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AUGUST 1923

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THE OCCULT REVIEW

EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

THE evidence of the identity of communicants from the other side has been one of the most vexed problems of psychical research. The number of alleged communications from persons who were well known in this life is legion, but the evidence of their identity is in almost every case singularly lacking. Communications from many celebrated characters and others known only within a limited circle have been received by automatic

writing and otherwise, but most of these show but little trace of their earth personalities, and if they fail to do this, evidence of a modicum of knowledge in connection with their earth lives cannot weigh with us too strongly. Professor Richet alludes to a number of these records in his comprehensive work just published, entitled *Thirty Years of Psychical Research*.* "The discarnate souls, to use the spiritist phrase, are," he says, "manifestly very different from that which they were in earth life. Nearly always they show very moderate intelligence

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indeed, and give utterance to commonplaces of a special kind with a 'spiritoid' complexion." I entirely agree with this criticism, in spite of the fact, admitted by Professor Richet, that there are occasional exceptions which seem to establish at least an *a priori* case not only for survival but also for identity. The Professor, however, seems to me to go too far in the following paragraph dealing with the case of George Pelham, who communicated (as alleged) through Mrs. Piper.

The principal proof of survival [he says], indeed the only proof, is the affirmation of the medium, "I am George Pelham" (after being Phinuit), "and I prove that I am George Pelham because I know all that George Pelham knew." But granting this is so, the proof is insufficient, for it would be necessary to show that Mrs. Piper's transcendental faculty cannot know what George Pelham knew in his earth life. This essential proof cannot be given, and that is why I say, provisionally, that subjective metapsychics cannot demonstrate survival.

Such an argument assigns almost limitless powers to the subconscious mind. It is, in fact, the problem of the akashic records over again. Professor Richet, though he may not be aware of it, is in reality taking up the same attitude as Mr. Leadbeater and saying that it is possible for humanity to tap sources of knowledge on the plane of the subconscious practically *ad infinitum*. It is a large order, and is certainly much more difficult of acceptance to the average mind than the belief in the survival of the personality and its ability to communicate

A COMMUNICATION FROM OSCAR WILDE. knowledge that it possessed on earth. One is forced to ask in a case of this kind, why should Professor Richet in his zeal for science adopt the least credible of the two hypotheses? The problem before us takes on another colour in the alleged communications which I publish in the present issue purporting to emanate from the late Oscar Wilde. The argument in favour of these is not so much any facts that Oscar Wilde adduces in connection with his earth life as the literary style and mannerism so peculiar to that author and so difficult of imitation by anyone who had not a quite extraordinary literary gift in this particular direction. It would be difficult to find anyone with moderate literary knowledge and familiarity with Oscar Wilde's writings when on earth, who, if given the communications in question without any clue as to their alleged source, would hesitate to assign them to their alleged author. To write down communications so exactly resembling in style the writings of Oscar Wilde offhand, without premeditation, would unquestionably imply

a literary skill of the very highest order. There is no justification for attributing this either to the amanuensis himself or to Mrs. Travers-Smith, without whose intervention, it appears, none of these communications could be brought through.

In many cases a plausible explanation is either fraudulent impersonation on the other side, or the subconscious cerebration of the medium. Neither of these explanations (I have no hesitation in saying) will fit the case in point. To acquire knowledge by supernormal means of certain facts in connection with the life of Oscar Wilde is one thing: to imitate his style of writing and manner of expression is quite another. I think

INDIVIDUALITY OF THE SCRIPT. we may say with confidence that no one has ever succeeded in simulating that style by normal means as convincingly as these communications simulate it; if, that is, they are otherwise than genuine.

The colourless character of most communications from the other side is strikingly absent from these extraordinary scripts. They seem indeed to vibrate with the individuality of Oscar Wilde as he was when he was known on earth, and they may well carry conviction to many whom a bald record of facts obtained by supernormal means would leave cold and unsatisfied. Whether any evidence would satisfy the sceptical mind of Professor Richet is another matter. Indeed, the Professor quotes the most startling evidence, only to brush it aside as proving what he terms "cryptesthesia," but not survival.

CRYPTESTHESIA OR SURVIVAL? He assigns this explanation to the communication of Abraham Florentine to Stainton Moses in August, 1874. Florentine was an old soldier of 1812, who had died at Brooklyn at the age of 83 years. He gave the facts of his life and the date of his death to Stainton Moses, who naturally had never heard of such a person. After much research it was discovered that these were exact, though no American or English newspaper had mentioned them.

It would seem appropriate here to quote two other instances cited by Professor Richet which appear to be only explicable on the assumption of the spirit hypothesis. One of these was originally given by Professor Bozzano. It has reference to a child of the name of Ray, two years and seven months of age at the date of the incident (1883). Ray's baby brother had recently died. Following his death Ray had constant visions in which he saw his brother sitting on a chair and calling to him. "Mother," he said, "the little brother calls Ray. He wants me

with him." On another occasion he said: "Don't cry. The little brother smiles at Ray. Ray is going to him." As may be guessed, Ray's intelligence was much above the average for his age. Ray died two months and seven days after the death of his brother.

The second case is as follows:—

Louise F., aged 48, died in January, 1896. During her last illness she constantly expressed the wish that when she had sufficiently recovered, she might take her little niece, Lily, aged three years, of whom she was very fond, to live with her in the country. About a month after the death of her aunt, Lily, who was in quite good health at the time, took to stopping in her play and looking fixedly out of the window. On her mother asking her what she was looking at she replied, "It is Aunt Louise who holds out her arms to me and calls me." Towards the 20th of May of the same year little Lily fell ill, and when in bed she looked up to the ceiling saying that she saw her aunt surrounded by little angels calling her. "My aunt has come to fetch me," she said. "She is holding out her arms to me." She died on the 9th of June, of tubercular meningitis, four and a half months after her aunt's death. Other records of a similar character are given. Professor Richet, however, observes that "in despite of their spiritoid nature, they are insufficient to make me believe that the consciousness of the deceased persons is present at the death of their relatives."

One may indeed despair of convincing the French Professor who curiously advances the very obsolete argument that when the physical brain has perished the consciousness cannot operate, as it has no instrument through which to function, quite regardless of the now widely held belief that the physical brain and physical body have etheric replicas to which consciousness is transferred at the time of death. Though he produces evidence in abundance of the existence of these replicas, the Professor makes no attempt to demolish the evidence of survival founded on their actuality.

Certainly Oscar Wilde seems to find no difficulty in manifesting his individuality. What could be more characteristic of his cynical wit than, for example, the following:—

"Being dead is the most boring experience in life, that is if one excepts being married or dining with a schoolmaster." "Do you doubt my identity?" he asks. "I am not surprised, since I sometimes doubt it myself." He suggests the formation of a society of superannuated shades for investigating the existence

of the living. They would attempt to investigate the question whether Mr. Dingwall (Secretary of the Society for Psychical Research) who was present at the séance, was fact or fiction. "Fortunately," he comments, "there are no facts over here. On earth we could scarcely escape them. Their dead carcases were strewn everywhere on the rose path of life. One

SOME CHARACTERISTIC OBSERVATIONS. could not pick up a newspaper without learning something useful." When he is asked for proof of his identity, he retorts characteristically: "Do not ask me for proofs. I do not wish to

visualize my medium as an old spinster nosing into the other world in the hope that she may find some chance for herself when Providence removes her from this sphere." Recurring to his own earth existence he exclaims: "Others might sip the pale lees of the cup of thought, but for me the red wine of life." And again: "I am none the worse for having drunk the dregs as well as the best of the vintage." Of his mother, Lady Wilde, he cynically observes: "She is not really improved in the process of dying. She is less comely now than when Speranza used to lead the intelligentsia in Dublin in those days when we still had the relics of civilization among us"; but he speaks affectionately of her all the same.

Not the least remarkable part of the script is Oscar Wilde's description of his bodiless state, some very singular descriptions of which he gives in a later communication. More than once he emphasizes the fact of the impossibility of people in his present condition on the astral plane concealing their thoughts from their neighbours, and in this connection he makes the singularly characteristic observation: "I feel now as if the extreme reticence of wearing a body was almost indecent."

Truly the evidence contained in the communications of which this is a first sample is something quite unique, and without parallel in the annals of psychical research.

In view of the character of Professor Richet's comprehensive work, it was indeed high time that further evidence of an entirely novel character should be brought forward in support of the spiritist contention. The Professor himself after thirty years of investigation has arrived, as he himself admits, at no conclusion whatever as to the explanation of the phenomena which he records, and in the genuineness of which he does not hesitate to express his firm belief. By doing so, it seems to me that he has given great occasion for "the enemies of Israel to blaspheme." No wonder that a writer in the Daily Press observes: "Cold com-

fort is here for the Rev. Vale Owen. Cold comfort for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the hot gosseller of spiritualism, who "COLD COMFORT," sees in Professor Richet the scientist who is to provide the scientific proof for the faith that is in him. Still colder comfort for those who have accepted Sir Arthur's assurance that the dead live, and have deluded themselves with the phantasy that through the mouths of Mrs. Brittain and mediums of that ilk they are talking to their nearest and dearest, who have been taken from them." *

And yet, if we peruse the very carefully selected evidence contained in the work in question, the one thing that should surely surprise most the unbiased and dispassionate reader is that the facts Professor Richet has collected have failed to bring conviction to the mind of the author. These are, it must be admitted, very varied in character, and many of them are unquestionably susceptible of some other explanation than that of intervention from the other side either on the part of deceased humanity or on the part of some mysterious beings who have never been clothed in human form, but who from time to time seek to intervene in the lives of mankind. We have, among them, certain very remarkable cases which many people might be inclined to put down to thought-reading, but some of which would probably be more correctly described as instances of clairvoyance or lucidity. There is, for instance, the very significant case of Mr. Reese, who was a native of Posen in Prussian Poland, who afterwards settled in America.

STARTLING
EVIDENCE
OF CLAIR-
VOYANT
POWERS.

He possessed along with other psychic gifts the power of successful dowsing. Among other notabilities by whom he was interviewed was the well-known inventor Edison, who subjected him to very stringent tests. Edison went into a room at a considerable distance from that in which Reese was sitting, and wrote on a piece of paper the words: "Is there anything better than hydroxide of nickel for an alkaline electric battery?" He then returned to Reese, who, without looking at the paper, replied: "No, there is nothing better than hydroxide of nickel for an alkaline battery." On another occasion when Reese visited Edison, the latter wrote the word "Keno" in microscopic characters, and put the scrap of paper in his pocket. He asked Reese what he had written, and Reese replied without hesitation, "Keno." Among others who tested this remarkable man was the well-known discoverer of ectoplasm, Baron Schrenck-Notzing. Schrenck-Notzing wrote the following questions on five

* *Evening Standard*, July 5.

pieces of paper: (1) What is my mother's name? (2) When will you go back to Germany? (3) Will my book be a success? (4) An intimate personal question not recorded. (5) What is the name of my eldest son? On this occasion Reese promptly answered four out of the five questions in as many minutes, and the fact that lucidity and not thought-reading was the explanation appears to be borne out in this case, as Schrenck-Notzing had mixed up the papers, and did not himself in any case know the contents of the particular one presented.

"The phenomena," says Professor Richet, "presented by Mr. Reese must be referred to 'pragmatic cryptesthesia.'" This is merely one of the innumerable specially concocted psychical terms which appear throughout this learned work, and of which there should certainly be a glossary at the end. Such terms do not offer any explanation of the phenomenon so labelled, but rather serve to bewilder the reader. Another term that occurs perpetually in the present work is one that seems to have found some favour on the other side of the Channel, though on this

"META-PSYCHICS" AND THE AUTHORITY OF ARISTOTLE. side it is so far, I am thankful to say, but little known. I allude to the word "metapsychic." Professor Richet says of this phrase, which I understand he coined himself, "It has on its side no less an authority than Aristotle." I confess that I find myself totally unable to pass this observation unchallenged.

"Aristotle," says Professor Richet, "having discussed the physical forces, went on to write of those great laws of nature that transcend physics, and took the title metaphysics (*meta ta phusica*)."

* Now what I suggest is that in all probability the heading for Aristotle's treatise was not chosen by Aristotle at all. We have indeed no justification for supposing it to have been so. The most natural assumption is that it was given to this particular treatise by the editor who arranged Aristotle's works, and who, having decided to make this treatise follow that on physics, "*ta phusica*," and finding no special title allocated to it, in rather slipshod manner headed it "*meta ta phusica*," that is to say, the treatise following that on physics. In saying this I do not suggest that the editor was guided by any other

THE ORIGIN OF A WORD. idea than that of making the treatises of Aristotle follow in their most natural and rational order. To say, however, on the strength of this, that we have the authority of Aristotle for so monstrous a barbarism as "*metapsychics*," is going immeasurably beyond all legitimate inference.

* i.e. after Physics.

Doubtless nothing would have surprised the editor in question more than to realize the fact that his somewhat slipshod editorial methods had quite unintentionally added a notable word (metaphysics) to the languages of the world, and crystallized in a single phrase one most important branch of philosophy.

Metapsychic facts [says our Professor], are marked off from the physical in that they seem due to an unknown intelligence, whether human or non-human. In nature we observe intelligence only among living beings. In man we perceive no sources of cognition otherwise than through the senses. We leave to normal psychology the study of human and animal intelligence. Metapsychic phenomena are quite different. They seem due to unknown but intelligent forces, including among these unknown intelligences the astonishing intellectual phenomena of our subconscious.

One may accept Professor Richet's interpretation of his own word. After all, there is something in Humpty Dumpty's observation, "When I use a word, I make it mean whatever I please." At the same time, even allowing the Professor's own inaccurate derivation of its origin, the word *metapsychic* should, properly speaking, have the same relation to the term *psychic* that *metaphysical* has to *physical*, and this clearly is not the case. I confess that it appears to me that the too great use of words coined for the purpose from obsolete languages tends only to obscure the issues. We may recall appropriately enough in this connection the old story of the precocious child who taught

A PROTEST his grandmother to suck eggs. "You see, grandma," AND A explained the young hopeful, "in order to extract the matter contained within this shell, you effect PARALLEL. an incision at the apex, and a corresponding aperture at the base." "Dear me," replied grandma, quite amazed at the child's erudition, "in my young days we merely made a hole at each end!" And yet it might appear to us on reflection that the ancient and honourable art of egg-sucking had not advanced appreciably during those two generations. Surely the parallel is an apt one. Surely the plentiful use of Greek composite words transmogrified into modern languages aids us not one whit in our knowledge of the essential meaning of psychical phenomena.

Professor Richet, indeed, admits that as far as he is concerned this is only too true. He has spent thirty years in accumulating material of the greatest scientific value, and after the most careful examination of the residuum of his most fully authenticated instances, he is forced to the conclusion that it leads him no whither. He takes up one interpretation of the phenomena

after another, and rejects them in turn. The spirit hypothesis he rejects because, as he says, "everything seems to prove that the intelligence is a function of the brain"; and DOUBTING he will admit no brain other than the physical one. THOMAS. "The lucidity of some mediums," he says, "is amazing, but lucidity is not survival. Survival implies the continuance of personal consciousness. Frederick Myers lived on the earth. He was himself and no other, with tastes, thoughts and an intelligence which made him a definite personality, very different from all others. But when Mrs. Verrall's hand writes, 'I am Myers,' or Mrs. Piper's voice says, 'I am Myers,' it is useless to try and find vague or even exact analogies between Mrs. Verrall's and Mrs. Piper's Myers and the real Myers as known on earth." "I do not," he says, "share the robust faith of Mr. Hubert Wales, who writes that 'spirits have bodies which, though imperceptible to our senses, are solid to them as ours are to us.'"

Surely this is just where the value of such communications as those which I publish in the present issue, purporting to emanate from Oscar Wilde, is made manifest. In these the real man as he was on earth seems to speak to us again, and to be asked to identify the communications, even without the name of the communicator being given, would be the easiest thing possible to anyone who had any acquaintance with the writings and characteristics of the alleged communicator. What more can be asked? What more conclusive answer could be given to Professor Richet's doubts? Not only this, but the signature of Oscar Wilde itself repro-

EVIDENTIAL
VALUE
OF THE
"WILDE"
SCRIPT.

Oscar Wilde
Believe me
your sincere friend
Oscar Wilde

duces the style and character of Wilde's own handwriting (unfamiliar, be it remembered, to the transmitters of the mes-

sages). In evidence of this, I am submitting a reproduction of this signature in the script and also another from one of Oscar Wilde's own letters.

