

# Light and Life

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"Mysticism, properly understood, represents the Spiritual side of Life."—F. F.

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### Jacob Boehme: His Life and Teaching, or Studies in Theosophy.

By the late Dr. Hans Lassen Martensen.



THE appearance of this book in the admirable translation given by Mr. T. Rhys Evans must be a pleasure to those who are already acquainted with Boehme's works, and a window of hope for those who desire to be, but who, either for lack of access to them, or of spiritual conditions almost more rare than these, remain ignorant of their contents. Both class of readers will, I think, be gratified by Bishop Martensen's book, always supposing that they bring a keen appetite to his studies; for he enlarges on most obscure themes with surprising lucidity, and is free from any of that

"insignificant nugatory prattle," which is the too common resource of English writers when they lay before an impatient public a burden of recondite instruction, conscious that it will be as little welcomed by the majority of their readers, as it is *fully* comprehended by themselves. But even among ourselves this flippancy of tone, often adopted as a sort of implied apology for *expecting* intellectual effort, is happily much less common than it was; when, for example, "Hours with the Mystics" came out.

The Danish Metropolitan, seeking first to meet the demands of his own high intelligence, never stoops to compromise for the sake of propitiating less earnest thinkers. But in the attitude he takes towards Boehme, nevertheless we find him quite a bishop; not for a moment deigning to recognise anything of *inspiration* in his knowledge. "I undertook," he says in the preface, "the perusal of his complete works—no insurmountable task, seeing that they

comprise only seven volumes in Schiebler's edition." To those who have gone through even two or three of those volumes several times, it will seem preposterous that one reading, however careful, should be supposed adequate for gaining any *just* idea of their freight; and to such readers the suspicion that this illiterate shoemaker wrote, "as he was moved by the Holy Ghost," will not probably seem strange; but a bishop would be apt to repress it as *unauthorised*. Evidently Martensen does his best to give an honest account of Boehme's teaching, but either missing or evading its aspect as *super-rational*, he gives it in the language of reason, when, as it stands in the original text, reason is out of court.

So little is he inclined to receive anything from him as revelation, that finding what he says on certain points unconfirmed by the Bible (though *not* contradictory) or unacceptable to reason, he rejects, in toto, information offered, and averts his intelligence from most precious gifts with all the conscientious dogmatism of a theologian. For instance, when he comes to the question of Adam's fall before the production of Eve—to the account by which Boehme harmonises the discrepancy between *vers. 27 and 31 of Genesis i., and vers. 18 of chap. ii.* of the same book, he dismisses it as an untenable theory because "Scripture does not give us the slightest indication that Adam's sleep was the result of a sinful fall" (*page 243*), and "we cannot discover his Scriptural authority for permitting the severance which now took place to be occasioned by a sinful fall, and for viewing the creation of woman as, at best, a counteractive measure, a remedial provision against a disturbance which had taken place. Scripture does not give the remotest hint that Adam was intended to propagate himself magically, but points out the sexual relation with which we are acquainted, as the original one."—(*Page 242.*)

In order to judge of what Martensen thus rejects, I must put before the reader a number of quotations from the work in which this great mystery is most fully laid open, the *Mysterium Magnum*; to give any summary of their drift *not* in the Seer's own words is impossible; and placing only the most essential in close sequence, I leave *numbers of highest value* unquoted. Considering the interest lately roused by Mr. Laurence Oliphant's "Sympneumata" in England, not to speak of the peculiar doctrines of Mr. T. Lake Harris in America, bearing on the supersensual relations of man and woman, I cannot believe such passages as these will be found unworthy of the space they occupy.

"All that is earthly in man, that is bestial and corruptible, and *not* man; albeit God created man an external body out of the *limus* of the earth; yet it is not to be considered of us, as now it is; for the true human *body*, according to the *outward world*, is a *spiritual sulphur*, a *spiritual mercurius*, and a *spiritual sal.*" . . . "In no wise the gross beast which passeth away and returneth not again; the true, real body which is *hidden* in the grossness is a spiritual body in comparison to the grossness: it is created indeed in flesh and blood; but in a fixed, steadfast, incorruptible flesh and blood."—(*Myst. Mag., chap. 16, pars. 2 and 3.*)

"Adam was a man and also a woman, and yet neither of them distinct, but a virgin full of charity, chastity, and modesty, viz., the *image* of God; he had both the tinctures of the fire and light in him; in the conjunction of which, the own love, the original centre, stood." . . . "Such a man as Adam was before his Eve, shall arise, and again enter into, and eternally possess, Paradise."—(*Myst. Mag., chap. 18, pars. 2 and 3.*)

"These two beings, viz., the inward heavenly, and the outward heavenly, were mutually espoused to each other and formed into one body, wherein was the most holy tincture of fire and light, the great, joyful, love desire which did inflame the essence, so that both essences did very earnestly and ardently desire each other in the love desire, and loved one another: the inward loved

the outward as its manifestation and *sensation*, and the outward loved the inward as its greatest sweetness and joyfulness; as its precious pearl and most beloved spouse and consort; and yet they were not two bodies, but only one; but of a *twofold* essence."—(*Ibid*, chap. 18, par. 8.)

"If God had created him for the earthly, corruptible, miserable, naked, sick, bestial, toilsome life, then he had not brought him into Paradise; if he had desired the bestial propagation then he would instantly, in the beginning, have created man and woman, and both sexes had come forth in the *Verbum Fiat*, into the division of both tinctures as it was in the *other* earthly creatures."—(*Ibid*, chap. 18, par. 5.)

But "Adam in his *perfection*, while he was man and wife, and had the magnetical conception in him, did amuse himself, or imagine after the beasts, and introduced himself into bestial lust to eat and generate as beasts do."

"Thus the image of God formed itself in the *Verbum Fiat* into such a beast as we are still to this day, and this same was done in itself, viz., man's own *Fiat*—viz., the first form of nature, which is the desire of God's manifestation, did affect it and none other maker from without him."—(*Ibid*, chap. 19, par. 25.)

