Psychic Unfoldment and Training. Winter Session will begin:

Wednesday, January 5th, at 7.30 ... MRS. KINGSLEY.

Friday, January 7th, at 7.30 ... MRS. KINGSTONE.

Monday, January 10th, at 7.30 ... MRS. LENNOX-KAY.

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6.30 p.m.—Speaker, Rev. Drayton Thomas.

January 16th, 11 a.m., Mr. H. Hitchcock; 6.30 p.m., Rev. Vale Owen.

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