Another theory which Professor Richet advances, but which he hesitates to accept, though he regards it as more credible than the spiritist hypothesis, is that there are mysterious beings, existences devoid of form, which by means unknown to us mould

ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESES. matter at will, direct our thoughts and impulses, and even assume our forms, thereby deceiving the psychical researcher or the frequenter of the séance room. If, however, there can be such existences devoid of form, what objection can

Professor Richet urge to the existence of human intelligence of a non-physical character? It is hard to see how he can fail, in rejecting the spiritist hypothesis, also to reject the other. A third hypothesis which he advances half-heartedly, but prefers to the other two, is that human intelligence is gifted with material and psychological powers which hitherto we have been entirely unable to gauge, and that these powers if properly understood

A THIRTY YEARS' FAILURE. will account for all the phenomena under discussion. We thus find in the present volume the record of thirty years' labours in the cause of psychical research, and at the end of it the admission

of total and unqualified failure. "Life's purpose unfulfilled, that is thy sting, O Death," sang the poet. The Roman Emperor, after he had spent one single day in which he had achieved nothing of practical value, entered in his diary the words *Diem perdidit*: "I have lost a day." The confession which Professor Richet makes at the end of his laborious and learned tome is not merely "I have lost a day," but "I have wasted thirty years."

A letter which I am printing in the current issue deals with a portrait said to be that of Dean Liddell which is stated to be

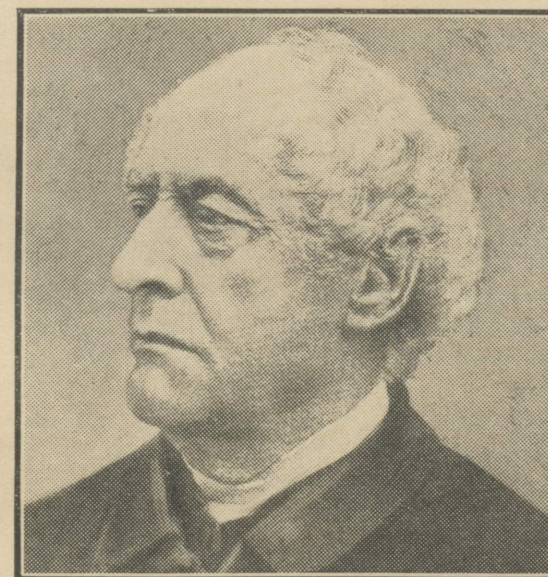
THE ALLEGED PSYCHIC PORTRAIT OF DEAN LIDDELL.

gradually appearing on the east wall of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford. This curiosity is the result apparently of the drying up with age of the mortar and cement in the wall, which gives the appearance of a man's profile slightly resembling that of Dean Liddell, whose sculptured statue is to be seen outside the cathedral walls. The portrait of Dean Liddell differs, however, somewhat markedly from this "psychic picture," the nose, mouth and chin by no means corresponding with those of the original, and the head being considerably



Alleged psychic picture now appearing on the east wall of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, and thought by some to bear a resemblance to the late Dean Liddell.

[Reproduced by permission of the *Daily Express*.]



DEAN LIDDELL.

G

longer from back to front. In some ways this strange picture seems to resemble more nearly the head of the present Bishop of Liverpool than that of the well-known Dean and part author of the celebrated *Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon*. My correspondent criticizes the cautious observations of the Editor of *Light*, but I confess to a still greater scepticism than Mr. Gow himself expresses. I remember the Dean of old, and it certainly would never have occurred to me for an instant to connect this psychic curiosity with him if I had not been given to understand that this was the suggestion made. What the explanation of the appearance of the profile in question may be is another matter. We may ask ourselves, if we like, whether astral shells are capable of impressing themselves on cathedral walls, or whether the whole thing is merely due to a curious natural freak. The illustration showing portrait of Dean Liddell as he was in life and also the alleged psychic picture are reproduced by kind permission of the *Daily Express*.

I am asked to state that the word "Abracadabra" in the article on "The Essence of the Practical Qabalah" in the last issue of the OCCULT REVIEW, should read, "Abrahamadabra."

THE RETURN OF OSCAR WILDE

WITH INTRODUCTION BY HESTER TRAVERS SMITH

PROOF of survival after death makes many and varied appeals. To some who seek for a definite promise of the continuance of human personality, satisfactory evidence consists in the fact that the communicator can recall small details of his earth-existence: his name, the name of the place and number of the house in which he lived, etc.

To others, proofs such as these are explained as telepathy between medium and sitter. The remembrance of trifling facts indicates no external influence. Unless an entire personality reveals itself there is no ground for supposing that we are in touch with a discarnate spirit.

It is only in rare cases that we find our evidence complete; concrete facts, recalled correctly, a complete personality pressing through our communications; a style which we cannot mistake and an attitude of mind which fits in with our memory of the person who has passed over.

In the case of literary celebrities our criticism of messages from beyond the grave can be more confident, especially when our communicator has impressed a definite literary style on his readers.

In the messages purporting to come from Oscar Wilde, which I have collected for this article, I feel we have an important piece of evidence of the survival of an entire personality. We have concrete personal facts given in our script, some of which were unknown to either of the sitters and all of which were unknown to the automatist whose hand held the pencil. We have a literary style which is unmis-takable; a type of mind and ideas which seem entirely unchanged; and an almost perfect reproduction of the handwriting of our communicator.

These messages came through Mr. V., who never before had succeeded with automatic writing. His pencil did not move unless my fingers rested on his hand, nor could he get any movement through the other persons present at our sittings. The messages obtained through the ouija board came through me alone, but I was unable to obtain the handwriting of Oscar Wilde without Mr. V.

The first script began with a message from a friend of Mr. V.'s.

It was interrupted suddenly at the mention of the lily. The writing became more rapid, and I recognized at once that the communicator, who first spoke, had been replaced by some one else. I asked who was speaking, and at once "Oscar Wilde" was written.

As the message continued it was more and more evidential; the writing was very rapid and the hand of Mr. V. was controlled so firmly that it was difficult to move it from the end of one line to the beginning of the next. The automatist was in a semi-trance condition. His grip of the pencil was tremendous; he wrote with his eyes closed. My fingers rested lightly on the back of his hand, and if I removed them, the pencil tapped on the paper, but no further movement came. The script came through in portions. It seemed to me that a limited result was possible, after a short time. Mr. V. would open his eyes, and a rest seemed necessary before we went to work again. I have found the same process with the messages from Oscar Wilde through my hand, alone at the ouija board. He pauses continually; perhaps seeking for the right word. The script which comes through Mr. V. and me, seems rather of the nature of an essay. It is more premeditated than the ouija messages are; they seem to be informal chats. I find it best to suggest a subject; Wilde then talks on freely, occasionally pausing to polish a sentence.

The first message came through on June 8. It was the first time Mr. V. had succeeded with automatic writing, and it began by a personal message from a friend about his daughter Lily.

The "Lily" which seemed to stimulate this first message was, of course, the emblem of the æsthetic movement. In Ransome's "Life of Wilde," p. 73, we find "Certains cochers de hansom affirment même l'avoir vu se promener vers l'heure des chats et des poètes avec un lys énorme à la main." Wilde jealously seized the word "Lily" from our first communicator and usurped his place from that time.

This first script is full of allusions to passages in Wilde's works and in some cases quotations. Neither Mr. V. nor I was very specially interested in Oscar Wilde's writings. I had read his plays, "The Picture of Dorian Grey," "Intentions" and some of his poems, many years ago. Mr. V. had read "Dorian Grey," "De Profundis," and the "Ballad of Reading Gaol" only. The phrase "Twilight in my cell and twilight in my heart" is an actual quotation from "De Profundis." Again in "Intentions" we find "The white feet of the Muses brushed the dew from the anemones in the morning," very similar to our script—"her white feet brush the dew from the cowslips in the morning."

Again in "De Profundis" we find, "There is not a single colour

hidden away in the Chalice of a flower or the curve of a shell to which, by some subtle sympathy with the very soul of things, my nature does not answer." In our script Wilde says, "There was not a blood stripe on a tulip or a curve on a shell or a tone on the sea but had for me its meaning and its mystery and its appeal to the imagination."

The second script in automatic writing came through on Monday, June 18, 1923. At this sitting Mr. Dingwall, Research Officer of the S.P.R., was present. He perhaps stimulated the drift of the communication.

Since this last message, Wilde has spoken frequently through me at the ouija board, and once more through Mr. V. and myself. His style, personality and handwriting are maintained throughout. I give this first instalment of our script in the hope that it may add to our proofs of survival. My chief claim for it is based on the fact that I consider it as evidence of an entire personality with which the public is familiar.

HESTER TRAVERS SMITH.

COPY OF AUTOMATIC SCRIPT OBTAINED ON JUNE 8TH, 1923.

Lily my little Lily—"No the lily was mine"—a crystal thread—a silver reed that made music in the morning. Pity Oscar Wilde—one who in the world was a king of life. Bound to Ixion's wheel of thought I must complete for ever the circle of my experience. Long ago I wrote that there was twilight in my cell and twilight in my heart but this is the (last?) twilight of the soul. In eternal twilight I move, but I know that in the world there is day and night, seedtime and harvest and red sunset must follow apple green dawn. Every year spring throws her green veil over the world and anon the red autumn glory comes to mock the yellow moon. Already the may is creeping like a white mist over lane and hedgerow and year after year the hawthorn bears blood red fruit after the white death of its may. (Mrs. T. S.: Are you Oscar Wilde?) Yes Oscar Wilde. (Mrs. T. S.: Tell me the name of the house you lived in in Dublin). (Tell me where your father used to practise). Near Dublin—my father was a surgeon. These names are difficult to recall. (Mrs. T. S.: Not at all difficult if you are really Oscar Wilde.) I used to live near here—Tite Street. (Mrs. T. S.: There is a Tite Street near here, and he has spelt it correctly. I don't know where he lived in London. Did you know about it?) (Mr. V., the writer of the script: I have never

been in Chelsea before to-day, and to the best of my knowledge I had never heard of Tite Street.) (Mrs. T. S.: Well, Oscar Wilde, what was your brother's name?) William—Willie. (Now, what did your mother Lady Wilde call herself?) Speranza. Pity Oscar Wilde. (Mrs. T. S.: Why have you come here?) To let the world know that Oscar Wilde is not dead. His thoughts live on in the hearts of all those who in a gross age can hear the flute voice of beauty calling on the hills or mark where her white feet brush the dew from the cowslips in the morning. Now the mere memory of the beauty of the world is an exquisite pain. I was always one of those for whom the visible world existed. I worshipped at the shrine of things seen. There was not a blood stripe on a tulip or a curve on a shell or a tone on the sea but had for me its meaning and its mystery and its appeal to the imagination. Others might sip the pale lees of the cup of thought but for me the red wine of life.

Pity Oscar Wilde. To think of what is going on in the world is terrible for me. Soon the chestnuts will light their white candles and the foxgloves flaunt their dappled drooping bells. Soon the full moon will swim up over the edge of the world and hang like a great golden cheese—Stop! Stop! Stop! Stop! This image is insufferable. You write like a successful grocer who from selling pork has taken to writing poetry.

(Mrs. T. S.: Who said that?) Oscar.

I find the words in my medium's mind. Try again—"like a great golden pumpkin hanging in the blue night." That is better but it is a little rustic. Still, I adore rustic people. They are at least near to nature and besides they remind me of all the simple pleasures I somehow missed in life. (Here Mrs. T. S. made some remark about Lady Wilde being a half-crazy old woman who thought she could write poetry.) Please do not insult my mother. I loved and honoured her. (Mrs. T. S.: We are not insulting her. Spell out the name by which your mother called herself?) Speranza. Yes, it is quite true what I said. I lived for the beauty of visible things: The rose-flushed anemones that star the dark woodland ways, those loveliest tears that Venus shed for Adonis and shed in vain were more to me than many philosophies.

Mr. V. wrote with Mrs. T. S.'s hand resting on his. When she took her hand off, the pencil only tapped and did not continue. Mr. V. is a mathematical scholar and had no special interest in Oscar Wilde. He had read *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *De Profundis*.

COPY OF AUTOMATIC SCRIPT OBTAINED MONDAY, JUNE 18TH, 1923.

Present. Mr. V., Mrs. Travers Smith, Mr. B., Mr. Dingwall, Research Officer of the Society for Psychical Research, Miss Cummins.



OSCAR WILDE.

[Reproduced by kind permission of Messrs. ELLIOTT & FRY.]

Mr. V. was the automatist, Mrs. T. S. touching his hand.

Oscar Wilde. Being dead is the most boring experience in life. That is if one excepts being married or dining with a schoolmaster. Do you doubt my identity? I am not surprised since sometimes I doubt it myself. I might retaliate

by doubting yours. I have always admired the Society for Psychical Research. They are the most magnificent doubters in the world. They are never happy until they have explained away their spectres. And one suspects a genuine ghost would make them exquisitely uncomfortable. I have sometimes thought of founding an academy of celestial doubters . . . which might be a sort of Society for Psychical Research among the living. No one under sixty would be admitted, and we should call ourselves the Society of Superannuated Shades. Our first object might well be to insist on investigating at once into the reality of the existence of, say, Mr. Dingwall. Mr. Dingwall, is he romance or reality? Is he fact or fiction? If it should be decided that he is fact, then of course we should strenuously doubt it. Fortunately there are no facts over here. On earth we could scarcely escape them. Their dead carcasses were strewn everywhere on the rose path of life. One could not pick up a newspaper without learning something useful. In it were some sordid statistics of crime or disgusting detail relating to the consumption of pork that met the eyes, or we were told with a precision that was perfectly appalling and totally unnecessary . . . what time the moon had decided to be jealous and eclipse the sun. (Mrs. T. S.: Shall we ask him some questions?) Don't degrade me into giving you facts. Inquire about Mrs. Chan Toon. I had the honour of her acquaintance some years ago.

(Mr. B. told a story of Whistler and Wilde. Wilde had expressed a wish to have made a certain witty remark which had just been uttered by Whistler. Whistler retorted: "You will, Wilde, you will in time.") With James vulgarity always begins at home.

RECORD OF A COMMUNICATION RECEIVED AT THE OUIJA BOARD,
JUNE 17TH, 1923, AT 11.30 P.M.

Recorded by Miss Cummins. The medium was Mrs. Travers Smith alone.

Oscar Wilde. I have come, as you asked for me. I am naturally an interesting person—not only do I flaunt the colours of literature, but I have the lurid flame of crime attached to me also. My dear lady, do you realize that you are talking to a social leper? (Yes, I do.) I do not wish to burden you with details of my life which was like a candle that had gutted at the end. I rather wish to make you believe that

I was the medium through which beauty filtered and was distilled like the essence of a rose. Forget my history, dear lady, and think of my best powers as they were when London was the haunted house of the . . . The haunted house which was peopled by the shades of Olympus. I think you may reasonably believe you are a living being and I a chimæra of your mind. But let me explain that to me you are a mere chimæra, and in reality you are less alive than I am. For I am still a living soul and mind. And I have as great a feeling for beauty as I had when I wore a top-hat and let my hair stream from beneath it. (Tell us about Mrs. Chan Toon.) I will not tell you anything about her. For I want you to make inquiries about the lady. She was a perfect specimen fit for the satin lining of a jewel case. And if she is still alive she could tell you much that would throw a light on my life as she knew it. It was not the life of a rustic, but it had something of the rustic element in it. And I can confidently say I had in my heart the innocent joy of a rustic who has never seen the stones of this great prison house, where if a man is unfortunate he is despised and thrown out upon his own chance of mental regeneration. Mine was not a very lucky one. My chance, as I was, when I left that quiet and monastical retreat where justice made me repose and take my pleasures sadly. (Here Wilde was interrupted with the query: "Who did you communicate through at the sitting for automatic writing this afternoon? Through Mr. V. or through Mrs. Travers Smith?") Through you, dear lady. He is a tool. You are the light that lets me peep again into the world which seems so dazzling now that the Divine Justice finds it His pleasure to keep me in dim twilight. (Did you know Mr. W. B. Yeats?) I knew Yeats very well.

He will not be interested to know that I have still the voice to speak and the mind to put my thoughts on paper. He is too full of his own literary salvation to worry over a brother in art who fell from too much beauty, or rather, the desire for beauty. (Mrs. T. S.: Give us a proof of your identity?) Do not ask me for proofs. I do not wish to visualize my medium as an old spinster nosing into the other world in the hope that she may find salvation for herself when Providence removes her from this sphere. I rather like to think of her as a creature who has a certain feeling for those who strive from twilight to reach the upper air. (We admire your work.) I am infinitely amused by the remarks you all make. You seem to think that I am gratified by your approval and your smiles, which mean that in

spite of all his crime he had a certain value for us. I have value as each and all of you have ; and I am none the worse for having drunk the dregs as well as the best of the vintage . . .

