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EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

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EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

"Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri"

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

IN spite of the advance of science in many different directions, we still remain profoundly in the dark as to the true explanation of some of the most ordinary processes of life. If we could solve the problem of the causes which produce sleep and of its psycho-physiological character, we should in all probability find the key which would supply us with the solution of the vast majority of the phenomena of dreamland. It is putting the cart before the horse to attempt to explain even the most common dream experiences without having some hypothesis to work on as to what sleep really is in its essential nature. "Sleep, gentle sleep! How have I frighted thee?" asks King Henry in Shakespeare's celebrated play. The King would fain know what he has done to inhibit nature's normal processes for the recuperation of the exhausted body. Still to-day, one of the most difficult problems that the medical profession is called upon to deal with is the restoration of the power of sleep to those who have lost it. Given healthy sleep, the physical frame can, generally speaking, be relied upon to recover from the most devastating ailments. If we knew precisely what

THE CAUSE OF SLEEP.

produced sleep we should be on the road to understanding how it might be brought back to the sufferer from insomnia. But even to-day the question is one to which a ready answer cannot be found, and the opinions of any two physicians on the subject will in most cases differ from each other very materially.

The contention of some that sleep is a pathological condition, is disproved, as Dr. Hereward Carrington very rightly observes,* by its naturalness and universality. Another view held is that sleep is due to the accumulation of toxic substances during the active waking period, which gradually reduce the functions of body and brain to inactivity. Others, again, hold that sleep is the result of the reduction of the excessive blood-pressure incident to active physical conditions to a normal level. The drinking of hot water before retiring to bed is an aid to sleep, and the reason of this is presumably that it tends to reduce the blood-pressure on the brain. A hot-water bottle applied to the feet in bed has a similar effect. Undoubtedly the absence of both bodily and mental tension is required before sleep can be induced.

THE NECESSITY FOR MENTAL PASSIVITY.

This is aided by eliminating all conditions that produce external stimulus. Hence if we have a pet parrot or other bird, in order to induce it to go to sleep, we cover the cage with a cloth or remove it to a darkened room. Passivity is indeed a condition essential for the reproduction of hypnosis whether this be auto-hypnosis or hypnosis deliberately induced by external operation. The man who sleeps best is the man who can control his mental activities most readily. The ploughman sleeps the sleep of the just, while the brain worker frequently suffers from a disturbed night's rest. For the brain of the ploughman is normally inactive and thus more readily adapts itself to the passive state which is the pre-requisite for a sound night's rest. We must not, however, assume from this that the man with an active brain is necessarily a bad sleeper. An active brain may co-exist with remarkable powers of control over the nervous system, and if this is so, mental activity is no bar to sound sleep. And nothing, again, is more certain than that a sound night's rest is the greatest possible recuperative agent for the mental and nervous systems. The greatest brain workers have therefore frequently been those who have had this command of

* *The Nature of Dreams*. By Hereward Carrington, Ph.D. Haldeman-Julius Company, Girard, Kansas, U.S.A. It is well to mention that Dr. Carrington has quoted a passage from *The Dreams of Orlow*, which he attributes in error to a correspondent of his own.

sleep. Probably Napoleon had as active and alert a brain as anyone who has ever lived, and he had the reputation of being able to induce sleep at any time of day or night, purely by the power of will. Gladstone, again, a man of the most active and versatile intellect, was one of the best of sleepers. To be able to dismiss disturbing thoughts at will is in reality one of the greatest tests of will power.

"My own theory," says Dr. Carrington, "is that sleep is a vital process and that during the hours of rest and sleep the human brain and nervous system are in some way recharged by vital energy in much the same way that a storage battery is recharged by electric energy." But the problem is, how does this come about? Are we justified in contending, as Miss Dorothy Grenside does in her latest book, *The Meaning of Dreams*,* that the consciousness quits the physical body in sleep, and by doing so allows the physiological functions to recuperate and rehabilitate themselves undisturbed by the constant tension attendant upon mental activity? If this is the case, it would explain the much more potent and beneficial results obtained by a good night's rest than by the same period passed in ordinary quiescence, when reclining, say, in an arm-chair or on a couch.

DOES THE CONSCIOUSNESS QUIT THE BODY IN SLEEP?

It has of course often been contended that the spirit does, under certain conditions, quit the body during sleep. The point, however, as regards the nature of normal sleep, is whether it does so regularly and as a matter of course. Whether, in short, sound sleep implies the withdrawal of the consciousness from the body. If this is so, not only does it explain the wonderfully recuperative powers of sleep, but also the shock invariably caused by suddenly awakening anyone in deep slumber. This is not a view usually held, at any rate by the medical profession. But what we are in search of is such explanation of sleep as will account most readily for the effects it produces and the phenomena with which it is attended. Miss Grenside, in adopting this view, observes that "the reason sleep overtakes us is not that the spirit sinks into unconsciousness but rather that it withdraws to other fields of activity, leaving the body to accomplish its recuperative work unhampered." She evidently adopts the hypothesis of the gradual toxic poisoning of the vital centres during the day, as she contends that "in the daytime the spirit is continually thinking, speaking, acting, and every word, thought,

REASON FOR RECUPERATIVE POWER OF SLEEP.

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or action is an expenditure of force, which gradually breaks down the physical tissues and generates a certain amount of poison in the body." At night " the body, freed from the ceaseless activity of the Thinker, can rebuild the broken tissues and eliminate the poisons from the system. . . . If for any reason the night's rest be broken, the body is hampered in its work because the spirit, instead of passing completely out of contact, is still enmeshed in some measure with its physical envelope." On this assumption there is a curious similarity between death and sleep, but the spirit in sleep maintains its connection with the body by that silver cord, the existence of which is now widely conceded by students of occultism, and which many clairvoyants maintain that they have visualized.

In experiments such as those described by Mr. Oliver Fox in several articles which have recently appeared in the OCCULT REVIEW, this process is performed consciously. In normal sleep the only difference is that it is performed unconsciously. We are probably most of us familiar with the story, which has indeed appeared long ago in the columns of this magazine, of the lady who visited a house with which she realized that she had long been familiar, though she had never seen it in waking life, and was told by her hostess that she was the ghost who had been haunting the house for the past two years. It was, in short, her dream house. There are many instances known of people who are familiar with persons and localities which they constantly resort to in dream life, but of which they have no other knowledge. The theory advanced here would explain these experiences as visits to actual localities and real people, and not merely phenomena of a subjective character. Instances have been brought to my notice quite recently of people who have dream friends whom they meet and meet again, and with whom in their dream world they are on very familiar and friendly terms, but who are quite unknown to them in waking life, and of whose names they have no knowledge.

DREAM FRIENDS— ARE THEY REAL?

It is one of the curious facts about dreams that the people we meet in them, unless they are people known to us in actual life, never, or hardly ever, appear to be associated with any specific names. They are simply taken for granted along with all the circumstances that surround them. In this we may note another circumstance peculiar to dream life, that is, that what we encounter there either as regards persons or incidents never seems to excite our surprise. Occurrences and circumstances the most unlikely

or even impossible are taken as a matter of course. We do not stop to reason with regard to them on the question of their improbability. If once we begin to do so, it is a sure sign that we are near waking up. The same is the case with a hypnotic subject. He is so receptive that everything that comes to him is taken at its face value. You can, indeed, as has been pointed out by at least one writer on the subject, suggest to yourself before going to sleep that you will realize in dreaming the illusory character of your dream experiences, and some success may be attained in this direction by this form of auto-suggestion. It is, however, probable that the tendency of any such suggestion is to wake the sleeper up.