The last sentence, wholly unintelligible to an unprepared reader, needs translation. *Astringency* is what Boehme calls the first form of nature: in his "Election of Grace" he uses the very significant phrase, "the *magnetical attraction is the beginning of nature*." Now, it was the desire of God to manifest Himself that originated Eternal Nature, and from thence *all* natures; and it is one of Boehme's most capital doctrines that creation by the Word was caused by its *re-outspeaking* in all nature and creature. "The *beginning* of all and every substance or thing is the Word, viz., the outbreathing of God's substance; and God was the Eternal One from Eternity, and continueth the same also in Eternity; but the Word is the efflux or *outflowing* of the divine willing or of the divine knowledge."—(*Divine Vision*, chap. 3, par. 2.)

"The visible world, with its hosts and creatures, is nothing else but the *outflown Word* which hath introduced itself into properties, wherein in the properties an own self-will existed."—(*Ibid*, chap. 3, par. 22; *Knowledge of All Things*, par. 12.)

This digressive hint, so to speak, of a profound depth in Boehme's revelations, was indispensable, because, according to him, the spirit always forming its own body, by the "*magnetic attraction*" of imagination and desire, Adam was his own "miscreator." "The desire," he repeatedly says, "maketh itself substance." "It was so done when Adam began to put his desire and imagination into the outward world."\* "He brought the earthly source or quality into the pure elementary flesh, which was created out of the Divine substantiality, so his light extinguished, that is, he went with his will spirit out of the Divine substantiality into the stars and four elements," and they, "the stars and elements, put on † to the body the fierce, earthly clothes of *their*

\* One naturally asks how could a creature so perfect as Adam put his imagination and desire into a lower plane? Boehme answers, "The crafty distemper or infection introduced by the devil was in the *Ens* of the Earth whence Adam's *outward* body was formed; into this earthly *Ens* the devil brought his desire." (*Myst. Mag.*, chap. 26, par. 67.) Elsewhere Boehme describes a process exactly answering to *animal magnetism*, practised by the dethroned angel Lucifer on Adam.

† *Put on*. This seems a contradiction to what has just been said above of the spirit forming its own body, but it is not so, the astral efflux and the four elements were the substance on which the magic of Adam's desire worked; the one pure element in which he lived before gave itself originally to the *fiat* of his will. "Car enfin, cette vérité doit sortir de l'ombre des Sanctuaires: la volonté était créatrice chez l'Homme Universel. Tout ce que cet homme voulait, était quand et comment il le voulait. La puissance et l'acte étaient indivisibles dans sa volonté."—(*Fabre D'Olivet's Cosmogonie de Moïse*, page 92.)

essence and substantiality," . . . "and so God and the Kingdom of Heaven was lost, for the Divine image disappeared, and the earthly began to appear; the outward fiat got the predominancy" (let it be understood, the outward fiat in Adam), "for as soon as Adam was overcome by the spirit of this world then he fell asleep, viz., into the *outward magia*, which signifieth or resembleth death; for the outward kingdom hath beginning and end, and *must* break off from the inward, *that* is its death."—(*Apol.* 1, *part* 2, *pars.* 212, 214, 215.)

"Adam died in Paradise, as God said unto him: If thou eatest of the tree thou diest; he died to the holy, heavenly image, and lived to the awaked bestial image. For now when Adam did awake from sleep, he was still in Paradise, for the vanity in the flesh and soul did *not* yet actually and effectually work, and was yet dumb, still, and senseless, until they did eat of the forbidden fruit, and then the earthly dominion began to rise." . . . "The heavenly image at last quite disappeared, which in Adam's sleep, and also in his awakening, *did yet live*, both in Adam and Eve, but in a very obscure and *impotent* manner."—(*Myst. Mag.*, *chap.* 19, *par.* 24.)

"Thus hath Adam's spirit by the imagination brought a power into the earth, and so the matrix of nature gave him what he would have."—(*Incarnation*, *Part* 1, *chap.* 5, *par.* 105.)

"Thus we understand what the woman or wife is, viz., a *half* Adam; Adam hath, in the superior might, the first principle, and Eve the second." . . . "In the man the spirit is fiery, that soweth the fiery tincture, in the woman's the spirit is watery according to the light; that soweth the spirit's tincture; in the inward kingdom the image of the faded substantiality, and in the outward the air's property out of the abomination of the earthliness."—(*Apology* 3, *Part* 2, *text* 4, *pars.* 56 and 93.)

Two very important points should be noted in this last passage. *First*, "*Watery according to the light*," senseless to any one unversed in Boehme's lore; but that *all* substantiality originates from light is one of his master keys to many a mystery; and again and again he points out how, from fire, light, and from light, air, and from air, water is *naturally* produced, taking the elementary fire, light, air, and water, as the visible representations of the Holy Trinity, speaking of *God the Father as fire*, *God the Son as light*, *God the Holy Ghost as air*, and the water of *eternal life as the Wisdom, mother of all substance*.

It is noticeable that Swedenborg, seemingly ignorant of the earlier mystic, emphatically asserts that the *atmospheres* of the sun originated the substances and matters of our earth.\*

*Secondly*, the woman's spirit's tincture is "*the image of the faded substantiality*." Why? Because her spirit's tincture is light, the second holy principle, and "every divine creature as are the angels and souls of men, have the Virgin of the wisdom of God as an image of the *Light of Life*, in the substantiality of the spirit" (*Threefold Life*, *chap.* 5, *par.* 57); but man having fallen, woman has *but an image* of God's image in her light tincture, till Christ is re-born in her, and what Boehme obscurely calls the *air's* property out of the abomination of the earthliness, *i.e.*, the body formed externally by *astral* influences to which the abomination of our animal condition has subdued man, made to rule over them; I thus understand "*air's* property," because Boehme as well as St. Paul attributes the "*power of the air*" to the spirit of disobedience: telling us that between earth and the moon rebel spirits have permitted sway.