Here we are in the most amusing position. We are like so many ants that creep round and round and do our silly tasks daily without any interest in our work. I feel like a very ancient *aunt* nowadays. I am doing what is little better than picking oakum in gaol. There, after all, my mind could detach itself from my body. Here I have no body to leave off. So one of my most interesting occupations is impossible. It is not by any means agreeable to be a mere mind without a body. That was a very decorous garment that made us seem very attractive to each other, or perhaps supremely the opposite. Over here that amusement is quite out of the question. And we know far too much about the interiors of each other's ideas. They grow very pale in this process. And one tires of one's ideas so easily. You can see them just as you saw the slightly creased and dabbled clothes of your friends on earth. (Have you seen your mother ?) Yes, I have seen her. She has not really improved in the process of dying. She is less comely now than when Speranza used to lead the intelligentsia in Dublin in those days when we had still the relics of civilization among us. (Will you come again ?) I will come again gladly if you will let me buzz on as an autumn bee might who was tired of hunting for fresh blossoms out of season. I am tired too, but I like to remind myself now and then of the fact that there are people who regard the little globe as the whole of what is reality.

"COMMUNICATIONS AND CONTROLS"

Does the Unseen World seek to have connection with ourselves ? Should we try to have connection with the Unseen World ?

By "A CLERGYMAN"

THE subject of our connection with the Unseen World is one about which I was always interested, but held no settled views.

Over and over again I have been asked to make one at a séance, and I always refused—and the reason was this: that a young clergyman told me of an incident, and others of similar cases—which effectually persuaded me of the possibility of visitors to a séance coming "under control" of the spirits who "came through." This was the story:—

"Living in the same house as myself when I was working in the West End of London, there was a lady who commenced going to séances. After her second visit she believed she had received instructions to begin to draw. We naturally laughed, as we knew her drawing could only be a very crude attempt; for she was utterly ignorant of freehand, model, or perspective. None the less, she sallied forth next day, and brought back a number of crayons of varied colour, declaring that she had bought them 'under control.' She retired to her own room and gave herself up to sitting with the spirit of an old Aztec architect, who had professed the wish to use her. The result was astounding. This woman, who had no 'colour sense,' and no 'sense of line,' came to our common dining-room bringing a sheet of cartridge paper, about the size of an ordinary theatre poster, covered from end to end with a symmetrical, geometrical design that was a perfect colour mosaic. She declared that her hand had been guided in its choice of the right crayons, and that then it had been directed in their use, and that she had no consciousness of what she was doing until the whole was finished.

"Knowing her as I did, I could not but believe her; and I suppose that as the days went on into weeks and months, her co-operation with this Unseen Control grew more perfect, for I have seen her produce crayon drawings even four times the size of the first. The strange thing about it was that she had no compasses with which to measure, and no rule to guide her

stroke. Her tools were simple crayons, and the paper on which she drew. This occurred as a result of attending a séance in Bayswater, and the lady lived in Elgin Crescent, Notting Hill, where I myself was residing for some time. I kept in touch with her for one or two years, and she was still at this work of drawing."

This story was told me about seventeen years ago. Others of whose veracity I feel sure recited similar instances where the effects of the control manifested themselves in the form of brilliant pianoforte and organ playing, although beforehand they could scarcely play a note. This was sufficient for me, for it appealed to my mind with irresistible force, that if some "Unseen Control" could so dominate a human body as to make it an instrument of artistic and musical production, there was no telling how far my own body might not become controlled.

Two or three years later I had another indication of similar possibilities, and this case was my own personal experience. At the special request of a well-known spiritualist, who was a friend of mine, I went with him to a house in Marylebone Road where a Mrs. Smith was then acting as a medium; my friend was in the habit of using her psychic powers to get into touch with a spirit doctor, who was practising spirit-healing upon him, and who, by the way, certainly cured him.

Mrs. Smith twitched off into a trance, and presently the supposed physician began speaking to my friend, and when he had finished I was informed: "There is another spirit who would like to speak to you if you will consent." I did! At once the appearance and voice of the middle-aged medium changed to one much younger, and I was thus hailed: "Why don't you let us use you more?"

On asking who was speaking I was told it was a spirit who was anxious to use me for preaching, and she calmly declared that she had already done so. When I requested proof she reminded me that in May of that very year I had felt impelled in my church—she knew and mentioned its name—to discard a sermon I had intended to preach and extemporize another, taking as my subject, "Yield yourselves instruments!" I was astounded, for it was literally true, having happened just two months before. It was rather hard on me too, for I had rather prided myself on that impromptu sermon—and now I heard her say: "I gave you that sermon! Why don't you let us use you more? Isn't it better to go up in the lift than climb the stairs?"

This settled me! I had been to only one medium, and since then "I have used no other." It may be true for the purposes of work that it is "better to go up in the lift than to climb the stairs," and I have little doubt in my mind that much forceful preaching and writing may be similarly inspirational in its sources. I remember that the Master, speaking to His disciples, advised them that when they should be haled before tribunals they were to "take no thought how or what you shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour." So I saw the possibility, but I also realized that it was one with a double side, and I had no desire to come under the control of *evil* spirits, and still less to give them an opening by attendance at any séance, where the presence of undesirable people might attract even more undesirable spirits.

I have felt quite convinced in my own mind that if there are any unseen agencies, desirous of using us as instruments, it is quite possible for them to do so, and if one were only able to sort out those spirits effectually, it might then be as well to make the way easy for contact by attending séances. But not unless! There are strange and subtle Control forces at work in the world, and I remember a curious instance of it.

Many years ago we had for a short time a maid out of our Sunday school. She was by no means a good girl—somewhat sullen, somewhat shifty, and altogether unreliable. She married a working man in the little town and went to live on the outskirts; and I remember how we wondered what kind of a wife this shiftless and almost illiterate girl would make. About two years later I heard, to my surprise, that she was arrested for—of all things in the world—begging-letter writing. I laughed, knowing full well that the girl could never have deceived any one by any letter that *she* wrote.

But, judge of my astonishment, when I was allowed to see one of the letters by the District Superintendent of Police. The writing was in a fine lady-like hand, of the kind affected by our great-grandmothers, and it was well and grammatically expressed. Over and over again in her life, at certain periods, the offence recurred; and, when in conversation with her I tried to find out why, she had nothing to say except: "I don't know why, sir! I only know that I *have* to write these letters. I think I must be off my head at the time, for, of course, I might know that I should get found out."

That might explain it to her crude mind, but it did not explain to me how a bad writer suddenly became a good one, and a girl

who could not spell correctly, nor express herself grammatically in normal times, suddenly became possessed with power to do both. Personally, I put it down at the time to "possession," and I have never seen any reason to change my opinion.

My sense of the reality of communications from the Unseen has been deepened by further happenings within my own experience. For instance, there was an elderly lady in the parish, whose husband, an owner of oyster beds, had died, and the business was being managed for her while her son, Bill, grew up. This strapping youngster went backwards and forwards to the oyster-dredging work daily from his mother's home, and the widow had looked for a continuance of the old prosperity that she had known when her husband was living. But for the first two or three years the receipts went down, though no other neighbouring oyster merchant suffered in a similar way. Then, one night, the old lady suddenly roused to a sense that some one was in her room, and to her great surprise she saw the form of her dead husband, who looked at her anxiously and said: "Send Bill down to the water to sleep!"

Next morning Bill took up his abode on board the oyster yacht, and he entered into residence. The result was that the returns for the year mounted again, and there was no other way of accounting for it than to conclude that his presence had checked surreptitious removals of oysters. The old lady herself related this story to me, and, she added: "I saw my dear man quite distinctly, and he spoke in the same tone that he used to use. Kind of jerky like. Oh, it were *he* right 'nough."

Another case I remember was that of a working woman, who beckoned me in, and by the look on her face I saw that something very serious had occurred.

"Oh," she said, "I've had a visit in the night from my late husband. There are two beds in my room, in one of which I sleep and in the other, Lizzie." Lizzie was her daughter, who was about thirteen, and who, until then, had seemed a rather fat, sturdy girl. "In the night I roused, and there was my husband standing at the foot of Lizzie's bed, and I saw him beckon her three times. I came down to breakfast this morning, feeling sure she had received a summons away. And, will you believe it, for the first time for years, Lizzie wouldn't eat any breakfast."

Well, the fact remains that from that day Lizzie simply faded away. She went into a rapid decline, and six months later, in spite of all efforts to keep her, she "passed on." The

occurrence made a deep impression upon my mind at the time; for the puzzle to me was, "Why the warning?"—inasmuch as it served no purpose, except that it confirmed the widow in the belief that her husband was living "over the border," and that he was interested in her family concerns. Ever afterwards she never referred to Lizzie as "dead"—she simply said, "Her father fetched her."

Another case of very great interest to myself was told me while I was away preaching in Kent. It seemed that my host, a keen man of business, had had a boy killed in the first week in January, 1917. He was in the Air Force, and somehow, as he was descending, a pilot mismanaged matters, and they were both of them killed on the spot. It appears that some little time before his death this young officer had sent home some lines he had copied, and he added: "I don't want to go West, but if I did I should like to go in the spirit of these lines." The following spring, his aunt, who was a lady of considerable psychic powers, was sitting one night in her room writing, and suddenly went on writing automatically: THIS IS FROM ERNEST WITH A MESSAGE FOR FATHER AND MOTHER. I WANT THEM TO READ A POEM ENTITLED "SNOWDROP," and the name was mentioned of a close friend of this very lady. The message was given, and on inquiry it was found that this very friend had only had one poem published, and it was this very one. The lines themselves were of the kind that aimed at comfort, hence his wish that the parents should read it.

His father now determined on a test, and asked this psychic lady to set as a test of the identity of the speaker this question: "Do you remember sending a very private letter to your father? When did you send it, and from where?"

At the next occurrence of automatic writing the young man wrote: "I heard what father said to you. I wrote that letter from M. H. (mentioning the name of his school) in May, 1914." The test was fulfilled. Afterwards he was asked: "Father and mother want to know where you got those lines that you sent home copied." And the answer came back that he got them from a poem he picked up in Arras, entitled "The Airman's Farewell." A well-known clergyman, who was staying with his father, remembered seeing the lines, and found them for the family in an old *Times Literary Supplement*. This double confirmation appeared very conclusive, and the statement made by his sister that he appeared to her and called her by her pet name was added to it later on.

This, out of all the many stories, more or less inconclusive, that I have listened to, is the only one of the evidences I have come across that have arisen in the war-period, though I have heard second-hand of many more for which I cannot vouch.

But from my own personal experience gained amongst those who were "breaking through" to the Land over the Borders, rather than those who "came through" from there, I feel certain that in some cases those departing had a distinct consciousness of something yonder before they left.

I remember a case of an old lady who was unconscious for about sixteen days owing to a stroke. She passed away in the house of her son, and the son was very anxious to see some sign of recognition on the loved face before the rigid line of division was drawn. He was a religious man, and prayed earnestly that he might see some such evidence. On the last day of her life I went in and out; but each time I entered the room there was the same scene—the son, a man of about thirty years of age and his young wife, and an elderly woman, who was a neighbour, waiting for the "weighing of the anchor" of the old, weather-worn craft for distant shores. All day long, like the creaking of the windlass as it unrolls the cable, so was her stertorous breathing, and through it all she made no sign. But about six in the evening I looked in again, and while I was there the sound suddenly ceased. Immediately the coma-stupefaction passed; a look of smiling recognition was given to her son as he bent over her, and then a glance of absolute amazement filled her whole countenance, and her eyes, leaving him, looked into space. Then the astonishment swiftly changed to a look of great joy, before, in one moment, the light of life went out.

"What was it she saw?" her son demanded. "She saw something!"

Aye, she *had*. There had been something there to see!

THE MAGUS

By CHARLES J. WHITBY

[In a lone oratory, at midnight, he evokes by the rites of high magic the spirit of one long dead.]

"MY purpose holds, albeit I seem to hear
An inward voice compelling doubt and fear,
My purpose holds, and midnight now is near.
"O Love, long lost and mourned, my virgin bride,
At noon espoused, withdrawn at eventide,
And now supremely blest and sanctified,
"If aught avail the practice of my art,
With constancy in each minutest part,
Thou shalt assuage the yearnings of my heart.
"When the last grains in yonder glass have run
The mystic rites appointed will be done,
And thou, the bourne of my adventure, won.
"For then, devoutly kneeling in this place,
I shall transcend the bounds of time and space
And see thee in thy beauty, face to face.
"Upon the instant, when I meet thy gaze
All doubts and questionings of bygone days
Will melt like vapour in the noontide rays.
"And eloquent of Love's benign control,
Thy beauty, like a sun-illuminated scroll,
Will manifest the secret of the soul."
Thus mused the Magus, and meanwhile pursued
His task sublime, the votive wreaths renewed,
The cypress burned, the emblemed past reviewed.
And by the wondrous alchemy of thought
Created in the chamber where he wrought
A universe concealing what he sought.
With fuming clouds of incense for a screen
He moved majestic, fateful and serene,
A symbol of the Power that works unseen.
For, purged by aspiration, dauntless eyes
May ransack the abyss, or pierce the skies
And take by storm the gates of Paradise.

When all was done, he knelt with arms outspread,
And thrice, before he lifted up his head,
Invoked aloud the presence of the dead.

As, when the tortured waves beneath grow white,
A wounded gull that laboured in its flight
Is caught and whirled across the dome of night,

The necromancer felt within his soul
The floodgates of omnipotence unroll,
And, launched thereon, was borne towards the goal.

The veil that shrouds the threshold of the brain
As by a scimitar was cleft in twain,
And lo! a spirit in the void again!

But man's infirmity delayed him still;
With nameless fears the spawning hosts of ill
Beset the steadfast fortress of his will!

What if this task, accomplished with such pain,
Were impious, and this freedom, false and vain,
The guerdon of God's infinite disdain?

Such doubts assailed him with malignant breath,
Whispering, "Fool! behold the judgment saith,
The wage of thy presumption shall be death!"

These vapours of the soul he swept aside,
These fears condemned, these menaces defied,
Remembering the beauty of his Bride.

That beauty contemplating—rather say!
For now there stood revealed an open way,
While sheer beyond the gates of jasper lay,

Which parted at his bidding, and behold!
Streets flooded with an atmosphere of gold,
Thronged with a radiant multitude untold!

And, from the dazzling verge of Paradise,
The foremost, She, while music thrilled the skies,
Gazed on her lover with benignant eyes.

So wondrous was her beauty and so bright
That, as he gazed and worshipped in delight,
The heavens behind her vanished out of sight.

No longer in the secret womb of space
But here on earth, Love's old abiding place,
The Living and the Dead were face to face.

THE OCCULT LIFE

By P. H. FAWCETT

THERE are, I am told, many weaker souls, who face with dismay the reality and responsibility of individuality. Yet they may take heart. They have reached their present position safely and have the future in their own hands. The desire to comprehend something of the machinery of Nature betokens a personality withdrawn from excessive introspection, and so from the precipice. Self is the abyss. The attitude of too many is to live in the present and let a problematical future take care of itself. It is not unreasonable, but it is what one may term the long, long trail of spiritual inertia. Such people should consider the theosophical simile of the "Flowers of the Tree"!

It is not given to all to be able to take the short cut to Occult Wisdom at once. Only a small proportion of the world's population hears of it; relatively few accept the idea with any seriousness. For as a whole we are still at an irresponsible stage, and may do a great deal with comparative impunity.

Fear is the impassable barrier which in all manner of insidious guises has excluded humanity from the Garden of Eden. It is the poison which wrecks individual lives and all human institutions. It is the motive power of all evil.

There are two paths by which to reach the Light more rapidly than by the long, long trail. One is by way of the Great White Brotherhoods, a perfect unselfishness; the other is by the difficult path of the perfect selfishness of the dark side, with ten thousand times more risk of disaster by the way. Sooner or later every one of us will have to take one or other of these paths, if we wish to be one of the "Flowers of the Tree." That is why it is desirable to understand the meaning and purpose of life.