Miss Grenside has a good deal to say in her book with regard to the more subtle vehicles of consciousness. "The physical body, interpenetrated by the etheric, is," she tells us, "the vehicle for expression in the physical world, but the astral, mental, and spiritual bodies are the spirit's only means of contact with the higher, immaterial spheres. When man leaves the physical body he finds himself as dependent in the astral world upon his astral body as he was in the physical world upon his physical body; if he desire to work in the mental world, he can only do so through the medium of his mental body, and in the spiritual world through his spiritual vehicle. The necessity for these various bodies is therefore obvious. They are man's vehicles of expression in the different worlds, and without them he would be a wandering, formless entity, incapable of activity, of life, of love, or of soul-experience on any level save the physical."

It would require more evidence than we have at our command to establish the existence of the numerous bodies to which Miss Grenside alludes. It is doubtless possible that the spirit of man sheds body after body just as it is possible to peel the skins off an onion, but we must recognize that when we get beyond a certain point we are simply dealing with unproven hypotheses. Hypnotic experiments and, perhaps also, the evidence with regard to the extrusion of ectoplasm by mediums in a certain condition tend to support the belief that the physical form has an etheric sheath, and the astral body has been seen by many clairvoyants either leaving the body at death or dissociated from the body, as in the case of phantasms of the living, or in that of apparitions after death. In any event, the existence of the individual consciousness apart from any form whatever is an unthinkable proposition. When, however, we get beyond

THE SHEATHS OF THE SPIRIT.

the problem of the astral body to spiritual and mental bodies, we are in deeper waters. Does the astral body disintegrate, and if so, how soon and under what conditions? Many have dogmatized on this subject, but it must be admitted that our actual knowledge does not carry us very far. May it not rather be that the substance of the subtle body after death becomes greatly rarefied, as physical conditions are put off and left further and further behind? We may at least postulate that the nature of the body worn must correspond to the condition of the spirit which it clothes, and that these subtler bodies are adaptable to changing spiritual states.

"The etheric body," writes Miss Grenside, "is the seat of sensation, and is so closely linked to the physical body that any effort to sunder the two usually reacts disastrously on the nervous system. . . . Hypnotism, anæsthetics, and sometimes extreme illness effect this violent separation, driving the etheric out of the physical vehicle, and reducing the latter to a dense, death-like sleep. The reason that the body feels no pain under an anæsthetic is simply because of the absence of the etheric body." In normal sleep, however, our author contends that this violent separation does not take place, as the sleeper withdraws in his subtler bodies, while leaving the etheric still locked within the physical. Herein, according to Miss Grenside, lies the difference between natural and induced sleep. This explains why the body in sleep is sensitive to touch or any discomfort arising, say, from the falling off of the bedclothes or any other reason, while the patient under an anæsthetic is without sensation.

THE SUBTLER BODIES.

There seems a certain amount of reason in these observations, but there can, I think, be little doubt that they require qualification. All anæsthetics do not act in the same manner, and though under most of them the consciousness leaves the body, this is not invariably the case. I might offer two instances from my own experience. In one case I was under gas at the dentist's, and have the clearest recollection of finding myself standing upright behind my body, which was in the chair. In another instance, however, under a more powerful anæsthetic, though I had no recollection whatever of anything on coming-to after the operation, the doctor informed me that while under its influence I showed "symptoms of ecstasy," surely proving that my consciousness still inhabited my physical form. In cases, again, where people talk in their sleep, the presumption is that the consciousness has not left the physical body, though there may

be cases in which there is a sort of dual consciousness both inside the body and outside the body at the same moment. "A man cannot be in two places at once, unless he is a bird," as the Irishman observed, but there are states of dream consciousness in which there is at least a subjective impression of this strange sense of bi-location.

"When the physical body dies," says our author, "the etheric gradually withdraws and its disintegration follows as a matter of course, because the purpose of its existence, which was the pouring of life force through the physical body to render it a sensitive instrument, is at an end. It is the only one of the subtler bodies of which the spirit has no need in the higher worlds." When a person is hypnotized and his sensitiveness is transferred, as in some experiments to, say, a glass of water, it may be presumed that some slight portion of the etheric body is so transferred, and hence the apparent sensitiveness of the water so hypnotized to tactile impressions. Under the influence of an anæsthetic, it may well be the case that the major portion of the etheric body is extruded from the physical even if this is not entirely the case, so that consciousness may still exist in the physical brain.

ETHERIC AND ASTRAL BODIES.

If and when the sleeper leaves his body, it is (we may assume) his astral vehicle to which his consciousness is transferred, and in which he makes his nocturnal perambulations. This is also the vehicle in which at death he leaves his physical form, though occult philosophy maintains that this again is merely a temporary tabernacle. Without it, however, it is hardly to be supposed that the departed spirit would be able to manifest in visible form on the physical plane. If this is true, the so-called ghost that manifests does so in the astral body, except in those instances where remnants of the etheric body may take the form of the deceased, though in these cases it is hardly to be supposed that intelligence would be exhibited. It is not to be inferred from this that the spirit who has put off his astral body can never reassume or again temporarily build up such body. Where materialization is concerned we should be safe in maintaining that the physical body could not be built up apart from the presence of the astral body, which would necessarily form the nucleus of the denser material form. The reappearance, however, of spirits who have parted from their astral bodies must be regarded as very rare. The manifestation of Katie King to Sir William Crookes and his family is presumably a case in point. Katie King, if occult

HOW DO GHOSTS MANIFEST?

teaching be correct, could hardly have retained her astral body for so long a period.

"Why," it may be asked, "are dreams so rarely remembered?" If it is the case that the consciousness never ceases its activity, it is obvious that every night the enormous proportion of our dream experiences are forgotten when we wake. Sometimes we remember nothing: at other times we remember probably the last dream that we had immediately before returning to normal consciousness. Miss Grenside holds that dreams are not registered on the physical brain, firstly, because the dreamer re-enters his body too quickly. That is to say, I suppose, that the transfer of consciousness is made so rapidly between the astral and the physical that there is no opportunity for the registration of astral experiences on the physical brain. Secondly, that the dreamer has no desire to impress the memory upon his physical brain; because the life out of the body "seems to him at the time so free, so vivid, and so intensely interesting that the question whether the body remembers or not appears to the person functioning on the astral a matter of small moment." In this connection Miss Grenside contends that the dream life is more real, or at least more consecutive, than the normal life, as the dream consciousness will not merely be aware of the life lived on the astral plane, but also of the physical life as well, whereas the individual on the physical plane remembers physical life, and that only. She advises those who wish to remember their dreams, in the first place, to impress upon themselves before going to sleep their determination to remember; and to come back slowly to physical consciousness, in the second. When the time comes for the dreamer to re-enter his physical body, he tends to pick up these affirmations.

WHY DREAM LIFE IS NOT REMEMBERED.