But now for the last links of this long expository chain. The purposes of the Omnipotent God cannot be frustrated. "Such a man as Adam was before

\* See Swedenborg's "Divine Love and Wisdom," Part 4, par. 303.

his Eve shall arise again, enter into, and eternally possess, Paradise."\*—(*Myst. Mag., chap. 18, par. 3.*)

"The heart of God moved itself, destroyed death, and generated the life again. Thus now to us the birth and becoming man or incarnation of Christ is a powerful and very weighty matter, that the total *abyssal heart* of God hath moved itself, and so therewith the heavenly substantiality which was shut up in death is become living again."—(*Incarnation, Part 1, chap. 9, pars. 20 and 21.*)

"Understand; in the right human and heavenly substantiality, which in Adam was shut up in death, would God become man; not in the earthly, introduced into the noble image and soul; into the right human nature of the second principle, in which God dwelt before Adam's fall into that very substance shut up in death is God's Word entered; *that is the seed of the woman, and the Word is God's seed.*"—(*Apology 1, Part 2, par. 236.*)

"Christ is that virgin-like image which Adam should have generated out of himself *with both the tinctures.*"—(*Incarnation, Part 1, chap. 11, par. 25.*)

"He brought again the *virginity*, viz., two tinctures into one unseparable, eternal conjunction in the love, no more in the desire after *substance* as it was in Adam, but only in the desire after power. The two tinctures generate *no more substance*, viz., a propagation, but holy power and God's holiness."—*3rd Apology, Part 4, text 4, pars. 64 and 65. See 1st of Forty Questions, pars. 224 and 225; also the 36th of Forty Questions.*)

For "the two loves, which in the temperature are *divine*, which were divided in Adam, when the imagination turned itself forth from the temperature, are *united* again in Christ."—(*Election of Grace, chap. 3, par. 47.*)

It is without scruple that I have so fully given the *clearest* expressions I could select of Boehme's teaching about this great mystery—the intense, mutual love of man and woman; because on one hand the grossness of animal passion has desecrated, and on the other total ignorance of its spiritual origin has lowered it in common habits of thought to the level of an earthly and transitory affection. Even by thoughtful and purest-minded Christians it is often so regarded. Misled by their preconceived ideas as to the relation of the sexes to each other, they read into the words of the Lord Jesus, "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels which are in heaven," tacit condemnation of any hope of heart-union in a blissful hereafter. But how could two once severed halves when for *ever united*, marry or be given in marriage? Surely that is a self-evident impossibility; asserting *that* our Saviour never said that being as the angels which are in heaven did not pre-suppose the restoration of original oneness.

As usual human wisdom interprets divine promises by negations rather than by intensatives. Had the human mind—untaught—been tasked to make pure white, undoubtedly it would have begun by trying to exclude every colour from its manufacture; by divine wisdom, as science proves, the process is reversed, and purest white is the combination of all colours. It is far easier to think of a state of existence from which feelings seldom unmixed with frailty *here* shall be wholly banished, just because it is so very hard to imagine the pure gold that divine love can rescue from all our defilements of sin, and to understand that even in its most debased forms the self-ignoring passion of love must proceed from a higher source than human nature as it *now* is. It

\* "First the heavenly substantiality had the predominancy, but afterwards when Adam went back with his lust into the earthly substantiality, then the earthly got the power and predominancy," . . . "and therefore must God, with the heavenly substantiality *in us*, become man, and in the heavenly virgin, and in the earthly, God is become man, and hath put upon our souls the heavenly substantiality again, viz., his heavenly body."—(*Threefold Life, chap. 13, par. 19. See Ibid, chap. 6, pars. 96-97.*)



seems to me a very injurious effect of age-long arrest in theological thought, that our *prescribed* ideas of heaven have been so sedulously cleared of any connecting link with this life's supremest joy. The heart has thus lost its natural hold upon the eternal future. For I doubt if any one who *has* known perfectness of reciprocal love, whether married in life, or in heart and spirit only, will deny that descriptions of everlasting praise and adoration of the Redeemer, not only as supremely loved, but as the *sole* object of love, are inoperative as a lever of hope compared to such as admit of intense affection for a human being also. Saintry people who have *not* known the best of a fellow-creature's love may deny it, surely no others. For even now, with all the flaws of that *best* in our present state, it seems to the happy hearts which have felt it pure and holy enough for the heaven where the Lamb is followed in light, and quite inseparable from all we understand by *identity*. If this love is lost in just men and women, what *can* be left that is specially their own?

Boehme says, "All, whatsoever is in this world, is a type and figure of the angelical world;" . . . "of all whatsoever this world is an earthly type and resemblance that is in the divine kingdom in great perfection in the spiritual essence; not only spirit as a will, or thought, but essence, corporeal essence, sap, and power; but as incomprehensible in reference to the outward world."—(*Signatura Rerum, chap. 16, pars. 16 and 17.*)

We owe much to Dr. John Pulsford for so bravely giving to the world his unconventional belief as to the future of human love in his beautiful book "*Morgenröthe*." To quote from it would be as ineffectual as to detach a few petals from the rose to prove its sweetness; to be read aright, it must be read in its entirety.

It is very observable that those who, on religious grounds, repudiate any imaginable likeness to earthly bliss in the Christian's heaven constantly fall into modes of speech which appear to translate into devout language every human affection—seeming to appropriate the love of the Lord Jesus Christ in a personal sense, better suited to the exclusive attachment of wife and husband than to the adoring love of the redeemed for a *universal Saviour*—as tender in pity towards the sinner as towards the saint. Hymn writers are, in some degree, answerable for this; but neither writers nor quoters of *some* hymns can imagine the repelling shock they often produce.

It is also remarkable that the frequent reference in our Bible to the relations of husband to wife, and bride to bridegroom, by which these amorous pieties are justified, give—one would suppose—the strongest sanction for the hope of eternal union which ordinary religionists condemn.

But well does Dr. Pulsford remind us of caution in proclaiming this hope even now. "Why has the gospel of our *whole* humanity been so long withheld? The impure would transmute heaven's purity into more impurity." . . . "Hitherto the unity has been only known on its fallen plane, and not as it was in God's beginning. The divine unity could not be conceived by the animal human race. The gross conceptions and appetite of the race would have carnalised, profaned, and abused any testimony that could have been given of the essential oneness of the sexes. For the same reason that which is holy should still be withheld from dogs, and the pearl of heaven's dual unity from swine."—(*Morgenröthe, pages 95 and 87.*)

Equally regrettable as a hasty refusal of truth, most important in its bearings upon our second birth is Martensen's positive tone about *essentiality*, which, as I have just shown, is exactly that which the first Adam lost, and the second Adam, the "quickenning Spirit," restored to our race. Thus Martensen *misunderstands* it.

"When Boehme says that the '*essentiality*' which was dead in Adam, and was again quickened in Christ, cried 'My God, my God, why hast Thou for-

saken me?' we believe that we can approximately understand this marvelously profound but obscure expression if we take 'essentiality,' to mean the spirit in distinction from the soul, that which is in the most rigid sense the divinely-imagined in human nature, that which makes it capable of love and of union with the Idea, the Virgin."—(Page 273.)