At the worst Nature is not brutal or revengeful in her sentences. The most abject member of human society in this age of iron tolerates and even clings to his misery; the incurable sufferer finds resignation. There is no ground for supposing that the denizens of the lower astral world or even of the "cosmic sink" do not adjust themselves to their lot. Remorse fades out at a certain stage of degeneracy, and it is at least doubtful if any memory of lost potentialities persists between one class of ex-

perience and another. Those of us who do not suffer immoderately from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune pity the victims of its excesses; but even the submerged of society have their aristocrats of poverty, crime and disease. The members of the Great White Fraternities pity us. They are the Masters of Compassion.

Fear is without exception the most difficult of all human failings, being deeply rooted in the germ plasm as the instinct of self-preservation and the very essence of self. It is intimately connected with emotion, which in itself is illogical. For emotion is the outward and visible expression of an imperfectly evolved monad. The Masters have wholly conquered it. It exhausts energy for one thing, and energy is not lightly wasted by those who understand its secrets. Monads young in the evolutionary sense are prone to excessive emotional display. In all civilizations at their prime the control of emotion distinguishes the superior element of the people; during decline, when the superior element is being rapidly replaced by the inferior, emotionalism prevails in all sections of society. For periods of racial decline are the great cyclic opportunities for the training and experience of the evolutionarily young in preponderating numbers. When civilizations are in process of construction monads of more experience are needed. Education, be it observed, has nothing to do with the quality of intelligence or superiority of the monad.

Weakness can only be banished by personal effort. Every characteristic which makes up the Individual is the result of habit fostered perhaps through many lives. Habit is the result of action under the impulse of free will. Once executed an action tends to repeat itself; repeated it becomes habit; habit is intensified by practice, to reach its utmost development perhaps incarnations ahead. The weakest are capable of this original action. No one can afford to drift through life without effort. The medicine must be taken sooner or later if we wish to get well. Why not lift the cup and have done with it? It was no idle saying of the Great Essene: "Except ye be born again . . ."

It is impossible to provide the proof for occult teaching which is demanded by the sceptical. The products of the factory are before our eyes, but it needs a pass to view the machinery. Yet surely the discoveries of modern science are encouraging to students!

Modern biology teaches us that the union of the male sperm cell and female egg cell is the first expression of life—the germ plasm. It is not readily susceptible to change, although varying

between individual and individual. It is the seat of heredity, behind which lurks, as Eastern Doctrine tells us, the selective action of the Skandhas, which are the qualities of one incarnation carried over into the next. The germ plasm of animals is less sensitive than ours; they vary little within their species. The vegetable germ plasm is less sensitive still. The Human Being of superior intelligence is more receptive to outside influences and adaptable to them than the man of low intelligence. So far so good! ". . . and the Spirit of God brooded over the face of the waters. . . ." We know that in a state of extreme cold the world's atmosphere would be condensed into a body of water overlying the earth's surface. As the sun's energy, expressed through an electronic bombardment, possibly ebbing and flowing under obscure circumstance, raised the surface temperature, atmosphere appeared. Mineral life is the product of electrical action, all physical matter being basically electric. Atoms vary electronically, cohere into molecules and later into form. Mineral life produced marine plant life, plant life organic life, fish life winged life. As dry land appeared marine plant life adapted itself, animal life evolved, and finally man. Temperature and atmospheric pressure varied and reacted upon form. Changes still proceed. The evolution of the individual life cell at its highest point has achieved specialized groupings combined into the Human Organism. Each cell is an expression of individual life; each specialized grouping such as the organs has its group intelligence; the whole is directed by the "Oversoul," the I am I, evolved as an astral consciousness under other conditions. The specialized cell groupings are not yet perfect. They are dependent in some measure upon the wayward rule of an imperfect "Oversoul," suffer from weak or rebellious cells, and so carry within themselves the seeds of dissolution and an insecurity for our control. The superior "Oversoul" must understand his subjects and keep imperfections in check if a healthy tenement is to be preserved.

All these "Oversouls" were not incarnated into the evolved cell groupings at the same moment. Some are very recent appointments; others are very old and wise in accumulated experience. Experience must be differentiated from genius, which is the result of application to the development of some special habit through successive rebirths.

The whole visible universe is electricity in a variable state of extreme agitation, intelligible, within narrow limits only, through the five recognized sense termini. We know the constitution

of the atom. When matter passes beyond the dissecting point of the atom and reaches to the "nature" of electricity, it is on the borderland of the astral world. Atoms form and break down; they transfer electrons from one to another and give us the elements of the material world. But the energy behind this is an enigma. Behind the electron moving at incredible speed, what is the force? We send messages along our nervous systems as a telegraphist does along his wires; but what is the force behind the process? Inexpressively it is "will," a force almost inert in the mineral, dull in the plant, active in the animal, intensive in man, and the servant of the superman. It is a force belonging to the astral world, one of the forces of which the uninitiated know nothing, and the full secret of which is as yet only obtainable through the channel of occult training. Such forces exist appropriately in all the more subtle states of matter, and form the untapped reservoir which may direct man to the Throne of the Gods.

The vital energy available for reckless expenditure in this life is limited. We do not control its production, but waste it grievously. As soon as our productive machinery is habitually subjected to demands to which it is unequal, the astral vehicle suffers, transfers its prejudices to the physical body, and old age and decay supervene. The vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms disclose this energy as vitality. Its radiations are visible in the human aura, and its creations in the phenomena of thought. We waste it every moment of an unguarded waking day in emotional disturbance and unnecessary physical movement, to say nothing of protective measures against antipathetic influences unavoidable in large populations.

The animal kingdom is less diffusive of its vitality than man. Yet contact permits the coarser quality of its vital energy to be absorbed beneficially by us. Poor health may gain much from domestic pets; abundant health may lose something. In the vegetable kingdom this conservatism of the animal is more pronounced; for the vitality of plants is difficult to extract. In the mineral kingdom this is enormously intensified. We learn from the Brotherhoods that prehistoric races in an advanced state of civilization not only employed electricity but were adepts in the art of extracting the vitality from plants and seeds.

There are ways by which the vitality of an animal may be filched. One and perhaps the most crude is to transplant a secreting gland of the more actively vigorous ape into the over-indulged body of a middle-aged man. For the vitality of animals

if coarser than our own is also considerably stronger. I have seen in my younger and less enlightened days a deer run nearly a quarter of a mile with its skull and brain a mere pulp from the effect of an explosive bullet. Injuries which would prostrate a man are borne unflinchingly by an animal. A squashed insect long shows signs of life. The vegetable world is even more tenacious of its vitality. It may be uprooted, divided and subjected to all manner of ruthless treatment, and dies with great deliberation. Seeds preserve their latent powers of germination for very long periods.

Human life may be sustained upon the vitality of the vegetable world without any internal chemical processes. As an experiment it would only be successful probably with a few, partly because not many would know what they were doing, and partly because most of us have habituated ourselves to an excessive diet for which the system would at first be insistent. The following simple test may however produce a recognizable effect. Stand with your back against a tree of vigorous growth, the head and palms of the hands close to the trunk, particularly the finger tips; breathe deeply and slowly, exercising the "will" to extract the vitality of the tree with each indrawn breath. The energy required for the functions of the human body is obtainable from other sources than plant or animal life, upon which we are at present dependent. There is a reservoir which may be tapped. It is thus that the Masters of Wisdom sustain their pure and untroubled lives, with no interference with any evolved matter.

Neither infectious nor contagious disease affects a vitally strong person. It is not simply a matter of phagocytes. It is even possible to take and be unaffected by the most violent poison—with knowledge. I know men who have passed half a century in the most pestilential corners of the tropics and not only preserved their youth but, following the rules of healthy living, have never been ill. Why is it that psychic treatment is frequently successful? What is the peculiarity of the Grotto of Lourdes and scores of other places in the world that they should be prolific of extraordinary recoveries? Why is it that Christian Science and kindred cults can claim justifiably to have benefited the sick? Why is spiritual intercession as practised by the Spiritualists often effective? Why is it that so many inexplicable cases occur in ordinary medical experience? There are more reasons than one of course, but that one is the action of vital force brought into play unintelligently by the united desire of a group of individuals or by a single individual. In cases it may

be supplied through the agency of Unseen Helpers. The latter operate like our own restorative organism during the trance called sleep, when waste of vitality in other ways is at a minimum. Psychic, Spiritualistic, Christian Science, and Faith cures are, we know, often ineffective. Methods are at fault, not the principle. We are all working more or less in the dark. There are cases where the powers of a psychic healer are simply amazing, but it is a temporary and not a permanent gift, whose explanation is obscure. We should always bear in mind that where any association between the Two Worlds is desired, be it for medical or another purpose, complete absence of emotional disturbance is essential. Mental excitement closes the door.

Such things as I have written here and elsewhere will not appeal to all. To some many statements must appear incredible; to others the whole conception of an Occult World seems to be eloquent of a bewildered fancy. For evolutionarily young monads physical surroundings must yet awhile appear the only realities.

When we have finished with the physical body the experience of those of us who are not some way on The Path will not be strikingly different from that to which we are accustomed here. We are already familiar with it during sleep. For those who have risen superior to the sordid aspects of life, such as greed, cruelty, hatred, malice, and so forth, such things will no longer exist. For those who cherish the lower passions, they will persist. There is little doubt that an inexpressible agony attends the passage of those who foster the lower passions and attach undue importance to possessions. For although the astral and physical worlds are States apart, normally unconscious of the existence of one another, there is a transition period on the Borderland, when the physical world is still clearly perceived and the astral world is unsensed.

The Great White Brotherhoods have an actual existence as described in the article on the Planetary Control. They are not the ultimate arbiters of human destinies, but are the Servants and Agents of God, the physical link in the chain which unites this world and its organization through all the Higher World States with the Origin of All. Alone of humanity the Masters have discovered the elusive secret of happiness. For all that is beautiful and desirable is to be found on the Occult Path; and beauty appeals irresistibly to all finer natures. To the neophyte ugliness soon becomes an unrecognizable quality. Lust, hate, greed, criticism, ostentation, vulgarity, selfishness, and indulgence

of innumerable kinds, which build up the misery of existence and destroy the harmony of the physical cell groupings, become human weaknesses provocative only of pity; and pity is love. Were we given a cup of the most delicious nectar knowing that if we were to take it we should be ill for the rest of our lives, we should not drink it. Yet with this physical life absolutely in our hands, whatever our habits may be, we face an eternity which depends wholly upon what use we make of it!

The inestimable benefits of following The Path are realized at an early stage. Worries vanish; access of health is astonishing. Proof of the existence of The Brotherhoods may not come for a very long time; early steps on the Path may be very trying; there will be stumbles; and unfortunately there are failures; but the end is certain if the rules are followed.

I say again: Eradicate FEAR and endeavour to live unselfishly. You may be tried by poverty or by wealth, by fame or by discredit, by confidence or by doubt, by harmony of life or domestic discord. But so soon as you plant the first foot on the Path, your action is known to those who can and will help you if only you can pass successfully the preliminary but all important tests, which may be so much a part of ordinary life as to appear unassociated with any occult purpose. It will not be long before you will realize that to hate your enemy is a foolish thing, and that when the Great Teacher advised us to do good unto them that despitefully use us He was speaking words of the deepest wisdom.

Personal effort is essential. The doors of opportunity invariably open for the knocking. Nature after all only craves our co-operation in bringing the product of the ages to perfection. She will not scrap her work without good and sufficient cause.

PSYCHIC MINING

By STUART ARMOUR

MINERS, like sailors, are thought to be a very superstitious class of men. If a belief in powers and beings invisible to mortal eyes which sometimes have an influence on one's destiny be superstition, then they certainly are a superstitious lot. It is generally the city-dweller who prides himself on being above such beliefs, for, surrounded as he is in his everyday life by the works of man, there is little to reveal to him the invisible forces that play their part in the advancement and evolution of mankind and the world. Miners, prospectors, explorers, trappers, pioneers, sailors, and all those who have to battle with the great forces of nature in their chosen callings, see more of the works of God than of man, and thus are the ones to realize that there are more things in heaven and earth than are generally recognized by the city inhabitant. Spiritualism, psychometry, dreams and intuitions have all played a large part in the discovery and development of some famous mines in the United States of America and Canada. I am going to relate a few incidents that came to my knowledge while following a prospecting and mining life in these countries.

How much Alvinza Hayward depended on mediumistic advice in working the old Utica Mine in California I am not aware, but I do know that when the outlook was so black most men would have felt justified in abandoning the enterprise, Hayward was encouraged to persevere in the face of disheartening obstacles by the advice of a spirit medium in San Francisco, who constantly assured him that great financial success would be his if he kept on. The story goes that Hayward, during his operating of this mine, became heavily in debt, owing every one who would trust him, and, what was more serious, was behind with the pay of his men. He tried every avenue known to him for funds to keep on, but financial men had lost faith in his enterprise and all refused to help him. When he was at his wits' end, a boyhood friend turned up in San Francisco who had some money. This old friend, however, was not willing to help him financially, though he did consent to visit the mine with Hayward. As they approached the property they saw the miners gathered on the

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surface near the mouth of the workings, evidently holding a meeting. When Hayward and his companion were perceived three of the miners detached themselves from the group and came toward them.

Hayward said to his friend: "I expect to be lynched, for I have not paid these men anything for two months, and I suppose this is a committee coming to notify me of the worst." One of these miners said to him: "Mr. Hayward, we have been having a meeting to discuss our situation. We have not been paid a cent of wages for some time, but that does not bother us so much as the fact that the merchants, knowing this, have shut down on credit and we can't get any tobacco. Now we have decided that if you can arrange to keep us in supplies and tobacco, we will stick by the mine and work for thirty days more and risk the matter of our ever being paid, for we have confidence in the property."

At this, Hayward turned to his friend, saying: "Now that these men have shown their faith, you surely will let me have enough money to keep them going."

The friend reluctantly complied. The outcome of the matter was that within the thirty days the miners broke into very rich ore and Hayward laid the foundation of a vast fortune, dying a millionaire many years afterwards.

Jesse Knight, a prominent Mormon of Utah, now deceased, laid the foundation of a large fortune by the means of a dream thrice repeated. He was a generous man of homely manners and speech, and had a splendid reputation for honesty and square-dealing. His father was one of the earliest converts to Mormonism and was the close friend and adviser of Joseph Smith, the original prophet. The marriage of Jesse's father and mother was the first marriage ceremony Prophet Smith performed. This was in Ohio in 1834. Later on, the widowed mother of Jesse moved to Salt Lake with her children, and there Jesse grew up to manhood, when he worked at anything he could do—was a scout in the Black Hawk War, later a teamster and freighter, cattle raiser and prospector. At prospecting he had been very unsuccessful until he had a dream! Jesse Knight had prospected over a certain region in Utah, but not finding anything of importance had gone to another part of the State, where he had a dream that he was back at this region he had abandoned, and at one place with peculiar landmarks which he remembered, he dug down and uncovered a very rich vein. He did nothing, but the next night the dream was repeated, and again the night

following. Being a pious Mormon, he then told his wife that the Lord had instructed him in a dream to go back to that region he had abandoned and he would find a mine. As he was short of money at the time, he had considerable trouble in getting the cash necessary to get back, especially as the only security he had to offer was a dream. In fact, the usual reply he got to his requests for money was the derisive word "Humbug!" He finally did raise six hundred dollars for an outfit and expenses, and right at the place he had seen in his dreams he found a rich mine. This was the famous Humbug Mine, which he so named to "rub it in" to the derisive ones. This made him wealthy, and he afterwards sold it for a handsome sum. A humorous journalist in writing up this incident years ago, remarked, "Many men have sold mines that were dreams, but Jesse Knight is the only man I ever heard of who sold a dream that *was* a mine!"

A dream was antecedent to the finding of the famous "Dolly Varden" mine of British Columbia, and was the cause of the selection of one of Dickens' characters as its name. The fact that the discoverers were all Swedes led a newspaper reporter of a Vancouver paper to ask Ole Evindson, one of them, why Swedish prospectors should be calling their mineral claims after a character in *Barnaby Rudge*. This brought out the following story, which I have compressed from the original newspaper report.

"I had heard talk on mineral wealth, so I left Prince Rupert and came up here with three other chaps in the spring of 1912," said Evindson. "We packed in grub and set out up the Kitsault River. None of us had been up there before, but we were hoping to find some good claims.

"One night, just after we started, one of the chaps, Ole Pearson, had a dream. His uncle had died a few months before. Ole told us that his uncle had come to him in a dream the night before and showed him a white boulder and some rocks, and said: 'You are going to find a big mine which will make you rich so that you will not need to work for the rest of your life. You will go on until you find this boulder and these rocks, and then you must stake the claim, and the name you must give it is the Dolly Varden!'"