Dreams such as those described as "dreaming true" and recorded, for example, in *The Dreams of Orlow*,* must be regarded as experiences in which the consciousness is entirely free from the trammels of the physical form, and could, I think, hardly take place otherwise. Memories of localities and persons at a distance brought back in this way seem to me definitely to prove dream travelling, and, I think, can hardly be explained by mere telepathy. In dreaming true it will be remembered by those who have read *The Dreams of Orlow*, and other similar records, the sensations of sight and touch are far keener than in normal life, while the capacity for pleasure and the appreciation of

* London: William Rider & Son, Ltd. 4*s*. 6*d*. net.

beauty are also greatly enhanced. Thus the dreamer in the book already alluded to, in meeting a friend on the astral plane observes: "Human eyes met hers with a smile that gave Orlow the most rapturous feeling of joy she had ever experienced in her life. Perfect love, perfect understanding, perfect friendship flooded her mind. No words were needed to cement it. . . . When her first dream friend held out his hand to her, she eagerly placed hers in it. Then Orlow played with his fingers and her heart bounded with delight when she felt that they were like the fingers of a living man." "He laid his hand upon her brow, and at his touch Orlow knew ecstasy of soul."

THE ECSTASY OF "DREAMING TRUE."

This dream experience gave her a realization of love such as she had never conceived before. "Only once in life," says her dream friend to her, "is there a glimpse of the love here vouchsafed to mortals, and that glimpse comes when in youth a man first falls in love with a woman, and only then if his mind is pure." . . . The vividness of such experiences is that of a higher plane, a plane in which the physical has no part, and of this stuff it is that true dreams are made. But what we ordinarily recall in waking up in the morning from a normal night's rest are experiences that fall into a very different category indeed.

Here is another similar experience from the same book illustrative, again, of the same kind of dreaming, the only difference being that in this case the dreamer is alone with nature and there is no man-friend, but the sense of ecstasy and vividness of emotion are alike in both. "The scenery had nothing grand or inspiring in its nature, but it pierced her with unspeakable delight merely to note the purity of colour, the exquisite cleanliness of the tree trunks, and the beauty of leaf and line of waving grass, of hedgerow and of flowers." . . . "There was nothing in it to account for the abnormal delight with which she stood there in her dream, bathed in a glow of sunshine and fanned by a light breeze which undulated the long grass to ripples. . . . But the rapture of her dream was quite beyond the power of language to describe."

Here it is to be noted that in the case of "dreaming true" the dreamer experiences the delight of being "bathed in a glow of sunshine," whereas in the ordinary dream the light, as it has often been remarked, is never vivid, but rather of the character of twilight. If these experiences are to be taken literally, and I believe, from what the author has told me, that they are a faithful record of actual dream sensations and emotions, it is

clear that those of us who study dream phenomena from the point of view of what I may call the common or garden dream, and believe that the dream world is limited to such experiences, are making a very great mistake. There are planes, as I believe, of dream life in which the spirit senses keener and purer delights and pleasures than anything to be met with on the normal physical plane. We must not take too narrow a view of a world of which most of us know only the barest fringes, and the wisdom of the psycho-analyst in this matter is, I am disposed to believe, merely a rather crude exemplification of that self-satisfied conceit of the materialist which is own brother to ignorance. "In my Father's house are many mansions" may surely be a saying as true of the dream world as it is of the starry firmament above us.

THE TRUE DREAM WORLD UNEXPLORED.

An item of interest to many unattached Theosophists will be the formation of the Blavatsky Association, the object of which is to perpetuate the memory and work of Madame H. P. Blavatsky on lines entirely independent of existing Theosophical organizations. The contention of the founders of this Association is of course that modern Theosophy has diverged to a grave and regrettable extent from the teachings of its founder, and in a letter which I publish in the present issue, the Secretary of the new Association, the Hon. Mrs. Davey, observes that "Even the very word Theosophy has become associated with so much that is the direct opposite of its original meaning and intent that it appears to be necessary to drop the use of the term in connection with the present movement," which it may be observed includes a number of the original pupils and co-workers with H. P. B., and others who at one time or another have severed their connection with the parent society at the time of the numerous splits and schisms which have rent the movement. Rightly or wrongly, the founders of this new Association have decided to decline to admit members of the existing Theosophical organizations, as long, that is, as they continue to retain their membership. It is not part of the programme of the OCCULT REVIEW to take sides either for or against, in the case of such disputes and polemical controversies, but it is an open secret that much dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs exists within the ranks of the Theosophical Society as at present constituted, both as regards teachings promulgated and

THE BLAVATSKY ASSOCIATION.

also no less with reference to the organization of the Society. It is felt on many sides that this organization has become too rigid and hide-bound in character, and attempts to render it more popular and responsive to the views of its members have been over-ridden by superior authority which adopts altogether too autocratic a standpoint in exercising its prerogatives. In such cases, external opposition and rivalry often serve the purpose of a very wholesome corrective. Apart from this, the new movement will tend to resuscitate and bring to the fore much of the teaching of the original founder of the T.S. which has recently fallen into the background and suffered eclipse owing to the adoption of views by its present leaders incompatible with what was taught and accepted in the earlier days of the Society. Those interested should communicate with the Hon. Sec., The Blavatsky Association, 22 Craven Hill, Bayswater, London, W.2.

BOYHOOD MEMORIES

By R. I.

LET the pious fools unite
To maintain that black is white!
'Tis the burden of my song
"I was right and you were wrong—
You who sinned against the Light;
You were wrong, and I was right!"

I can see you as you were,
Deaf to human need and prayer,
In your round of petty cares,
Rotting with the rotting years.
Palsied heart and stunted head,
Sleep within your narrow bed!
Not so narrow as the mind
That has cast the Truth behind.
Nay, methinks you live again
Dream-like on the astral plane,
Where they breathe the torpid air
In the land that is not fair;
Where the man without a soul
Plays his old accustomed rôle;
Where the woman without heart
Re-enacts her meaner part.
If 'tis sooth, as sages say,
You will yet return one day.
Well the future draws its veil
On the upshot of my tale.
Well the stream of Lethé flows
'Twixt the shores that no man knows.

Let the pious fools unite
To maintain that black is white.
'Tis the burden of my song:
"I was right and you were wrong—
You who sinned against the Light;
You were wrong, and I was right!"

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCE AND SPIRITUAL HEALING

By BERYL SYMONS, Author of "The Leaven of Love," "A Lady of France," "Prince and Priest," etc.

PSYCHIC experience is not necessarily spiritual, and spiritual healing is independent of psychic experience. Some find the latter a useful medium for obtaining knowledge of the former, but a person may practise spiritual healing without any adventuring into the psychic plane. This is my case. The psychic experiences I have to relate are only personal in so far as they have been given me first-hand by friends whose good faith is beyond all doubt. The nearest approach I have ever made toward such happenings has been in my dreams. But spiritual healing is my own experience, a well of consciousness which becomes an integral part of my being.

I give the psychic stories as proof of direct communication with the so-called dead without the presence of any intermediary such as mediums and what I think are called "Spirit-controls."