Boehme's translators are answerable for the mistake of rendering *Wesen* essence, which, oddly enough, means in German both essence and substance; this was in accordance with the ideas of their day. Even John Sparrow, with all his reverent and diligent study, seems to have missed the point which Boehme reiterates with emphasis in almost all his works, that all spiritual beings have corporiety—even the Being of all beings. We are often blind to what we do not expect to see. The oneness and yet the difference of pure substance and pure spirit was not, and hardly now is, a received idea. Yet just upon *this* Boehme tells us regeneration depends. He says that the incarnation of the Word was necessary, because "the matter was not about forgiveness only; the soul wanted not only forgiveness, but a new birth."—(*Baptism, chap. 2, page 10.*) "When Adam's will spirit imagined after earthliness, God let him fall down; for he brought the imagination of earthliness into the heavenly substantiality."—(*Incarnation, Part 1, chap. 6, par. 7.*) "This substance, vanished and shut up in death, was signified by the dry rod of Aaron, which substance grew in this awakening and introducing of the heavenly living love essence where God's substance became man, in whom the holy fire could burn;" . . . "that same love-burning was the new life of the regeneration."—(*Baptism, chap. 2.*)

"Seeing man was earthly and elementary, there must also be an elementary medium or means for that purpose wherein the flowing forth of the Divine love in the covenant might take hold."—(*Ibid, par. 27.*) "And, therefore, God assumed the humanity that He might work in and with us, with the Deity, through the humanity."—(*Ibid, page 18.*)

It is much to be wished that those who speak of the obsolete childishness of belief in an "historic Christ" could at all reach the depth of causation, where the coming of the Christ, the Divine Anointer, to the human race *at a given point of time* is seen to have been as necessary for its purpose—to employ a very homely simile—as waiting for the right time of year to graft a tree. Its sap must be in a certain stage of flowing before this can be done with success; and the human stock had to be developed to a certain pitch of spiritual growth before there could be receptiveness for the quickening spirit. For this the Law was a most essential preparative; and when that had done all it could for men, "then came the fulfilling of the promise and put another new body on to them; for thou canst not have another soul, for thy soul was out of the eternity."—(*Three Principles, chap. 22, par. 85.*)

[Fuller light on this point will be found in the *3rd Apology, Text 4, pars. 28 to 32*, and *Incarnation, Part 1, chap. 9, par. 46*; and *Ibid, chap. 12, par. 22.*]

Why Martensen judged it suitable to speak of the Virgin Sophia as "the idea," when *all* ideas of the Abyssal God prior to nature and creature are said by Boehme to have been reflected in her as a passive mirror of the Divine mind, I cannot understand. Yet I believe it must be admitted that in one of Boehme's writings he had enough to confuse him as to what conception *she* attached to the word. In the fifth of his "Theosophic Questions" we find him call "*the Idea the express image of God, a form of the Divine names,*" and in the twelfth the expression occurs "*which Spirit the Idea, Jesus, viz., an efflux from the Divine unity, came to help and relieve.*" His very immature treatment of "*Teutonicus*" tempts one to a redundancy of criticism, and as a restraint upon this, I must only allow myself to enlarge on his *most* defective

apprehensions; even thus I fear the patience of the reader may be too severely strained.

At page 110 we find it said that Boehme represents God apart from Eternal Nature as "life and yet not life; only a figure or schema of life. God does not become the living God until the Eternal Nature arises;" again, "although it is spirit itself that posits Nature, it is permitted to borrow its life from Nature." A gross misconception; yet I grant it is easy in a *cursory* perusal so to misunderstand him; but no one thoroughly conversant with his writings could allow that this is his doctrine: very many quotations one could adduce utterly to disprove it; the only difficulty is to select one of the clearest on a theme so inevitably obscure. In his treatise on the *Incarnation, Part 2, chap. 3, from par. 17 to 27*, the admission of such an idea is combated; and at *par. 24* of the same chapter he says, "God is in Himself the Abyss, viz., the first world of which no creature knoweth anything at all, for it standeth solely and alone with spirit and body in the Byss or ground. Thus also God Himself, in the Abyss, would not be manifest to Himself, but His *Wisdom* is, from Eternity, become His ground or Byss."—*See Context.*

To quote detached passages of this kind about a mystery quite unsearchable would only perplex readers not used to Boehme; and as many sayings of his may be found *seemingly* contradictory, it might leave the balance even between the opinion of Martensen and that of his critic. It will be better to accept the judgment of *Dionysius Freher*, whose thorough mastery of the sense of "Teutonicus," after reading all his books throughout ten times, gives *his* verdict exceptional value.

(To be Continued in next Number.)

## Madame Guion:

### SOME DETAILS OF THE LAST YEARS OF HER LIFE.\*

THE holy and divine Madame Guion was imprisoned at Vincennes on the 27th of September, 1695, then at Vaugirard, and afterwards in the Bastille, till the year 1705, although all the proceedings against her were at an end in 1700, and her justification pronounced that same year at Issy. She was then taken out of the Bastille and sent into exile in her own country. She went, first of all, to a country house belonging to her children, whence she received permission to retire to the town of Blois, which was in the neighbourhood. Here she passed the last twelve years of her life, of which she has written nothing herself, for which she gives the following reason, to quote her own words:—"In those latter times I can only think, not speak, of my dispositions."

\* *Note by the Translator.*—The French manuscript, of which the following is a translation, was presented to me some years ago in Lausanne by Mr. A——, bookseller there, an ardent admirer of Madame Guion's writings, and the successor of M. Petillet, the publisher of the second edition of her collected works in forty volumes (Paris, Lausanne, 1790), the sheets of which were still lying at the dépôt in Lausanne at the time of my visit in 1875. If the name of the author of the following fragment was mentioned to me it has escaped my memory. I have no doubt it is perfectly authentic, having been handed down from an original source as a supplement to the life of Madame Guion. Some of the details given are also to be found in the life of Dutoit, the mystic pastor of Lausanne, and editor of the above-mentioned edition of Madame Guion's works. Jean Philippe Dutoit was a remarkable man, and author of several mystic works, of which the best known is "*La Philosophie Divine*," published by him in 1793 under the *nom de plume* of Keleph Ben Nathan. He was an enthusiastic disciple of Madame Guion. In his life by J. Chavannes (Lausanne, Georges Bridel, 1865) there is to be found much interesting information regarding the circle of friends of the mystic doctrines, and who may be called the spiritual children of Madame Guion, in Switzerland, Germany, and other countries, together with the trials and persecutions they had to undergo in defence of their faith.—T. W. D.