When Ole Pearson told his dream next morning, his companions received it with amused interest and hopes. Days passed as the little company fought their way up through the dangerous trackless canyon, without sight of mineral. Then two of the

company went back for supplies, while Evindson and his companion, Pearson, struggled on.

"We took different paths about seventy yards apart. I took the higher ground to prospect," said Evindson. "Then I saw in the bare andesite a streak of grey rock that looked as if it carried silver. With my hammer I broke down the capping, and saw that I had uncovered a vein that looked like rich ore."

While Evindson was examining his new find, Pearson let out a yell. "I've found the mine; I've found the mine," he cried in great excitement.

"I've found one too; stay where you are," called back Evindson, who, as the more experienced prospector, finished his research before lowering himself down to where Pearson was waiting.

"Where's your mineral?" asked Evindson, as he handed his own samples over to Pearson and looked round for signs of a ledge.

"I haven't found any mineral, but here's the boulder that my uncle showed me in my dream," insisted Pearson.

What with Evindson's ledge and Pearson's boulder, the two prospectors concluded that the finger of Fate was clearly pointing their way.

"Say, what is the name your uncle said we were to call the claim?" asked Evindson.

"Hanged if I can remember," admitted Pearson at last, after vainly trying to cudgel his brain.

So far as Evindson was concerned the name had slipped his memory. All that day and all the next day, these two prospectors sat around trying to think up that elusive name, feeling that they could not afford to take chances on any other.

At last hope came. The two companions hove in sight, with the grub. Without disclosing their find, Evindson put the fateful question: "What was the name of that claim that Pearson's uncle told him?"

A moment's pause, and then the answer came: "It was Dolly Varden."

Unfortunately, in my prospecting experiences I was never guided to rich discoveries by dreams, though many times I have been saved serious inconvenience in my mining operations by dream warnings. One instance may suffice to explain what I mean. We were working in a desert country where our drinking-water had to be hauled some miles, and at this time our hauling was done by a man owning his own horses and wagons,

as we had not put in our own teaming outfit. I had a symbolic dream one night that I interpreted as meaning that this teamster was going to shut off on us suddenly to hold us up for higher rates. I sent the foreman off early next morning to the nearest town, twenty-five miles away, to buy our own team and wagons. He had just been gone the day, when word was sent to us that the teamster refused to haul any more water for us, thinking, no doubt, I would rush down and offer to pay whatever he demanded, for lack of water meant an expensive shut-down of mining operations for several days, as this man had the only teams within twenty-five miles of us. However, I told the messenger that he could tell the teamster he could go to a hotter climate that even that of the Nevada desert that August day, and the next night the foreman drove in with our own horses and the wagon loaded with water.

The following experience enabled me to have a little quiet fun with my miners.

We were running a cross-cut to the west on the 200-ft. level for the purpose of exploring the ground. I kept telling the men that when we cut into a certain ledge, which only showed iron croppings on the surface, we would get copper, but from the way the miners would look whenever I mentioned it I knew they did not believe it, for their impression was that if we cut any ore at all, it would be gold. At one hundred feet in from bottom of shaft on that 200-ft. level we reached that iron ledge which at that depth was carrying values in copper, much to the surprise of the miners. The reason I was so certain of it was simply this: On several nights during sleep I was visited by a dream-miner who seemed to take me out to the top of this iron-ledge on surface, and with his pick would lift the top of it up like the lid of a box and show me that there was copper underneath. Though this copper ore would have been very valuable in some mining camps, from our distance from railroad, the expense of working where water was scarce, and for other technical reasons, the finding of it did not help us at all.

That these psychic occurrences are quite common in mining I feel assured from the number of weird tales I heard while following the prospectors' trail. Unfortunately I did not realize their importance at the time and neglected to make notes of them, and many of these tales have slipped out of memory.

THE OCCULT SCIENCES IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

By THEODORE BESTERMAN

THE late Middle Ages offer peculiar scope for investigation into occult science. In them first mingled what had penetrated to them of the classical learning of past generations with the rich and exotic stores of Oriental knowledge. At this time the sciences of astronomy, optics, dynamics, made considerable progress; algebra made its appearance; the Hindu-Arabic numerals arrived; the calendar was perfected; in short, the first mingling of East and West in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries gave birth to the first signs of modern science. There exist of this period enormous masses of material in the way of manuscripts in all the great libraries. It is all the more surprising, therefore, that Professor Thorndike had to traverse almost virgin ground for his recent history of magic,* in which is collected the largest and most carefully sifted assembly of facts regarding the late Middle Ages that has yet appeared. The author has proved that into the Middle Ages the "ideas and discoveries of Hellenic science persisted and were preserved by mediæval men to a greater extent than has been generally recognized; and to them the mediæval men added questions, observations, and even discoveries of their own. Not only did curiosity concerning nature's secrets continue, but the authority of the ancients was often received with scepticism; and a marked tendency runs through our period to rely upon rationalism and experimental method" (II-971). How true this is can be judged from the tone of the eleventh and twelfth century Spanish translations of the Arabic treatises on Astrology. The translators and original writers of these centuries, Pedro Alfonso for instance, insisted in a manner entirely in keeping with contemporary scientific astrology upon the fact that astrology † is an empirical science to be tested in the ordinary way by experiment and experience, by trial and error.

Indeed, the late mediæval centuries are of the utmost importance in the history of astrology, for in them, as has already been indicated, were first translated into non-classical Latin and into the newer European

* *A History of Magic and Experimental Science during the First Thirteen Centuries of our Era.* By Professor Lynn Thorndike. 8½ ins. × 5½ ins., 2 vols., pp. xl + 835 + vi + 1036. Macmillan & Co., 1923. Price 42s. net.

† This method has been employed with strikingly successful results in recent years to ascertain the effects and influences of the recently discovered planets Uranus and Neptune.

languages the important Arabian treatises on the subject. These translations, together with the comments on them by their translators and those that continued to be made from the Greek and to a lesser extent from the Oriental languages, paved the way for later astrologers such as Albertus Magnus and Guido Bonatti. These translations from the Arabic were especially useful in killing with their more rationalistic spirit such conceptions as that, for instance, of Bernard Silvester, who died at the beginning of the twelfth century. Bernard Silvester looked upon the stars as gods who served God and who ruled the world. At this time also astrology received its first serious treatment in England, at the hands of Daniel de Merlai (of Morley), and of Roger of Hereford, both of whom were, however, merely moderate exponents of Arabic teaching.

Alchemy, in its Hermetic and transmutational sense as opposed to its systematic chemical sense, experienced in the centuries under consideration at once its high and low water marks. In the eleventh century the European Hermetic and pseudo-classical works began to make their appearance, and the practice of alchemy in the centuries immediately following meant indeed the making of gold and nothing else. It was not until later, in the era opened by Paracelsus, that alchemy began to assume the proportions of a herald of scientific chemistry. In the meanwhile there occurred a transition period which marks the low water period of which I have spoken. It is at this time that we find in these *pseudo*-alchemical books directions for all sorts of occult and divinatory practices which have not the remotest relation to alchemy.

Dream-books were particularly plentiful at this time. Most of them were not so much concerned with the interpretation of specific dreams as with the whole question of dreams and their causes and effects. The general point of view regarding dreams at this period may be briefly summarized as follows. Dreams were held to be very valuable as being the records of the working of a person's mind during his sleeping moments. But as these dreams were generally, owing to inexplicable reasons, very vague, it was very right and proper that recourse should be had to those who were able to interpret these dreams and give them their true meaning. And indeed the interpretation of dreams was very generally excluded from the condemnations which were periodically issued against the occult arts. This exemption, and the defences which were required on occasion were generally based on the above argument supported by references to Biblical precedents such as those of Joseph and Daniel. The occultism of the Chaldeans and the metaphysics of the Greeks were also constantly invoked. To come to the dreams themselves, it was held that these could be inspired by good or evil spirits, but, as one writer naïvely remarks, if you go to bed with a good conscience you are unlikely to have a nightmare.

The subject of divination has never yet been satisfactorily studied.

Of the Greeks and Romans, we know, thanks to Bouché-Leclercq, as much probably as we shall ever know. Of the Chaldeans and Assyrians also we have considerable knowledge embodied in several valuable works. Of the Babylonians and Egyptians we have less. But of the Middle Ages in Europe, which provide in one sense perhaps the richest field of all, we have no systematic knowledge whatever. Professor Thorndike's book does not remedy the omission. Rather does it exasperate by giving crumbs from the rich store that was at hand. In the whole of his two thousand pages Professor Thorndike mentions the divining-rod (if memory and indexes are to be trusted) only once, and then only in passing. Not one of the methods of divination are systematically considered, although this could easily have been done. Though astrology overshadowed all the Middle Ages, there were certain kinds of divination such as necromancy, geomancy, aeromancy, sortilege, etc., which were in constant use. It is amusing to recall that Michael Scot (thirteenth century) made a list of the methods of divination known to him; this list numbers about twenty-eight. I have myself prepared a list of methods of divination with specific English names which stretches into nearly one hundred and fifty items. Of the system of divination mentioned above, geomancy was perhaps the most generally in use in the late Middle Ages, and it is regrettable therefore that Professor Thorndike gives a very erroneous definition of this art. Geomancy may be described as the art of divination by means of lines or figures formed by jotting down marks or dots on any surface. Of the many works on Geomancy of the period under consideration the earliest, I think, is that of Bernard Silvester (died 1130). That written by Plato of Tivoli aroused the interest of Henry VII and of the Duke of Gloucester of the time. It is interesting to note that several of these works claimed to be of Indian origin. How far these claims are true it is of course impossible to determine, but there is no reason for doubting that certain Sanskrit teachings penetrated into Europe at this time, since the contemporary legends of Prester John had that origin, and it is almost certain that Peter of Abano was familiar with Indian astrological works.

In conclusion it only remains to be said that after the publication of Professor Thorndike's painstaking and comprehensive work it will no longer be possible for occultists to ignore the period which has been more particularly considered in this article.

CORRESPONDENCE

[The name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, is required as evidence of bona fides, and must in every case accompany correspondence sent for insertion in the pages of the OCCULT REVIEW.—ED.]

MR. LEADBEATER REPLIES TO MR. LOFTUS HARE.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—My attention has been drawn to an amazing attack upon me, made in the January number of your magazine by a certain Mr. Hare. He disinters from an old number of *The Theosophist* an account of the life of a contemporary of Zoroaster, and finds fault with the date assigned to him, the spelling of the names incidentally mentioned, etc.

On these matters he has, of course, a right to his own opinion; but when he proceeds to insinuate that I copied the story from some Persian book he commits a gratuitous impertinence.

I have never asked Mr. Hare or anyone else to believe in that story or in anything else that I have written. That which I see I put on record when it seems to me of interest; whether people accept it is exclusively their affair, not mine. It is open to any man to doubt whether I have observed correctly, or to suppose me to have been in error in my deductions; but he has no possible right to accuse me of bad faith because he does not agree with what I have seen.

To fix dates in ancient history is no easy matter; I do my best, and I have often taken an amount of trouble of which my carping critic can have no idea to establish the accuracy of even an unimportant point; but I make no claim to infallibility.

For the spelling of the Persian names I can take no responsibility. What I heard I tried to reproduce phonetically; but the result was so weird and uncouth that I appealed to my Parsee friends, and either accepted such spelling as they suggested, or endeavoured to indicate their pronunciation as closely as I could.

I have never pretended to be a leader in the Theosophical Society, and I hold no office therein, though I have been a member for forty years.

We are but at the beginning of the study of the science of clairvoyant investigation; surely better work can be done by quiet and temperate comparison of results than by the gross rudeness of unwarranted accusations of deceit. Can we not at least begin by the ordinary courtesy of crediting one another with common honesty and good intention?

C. W. LEADBEATER.

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA.

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THE AKASHIC RECORDS AGAIN.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—In his letter published in your recent issue Mr. Jinarājadāsa states that Mr. Leadbeater does not care at all whether people believe or not his reading and interpretations of the Akashic Records.

I submit that this is a very unusual and far from commendable attitude when matters of such serious import as the study of the evolution of the Earth and of Man are in question. It ought to be a matter of the deepest concern to any teacher whether his statements are gaining a vital hold on the world of thought or not; otherwise it is obvious that what he says is based on insincerity or utter incapacity to realize the spiritual significance and depth of the themes of which he treats. I am myself of opinion that the latter is the correct view of Mr. Leadbeater's position as an exponent of occult doctrine.

Mr. Jinarājadāsa further states that Mr. Leadbeater is in the habit of looking into encyclopædias for confirmation of his visions. If he had even done this with discernment he would find, for example, that his statement in regard to the birth of Jesus, 105 B.C., cannot be reconciled with the actual date of the rule of Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem, which is given in any reference book of Roman history as from A.D. 26 to 36. Herod Antipas was ruling contemporaneously from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39, and both figure as essential characters in the Gospel story. Indeed if the birth period is removed to 105 B.C. the whole of the Roman references would have to be removed from the Gospels, as Pompey the Great did not set foot in the land till 63 B.C.

Students of the calibre of Mr. Loftus Hare have long realized the inaccuracy and inconsistency of many of Mr. Leadbeater's statements, and it is strange that so obvious an example as the above seems to have escaped even the mildest of his critics.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR JOHNSON.

LONDON.

[Mr. G. R. S. Mead has written an informing and critical work under the title *Did Jesus live 100 B.C.?* Students of the problem should study the pros and cons put forward very dispassionately in this book. I confess that for myself I have no faith in the earlier date.—ED.]

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—As your issue of July makes more than one reference to my name, perhaps you will allow me to send an *omnibus* reply.

I thank Mr. Stewart for his friendly letter, and will give careful thought to his suggested modification of the scheme which I presented in broad outline. The first thing I wished to establish was that our various faculties and powers—call them what you will—must be placed in some evolutionary order. I do not profess to have “walked round the mountains” of psychism, occultism and mysticism, nor to have

mastered all their details, but I feel the necessity of attempting to get a clearer view of these great realities. And, as your pages show, there are others who have a like desire. We should help one another, and by the exercise of a common mind may hope to get some good results. Meanwhile, I am strongly disposed to agree with Mr. Stewart's suggestion that all development proceeding from self-consciousness, accompanied by self-sacrifice, may be called mystical and regarded as "white," while all that is not so accompanied is in danger of becoming "dark," and in some cases does so. In this respect, then, what I called "occultism" has a moral bifurcation to the right and the left hand respectively. Both are subject to the exercise of the will. On the other hand, the movement backwards, *below* self-consciousness, which I denote as "psychism" is perhaps amoral, especially since it is involuntary and atavistic. This would seem to be reasonable, since we cannot designate anything moral or immoral that belongs to the order before the development of self-conscious intelligence and will.

Your contributor, R. M. Sidgwick, has my sympathy in the wish that the leading professors of occultism—and especially those who give us the results of their clairvoyance—should endeavour to attain to some kind of mutual consistency; even more desirable, perhaps, would be a self-consistency. Mr. Leadbeater, for example, as a Buddhist could find no trace of the Gospel Christ, the Crucifixion, or the twelve apostles, but having lately become a Liberal Catholic Bishop he has quietly unearthed them for the delectation of "those who want to believe in them"—as Mr. Van Gelder would say. One of his fellow clergy told me Mr. Leadbeater had on this matter changed his opinion, which seems to show that all clairvoyance does not lie so far beyond the realm of opinion as we were wont to believe.

You have, sir, kindly supplied me with the full text of Mr. R. Van Gelder's long letter from Sydney, the dwelling-place of Mr. Leadbeater; and it is somewhat remarkable that both he and Mr. Jinarājadāsa, writing from Adyar, open by assuring you that Mr. Leadbeater is not anxious to prove by his investigations the genuineness of his clairvoyance. I can find no passage in my article which this statement is supposed to refute.

There are, to my mind, two issues before us, one of historical accuracy and the other of literary integrity. The first is, of course, important but not vital. We can live quite well without knowing for certain the date of Zoroaster; but we cannot live without honesty.

Mr. Van Gelder gives a list of authorities and insinuates that because I quoted four, whom I think the right ones, as concurring, I was hiding the fact that others give an earlier date for the prophet. Everybody who has dipped into the subject for half an hour knows the long conflict of opinion during the last fifty years. Here are the chief names in the debate, and their conclusions as to the date:

1. Martin Haug (not "Martyn Haig" of Mr. Van Gelder's letter) gives 2800 B.C.
2. Laurence H. Mills 1500 to 1000 B.C.
3. Karl Ethe 1400 B.C.
4. Eduard Meyer before 1000 B.C.
5. *Historians' History* „ 1000 B.C.
6. Karl F. Geldner after 1000 B.C.
7. Percy Sykes is indecisive, but inclines to . . . 660-593 B.C.
8. Williams Jackson (not William Jackson) . . . 660-583 B.C.
9. Hope Moulton recanted from 1000 to Jackson's date.
10. Edward Browne, West, Justi and Casartelli agree with Jackson's date.