The first instance might even have concerned the living. The appearance was that of a stranger, and I have never since heard of it being recognized. The friend to whom the event occurred had taken a furnished house in the West End of London during the summer of 1916. Her husband was fighting in France, and like so many other women she lived in London with her children so as to be close at hand when the short-leave facilities gave him three or four days in England. And in this house, one night, she saw a vision. She had turned off the light at the head of the bed and was lying with open eyes, not at all sleepy, rather very wide-awake. The regulations enforced strict shading of all lights from windows, and heavy dark curtains were drawn across the whole front of the room. Against the sombre drapery she suddenly saw a gleam of light. Her first thought was for the electric globe behind her head, but she had turned the switch thoroughly and the bulb was dark. So also were the three other pendants in the room. The strange light deepened and glowed like a soft fire but did not illumine the room. It remained, a golden oval patch upon the curtain,

and it seemed to burn from the circumference to the centre—a curious indrawing of the light to a central point. Then, as she lay watching it, puzzled but in no way frightened, something appeared in the heart of the light. It was the life-size head of a young man, with a cheerful, smiling face, perfectly clear in its outline, and apparently solid. She said it was a delightful face with very blue eyes. He seemed to smile at her in a friendly fashion, then gradually faded into the heart of the light, which in its turn also gradually disappeared. She switched up the electric light, more as a matter of mechanical form than anything else. Of course the room was empty. She felt no alarm, only intense interest. Who was the boy? Why had he appeared? So far as I know she never discovered, but it is a fact that, being wide-awake at the time, she saw the appearance as I have described it.

The second case also concerns a friend. She was a younger woman than the first, pretty, gay, and with absolutely no leaning towards things occult and psychic. Her joy in the present life left her no time to think much of any other. Withal she was practical, with much shrewd common sense and distinct business capacity. She told me the following story quite simply. It impressed her deeply at the time, but I never heard her speak of it again, and so far as I know she never had a similar experience. Her husband was also fighting—in Mesopotamia—and she was staying for the week-end with her parents in the country. All three were anxious about a dearly loved son and brother then known to be in the line in France. One boy had already been killed. This remaining brother was my friend's favourite. The winter night was very dark and cold. One remembers the frugal coal ration and that many rooms remained shut up. These then, having finished dinner, sat together over the dining-room fire, thinking of the hell which the boy was sharing in France. "Suddenly," said my friend to me, "I looked away from the fire and saw Dick standing by the door. He was in uniform and I saw him so clearly that at first I thought he had got over unexpectedly." Then she added that which proves that she really did see what she asserted. "But somehow I did not see him with my eyes—these," and she touched her own beautiful eyes—she was so pretty—"I saw him with an inner vision much deeper and truer than my eyes could give. It was very puzzling and I can't explain, but I saw him, inside me, so to speak, and yet plainly by the door. I knew then he was dead. I didn't say anything to mother or to my father."

That was at ten o'clock on the Saturday evening. On the Monday morning came the War Office telegram announcing that Lieutenant M— had been killed on Saturday afternoon in a gallant attack on the German trenches. This young soldier appeared to his sister some hours after he was killed, and she saw him, not with the eyes of the imagination but with that inner certainty of vision which knows beyond all doubt that it is true. In her turn she too has passed on, and the world is poorer for the joy of life she has taken with her.

The third experience is different, and may be useful to those who long for their dear ones but yet hesitate to trust the power of a medium. In this case my friend is a much older woman—yet possesses the secret of eternal youth. I cannot describe her without breaking away from the confines of this article. It must be enough now for me to say that I and many others have sat at her feet for years learning the way of mysteries. She is a woman who has won a deep and marvellous insight into the things of the Spirit—and the word should be written with a capital "S." Her knowledge transcends spiritualism. She descends into the psychic plane from the safe altitude of the spiritual. But she herself would desire me to say no more. What little has been said is necessary as a guide to the experience I would tell. Her husband died, and for three days she sank into cruel depths of grief. Then she found the way up and out and made a certain prayer, and her husband appeared to her and spoke to her in broad daylight, when she was alone. He came as simply, as directly as if entering from the garden outside, and he was shining with a wonderful radiance of joy. He came several times within the next few years. He was allowed to advise her on certain matters, notably on business questions, and she profited as much from his clear legal brain as she had when he was in the flesh. Most precious joy of all was the ever-deepening sense of reunion. She knew his spirit and he hers with a marvellous clearness that of necessity must be veiled when the soul can only speak through the medium of a body. Now with the barrier of the flesh down, spirit talked with spirit unhindered by the slightest cloud of non-understanding. As time went on his visits became fewer, at last entirely ceased. But she is happy in the knowledge that he lives, that she does not see him now because he has other work to do, and that when she too makes the forward journey, he will greet her.

And what she has done, all can do—that is, obtain the same direct, unshakable conviction that the beloved are not dead

but only waiting, even while they work. This method transcends all others. No element of deception can touch it.

I do not think I am psychic at all. Years ago I wasted much time in fruitless gazing into the crystal. I have never seen a ghost. If there is in me any bent in this direction it lies in a certain faculty for perceiving rather cloudy facts in the pastime known as fortune-telling by cards. There have been curious dreams, one sufficiently disturbing to make me reconsider and relinquish a certain line of study, one of peculiar horror which visited me in early childhood and haunted me at various times, then ceased entirely for many years and culminated in a strange manner just two years ago. The one mentioned first was the natural result of much time spent in mental concentration. There is a school of thought which teaches that to obtain what we greatly desire we must make a mental picture of that desire and concentrate many hours upon it until it actually manifests: not in a suddenly concrete form appearing from space, so to speak, but in a natural sequence of events which brings the desire quite naturally into fulfilment. Keen to experiment, I sat daily for a certain time, concentrating upon mental pictures until my dreams even became impressed with the brain-working of my waking hours. One night I dreamed that I came into my drawing-room and saw myself sitting at my writing-table, and myself rose and advanced towards me, in every feature, in every detail of form and dress, the replica of what my looking-glass showed me every day. I do not know why the experience should have been so terrifying, but a very agony of fear seized me. I tried to turn and escape from the room, but, in the manner of nightmares, I remained rooted to the floor. And myself came closer, and I knew that if this separated self touched me, the horror would kill or drive me mad. In the agony of the moment I tore myself back from sleep to wakefulness.

The experience was acute enough to warn me of possible folly in continuing experiments in the psychic world, and I discontinued the practice of intense concentration.

The other dream was black with a yet deeper terror, and a physical pain far greater than any I have ever experienced when awake. As I have said, it first visited me when I was about ten years old. I dreamed that I was grown up and that a dance was being given in our home. I saw my brothers and sisters, also grown up, my parents, many friends and some strangers. Amongst the latter was a heavily built man, with a large unkempt head rather sunk in his shoulders, and who sat alone on a sofa,

not once joining in the dances. A moment came when supper was announced and everyone left the room save this man, who remained seated. I see myself now, as I saw myself in that dream, dressed in a pale blue silk dress such as my mother actually wore in those days, approaching the man and asking him to join the rest of our guests at supper. He did not answer. He looked at me without speaking and then slowly slid off the sofa and advanced towards me, crawling upon all fours. Children suffer from what are called "night-terrors." This may have been one. The experience has proved to me that age has nothing to do with certain proportions. I suffered terror in that dream as a grown-up. There was no diminution proportionate to a mere child's capacity for feeling. I knew that the heavy, shambling form now crawling towards me was unspeakably evil, and I turned to fly. But my limbs were laden. Most people know the horror of the nightmare which prevents movement. If I could get into the hall, I should be safe because the supper-room was next to the dancing-room and the door was open. Terror flogged me, yet I could scarcely move, and terror choked the cry in my throat. And the Thing was very close. Yet somehow I did get into the hall, to the open door of the supper-room. *It was empty.* In all the house, no one but myself and the shambling, heavy, unkempt silent Thing. I think it was his silence which deepened my fear. I tried to run to the stairs. As I reached the first step, the figure behind lurched to its feet and moved more quickly. A hand seized me. I uttered a shriek, and woke, sobbing and shaking under the influence of the awful strain I had been through.