Every day of this latter part of her life, says Dansay, was passed in the consummation of her love for God. It was not only fulness with her; she was intoxicated with it. Everything about her—her tables, ceiling, her room, all served her to write, by the motion of the Holy Spirit which guided her pen, those happy sallies of a fruitful genius full of her only object. What has been gathered together of those scattered verses which thus escaped out of the abundance of her heart, forms to-day a collection composed of four volumes of spiritual songs, and another of emblems upon Divine love. Her state was so consummated that the language of heaven would be necessary to speak of it, and this is why so little can be related of it. For the same reason sacred writers say almost nothing of the holy Virgin.

Madame Guion's relations with Fenelon continued both by writing and by an interior correspondence, which enables souls of this degree to communicate with each other at a distance as well as near at hand, and felt in a manner unknown and incomprehensible to those who have not the experience of it. The day of eternity alone can make known the divine things which have passed between these two mystic eagles.

The intimacy which existed between Madame Guion and the Archbishop of Cambrai was reflected upon the nephew of the latter, the Marquis de Fenelon, to whom the 37 first letters of the 4th volume are addressed, as well as the 21st, 22nd, and 46th of the 3rd volume. One sees by these letters that the young marquis regarded Madame Guion as his spiritual mother, and that she had accepted him upon that footing. This correspondence was maintained in all likelihood till the death of Madame Guion, since in the year 1715 she wrote him a letter of consolation (letter 11 of 4th vol.) upon the death of his uncle, the Archbishop of Cambrai, which took place at that time. It appears by letter 9th of the same volume, that the marquis went to see Madame Guion at Blois. He was for a long time Ambassador in Holland, and was killed at the battle of Lauffelt, in 1747, whilst performing prodigies of valour. Voltaire, although an enemy of all religion, is obliged to confess it in his "Age of Louis XV." When Madame Guion was spoken of to the young marquis he was, as it were, beside himself, and said openly in society at Paris that Madame Guion and his uncle were saints.

The girl who had been given to Madame Guion by her sister to serve her, and of whom mention is made in her life, was called Cathoz. It is easily seen how much Madame Guion suffered for her, owing to the resistance which her propriety offered to her radical purification. This girl attained to an eminent degree of perfection and consummation in God, so that she became one of the most cherished spiritual children of her divine mistress, and was associated with her in her apostolic sufferings. She was shut up with her and carried from prison to prison, separated afterwards from her, detained a number of years, interrogated by persons who only sought to make her commit herself by captious questions, and, in fine, had to undergo the most atrocious treatment. She gives a description of her state in the two letters which are to be found at the end of Madame Guion's life. She came out of prison with her mistress, followed her to Blois, and remained with her till her death.

Madame Guion had at Blois this chambermaid, two servants, and a valet. She received from time to time the visits of the archbishop of the place. Her eldest son, who had shared his mother's disgrace, lived in a country house at a short distance from Blois, and came often to see his mother.

In her house she had a chapel, where Divine service was performed every day, and, as this chapel was next to her own room, she could always be present, being able even to hear in bed, where her continual maladies so frequently kept her. She usually received the holy sacrament every morning

between 9 and 10 o'clock, and wrote at its approach, "They are bringing to me, they are bringing to me my Divine little Master." Who could express all that passed in that patriarchal house, where God was served and worshipped as He desires to be?

The persecution of Madame Guion and Fenelon having made a great deal of noise, curiosity caused many foreigners to read those of her writings which were then printed, and of which there was so much question. These treatises were the *Torrents*, the *Short Method*, and the *Explication of the Song of Songs*. The reading of these had made an impression on a number of persons, and several resolved to know for themselves a lady whose works had so divine an unction that was not to be found elsewhere. They had recourse to her either personally or by writing, and five thick volumes of her letters attest the extent of her correspondence. Several English and Scotch Protestants made her acquaintance during her exile at Blois. They had also seen the Archbishop of Cambrai, and known Mr. Poiret. They came to her house to the number of seven, and ate at her table. Lord Forbes (one of them) remained there seven years, until the death of Madame Guion, and has related several particulars of his sojourn. They paid no board, and as the English are great eaters of meat, the expense was considerable, and they could not understand how, with so modest an income—not exceeding 1000 crowns—she could make ends meet, they did not doubt but that there was something miraculous therein, like to what Madame Guion relates in her life of her abundant charities, which happened to her at Louanna during her husband's lifetime. She lived with these English like a mother with her children; and as those of that nation are enemies of constraint, and give themselves up pretty much to their natural movements, they often disputed and quarrelled with each other. On these occasions she pacified them by her sweetness of spirit, and induced them to cease. She did not forbid them amusements, and when they were engaged in these and asked her advice, she replied, "Yes, my children, just as you like." Then they amused themselves with their games, and this great saint remained during this time with them, although being in God. Their games soon became insipid to them, and, feeling attracted inwardly, they left all, and dwelt in silence in a profound interior recollection united with her in the presence of God. When the holy sacrament was brought to her they were together in her chamber, and on the arrival of the priest they remained behind a closed curtain, so that, being Protestants, they should not be seen. They knelt down and abode in a deep inward recollection, each according to his degree of prayer, and with sufferings or peace, according to their own states. What miracles have taken place in those moments can only be known in eternity. These English were in a manner the first Protestants to receive the doctrine of the interior. On their behalf Madame Guion composed several songs suited to their dispositions. Lord Forbes relates that if any new airs were sung over, and she was solicited to set words to them, she dictated a poem on the spot, and always appropriate to the person. It was for them that she wrote the heroic poem No. 19 of volume 4. She also dictated to one of them, without meditation, walking up and down in her room, the heroic poem No. 9 of volume 4. With the same view she composed the discourse No. 6 inserted in the 5th volume of the letters, having for its title "The Interior Rejected and Sought Again." We see by these traits that she did not exact from Protestants a change of religion, just as our Lord did not oblige the Samaritans to become Jews, but engaged them to worship God in spirit and in truth. She made them enter into the interior life and ways, and thus they became true Christians in place of being so only outwardly, bearing the name without having the spirit and life, like the Catholics and others. She did not

approve of Ramsay's outward change, not looking upon this change of worship as necessary to the interior life in which the true Christian religion is to be found. Lord Forbes had this desire, and wished to enter a convent, but she prevented him, and predicted that he would marry, which he in fact did, espousing a very rich London lady, their first child being carried to the baptismal font by Mdlle. Eschveiles, and named after Madame Guion, who, though dead, was looked upon as present at the baptism. This Miss Eschveiles was afterwards married to the Count de Fleischbein,\* a cherished and distinguished interior child of Madame Guion, and one of the greatest saints of this age.