My argument, which Mr. Van Gelder entirely ignores, goes to support the case presented by the writers 7 to 10, but it is Edward Browne's table of Achaemenian Kings which clears up the difficulty for me by showing how the dynasty divided into two lines and became united again under Darius I, who succeeded Cambyses II, his third cousin once removed.

But when we turn to the question of literary integrity the matter becomes more serious. Mr. Leadbeater, with every facility for consulting authorities, as we now learn from Mr. Jinarājadāsa he does, chose the earlier dates 2 and 3 for the "framework of history" in which he was about to set his clairvoyant pictures. But there is no particle of evidence to show that these dates were "corrections of so-called history by the real akashic record." True, he allowed his friend Mr. Wadia to descend upon the wonders of the seer's astral phonetics, of how he was able to "bring through" the most unpronounceable Zend proper names, though he had "not studied ancient Persian history, nor even perused the *Shanameh*," yet in this book, I believe, the name Lohurasp, as the father of Vishtaspa, is alone to be found in literature. He allowed Mr. Ernest Wood to give a long account in an article published in *Theosophy* of February, 1923, in which he described in detail how he and another helper took down at Mr. Leadbeater's dictation the material for *Man, Whence, How and Whither*, and the *Lives of Alcyone*. There is no hint of the employment of encyclopædias to get "as it were a framework of history." Finally, Bishop Wedgwood describes in the Union Lodge Lectures, 1918, the method employed in making clairvoyant investigations for the Old Catholic Church affairs. "The questions were usually put when we were out of the body at night," he says. Shall we now hear that for this work Mr. Leadbeater employs ancient liturgies and ecclesiastical histories to get his framework? Undoubtedly we shall. And so the whole edifice of this life-long clairvoyant construction comes clattering down. At most it is the correction of poor benighted "so-called historians."

Two more points and I have done. Mr. Jinarājadāsa hints at my ignorance of Zend; he is right. But Mr. Wadia's assurance seems to

show that Mr. Leadbeater does not know "a little bit of Zend."

In a curious way Mr. Van Gelder confirms my suspicions that the purpose of the romances is "to flatter and intrigue the leaders of the Theosophical Society," and, I may add, to coerce the recalcitrant members. For he concludes by attributing my hostility to the fact that I have "been left out of the Lives," and he advises the Theosophical Society in England to get another Director of Studies in Comparative Religion and Philosophy.

Happily I am now beyond the reach of this subtle diplomacy.

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM LOFTUS HARE.

"SOME THOUGHTS ON OCCULTISM."

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—The above paper by R. M. Sidgwick is in my opinion not only very clearly expressed but is admirable in being correct in its statements; if anything, some of the statements could have been put more forcibly.

After many years' study and endeavour, I have reached the position to regard the whole mass of so-called occult teachings as purely speculative beliefs, having no coherent system of accurate thought and based upon premises incapable of proof and, knowing the contradictory theories put forward by many of the so-called teachers of occult societies, and the extremely variable and indefinite experience by intuition or the still uncertain clairvoyant methods of trying to arrive at something like basic truths. It has no certain system of knowledge and is therefore outside the category of being scientific.

As the Editor of the *Quest* recently stated, "The Whence and Why and Whither of our lives is still a profound enigma for our understanding."

Yours faithfully,

G. W. L.

WAS MADAME BLAVATSKY A MEDIUM OR AN OCCULTIST?

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—I have only just read in the April number of your REVIEW, under Notes of the Month, the statement that Mr. Hodgson—who was sent out to Adyar by the S.P.R. to examine the phenomena reported to have been performed by Madame Blavatsky—"caught her playing her foolish and childish pranks . . ." etc., and forthwith put her down as an impostor. Will you allow me to point out that when Mr. Hodgson was at Adyar, Madame Blavatsky was on a brief visit to Europe with Colonel Olcott; and that he never, to the best of my knowledge, ever even saw her? His report was based mainly on the fabricated evidence

of dismissed employees, despite the fact that they were absent when the most important phenomena took place. He certainly never "investigated" any phenomena, for he never saw any. Most of them occurred at Simla in 1880, and he did not reach India until 1884. If any of your readers possess a copy of my book, *H. P. Blavatsky: Her Life and Work for Humanity*, which you were kind enough to mention in your Notes, and will turn to chap. vi, they will there find the real facts of the case and a brief but masterly indictment of the report by the well-known Orientalist, Mr. Charles Johnston.

As I was closely associated with Madame Blavatsky from 1887 until her death, as one of her personal pupils, I can testify that she was far too great and noble a character to be guilty of deliberate fraud. She was undoubtedly full of fun—as many great people have been—and often did little "psychological tricks," as she called them, to amuse her friends, or by way of a practical illustration: e.g. producing raps *at will*, to show that they are not necessarily done by "spirits"; or moulding the ectoplasm of a materializing medium to any shape or likeness she chose, as she did repeatedly at the Eddy Homestead in the early seventies, in order to instruct Colonel Olcott, who was then a Spiritualist.

Her explanations of the spiritualistic phenomena were repudiated by the Spiritualists, who still seem to prefer the assertions of the alleged "spirits" to the positive knowledge of an Occultist trained in the ancient wisdom of the East. But the latest scientific tests of men like Grünwald of Munich, and Schrenck-Nötzing of Charlottenburg tend ever more and more to confirm the accuracy of the Occult explanations offered by Madame Blavatsky. It is true that she was born with a highly developed psychic organization, but she herself relates the terrific struggles she had to go through in order to become complete master of it, before she was even allowed to go to Tibet and be trained for her mission under the Eastern rules of Occultism.

I am, etc.,

ALICE LEIGHTON CLEATHER.

KUMAON, HIMALAYAS.

PREMATURE BURIAL.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—It was with much interest that I noted that your article in the May issue of your REVIEW, on premature burial and suspended animation, entirely bears out much that Mme. Blavatsky wrote on the subject in her *Isis Unveiled*. She gives several curious instances of similar happenings in Vol. I, page 479; but—and this seems the interesting point—her statements on page 483 of the same volume seem to agree with those quoted in your article by Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson. He says: "Presuming that an organism can be arrested in its living in such a manner that its parts shall not

be injured to the extent of actual destruction of tissue or change of organic form, the vital wave seems ever ready to pour into the body again as soon as the conditions for its action are re-established." Whereas, on the page mentioned above, Mme. Blavatsky says, "... the man is not dead when he is cold, stiff, pulseless, breathless, and even showing signs of decomposition; he is not dead when buried, nor afterwards, until a certain point is reached. That point is, *when the vital organs have become so decomposed, that if reanimated, they could not perform their customary functions*; when the mainspring and cogs of the machine, so to speak, are so eaten away by rust, that they would snap upon the turning of the key. Until this point is reached, the astral body may be caused, without miracle, to re-enter its former tabernacle, either by an effort of its own will, or under the resistless impulse of the will of one who knows the potencies of nature and how to direct them. The spark is not extinguished, but only latent—latent as the fire in the flint, or the heat in the cold iron." In this connection it is interesting to note how modern science is advancing along the lines of those Eastern teachings that were given out in the works of Mme. Blavatsky towards the end of last century; and statements that met with ridicule and opprobrium forty years ago, are now being accepted by some of the greatest scientists of the day.

Yours truly,

A STUDENT.

THE RELATIVITY OF KNOWLEDGE.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—Referring to the letter of Mr. F. C. Constable on the matter of the relativity of our knowledge, it is possible to go a good deal further without violence to the facts with which science is concerned. It is admitted that we deal only with the apparent positions of the sun and stars, some of the latter being theoretically at immense distances from us, "So distant, says the sage, 'twere not absurd to doubt that light, set out at Nature's birth, had yet arrived at this so foreign world—though nothing half so rapid as its flight" (Young's *Night Thoughts*).

The real fact is that we are dealing only with the *images* of the celestial bodies as reflected on the air-screen of the earth. It is admitted that there is no such thing as light, as we know it, outside of the earth's atmosphere; and in one of those bright flashes of genius to which all great poets are at times disposed, Shelley describes the sun as "a rayless orb, floating in a black concave," which is precisely what our knowledge of the phenomena of light would lead us to expect from an extra-atmospheric view-point. Truly we now see "as through a glass, darkly," and the whole of our knowledge of the universe is *purely relative*. Even the elliptical orbits of the planets are true only in regard to a *stationary* sun, and the sun's proper motion in space

being discovered, puts an end to the elliptical orbit of the planet as a matter of fact, though for convenience of working we retain the idea theoretically, and this is only one of the many postulates of science which are taught in the schools as "solid fact."

Yours, etc.,

W. GORNOLD.

THE SEPTIFORM SYSTEM OF THE UNIVERSE. "GOD GEOMETRIZES."

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Each one of us is embarked to solve a mystery. There are creeds, and theories, philosophies and dreams; but out from a galaxy of speculation the thoughtful student gradually begins to realize the elementary, primordial truth, that behind and beyond the ever evolving physical phenomena are mathematical, rhythmic laws, fundamental, common to all other factors and the whole Universe.

So bedrock in nature are these principles, that the most superficial, for a reason which he cannot define, realizes and accepts these truths, which truths in the course of time crystallize into terse maxims.

The Bible Conception of the Cosmic Creation is in accordance with these laws, and to the initiated becomes an inspiration and a light. Primarily in a simple form the whole of Life may be accepted to be a definition of that law.

"As above, so below."

This statement in itself may be applied as a precept to be literally accepted in questions of health and physical welfare. (Sufferers and others interested in these problems are here cordially invited to communicate with the author of this system, who will gladly accord the help of his knowledge in this his life's work.)

While the New Testament is devoted to the upward Arc of evolutionary Redemption and symbolized by the Apostolic number Twelve (12) the Old Testament is instructive of physical Creation, and its law as expressed in numbers is Seven (7). This number seven is constantly alluded to both by direct statement and analogy.

The whole scheme of physical creation is Sevenfold, and the Cosmic conception becomes exceedingly clear on the Septiform division.

The days of the week are a reminder of this classification.

The physical body is a sevenfold production.

All cycles, whether the gestative period of an embryonic egg, or the natural course of life, may be well and clearly marked out by an application of this number.

In music we have seven full tones; strike an eighth and what do we do? We reproduce the first note once more, *but upon a higher octave*.

What a stupendous promise God has given us in this symbol of the octave tones!

This great mystery is the solution of the Egyptian symbol of the "Tau."

ALEC STUART.

BRANSGORE, CHRISTCHURCH, HANTS.

THE ALLEGED PSYCHIC PORTRAIT OF DEAN LIDDELL.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Doubtless you have read in the Press about the psychic portrait appearing on the east wall of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford. I have no doubt that considerable play will be made with the argument of coincidence. I agree that this is a perfectly legitimate argument to bring forward, but the casual and thoughtless manner in which it is advanced by those who do not perceive or who do not care what the word coincidence implies should, I think, be condemned. Too often the word coincidence is used with absolute dishonesty; that is to say, by people who use that term merely as a screen for their often fanatical disbelief in and opposition to any explanation savouring of the occult, or, as they deem it, the superstitious. Anyone honestly using the term coincidence to explain, for example, the present observed fact should be prepared clearly to state what, by approximate calculation, must be the odds against the explanation he advocates, and so commit himself to that position with a perfectly clear understanding and acknowledgment of what the term coincidence implies in the given case. If this line were followed out consistently, people would, I think, become remarkably chary of the abuse of this otherwise favourite word. To take certain factors involved in the present instance. The odds against it happening include at least the following:

- (a) Any one of several million men might have been represented.
- (b) Any other cathedral or building might have been pitched upon.
- (c) Any other place in the present building might have been pitched upon.
- (d) All these difficulties surmounted, the portrait might have appeared any way up; upside down, for instance.

The coincidentalists will readily see the chances against the portrait appearing of this particular man above all men, in this particular building above all buildings, on this particular spot above all spots; and he must calculate not only the chances as regards (a), (b), (c) and (d) separately, but, and this is where the trouble comes in for him, the almost unrealizable number of possible combinations amongst these varying factors which would almost certainly eventuate in failure.* The final miracle that an accurate portrait of the right man should be found in the right cathedral on the right wall of the cathedral (below the window dedicated to his memory) facing towards his wife's tablet; in other words, IN ALL RESPECTS agreeable to the conditions which

* All of them, in fact, but one.

would result from human purpose and design; these, I think, require such explanation on the part of the coincidentalists as shall prove a greater tax upon our credulity than other possible explanations, such as the psychic or spiritualistic. The champion of coincidence usually entirely disregards the vast odds against his explanation, and he almost invariably ends up by making such tremendous claims upon our credulity that trifles like miracles and occult phenomena drop at once into the background. I have noticed that, generally speaking, when something very unusual and difficult of belief happens upon undoubted evidence, nine explanations out of ten offered are infinitely more difficult of belief than the original happening. Still, this, of course, is common experience to students of the occult.

Sincerely yours,

C. H. COLLINGS.

[I have given my reasons for scepticism on this matter in my Notes of the Month. An important point is, I think, that no one who had known Dean Liddell in life and had been shown the psychic portrait, apart from its context, if I may use the expression, could possibly have identified it. Of this I am firmly convinced.—ED.]

THE EXPERIENCE AT DAMASCUS.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—If one were to pass a hasty opinion upon your correspondent's amazing experience at Damascus, it would be that the spiritual body of the lady, being free (as we often are during sleep), and bent on a voyage of discovery, seeing the danger of her fellow-countryman, and having both knowledge and power, came to his assistance. But there are two serious drawbacks to such an opinion; first, the lady's after-condition, which makes it fairly obvious that her abstention from her body was not voluntary, and second, her knowledge of Arabic. Much must be conceded to the subconscious, but not the perfect knowledge of another language, I presume, or many well-established opinions of the séance room would have to be discarded, to the detriment of the spirit hypothesis generally.

Would it not be safer to assume that the subconscious mind of some friend or former traveller, either living or dead, seeing your correspondent's danger, came to his assistance, finding a perfect vehicle for expression in the spiritual body of this lady, itself in a state of freedom no doubt. When danger and death are lurking around, very many curious things happen. It is then, indeed, when the ordinary individual gains his greatest experience of these great and hidden powers lying within us.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

E. S. R.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

THE Quest in Islam is surveyed by Dr. R. A. Nicholson in the current issue of *THE QUEST*: it is a new and informing study of Islamic mystical theology and several of its developments within and without Sûfism. We hear something concerning the Sincere Friends, otherwise Brethren of Purity, founded at Basra, that city of treasure and enchantments, "towards the close of the tenth century." They are said to have drawn their theosophy from many sources, but from Neoplatonism more than all. To this in the main they owed their idea that the soul emanates from God and that the soul's end is to return. The path was one of contemplation, but also of ascetic life. As regards external Arabian religion, it was held to be "defiled by ignorance and adulterated by error," the way of its purification being a marriage with Greek thought, which would "extract the spiritual kernel from the literal husk." But the Friends were in touch with political movements, and their doctrines are said to have supplied a theoretical basis for the secret propaganda which undermined the power of the Caliphate. This "Islamized form of Neoplatonism" is contrasted with that Sûfism which is described as rooted firmly from the first in Mohammedan religion. Sûfism is the Mysticism of Islam, "born, cradled and bred" therein, whence it rests on an unitarian basis, in precisely the same manner as Christian Mysticism rests on the foundation of the Trinity. Transcendent or immanent, God is not inconceivable and can be known from within Himself through the immanence within the soul. The path of union is followed by a "science of the heart," this being the organ with which God is contemplated. Hereof is the earlier Sûfism, but many schools arose in succession under the names of successive teachers, and Dr. Nicholson gives account of these. He shows further that older Sûfism sought its end of being in communion with God and not in absorption, an idea which developed later. There are exhibited also certain important distinctions between Christian and Islamic Mysticism, when both are taken at their highest: in the latter, for example, there is scarcely any idea of "personal sympathy" between God and the soul.