This same dream haunted my childhood intermittently. I think it culminated some two years ago in the following manner.

One night I dreamed that I walked along a garden path in complete solitude. A bend of the path revealed at some yards ahead a bench, and on it a man sitting. The sight of him filled me with sudden terror. He radiated evil—and I was alone. I gazed about me in desperation. Not a soul in sight. I must face this horror unaided. That awful sense of helplessness which assails us in dream-life forbade my retreat. A force greater than myself drew me on. All the terror and the horror in the world focused in my being as I went forward. When I reached the bench, the man lifted his head and looked at me. What a face! White, fat, evil, with black hair crowning it, and a black beard fringing the heavy cheeks and chin.

He looked at me!

Why are one's feelings so intensified in dreams? He looked at me, and in that moment I felt my very soul withering. I passed him—two yards, three yards, ten yards. Then I looked over my shoulder and he was following me, not walking upright, but in a crouching, leaping way upon all fours, like some ungainly beast. And in my dream I remembered that similar dream of my childhood.

I shrieked aloud, as the man sprang. He caught me in a grip of steel, laughed in my face and then began pressing his thumb upon my back, just over the place where the left kidney lies.

Who can describe pain! What meaning does the word "agony" convey, save to those who have felt it? How does it feel to have a red-hot knife pressing upon an open wound! Pain! Nothing in all the world but pain! No longer any consciousness of a body, no longer any selfhood. Only pain, a weight, a pressure, the whole world one vast throb of pain concentrated into me.

And the terrible face of my torturer and the horror, and the pain and again the horror! Those awful relentless fingers pressing the agony into my back. And then my sudden swift cry to him. "You also are a Son of God," my last scream, and then merciful release as I slid back into wakefulness.

I lay in bed, drenched with perspiration and shaking all over, but without a vestige of pain. When the shock had passed, I laid a cautious hand upon the place where I had suffered in sleep. My first thought was that I must be very ill and that my dream had been caused by acute suffering in the body. That being so, I should feel it now. But not only was there entire absence of pain in the body, there was no tenderness to the touch, not even to the deep pressure I ventured to apply. Then I searched the bed for any hard substance which might inadvertently have found its way there for me to lie upon. There was nothing. I leave the explanation to the dream experts and to the common sense of the doctors. Yet I ask myself, if physical disorder were alone the cause, why was it expressed by such an evil agent? Did that figure of dreadful menace spring even as a hidden force of sin from the subconscious mind, cleave its way to the surface to be destroyed by the frenzied utterance of those strange words? Are we not indeed creatures of greater interest than we imagine? Who amongst us has plumbed to the depth of his being? Who has dared the adventure?—However, the puzzle is offered equally to doctor and to psycho-analyst. As I have said in the beginning of this article, I am not psychic.

The dreams may partake of such nature, but I hold no definite opinion, because I do not know. And my conviction of the fact that life is eternal, without beginning and without end, is not dependent upon the truth of spiritualism and the appearance of personalities from the other side. It is when I come to Spiritual Healing that I tread on firm ground, because I then speak of what I do know.

Spiritual Healing is a fact. It is natural. The only miracle about it lies in its upsetting of preconceived opinion. At present, the majority of people practising it are aware of being but children in knowledge, but they remember the history of the railway, the motor-car and aeroplanes, to name some of the more popular examples of development, and they go forward in steady faith.

I will tell quite plainly and without giving any explanation some instances of personal proof of its power. The secret lies in a change of the point of view and a readjustment of values.

Sea-sickness, for instance, has lost its terror. The strangle-hold was broken for the first time ten years ago in a rough journey to Egypt. I remember, in the joyful insolence of new-found liberty, proffering counsel to a very sick woman, but she would have none of it. "They told me at home to make pictures of myself walking through green fields and that I should be all right," she moaned. "And it's no use." "The *sea* is green," I said heartlessly, and then would have shown her a better way, but she refused, disbelieving, so I left her. Since then I have wondered how I should be in a really heavy sea. I discovered the answer this year in the Bay of Biscay in one of the worst storms known for twenty years. Beyond a slight giddiness which made keeping my berth preferable to getting up, and a disinclination to eat much, I suffered not at all. On the return journey, although the seas were not mountainous as before, we had four days of very rough weather which upset a large proportion of the passengers, but which I enjoyed thoroughly, being up and about each day with an increased appetite.

One of the most remarkable experiences occurred in India. An acute attack of dysentery was prostrating me. It lasted twelve hours and continued with a vigour that seemed to ignore all efforts to apply spiritual treatment. I remember that more bitter than the pain and general illness lurked a presage of disappointment. One had perceived vistas of new power and new interest in life, and I could not bear to think that they were false and that limitation was indeed the yoke set upon the neck.

Fourteen people were coming to dinner that same evening, and I could scarcely crawl into my dressing-room at seven o'clock. Then I remember making a certain prayer, but to this day I can never remember anything of dressing or receiving my guests. Everything on that evening was a blank—and has so remained, from the moment of my prayer to the middle of dinner, when I found myself eating and drinking and laughing with my friends. I had eaten every course and was drinking champagne, and quite suddenly it flashed upon me that I had been ill. Memory seemed forced to make an effort to recall the fact, so obliterated had it become by the consciousness of health.

I could give many other instances equally wonderful, but no one is believed for much talking, neither do I want to make converts. I only feel that I want to share the good news, and if anyone is interested these two facts will be as stimulating as two thousand. Moreover, let anyone make the proof for himself, then stories of other achievements become merely interesting and no longer necessary.

Spiritual Healing applies to circumstance, to poverty, to unhappiness as well as to physical health. It works miracles, opens doors, achieves the heart's desire. I could tell many stories of success, of apparently insuperable difficulties melting like snow. I could tell of deadly fear giving place to perfect peace. In short, I could point the way to a new world.

The formula!

"Know thyself."

"With all thy getting, get understanding."

A caution.

Do not invite disappointment by rushing blindfold into the marsh of super-enthusiasm.

Between the past of sorrow and the future of achievement lies the present of experience.

"He that believeth will not make haste."

THE MATHEMATICS OF THE SEPHER YETZIRAH

By H. STANLEY REDGROVE, B.Sc., A.I.C., F.C.S.