Lord Forbes, although he remained with Madame Guion till nearly her death, had not the consolation of seeing her die and of being present at her last moments, having gone to see some interior souls, of whom there were a great number who regarded Madame Guion as their spiritual mother. Many came to Blois to visit her, and it was at that place that her English friends made her acquaintance. We know that there were whole convents whose inmates used prayer, even villages, the inhabitants of which lived in a continual presence of God. Lord Forbes knew a cloister where all the nuns were interior, and some far advanced. Visiting them one day, he asked them, "My dear children, what do you do together, and how do you pass your time?" To which the principal replied, "My lord, we serve the good God, and we crucify one another." It was during one of these journeys that his holy mother died, and he much regretted not to have had the privilege of kissing her feet before her decease.

Besides these English persons of whom we have spoken, Madame Guion had many other recognised spiritual children; one Abbé Gautier, of Paris, whom Mr. Fultman found still alive in 1735, also a Mr. Colombier. This abbé, who had known Madame Guion, spoke of her in these terms: "He who could comprehend the state of annihilation of Jesus Christ in the holy sacrament would also understand the annihilation of Madame Guion and her holiness." This Abbé Gautier was very advanced, much more so than Mr. Colombier.

She had also many more disciples in various places. In Switzerland the Abbé de Watteville,† who went to Blois in 1717 to see her, but found her dead. There are several letters addressed to him in volume 4. He died in 1746 in a very advanced state, it is said. In the same country there was Mr. Monod, of Morges, to whom letter 106 of volume 4 is addressed; Mdlle. de Venoge to a question from whom she replied in letter 151 of volume 4;

\* M. de Fleischbein was a fervent disciple of Madame Guion, and translated her works into German. He was one of the greatest interior souls of the last century. Along with M. de Klinckowström, he undertook the publication of a great number of works relating to the interior life, and circulated them not only in Germany but in other countries. They put themselves into communication with all persons eminent for their piety in England, the Low Countries, Denmark, Prussia, and throughout the whole of Germany.—*Vie de Dutoit*.

† In a letter, dated 8th October, 1762, M. de Fleischbein writes thus to a friend: "A M. de Watteville, called Abbé because he had been consecrated as a minister in the reformed church, stayed several months with us at Hayn in the summer of 1738. He was in the desert of obscure faith, and died in the Lord some years after his return home. He was an excellent man. He wished to see Madame Guion in 1717, but she had just died when he arrived in Paris. Mdlle. de Venoge, from what M. de Marsay has told me, and from what I have had confirmed later on, must have been very advanced in the interior life. Such a great number of holy children of God must have left behind them in Switzerland a spiritual seed. This is evident from what you write me of Dutoit and other children of God in his country. I pray God that the writings of this venerable Dutoit may bear much fruit." A little further on, in the same letter, he speaks also of the worthy M. Monod, doctor and postmaster at Morges, and designs him, as well as M. Duval of Geneva, as "a faithful interior soul," some of whose letters he had read. It was those two men who furnished funds for printing the French works of M. de Marsay.—*Vie de Dutoit*.

also Mr. Treytorrens.\* In Germany the Baron de Metternich maintained with her a very considerable correspondence, but the most interesting was that of the celebrated P. Poiret. He had composed several works upon the interior doctrine, but when he became acquainted with those of Madame Guion he felt the infinite difference there was between his own and this mystic eagle's, and even printed, without her knowledge, the *Short Method* in 1689. One of Madame Guion's friends having shown her a copy at Blois, with the initial letters P.P., which he was in the habit of putting at the head of his books, she immediately exclaimed, "That is the man who will publish all my works." And in fact it was he who published the complete edition in Holland under the name of Cologne. She had never heard him spoken of until they became acquainted. There is to be found at the end of the 5th volume of the letters a list indicating the whole of this correspondence, and it is known that she made particular account of it. He had formed in Holland a house quite of a patriarchal character, and, after Fenelon, passed for one of the most interior souls.

We see by what has just been said that Madame Guion did not reject Protestants. Some one asked her why there were so few saints among them. She answered: "Because there is no subordination among them, and each conducts himself after his own mind."

There was at Paris the Duchess de Grammont, who was regarded as a highly consummated soul, but who lived in a very retired manner. There was also formed in Italy, and in the kingdom of Naples and Sicily in particular, a great interior people, who were unjustly persecuted after Madame Guion's death, under the name of Quietists, some being put to death and others imprisoned. They were avenged from heaven by an earthquake, which in the year 1724 destroyed a great many people, more than 2000 at Palermo alone.

Madame Guion, whose divine state and consummation of loss in God can neither be imagined nor described, is regarded by the most profoundly enlightened persons as the loftiest soaring soul after the holy Virgin who has appeared in the world, and as being reserved for these latter times as the instrument by which the reign of God was to be established in hearts, being the apostle of pure love and Divine justice as much by her sufferings as by her writings.

With reference to what she says in the first volume of her life concerning Geneva, and the prophecy she makes about the Church of St. Peter as yet one day to contain the mysteries of the Catholic Church, it must not be thought that the Catholic Church of to-day is meant; but a new and holy Church of God, composed of true worshippers in spirit and in truth. In that happy time the ceremonies and exterior of the Church shall be established as the Holy Spirit shall please, and then shall be realised the device of Geneva, "After darkness, light."