Dr. Gaster translates part of the *VEILED MIDRASH* incorporated in *SEPHER HA ZOHAR*, concerning the resurrection of the dead. It is described as a Gnostic fragment and a comparison is instituted with Mandæan teaching on the "revival" of Adam and Eve, in common with the whole creation. We note also that Dr. Gaster sets aside the hostile criticism which refers the composition of the *ZOHAR* to a certain Moses de Leon at the end of the thirteenth century, affirming the existence of an ancient *MIDRASH* under the name of Rabbi Simeon ben Yochai, with which later editors have joined independent treatises

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and have formed in this manner an inchoate commentary on the Pentateuch. It follows that Dr. Gaster's view is parallel to that of Professor Schiller-Szinessy, writing in the ninth edition of the *ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA*. . . . Dr. Eisler concludes his papers on the Original of the Last Supper. He has studied successively the symbolism of the Cup of Wine and the broken Bread; he has reconstructed the last Passover discourse; and in the present essay he claims to "resolve in the affirmative sense the age-long controversy whether the Last Supper was a Passover-meal or not," maintaining the correctness of the Synoptic tradition against Johannine chronology. It is affirmed also that during the celebration the "peculiar Messianic self-consciousness" of Jesus was revealed to His disciples. . . . The prevailing fashion of the moment in favour of reincarnationist belief—held and argued, for the most part, on very shallow and frivolous grounds—has relegated to the horizon's verge that of simple pre-existence. In his study of the Transcorporation Doctrine, Mr. Mead reviews several aspects of both ideas and registers incidentally his opinion that the counsel of Jesus to the man born blind—i.e. to go and sin no more—connotes the doctrine of pre-existence rather than reincarnation. Of the answer offered by Christendom to the question: Whence do we come?—he says that practically it "slams the door in our face," for the soul has no prior history but is created immediately by God in the case of "every child born into the world." Apart from all experience, it is yet held morally responsible for all its acts, amidst glaring inequality in the tasks assigned thereto. Moreover, the "deeds done on earth" carry an everlasting consequence in the orthodox schools, according to their doctrine of future rewards and punishments. From such considerations Mr. Mead proceeds to postulate—on the authority of immemorial antiquity and on the wealth of facts observed and analysed by Psychical Research—an embodied state of the soul after physical death, as against that of a spirit "minus a body of any conceivable kind." Further as regards reincarnation and pre-existence, he dwells upon the fact that their doctrine of rewards and punishments pictures the results of evil deeds in this life as worked out subsequently in some intermediate state. In this case the very pertinent question arises, Why—on the reincarnation hypothesis—should all souls carry into the next incarnate life a debit or credit? The later Platonists held that intermediately it is punished of necessity, but volunteers afterwards for a life of struggle and misfortune, "that it may of its own free will discipline and purge itself." Other reincarnation systems do not offer even this very partial and not too convincing light. Mr. Mead's tentative conclusion is that as research advances into "the buried levels of memory" we may find some ground of reconciliation between the contradictory theories of one life only on earth and of recurrent lives.

THE HIBBERT JOURNAL will attain its majority on the appearance of the October issue, having been established in the corresponding

month of 1902. A leaflet which accompanies the current number tells us that during this period it has printed over one thousand articles, dealing with Religion, Theology and Philosophy. There is no need on our part to speak of its importance and influence, or, indeed, to do anything more than express our sincere wishes for its continued success under the able and sympathetic editorship of Dr. L. P. Jacks, for whose own literary work we have always had great respect, whether represented by his contributions to *THE HIBBERT JOURNAL* itself or by volumes like the *LEGENDS OF SMOKEOVER*. Among articles in the current issue, a living interest attaches to Professor Lutoslawski's account of the conversion of a psychologist, which tells how he who is a Pole and was born in the Roman Church, severed his connection therewith and became an unbeliever at the age of twenty-three, "though not yet a quite decided materialist." Five years later he "discovered the absolute reality of his own self," with the help of the German philosopher, Teichmüller, and since that time he has never doubted that he is "a free agent and an immortal soul." This great fact did not, however, in any way lessen the distance which separated him from the creed of his Church. But at the expiration of fifteen further years he was arrested suddenly by the "analogy between a clean body and a clean soul," whereupon he went to confession, pointing out that he had no faith in several vital dogmas of Christian theology. The monk who heard him—described as very simple and uneducated—urged him to receive communion, assuming all responsibility, and in obeying this mandate the Professor experienced a change which transformed his life. It was "the clear consciousness of a mysterious powerful Presence." The value of the event was infinite, and, caring nothing for the belief of others therein, he "desired to be a member of that Church which had the power of producing" the result thus placed upon record. He was led subsequently to the lives and works of the saints, "especially of great mystics." For the rest, his spiritual change or conversion is compared with "the sudden mutation of organic forms which is known in biology."

Mr. Watkin Davies commemorates the centenary of the birth of Ernest Renan, presenting him to our consideration as the most influential man of letters since Voltaire, as well as "the most original and able theological critic of the last century." It is altogether a notable article, whether it regards Renan as a Celt of Celts, dwelling on his Breton birth and the place of Iona among early Christian missions, or reviews the change which has passed over religious feeling in respect of *VIE DE JÉSUS*, whose author was regarded in his own day as a hopeless heretic and "something unclean," while now "the narrowest of divines reads his books without offence, if not with admiration." The day of Renan has passed, and we think that the discriminating panegyric of Mr. Davies—in part unconsciously to himself—offers evidence of the fact; but that which remains is Renan's "noble spirit," married to a "literary skill of the highest kind," and

also "the truth-loving mind of the man himself." In *THE FIRST MAN AND THE SECOND*, Sir Oliver Lodge discusses the evolution of mind or consciousness, the dawn of a sense of free will, the bringing to birth of him who was first entitled to be called man, standing on "a higher level than the rest of the animal world." It is said of him that "he had acquired a soul," that he had entered into the state of humanity. But there was a second man to come, as a "Lord from heaven," in Whom was to be revealed the "potential divinity of man," self-realized as a Son of God and an heir to the Kingdom of Heaven. It is a confession of Christian faith, the recognition of One "in Whom dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

The current issue of *MODERN ASTROLOGY* has two articles which are perhaps of more general appeal than the technical papers, important as these are from the standpoint of students. One is on the relation of the Equinoctial Zodiac to that of the Constellations, and is of considerable interest along its own lines. The other is on Biblical evidence in support of Scientific Astrology, and it marshals a creditable number of texts, besides citing the views and interpretations of modern commentaries. We learn, for example, that Canon F. C. Cook regards Isaiah xlvii. 13, as a challenge—on the part of the Prophet—calling on the people to demand from the Chaldean astrologers that they should make independent investigations as to the accuracy of his predictions concerning the Fall of Babylon from the standpoint of their own art.

As its title indicates, *THE SQUARE* is a magazine for Masons: it is published at Vancouver and is now in the third volume. We observe with satisfaction a statement in one of the articles that "any inquiry into the meaning of Masonry must be far wider than a discussion of its moral issues, its symbols, its fable and its Charges." Such an intimation might be placed at the head of every number, to act at once as a keynote and a caution to contributors at large. Other papers are on the Pillars of the Porch and on Mozart's so-called Masonic Opera, entitled the *MAGIC FLUTE*. As it happened that the musician became a member of the Craft in 1785 and that this particular composition was undertaken at "the behest of a Brother Mason," it is presented to our notice as "a glorification" of the Emblematic Art. Interpretations of this kind are liable to be somewhat arbitrary, and the Opera is concerned in reality with the Mysteries of Isis and Osiris, a subject which may have been inspired by the fact that Mozart belonged to the Masonic Order, but there is no further relation. The hypothesis arose about 1865, when an Austrian Freemason endeavoured to show that the Opera was allegorical and that its characters were historical personalities, Leopold II, Maria Theresa, a Mason named Born—who was a notability of that period—and so forth. It is difficult to see in what manner there is colourable probability in the scheme, but those who may care to pursue the subject can be referred to the *TRANSACTIONS* of the Leicester Lodge of Research for the year 1920-21, where the

affirmative side of the subject is put forward at considerable length.

There have been papers of varying interest in recent issues of THE MASONIC RECORD, including one on the inner significance of Masonry which offers some amazing points, as for example that there are things in Craft Ritual which embody all that remains of ancient religions and philosophies. On examination, however, our old but long-discredited friend, the solar-mythological explanation of "all that hath been, is and ever shall be" in faith, symbol and ceremony is again brought forward, as if indeed it were something new and strange. The Blazing Star is Sirius, "whose rising gave warning of the approaching overflow of the Nile. The circumambulation of the Lodge is a relic of solar worship. Most notable of all is the suggestion that the mosaic pavement "represents the beautiful and variegated vegetation of the Delta disclosed when the water receded." We are in plenary agreement with the writer, Sir John A. Cockburn, when he affirms that the great secret of the Mysteries and of all true Religions is the reconciliation and conjunction of Heaven and Earth, whether or not he can persuade us that such bond of union is typified by Jacob's ladder. There is another article which we have read with exceptional interest because of the gulf which is opened beneath the feet of its subject quite unconsciously to the writer. Mr. L. Vibert affirms that there must be a Ritual in Freemasonry, but that "it cannot be too clearly or too often repeated that there is no Authorized Ritual," that none is acknowledged by Grand Lodge, "nor is it officially committed to the approval of any particular system." The measure of these statements, within Mr. Vibert's meaning and intention, is no doubt the measure of distinction between extant workings, Emulation and Stability, Oxford, Western and so forth; but it happens in the irresistible logic of terms that there is something much wider implied. If there is no officially authorized Ritual, then a Lodge which elevated its understanding of the "peculiar system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols" to such a height that its Ritual became expository of the relation between God, man and the universe would be still a Masonic Lodge, within the meaning of Grand Obediences, so only that it maintained unaltered the Obligations of the First and Second Degrees, with the Ceremonies of Opening and Closing, the former having been settled by Grand Lodge in 1816 and the latter by the Lodge of Reconciliation, as specified by Mr. Vibert. It would appear, further, that if, against the logic which has been mentioned, there were an attempt to intervene and hinder such transformed working, it would become necessary for Grand Lodge to authorize a specific procedure—e.g., Emulation, Emblematic or Stability—and then by unescapable implication the little printed books which every one uses, but which are not supposed to exist, would have to come into their own and be authorized also, even as Great Priory, Grand Mark and other Institutions authorize particular Rituals belonging to their own Masonic concerns and issue them from their own offices.

REVIEWS

FRONTIERS OF THE AFTER LIFE. By Edward C. Randall. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

THIS volume of psychic experiences has a special value for the student of the great change called death. It is kept entirely to the experiences of the change itself and immediately afterwards. Mr. Randall collected these statements, made by disembodied beings to him in the seclusion of his own quiet house, showing indomitable perseverance and tenacity of purpose over twenty years. The assemblage of testimonies gives to the work a feeling of great reality. When you have read through these two hundred pages you feel you have talked with those who have died, and learned from them.

The experiences of many of those who came to tell Mr. Randall what death had meant to them took place, as might be expected, on the astral plane, although he designates it as "spiritual." Of course the spiritual world is far beyond this. The teaching given by all the messages as to the effect of this life on the immediate after life, is that of all the great teachers of the past, and is summed up in Walt Whitman's line:

"Life, life is the tillage and Death is the harvest according."

There is a charming chapter on the after life of children who have died young which should be a great comfort to those who have lost them. It is noticeable that children who die very young are usually the most beautiful of the flock in every sense. The common expression "too good to live" applies to them, and mothers would rejoice instead of grieving if they realized that these angelic children do not live because they really are too good. They do not need the bitter lessons of earth life, but pass through it and through the astral (which naturally has no hold on them) to the glory of the ethereal life where that body develops fully. This later part is beyond the rigid line Mr. Randall has laid down for himself, so he limits the messages he quotes to those which deal with the gardens and playgrounds where the child spirits are received. MABEL COLLINS.

THE STORY OF THE VENETIAN VIRGIN. By Guillaume Postel. Pp. 61. Plymouth: J. H. Keys. 1s. 9d. net.

THIS little book is the work of the father-confessor to Johanna, the Venetian Virgin. The present edition is the translation of a translation, Mrs. H. A. M. Home, the English editor, having worked upon a French version by M. Morard, who in his turn translated it from the Italian (Venetian) original.

Johanna, the Venetian Virgin, was born about 1496 and early dedicated herself to perpetual virginity, and to the service of God and her sick brethren. From Padua, where she began her life's work, she passed to Venice, where she completed it. Postel became her confessor about the year 1547, and he was responsible for compiling this record of her mystical doctrine and experiences. The usual phenomena of illuminated souls are to be found in the story of Johanna; physical changes of counten-

ance, mental and psychic experiences, all have a place in this remarkable chronicle. The teaching of the mystic bears a close resemblance to that of some of the early Christian Gnostic sects with regard to the origin of the universe; and Mrs. Home has added, in footnotes, some inspirational scripts received by her in recent years which are in agreement with passages in Postel's work.

H. L. HUBBARD.

IS FLESH-EATING MORALLY DEFENSIBLE? By Sidney H. Beard.
The Order of the Golden Age, Brompton Road, London. Price
4d.; 4s. per dozen.

THIS is a reprint of a very valuable piece of work. It is a complete survey of the whole subject and stands now, as at first, an unanswerable indictment. The difficulty in its distribution is that those who ought to read it, the meat-eaters, will not. Mr. Beard's preface to this new edition, written in May, 1923, contains an interesting personal tribute to the non-meat diet. During the past twenty-eight years he has himself been an absolute abstainer from flesh, and has not had a day's illness. I myself as a child could not eat meat, and I can remember my mother saying, "We shall not be able to rear her if she will not eat meat." I am sure she believed this, she was so sad and anxious. I am now twelve years older than she was at the time of her death, and mine has been a strenuous and hard-working life.

There has been a great advance in the use of the Humane Killer in recent years, but its use is by no means universal. There is a fallacy which stands in the way of its general use—that the meat is not so good if the animal is killed in the humane manner. It reveals the depth of selfishness in general human nature that this should be so, but it is. Mr. Thomas Arnold Cash, of Messrs. J. & J. Cash, Ltd., who has recently died, has left £26,000 for the work of promoting humane slaughtering. We can but hope for some good results.

MABEL COLLINS.

STINGING NETTLES. By Marjorie Bowen. London: Ward, Lock & Co., Ltd. Pp. 320. Price 7s.

To enjoy this mordant and spiritually heroic novel the reader must be philosophically-eyed, for it contains much from which the sentimentalist averts his fastidious peepers. The heroine (Lucie) is at once a successful author and designer and the unprotesting prey of human parasites. Her Sicilian husband detains us wearisomely in the Valley of the Shadow, through which he passes amid the horrors and futilities of tuberculosis: he is so abominably selfish and silly that it is a relief to turn from the display of his mind to the pathological details of his case. Lucie's husband-hunting cousin and disgustingly ungrateful aunt supply another domiciliary atmosphere for her; and it is well that Marjorie Bowen saw fit to raise her conception from the satirical to the sublime by means of one of the noblest men who have ever lodged in a novel. He is a doctor who so rises above carnal longing as to will his own separation from the physical facts of love and find a deep satisfaction in his sweetheart's distant and alien motherhood for her sake. The scenes of the novel pass in England and Italy, and much ability is shown in the selection and management of local colour. Pp. 221, 236 supply an example of humour particularly dear to my literary sense.

W. H. CHESSON.

WALTER, AN ENGLISHMAN. (Before and Since Transition.) By his Wife, Mrs. Walter Tibbits (author of "The Voice of the Orient," etc.). Price 1s.

THESE few poignant pages tell briefly of two souls whose marriage was surely made in Heaven, and so death has not divided them.

Major Walter Tibbits, says his wife, "embodied supremely the best British traditions." But trace these traditions backward and one finds them in the core of the great Aryan race. So this fine Englishman had also, she adds, "without knowing it, Hindu ideals . . . of duty . . . of marriage, and of mercy."

A link so strong between husband and wife naturally asserted itself when opportunity was given. Mrs. Tibbits tells us she went last year to the W. T. Stead Bureau, knowing that "any place run by his daughter must be clean." Of her success there, and of a photograph she obtained later with the Crewe Circle, she speaks unhesitatingly, saying of the psychic picture, "*His face was exactly as I last saw it in the hospital ward!*"

This pamphlet has been privately printed, but it may be obtained direct from the author, Duke's Hotel, St. James's Place, London, S.W.1.

EDITH K. HARPER.

THE MASONIC HANDBOOK SERIES. I. THE E. A.'S HANDBOOK.
By J. S. M. Ward, B.A., F.S.S. Small 4to, cloth. The
Warrington Publishing Co., London. Price 2s. 6d. net.