AS readers of the OCCULT REVIEW are aware, a new and excellent translation of the *Sepher Yetzirah* by Mr. Knut Stenring has recently been published, under the able editorship of Mr. A. E. Waite,* and in consequence an increased interest on the part of students of Occultism in this extraordinary work—though it is one which has always fascinated and attracted them—may be anticipated. The time seems opportune, therefore, for offering some considerations and conclusions touching one aspect of the subject matter of the *Sepher Yetzirah* which I think will be of assistance to the student in his endeavour to unravel the riddles that this book offers.

Naturally, in a work which opens by the declaration that God "created His Universe by the three forms of expression: Numbers, Letters and Words," the occurrence of various numbers is no matter for surprise. The point I wish to make plain in this contribution to the subject is that these numbers are significant, and that certain of the more important of them can be arrived at by a particular mathematical calculus known as the Theory of Permutations and Combinations. Whether the author of the book—whoever he may have been, and I am not prepared to pledge myself to Mr. Stenring's attribution of the authorship to Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph—was acquainted with this particular calculus I cannot say, since the numbers in question could also have been obtained by the more laborious process of writing out all the permutations or combinations involved and totalling them up. But whatever method he adopted, the fact must be placed to his credit, as has not always been done, that his work was accurately carried out. Indeed, commentators on the *Sepher Yetzirah* have not dealt at all satisfactorily with the underlying mathematics of the book. In Westcott's translation,† for

* *The Book of Formation* (*Sepher Yetzirah*). By Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph. Translated from the Hebrew, with Annotations, by Knut Stenring. . . . With an Introduction by Arthur Edward Waite. Price 6*s*. net. (London: Messrs. Wm. Rider & Son, Ltd. 1923.)

† *Sepher Yetzirah: The Book of Formation.* Translated from the Hebrew by William Wynn Westcott, M.B., J.P. Third edition, revised throughout (London, 1911).

example, the following comment is made concerning the "231 Gates of Knowledge" mentioned in the text.

"The number 242 is obtained by adding together all the numbers from 1 to 22. The Hebrew letters can be placed in pairs in 242 positions: thus *ab, ag, ad,* up to *at*; then *ba, bb, bg, bd,* up to *bt,* and so on to *ts, tt*: this is in direct order only, without reversal."

Regarding these remarks, the following observations appear to be necessary: (i) The number 242 is not obtained by adding together all the numbers from 1 to 22. These numbers add up to 253, as the reader may test for himself by simple addition.* (ii) In the examples given of the pairs of Hebrew letters, although it is said "this is in direct order only, without reversal," a case of reversal occurs, namely *ab* and *ba.* In neither case, however, does the number of pairs amount to 242. If reversed pairs are included the total number of pairs is 484. If reversed pairs are excluded, the total is 253. These results hold on the assumption that each letter may be doubled in order to make a pair. In the illustration given this doubling is applied to *b* and *t,* but not to *a,* so that it is not clear what is intended by the commentator. The text of the *Sepher Yetzirah,* however, makes it plain, I think, that doubling is excluded, and in this case, as I shall show in a moment, the total number of pairs, reversed pairs being excluded, is 231,† as correctly given in the text.

"Twenty-two basal letters: He designed them, He formed them, He purified them, He weighed them, and He exchanged them, each one with all; He formed by means of them the whole Creation and everything that should be created (subsequently)." The belief in the magic power of words is not only a notion of great antiquity, but is one very widespread amongst different races of mankind. Amongst many primitive peoples, for example, it is customary for the individual to have two names, one, his real name, being preserved as a great secret, since, if it became known to his enemies, they would, it is thought, be able to work evil magic on him by means of it. And the notion, too, is encountered in early religious systems that the power to control the gods belongs to him who possesses the secret of their true names. The new historical school of Ethnology holds the view

* The sum of the series of whole numbers from 1 up to any number n may be more easily calculated by means of the formula, S (the sum) = $\frac{n}{2}(n + 1)$.

† If reversed pairs are included, the total number is, in this case, doubled and therefore amounts to 462.

that the origin of the belief in the magic power of words, as of many other magical ideas, can be traced to the ancient Egyptian civilization, and accounts for it on the ground that spoken words are amongst those things which issue from the living man and serve to distinguish him from one that is dead, they being therefore "Givers of Life." Whether this theory be valid in its entirety or not I do not propose to discuss: what I wish to do is merely to indicate how easy is the transition from a belief in the magical power of words to the theory that by means of words, and hence of letters, God created the world. "God said, Let there be light: and there was light." Throughout the Creation story as recorded by *The Book of Genesis*, each stage in the creative process is preceded by the spoken command of the Deity. Philosophically the journey is a long one to *The Gospel according to St. John*, but here again we meet with the same fundamental idea in the creative power of the word, although the Word has now become personified as the Second Person in the Trinity. Now, there are special reasons relating to the language rendering the passage easy, and in fact, inevitable, for those whose native tongue is Hebrew, from a belief in the creative power of words to that in the creative power of letters. In the first place, every Hebrew letter is itself a word and hence an idea, so that when we are dealing with combinations of Hebrew letters we are not merely considering the combination of sounds, but also the combination of ideas. In the second place, the Hebrew alphabet is a consonantal one, and consequently any combination or arrangement of Hebrew letters can be pronounced, and is therefore a potential word. If we try to arrange in various ways two or more letters of the Latin alphabet chosen at haphazard, only a relatively few of these would be pronounceable. It would, for example, puzzle even a Pole or a Czech to pronounce "xqb," owing to the fact that at least one vowel letter is necessary in every word.

The Hebrew alphabet, therefore, provides us with twenty-two letters corresponding to twenty-two primary ideas; let us say, endeavouring to follow the thought of the author of *Sepher Yetzirah*, twenty-two elemental spiritual forces. These forces are capable of combination with each other in every conceivable manner: surely they are adequate to account for the multiplicity of the manifested Universe. At first sight the reader may think twenty-two elements far too few in number, but Mathematics shows that, although all the possible arrangements and combinations of twenty-two letters or forces is certainly not infinite, it

is an almost inconceivably great number. I have endeavoured to estimate this number, and I find that the total number of words which might be written by means of twenty-two letters, using each letter not more than once in each word, exceeds three thousand and fifty trillions.* Those of us who have been having business dealings with Germany in recent days have certainly got into the habit of thinking in unusually large numbers; but the immense magnitude of this particular number may perhaps be brought home to us if I point out that the fortunate possessor of three thousand trillion marks, after exchanging them for British currency, would still find himself a multi-millionaire, with an income of over seven million pounds sterling a year, assuming him to be able to invest his capital at 5 per cent. Naturally, if the letters may be repeated, the number of possible words is increased, and if no limit be put upon the number of repetitions and the consequent length of the words, no limit can be assigned to their possible number.

Now I do not suppose that the author of the *Sepher Yetzirah* worked out the total number of words that could be obtained by various combinations and arrangements of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. I do not suppose that he even attained to the approximate figure which I have given above, since calculating even this rough approximation necessitated the use of logarithms, which could not have been known to him. But I do think that he was sufficiently awake to the possibilities to realize that the number was an immense one, and that the theory that all things in the Universe are the product of twenty-two elemental forces would not break down for lack of a sufficiency of possible combinations and arrangements. Moreover, the possibility of dividing these twenty-two letters into three groups containing respectively *three, seven* and *twelve* letters each, gave the theory an additional attractiveness, owing to the symbolic significance of these three numbers and the possibility of equating the various letters to natural phenomena, such as the three elements,† the seven traditional planets, and the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

The student of the *Sepher Yetzirah* will realize, therefore, how considerably his understanding of the book will be facilitated if he has at his command the elements of that mathematical

* The actual number is the integral portion of the expression $e\lfloor 22 - 1$, e being the base of Napierian logarithms and equal approximately to 2·7183.