She was attacked during the last year of her life by a grave malady, which lasted three months. Her daughter, the Countess de Vaux-Fouquet, came from Paris with a skilful physician, whose remedies apparently did her good. The malady returned with redoubled force two days after his departure, and became more alarming by an inflammation of the throat and chest,

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\* Nicolas Samuel de Treytorrens, a man of sincere piety, was not afraid to raise his voice on behalf of the sectarists persecuted by the Bernese government. Animated by his charitable zeal, he succeeded in seeing them and consoling them in their prisons, and was emboldened even to the point of soliciting their Excellencies a mission to go at his own expense to visit and deliver the pietists and anabaptists who had been sent to the galleys of Genoa and Naples. Refused by the persecuting authority, as we may easily imagine, he was himself arrested as a pietist and condemned to perpetual banishment.—*Vie de Dutoit.*



which caused her excessive pain, especially when she took some nourishment. The letter at the beginning of her life contains the details of her state. Her daughter did not leave till after her decease. Having become a widow, after some years she was married for the second time to the Duke de Sully.

These details of the last years of Madame Guion's life have been given by one of her spiritual children.

## The Sunny Heights of Quakerism.

I.—YOUNG GEORGE FOX.

Our blessed Lord said to His disciples, "Without Me ye can do nothing." All our strength and ability is *in Him*; and this strength and ability is received from Him by our inward waiting upon Him in the gift of His holy spirit. There it is that we see our own unworthiness, and ourselves truly as we are; here it is that we persevere on, and go on from one degree of strength and grace unto another; here it is that we see what the Lord may require of us, either respecting ourselves or others; and here it is, also, that we see the enemy of our souls in all His appearances and transformations, and are made able by the Lord's strength to withstand him in all his temptations. But oh! *this inwardness, this inwardness*, has been and is too much a wanting amongst the Lord's people, even among many preachers, as well as hearers, whom the Lord in the beginning highly favoured.

J. PIKE TO J. GURNEY IN 1717.

THE Christian Quaker is necessarily a reformer. Trembling in the currents of the Divine inflowing, he sees in the Light and feels that to be consistent he must *do*: thus his life's love goes out into active use as naturally as the sweet-briar's perfume spreads itself through the sphere of its immediate surrounding. One with heaven in the enthusiasm of humanity, the supreme will is carried out by him into generous ultimations, as many a page of Friends' history shows. Indeed, the survey here is as if one should wing his way from peak to peak along the mountain range of Pindus: all is serenity in the Light. Fox, Dewsbury, Barclay, Whitehead, Penington, Story, Shewin, Woolman, Shillitoe—what a *Kalendarium Sanctorum* one could write out without going beyond these children of the Light! At Home in the Affirmative Principle their eyes are tranquil, their hearts joyous, their touch sure and effective for the renovation of society.

"The casual outcome of constitutional kindness," say some. Strange then that in so much it should be restricted to these people. Look through the chronicle of humanitarian achievement during the last two centuries; how much of it is the result of Quaker inspiration at work of set purpose from a heart at peace! You look around after reading Macaulay's history of the Restoration times—why the old tints have disappeared from our highest civilisation, that of vital Christianity—and we have a new sunrise whose golden hues are irradiating all things and nullifying by a new warmth the cold spirit of opposition. Civilisation of Aborigines, Complete Spirituality of Religion, Total Abstinence, Tithe Restrictions, Abolition of Slavery, Cure of Lunacy, Prison Reform, Extinction of Corn Laws, Free Gospelling, Protection of the Rights of Juries, Arbitration Principles, Peace Societies, Colonisation with a conscience and the truth against churches without one—all this the "mere casual outcome of constitutional kindness!" Why, it is God's loving arm placed around humanity to safeguard her as she rises into organised Christianity—Federalism in the Light and Spirit of the Lord.

And yet how humble its origin! Like the Primitive Church, of which, historically, it is the highest expression, it was founded in obscurity, was too insignificant for serious contemporary notice. A meditative boy, one George Fox, apprentice to a shoemaker, who is also a grazier of sheep and kine which George at times tends, here is the first visible sign of the new life.



"The Lord taught me to act faithfully two ways, inwardly to God and outwardly to man, and to keep to *yea* and *nay*," says George. His parents wished they had dedicated him to the Church of England. He was intended, in God's providence, for Humanity's Temple instead: thus the young scholar had to let meditation make amends for slender culture. The lad was noted for his religious bearing.

He was much alone. The moon, the stars, and the silent sky; the meadows walled about with night; the herd grazing around in silent content; these formed one kind of study: the mystery of temptation, the impulsions of evil proclivities, the heights of a strange splendour streaming down into conscious thought; these formed another and more solemn field of speculation. Thus oftentimes when the heavens without were "telling the glory of God," there was manifested a second universe within, where, to him who wisely listeneth, "day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." Before George had gone far through his apprenticeship he had become painfully aware of the wide gulf separating good from evil, had seen what wrong sin does to human nature, and had undergone severe temptations. At length, when entering upon manhood, there comes a monition through the deeps, or rather heights, of the soul: "Thou seest how young people go together into vanity, and old people into the earth: thou must forsake old and young: must keep out of all and be a stranger to all!"

The result was that on the 9th July, 1643, when he was nineteen years of age, George broke off all familiarity with old and young, and underwent a series of mental conflicts that led him to take counsel with certain ministers of the neighbourhood—men called "divines." With these men, however, there had been no inward "transforming by a renewing of the mind," thus one of them, firm-fixed in the oldness of the letter, fell to talk of the Messiah's parentage and then to unseemly chiding, George having trodden on the edge of this priest's flower-bed; another advised him to take tobacco and sing Psalms; while a third was so practical that, under a less spiritual civilisation, he would have favoured "Lithographed Sermons for the *Christian Year*." He noted down the young man's answers for working up into his Sunday discourses! A fourth minister found George's piety so incomprehensible that he would physic and bleed him! Expect a blind man to discourse intelligibly of spectrum analysis!

Avoiding contact much longer with divines, the shrewdest of whom could but recommend him to take a wife, George next betook himself, Bible in hand, to the fields and the orchard. There he could anticipate the thought Landor puts in the mouth of Marcus Tullius: "Could I begin my existence again, and what is equally impossible, could I see before me all I have seen, I would choose few acquaintances, fewer friendships, no familiarities. This rubbish, for such it generally is, collecting at the base of an elevated mind, lessens its height and impairs its character." Alone with God, George could still pursue his studies in self-knowledge. He had become convinced that being bred at Oxford or Cambridge does not qualify a man to be a true minister of Christ; and that, on the other hand, God can qualify George although lacking this college-lore. His friends tried persuasion, calumny, and threats, but George showed them his Bible, and told of an anointing within man to teach him; yea, that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself taught *His* people.