THIS little book is the first of a series of Masonic Handbooks designed to assist Freemasons towards an intelligent understanding of the meaning of the ritual of Freemasonry. Mr. Ward is the Founder of The Masonic Study Society, and has proved himself to be worthy of Sir John Cockburn's prefatory tribute as "one of the most able and earnest of Masonic students." To any brother who has recently been admitted to the Craft this detailed explanation of the several points of the ritual of the first degree must be of absorbing interest, and many a Mason who has advanced from one degree to another during a succession of strenuous years will be glad to read this little work from cover to cover. It is clear to the reader that Mr. Ward regards the ritual of Freemasonry as an embodiment of spiritual philosophy drawn from all peoples of the earth; and though his own studies have furnished him with certain parallels which might not be generally accepted without criticism, the imaginative and suggestive application of his theories to the symbolism expressed in the lodge and its officers compels admiration, and appreciation both of his motive in issuing these handbooks and of his ability in their execution. The volume is of a handy size, and well printed.

P. S. W.

NATURAL RELIGION—The Ultimate Religion of Mankind. By J. S. Bolton, M.D. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.
Price 3s. 6d. net.

THE author of this extremely readable book has handled a subject which prejudice makes difficult, with a bold daring, but he is an iconoclast who works with reverence. He seeks to tear the veil from before the face of the false gods that Christians worship in the careless belief they are following the commands of Him of Nazareth, and to give in their place the image of the true God. "Through the ages man has been for ever trying

to appease an angry God. Mankind has been slow to learn that there is no angry God to appease." "The making of man was not a failure which had to be remedied by the coming of the Christ. God had never any cause to repent that He had made him." And in regard to criticisms that the world is all wrong—God-forgotten—he says, the Creator saw fit to give man the power of choice and that if he were placed on a perfect earth with perfect government, laws and social systems it would not long remain perfect while he exercises that power and until he has grown to know its possibilities.

He emphasizes the fact that man is innately good, and the new religion will be one which each man builds for himself on the realization of his heritage from God. The dead teachings of the Church about faith in marvellous happenings in the beginning of the Christian era has not and cannot save man from evil—he will not be saved by faith in Jesus Christ, but by faithfulness to the Christ within himself. The vicarious atonement—that main pillar of the Church foundation—receives the treatment such a barbarous, unholy doctrine should receive, and Jesus stands as man's great example and possibility and not his price. Material science has progressed apace because of its purpose to penetrate the future, while spiritual science has lain for centuries in shackles forged by ignorance and superstition. It is a book which will answer the questions of those crying in the wilderness of dead liturgies and empty creeds.

THE NINTH VIBRATION, and other Stories. By L. Adams Beck. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company.

L. ADAMS BECK is a new writer on Occultism, who presents his knowledge in a most alluring and fascinating way. He is a Canadian, a great traveller, and knows his East. His descriptions of Eastern scenery and gardens are very wonderful, and carry the reader right away from the West with a swing. He has invented a new name for the world which is invisible to the ordinary man, and calls it *The Ninth Vibration*. In the *Ninth Vibration*, he says, surprise has ceased to be. "We walk blindfold through the profound darkness of material nature. It is only when the doors of the material are closed that the world appears to man as it exists in the eternal truth." That is the doctrine expounded in these very enchanting stories, which appeared first in the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Asia* and the *Japanese Grasshoë*. Since this volume appeared he has brought out another, *The Key of Dreams*, an Eastern love-story.

MABEL COLLINS.

THE BIRTH OF PSYCHE. By L. Charles Baudouin. Trans. by Fred Rothwell. 7½ ins. × 4¾ ins., pp. xxiii + 211. London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., Carter Lane, E.C.4. Price 5s. net.

NOT trite is the saying that the child is father to the man; but rather, as modern psychology demonstrates, of deep significance and importance. "Scratch the man ever so little," writes M. Baudouin, "and you find the child." The importance of the experiences of childhood can hardly be over-estimated: it is during childhood that emotions are aroused and complexes formed which play so important a part in the mental life of the adult. The history of childhood is, therefore, for the psychologist second to none in significance. No doubt it is impossible for anyone to write a

full biography of his or her early years, since so much of it belongs to the unconscious; but it is equally certain that the psychologist who makes the attempt may achieve a large measure of success. M. Baudouin asks us to judge the sketches which comprise this book, in the first place at any rate, from the literary point of view, and certainly from this point of view their position of merit is a high one. But we need not forget that M. Baudouin is a psychologist as well as a poet, and the fact makes them of double value. Many points of interest emerge in the course of the book. Very significant, I think, is the concluding sketch, "The Anguish of Love," in which the author recounts how in order to assuage his childish fears that his mother had met with an accident when away from home, he invented a sort of prognostic ritual, which had the advantage that it might be repeated if the first attempt gave an unsatisfactory prognosis. "All this," he writes, in comment, "which took place in the past, is very childish and laughable. But when this past became the sad and painful present, how was I to express, or even evoke within myself, the mute torture of an ever-anxious passion?" And not less interesting—in view of the claims made by the materialists for the immediacy of the concept of matter—is the account he gives of the difficulty he experienced as a child in realizing that an object seen from different points of view was one and the same object.

H. S. REDGROVE.

PSYCHOLOGY AND MORALS: An Analysis of Character. By J. A. Hadfield, M.A. (Oxon.), M.B., Ch.B. (Edin.). 7½ ins. × 4¾ ins., pp. vii + 186. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 36 Essex Street, W.C.2. Price 6s. net.

THIS book contains the substance of the Dale Lectures delivered at Mansfield College, Oxford, in 1920, and deals with the application of the latest developments of psychology to the practical problems of moral conduct. The point of view from which it is written is that of the physician. The work is designed to meet the needs of the general reader who takes an interest in psychological matters and is well adapted to appeal to him, to awaken his interest and to stimulate his thought. The author is a disciple neither of Freud nor of Jung, and whilst, in common with all modern psychologists, he is indebted to both of them for many of the ideas he puts forward, he avoids the extremes to which the two schools of thought associated with their names appear to have been led.

Mr. Hadfield distinguishes between "four main classes of disorder which may result from man's struggle with life," namely, organic diseases, functional nervous disorders, moral diseases, and sins. The first are physical in origin, but their symptoms may be mental as well as physical. The second and third types of disorders are those which originate in the unconscious, owing to the conflicts set up by repressed complexes, and are distinguished according to whether the symptoms are physical (as in neurasthenia—a functional nervous disorder) or mental, as, for example, in the case of uncontrollable bad temper. It is these two types of disorder, and especially the latter, with which Dr. Hadfield is concerned. "Sins" he defines as those disorders of conduct "which result from a deliberate and conscious choice of the self, and depend upon the acceptance of a low ideal." We can, he points out, only be held responsible for our moral diseases in so far as, being acquainted with the possibility of

their cure, we do not attempt to effect this. His account of the origin and nature of such moral diseases and his outline of the method whereby they may be cured, with its insistence on "the urge to completeness" as the most impelling motive of life, is in nearly all respects admirable. Especially of interest is his definition of the will as the activity, not of the whole self, since this would include the repressed complexes, but of the organized self to which these latter are opposed. But he is surely expressing a palatable fiction when he asserts "the race has learnt that happiness comes more by benevolence than by meanness, by courage than by cowardice, by altruism than by selfishness." This is the philosophy of the "thoroughly comfortable," who have failed to realize and to sympathize with the enormous misery of the world to-day. The lesson is one which the race has yet to learn, and Mr. Hadfield's theory of the ideal as the necessary stimulus of the will ought materially to assist in its inculcation.

H. S. REDGROVE.

THE FORGING OF PASSION INTO POWER. By Mary Everest Boole.
London: C. W. Daniel & Co. Price 6s.

THIS is the third edition of a book which has justly deserved its triple reproduction. The author has written for all classes with the psycho-analysis of true ethics from which all the objectionable elements of the Freudian theory are absent. Her style is popular, and though in didactic English and a little too redundant of the "you and I, my friends" of her spiritualized socialism, the critic cannot quibble with these, when remembering that the book is written for the suffering, the keepers of the mentally defective, and all who live as "mute inglorious Miltons." Her chapters on "Sex Instincts," "Invert Consciousness," "The Balance of the Nervous System," and similar subjects, command respect, for a sound judgment of psychology and the human make-up are requisite for every student of those subtle diviner phases of mind and soul which we know as genius and occult power.

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

GREATER THINGS AND A GREATER THAN THINGS. Anonymous.
London and Toronto: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd. Price 1s. 6d. net.

THIS is a little book of Meditations, clearly printed on very good paper, and of a sort and kind whose number is ever on the increase. It is in two parts: Part I is addressed to those who seek "Greater Things," and Part II to those who seek "A Greater than Things." These distinctions, presumably, imply desire on the physical and on the spiritual planes respectively. The Voice of the Higher Self gradually makes itself heard, speaking from the innermost depth of the soul. In Part I we read: "In our world is revealed the state of our hearts, our hearts are divided, our world is disrupted, there is so little love, so little friendship among us." With regard to mankind in the mass this is painfully true. In Part II occurs this Meditation: "Should you have followed me, you will be rich in my treasures, faith, love, and truth."

The two foregoing quotations will sufficiently show the gist of this volume. It is all quite good, and will no doubt find favour with many who perhaps may not have found in the wonderful treasure stores of Old and New Testament the same thoughts expressed with glowing simplicity and sublimity.

EDITH K. HARPER.

THE WHITE WITCH. By Elizabeth Lechmere. Pp. 38. Blackburn: Scott-Cowell. Price 1s. 3d.

THE weird and sensational romance contained in this small booklet falls between two stools, in that the author does not seem to have decided whether she is writing for grown-up or for juvenile readers. The style in which the story is told suggests that she had the latter in mind, but the tale is not really suitable for children, nor is it sufficiently credible to satisfy their elders.

We feel, from the outset, a little doubtful when we read of the "sweet girl who, among other delicate and lovely gifts of mind, possessed that of exquisite miniature portrait painting," and "had an inborn love of the Antique"; and of her child, who "inherited his gifted mother's mind" and became "a superb portrait painter and a passionate lover of the Antique." More doubtful still when we encounter the "celebrated connoisseur on ancient paintings," and the portrait "dated 1,000 B.C. in the most ancient Greek figures" and recognized by the hero as the work of his own brush in bygone ages. After this, the beautiful daughter of "the great House of the noble family of Heidelberg" and her connection with the mysterious Witch's Book, have less power to thrill us, but it must be said that in the latter half of the tale the language becomes less stilted and the whole atmosphere more natural, in spite of the wild and uncanny adventures described.

If the story is the work of a young writer, she may be congratulated on her inventive imagination, but several obvious spelling mistakes and an indiscriminate use of capital letters might well have been corrected.

E. M. M.

THE TORCH-BEARERS. A Satirical Comedy, in three Acts. By George Kelly. Preface by Kenneth MacGowan. New York: American Library Service.

THIS somewhat cruel little travesty of stage-fever, and its effects on vain and pompous people, was produced in 1922 at the Savoy Theatre, New Jersey, and had, subsequently, a successful run at the Vanderbilt, New York.

Mr. MacGowan, in his friendly and appreciative preface, reminds us of the important place of satire in dramatic art, and of the work of Aristophanes, Molière, and Shaw; and he goes on to say that America has recently developed a surprising fondness for satire and for the "distinctly satirical" play, of which *The Torch-Bearers* would seem to be a typical example. We may say at once that the supernatural and the supernormal have no "speaking parts" allotted them by the writer of this play.

Of that great Background to which all the little figures in Life's puppet-show owe so much of their impressiveness, and of their power to move us to mingled laughter and tears, he gives us scarcely a glimpse.

But he is, probably, much too clever not to know that the Background exists, and that the "fantastic tricks" of his characters are played, in truth, like the rest of their kind—before the audience of "high heaven." It has been justly said that you cannot depict a man correctly unless you believe in his soul. So much are even the trivialities of our outer behaviour influenced by our inner selves!

The dialogue maintains a creditable level of smartness; and the *dénouement* is decidedly ingenious. Feminists may complain at the silliness and invulnerable vanity of the women; but, after all, satire must have its privileges.

The book is well printed and attractively bound.

G. M. H.

HIGHLAND SUPERSTITIONS. By the Rev. Alexander MacGregor, M.A. With a Foreword on Superstitions and their Origin by Isabel Cameron. 8½ ins. × 5½ ins., pp. 72. Stirling: Eneas Mackay, 43 Murray Place. Price 3s. 6d. net.

This work first appeared as a series of articles in Vol. II of *The Celtic Magazine*. Subsequently it was published as an appendix to *The Prophecies of the Brahan Seer*, and it has also passed through two editions in separate book form. Its scope is well conveyed by the full title, which is "Highland Superstitions connected with the Druids, Fairies, Witchcraft, Second Sight, Hallowe'en, Sacred Wells, and Lochs, with several curious Instances of Highland Customs and Beliefs." It is a pleasantly discursive book, containing a good deal of interesting information, though the author is sometimes careless about the accuracy of his statements. For example, concerning the mistletoe he remarks, "it grows chiefly on the oak and chestnut," thus falling a victim to a superstition himself. As a matter of fact the mistletoe is very rarely found on the oak at all, its most favoured host being the apple. Naturally a good deal of the book is devoted to a consideration of second sight, concerning which the late Mr. MacGregor

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relates many interesting instances, in the reality of which he appears to have believed, though his attitude towards the majority of the superstitions of which he writes is that of contempt. Certainly "frets," to use the author's term, is a word that is well applicable to the majority of them. There seems to be—or perhaps I should say, to have been, since it is to be hoped that many of these superstitions are now defunct—no important event in the life of the Highlander that was not hedged about with ridiculous and unnecessary customs. Yet there is a sense in which, as concerns their origin, these superstitious practices are not altogether ridiculous. "Lying at the heart of almost all our superstitious beliefs," writes Miss Cameron in her Foreword, "is a religious origin," and she maintains that many of them can be traced to the beliefs and practices of the Druids. As Éliphas Lévi has so aptly put it, "Superstition is a sign surviving the thought, it is the dead body of a religious rite"; and it is this fact, I think, which gives to books detailing superstitions, such as the one under review, not a little of their interest.

A word of commendation is due to the publisher for the get-up of the book. In these days of so much shoddy book-production it is a pleasure to handle a volume printed on such excellent paper, with top edges gilt, and bound in buckram. H. S. REDGROVE.

THE BEAUTIFUL NECESSITY: Seven Essays in Theosophy and Architecture. Second Edition. By Claud Bragdon, F.A.I.A. 9½ ins. × 7 ins., pp. 111. London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., Broadway House, Carter Lane, E.C.4. Price 8s. 6d. net.

CLAUD BRAGDON is an original and penetrating thinker. Some little time ago I had occasion to commend his *Four Dimensional Vistas* to readers of the OCCULT REVIEW, and not less welcome is this second edition of his very interesting work on the philosophy and aesthetics of architecture. His thesis is that, whilst it would be impossible to achieve a work of art by mechanically following any geometrical law or law of symbology, nevertheless works of art, and especially those which achieve the highest order of artistic merit, do embody such laws, and thus follow a "beautiful necessity." His book, which is profusely illustrated, is mainly con-

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cerned with the application of this thesis to architecture. In a very interesting introductory philosophical essay, he points out that architecture and music are the two "pure" arts in the sense that the first is purely spatial and the latter purely temporal; moreover, just because of this clear-cut distinction between them, they also, in a way, resemble, or perhaps one should say correspond to, each other, and, in a final essay entitled "Frozen Music," this correspondence is worked out to the degree of detail which is possible. The proviso is important, for Mr. Bragdon possesses the admirable but rare virtue of not running his theories to death.

Following the principles of Theosophy (understanding this term in no sectarian sense) the author lays down, as his first law, that of unity; "for there is one Self, one Life, which, myriad in manifestation, is yet in essence ever one." The second law, "not contradicting but supplementing the first, is the law of *Polarity*, i.e., duality." In the world of living beings this law manifests as sex; and of great interest is Mr. Bragdon's chapter dealing with the manifestation of the law in architecture. A large number of instances are adduced and an exceedingly good case made out for what to the ordinary mind might seem an improbability. Other laws dealt with and illustrated are those of "Trinity," "Consonance," "Diversity in Monotony," "Balance," "Rhythmic Change" and "Radiation," which last, according to Mr. Bragdon is, in a sense, a return to the law of Unity. Chapters then follow dealing with the correspondence between architecture and the human body, and with the latent geometry and arithmetic of artistic design, from which it appears that a certain simplicity of geometrical form and proportion between the parts is an essential element in beauty. Altogether Mr. Bragdon has written a most novel and interesting book, and one which opens up a line of philosophical inquiry promising highly fruitful results.

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