† Jewish philosophy appears to have recognized only air, fire and water as elements.

calculus which deals with the numbers of possible arrangements and combinations of various dissimilar objects. And seeing that the elements of this particular calculus are extremely simple and can be easily mastered by the tyro without any previous mathematical knowledge, I propose, for the benefit of the non-mathematical reader, to deal with the matter here and now, and to explain the meaning and use of certain simple formulæ.

To commence with we must distinguish between what mathematicians call respectively a "permutation" and a "combination." The difference is that order is significant as concerns the first, but not as concerns the latter. Thus, suppose *a*, *b*, *c* and *d* represent dissimilar objects, then *abc* and *acb* represent different permutations of these objects taken three at a time, but not different combinations; whereas *abc* and *abd* are both different combinations and permutations.

First, to consider permutations :—

1. Suppose we are given a number of dissimilar objects, n, and we are asked to find the total number of permutations that could be made using all the objects each time. Let us suppose for the sake of simplicity that the objects are letters and that we are engaged upon the problem of word-building, any arrangement of letters being considered a word. Now it is clear that we can choose the first letter of our word in n different ways, but having chosen this we are reduced to $n-1$ choices for the second letter, $n-2$ choices for the third letter, and so on down to the last one, in the case of which we have no choice, that is to say can choose in only one way. Now, as it is clear that every possible choice of the first letter can be associated with every possible choice of the second letter, and this with every possible choice of the third letter and so on, the total number of words (or permutations) will be got by multiplying n by the whole number next below it, multiplying the result of this by the whole number next below the last multiplier, and so on down to 1. This quantity is frequently written $\lfloor\underline{n}$, and is called "Factorial n." For example, suppose we are asked to form all the possible three-lettered words from the letters *a*, *b* and *c*, no letter being used twice, then the answer to our problem is $\lfloor\underline{3} = 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 6$, the words being

abc,	*bca*,	*cab*.
acb,	*bac*,	*cba*.

2. The next problem is to find the number of permutations of a number of dissimilar objects when not all of them are taken

at a time. Let us suppose, for example, that we have n dissimilar objects, but that we are to use only r of them for each arrangement, r being any number less than n. A moment's reflection will show us that the solution of this problem is very similar to that of the last one, only instead of multiplying n by $n - 1$, $n - 2$, and so on down to 1, we shall have to stop multiplying after we have multiplied together r terms. In other words, in order to get the same result as before, namely $\lfloor n$, we should have to go on multiplying by $n - r$ more terms, and, these terms being whole numbers starting with $n - r$ and decreasing regularly by ones down to 1, their product is equal to $\lfloor n - r$. The required number of permutations therefore is $\frac{\lfloor n}{\lfloor n - r}$.

For example, suppose we are asked to find the number of possible two-letter words, any arrangement of letters being reckoned as a word, from the four letters a, b, c and d. The answer to the problem is $\frac{\lfloor 4}{\lfloor 4 - 2} = \frac{\lfloor 4}{\lfloor 2} = \frac{4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1}{2 \times 1} = 12$; the words being

ab,	bc,	cd,	da,
ac,	bd,	ca,	db,
ad,	ba,	cb,	dc.

Finally, let us see if we can now solve the problem of finding the number of combinations of n dissimilar objects taken r at a time,* r being a number less than n. Each combination, since order is immaterial as concerns combinations, is capable of yielding several permutations, and, in fact, as each combination contains r dissimilar objects, each is capable of yielding $\lfloor r$ permutations. The required number of combinations, therefore, multiplied by $\lfloor r$ is equal to the number of permutations of n things taken r at a time, that is to say, $\frac{\lfloor n}{\lfloor n - r}$. In other words, this quantity divided by $\lfloor r$ is equal to the required number of combinations. This latter number, therefore, is equal to $\frac{\lfloor n}{\lfloor n - r \times \lfloor r}$.

For example, suppose we were asked to find the number of combinations of the four letters a, b, c, d, taken two at a time. The

* It will be noticed, of course, that the number of combinations of n dissimilar objects taken n at a time is 1.

answer is $\frac{\lfloor 4}{\lfloor 4-2 \times \lfloor 2} = \frac{\lfloor 4}{\lfloor 2 \times \lfloor 2} = \frac{4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1}{2 \times 1 \times 2 \times 1} = 6,$

the combinations being

ab, *bc*, *cd*.
ac, *bd*,
ad.

The three formulæ I have developed above may seem rather unnecessary when dealing with such simple problems as I have so far given in illustration of their application; but they are extremely useful when we have to handle a large number of objects, such as, for example, the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

"How," it is asked in the *Sepher Yetzirah*, "did God combine, weigh and exchange the letters?" The answer is provided: "A with all and all with A; B with all and all with B; G with all and all with G; and all of them turned round. Hence they come forth through two hundred and thirty-one gates, and thus it comes about that the whole Creation and all things proceed from one combination of letters." The only possible obscurity about the meaning of this is as to whether reversed pairs of letters are to be reckoned or not, that is to say, whether permutations or combinations are intended; but the idea appears to be that when we have got the key it is to be read both forwards and backwards, and hence that it is only different combinations which are to be considered. The number 231 makes this perfectly clear. This number is equal to the number of combinations of twenty-two things taken two at a time, as will be clear by an application of the above formula.

Number of combinations of 22 dissimilar objects taken two at a time

$$= \frac{\lfloor 22}{\lfloor 22-2 \times \lfloor 2} = \frac{\lfloor 22}{\lfloor 20 \times \lfloor 2} = \frac{22 \times 21}{2 \times 1} = 11 \times 21 = 231.$$

Thus the number 231 is the number of pairs that may be made from the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, no letter being paired with itself and pairs in reversed order being excluded, as correctly shown in the diagram appended to Knut Stenring's translation of the *Sepher Yetzirah*. These 231 pairs symbolize, as it were, the first act of creation after that of the primary twenty-two forces themselves. They represent the first effect of the mutual operation of these forces on each other and

the gates, so to speak, whereby they enter into manifestation. The number 231 is also, and the reason for this will be clear to the reader if he ponders it a moment, the sum of all the whole numbers up to and including 21.