Being "bought off" from outward things to rely altogether upon God, he would hold no middle course with men "whole and at ease" in that condition which to him was misery. An inward voice said to George, when in the fields one day, "Thy name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, which was before the foundation of the world." At another time it was inwardly

declared to him: "There is One, even Christ Jesus, who can speak to thy condition," at which words George's heart "did leap for joy." "The Lord," he writes, "did stay my desires upon Himself from whom the true help came, and my care was cast on Him alone." Amphilocus-like, from the invisible side then alone, was the "Call" of George Fox. The Inner Light his university, his lore is spiritual altogether, yet not wholly lovely. Free-gospeiling somewhat later at Nottingham, he was inwardly shown that the nature of things hurtful *without* exist as to essentials *within*. The natures of dogs, swine, vipers; of Sodom and Egypt; of Pharoah and Cain, *he saw in himself*, and he cried to the Lord: "Why should I be thus, seeing I was never addicted to commit those evils?" The answer was that George needed a sense of all conditions, for how else could he speak to all conditions? Thus God's love seemed manifest even in these things, and George saw that although there was an ocean of Darkness and Death, yet there was also an infinite ocean of Light and Love which flowed over that darkness. A strange change, too, came over his physical nature at this time. He seemed about to experience the condition Milton had just sung of, how

" Oft converse with heavenly habitants  
Begins to cast a beam on the outward shape—  
The unpolluted temple of the mind—  
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence."

George became altered in countenance and person—"new moulded." He grew cheerful as a skylark, too; respired gladsomely in a new inner atmosphere of light and life. "I have been in Spiritual Babylon, Sodom, Egypt, and the grave," wrote he, "but by the eternal power of God I am come out of it, brought over it and over the power of it, into the power of Christ." It was from this came internal respiration and the true liberty of prophesying; it was this that determined the legitimacy of woman's preaching, the true teacher being he or she who "keeps in the daily cross, the power of God:" here the law of God that is perfect answers the perfect principle in every one.

This serenity of George's was not wholly untroubled as yet. Doubt stole upon him once in the Vale of Beavor, but he let patience do her perfect work, and "the cloud and temptation vanished away, and life rose over it all; my heart was glad, and I praised the living God"—a record no little-minded minister would have left to the world, for such an one has no room for doubt: *he* settles down in the form, and not seldom, while in discourse Christian, is in act Iscariotese. George could go forward from victory to victory for the remainder of a long lifetime. "Now was I come up in spirit through the flaming sword into the Paradise of God. All things were new. All the creation gave another smell unto me than before, and beyond what words can utter. I knew nothing but pureness, innocency, and righteousness, so that I was come up to the state of Adam, which he was in before he fell." He was in the Affirmative Principle as a Home; was the Free-gospeiler of resurgent Christianity—Primitive Quakerism. It had its birth in the resolve to be one's-self and not another; to dare to dissent and yet to retain one's piety. Renouncing and denouncing externalisms and priestcraft, its founder had fallen back upon the religious sentiment. Puritanism had been a reaction from torpid Protestantism; Quakerism, at the extreme limit of this reaction, shall continue it, and, whilst opposing the old formalities, shall react against frigid Puritanism also. In his storm and stress, George has found many who understand him; the shoemaking craft is abandoned, and Cromwellian England hears of George Fox and his Society of Friends—the "Flocks of the Companions."

R. M'C.

## Notes and Queries

### RELATING TO MYSTICS AND THEIR WORKS.

DR. JOHN F. HURST, in his "History of Rationalism," says of Boehme:—"It has been truthfully said of him, that his characteristic lay in his pneumatic realism. His was ecstasy of the loftiest type; but with him it was something almost tangible, real, and akin to actual life." Many such extracts no doubt exist in modern books. We should be glad if readers would copy out and send them to *Light and Life* for insertion.

Will some reader send a note of the writings of Paracelsus, and give some account of the man and his ideas?

The Editor of *Light and Life* would be greatly obliged if readers would send to him any papers with notices relating to Mystics and Mysticism.

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We note that R. H. Fryar, Bath, is about to print A. L. Cahagnet's "Magnetic Magic," 7s. to subscribers. He has in the press "The Golden Treatise of Hermes"—a rare alchemy book, 5s.

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Our readers will do well to send for new prospectus of N. D. Circulating Free Library from J. K. Collett, Cardiff. This Library contains many books by M. G. Pearce, John Pulsford, Dr. Holcombe, and George Macdonald, and other truly mystic authors.

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### To the Reader.

NEXT month we will continue the Review of Dr. Martensen's Book, "Jacob Boehme: His Life and Teaching," &c., and in each Number of this Volume considerable space will be given to studies bearing on the writings of Jacob Boehme. We are fully assured that, as our Paper becomes known, these studies will be widely appreciated.

The English Mystics will be largely quoted, and we hope to continue to give new translations from foreign writers on Theosophical subjects.

A complete work, by Van Helmont, will be reprinted in the early Numbers, and this alone we believe will be worth the Yearly Subscription.

Notes and Queries, relating to Rare Mystic Books and their Authors, will be given each month. The Editor will be glad if readers will aid in this.

More space and attention will be given to notices of New and Recent Books, and also to the contents of Foreign Magazines.

We welcome contributions relating to the Lives and Works of such men as Paracelsus, Van Helmont, and the early Alchemists.

It may be well to state that this Magazine has no connection with any sect or party of Christians, and our chief aim is to assist in the unfolding of Truths relating to the Spiritual Life, through whatever channel they may reach us.

*Subscriptions for Year (for Great Britain and all countries in the Postal Union, 2s. post free; American Subscribers remitting One Dollar Two Copies post free) may now be sent to "LIGHT AND LIFE" OFFICE, 100 West George Street, Glasgow.*

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A few sets of Vol. I., neatly bound in cloth, titled, may now be had, 2s. 6d. post free.

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As the number of the above is limited, early application must be sent to "Light and Life" Office, 100 West George Street, Glasgow.

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The Editor will be glad to receive from readers a list of names of any friends who might be likely to become Subscribers, and to whom a Specimen Copy would be sent. Various causes prevent our issue this Month till 4th September, and so our Book and Magazine Notices are left out.