In the chapter of the *Sepher Yetzirah* dealing with the seven double letters, the question is asked and answered, " How did God fuse these letters together ? " the reply being, " Two stones build two houses, three stones build six houses, four stones build twenty-four houses, five stones build one hundred and twenty houses, six stones build seven hundred and twenty houses, seven stones build five thousand and forty houses. Make a beginning herefrom and calculate further what the mouth cannot pronounce and what the ear cannot hear." In his commentary on this passage Dr. Wynn Westcott writes : " These numbers have been a source of difference between the editors and copyists, hardly any two editors concurring. I have given the numbers arising from continual multiplication of the product by each succeeding unit from one to seven." These numbers are undoubtedly the correct ones, and are those also given, as in the quotation above, by Mr. Knut Stenring. But Dr. Westcott does not explain why one should take the numbers arising from continual multiplication in the way he adopts, nor does Mr. Stenring enlighten us as to their significance. From what we have already seen, however, the meaning of them is obvious. The numbers are the " factorials " respectively of the numbers two to seven, and represent the number of permutations that can be got by taking respectively two, three, four and so on up to seven of the letters all at a time. The closing sentence of the passage I have quoted from the *Sepher Yetzirah* is significant. As I have said, I have endeavoured to make the computation, and we have seen where it leads.

There are other verses in the *Sepher Yetzirah* which the mathematical theory of permutations and combinations is capable of enlightening. For example, the closing verse of the first chapter deals with the six permutations of the three letters of the Ineffable Name of God taken all at a time. But I have given the student the key : he must use it for himself.

THE ISTRIAN BARQUE

By ALBERT BUHRER

THE holy Virgin goes with me,
To Her I pledge a rover's vow,
Her form is painted on my prow,
The sweet Madonna of the sea.

And I have eyes to find my way
When the Sirocco blinds my course;
Nor do I fear bold Bora's force:
The Virgin watches night and day.

My hull was carven from a tree
That flourished in a mountain glen,
Made holy by the prayers of men
And their profound humility.

My years are few, for even now
My beams can feel the throb of Spring,
And hear the phantom blackbird sing
Upon the erstwhile leafy bough.

I have two loves, nor can decide
The one I love with better zest,
Venice doth draw me to her breast,
And Pola, too, would be my bride.

When Pola wins me with her art,
And lauds me with a lover's praise,
I think of Venice and her ways
And must set sail to storm her heart.

But sleeping on Venetian quays,
I dream of Istrian delights,
Then Pola witchingly invites
My vagrant soul across the seas.

BELIEF *versus* KNOWLEDGE

AN ESSAY BY FRATER ACHAD

IT has been written that " in all the world there are only two kinds of people—those who know, and those who do not know ; and this knowledge is the thing which matters." However sweeping this statement may appear, it is little short of truth from the standpoint of religion in its real sense.

Knowledge has been defined as " a clear perception of a truth or fact, erudition ; skill from practice." Also " to know, viz., to perceive with certainty, to understand clearly, to have experience of."

On the other hand, belief is an " assent to anything proposed or declared, and its acceptance as fact by reason of the authority from whence it proceeds, apart from personal knowledge ; faith, the whole body of tenets held by any faith, a creed, a conviction."

In regard to religion it will doubtless at once be evident that a great deal could be said on the subject of belief, it being, one might almost say, the principle on which most, if not all, exoteric religions are based. It will also be evident, though perhaps in a lesser degree, that all these various religious beliefs, held by masses of people in all lands, must have arisen in the beginning out of the personal experience of a few who had somehow obtained a direct perception or knowledge of certain facts in regard to " the Absolute," " God," or at any rate some Being or Beings of a distinctly higher order than themselves, and that these revelations were then given out by them to others, coloured to a certain extent by their own personality, and limited by the horizon of their own intellectual sphere. To what extent these " revelations " or " inspirations " can be relied upon, and whether it is better to accept them as taught or to rely upon our own experience, are matters I shall endeavour to treat of in this brief essay.

The first thing that strikes one in attempting to deal with the subject—at any rate in the writer's own experience—is how little we really know and how rapidly, if unchecked, our beliefs tend to accumulate.

The beliefs accepted in our early childhood undoubtedly

have a strong influence upon our minds, especially in early life, but apart from these, as soon as we begin to look around us and attempt to think for ourselves, fresh beliefs rapidly creep in upon us. These gain strength, and to some extent, often to a great extent, modify our ideas and even dominate our actions.

Those who have a natural aptitude and desire for religion soon begin to read books and possibly to attend lectures on the subject. Something that one has heard or read strikes us as being original and fascinating; it seems to us this new idea *must* be true, and almost unconsciously we find ourselves believing it.

If the matter were allowed to rest there until we found time and inclination to go over these new ideas, carefully comparing them and trying to unite their utmost divergencies so as to make them conform more or less with our own experience and outlook on life, well and good. But if, as is very liable to be the case, these new theories are lightly discussed and then forgotten for a time, there seems to be a tendency, upon the subject re-arising or again being presented to us at some later period, for these ideas to be awakened more or less suddenly and for us to think " Oh, I *know* about that," while losing sight of the fact that it is not actual knowledge, but a bare belief that has lain dormant in our subconscious minds.

I think that anyone who has taken the trouble to examine his, or her, own mind in regard to their worldly knowledge on any matter, will agree that this knowledge is entirely based on experience, but when we turn our attention to religion, we immediately feel either that actual knowledge is lacking or that it is confined to certain instances of an entirely different nature from any other experience we have had, so that these " illuminations " stand out as landmarks along the path, having a marked effect upon the outlook and conduct of those who have partaken of them.

To make my meaning clearer, I will quote an instance from the life of Charles Kingsley which will give a good general idea of one of the earlier mystic states. He writes: " When I walk in the fields, I am oppressed now and then with an innate feeling that everything I see has a meaning if I could but understand it. And this feeling of being surrounded with truths which I cannot grasp amounts to indescribable awe sometimes. . . . Have you not felt that your real soul was imperceptible to your mental vision, except in a few hallowed moments ? "

A much more extreme state of mystical consciousness is

described by J. A. Symonds; and probably more persons than we suspect could give parallels to it from their own experience. "Suddenly," he writes, "at church, or in company, or when I am reading, and always, I think, when my muscles were at rest, I felt the approach of the mood. Irresistibly it took possession of my mind and will, lasted what seemed an eternity, and disappeared in a series of rapid sensations which resembled the awakening from anæsthetic influence. One reason why I disliked this kind of trance was that I could not describe it to myself. I cannot even now find words to render it intelligible. It consisted in a gradual but swiftly progressive obliteration of space, time, sensation, and the multitudinous factors of experience which seem to qualify what we are pleased to call ourself. In proportion as these conditions of ordinary consciousness were subtracted, the sense of an underlying or essential consciousness acquired intensity. At last nothing remained but a pure, absolute, abstract self. The universe became without form and void of content. But self persisted, formidable in its vivid keenness, feeling the most poignant doubt about reality, ready, as it seemed, to find existence break, as breaks a bubble around it. And what then? The apprehension of a coming dissolution, the grim conviction that this state was the last state of the conscious self, the sense that I had followed the last thread of being to the verge of the abyss, and had arrived at demonstration of eternal Maya or illusion, stirred, or seemed to stir, me up again. The return to ordinary conditions of sentient existence began by my first recovering the power of touch, and then by the gradual though rapid influx of familiar and diurnal interests. At last I felt myself once more a human being; and though the riddle of what is meant by life remained unsolved, I was thankful for this return from the abyss—this deliverance from so awful an initiation into the mysteries of scepticism."

"This trance recurred with diminishing frequency until I reached the age of twenty-eight. It served to impress upon my growing nature the phantasmal unreality of all the circumstances which contribute to a merely phenomenal consciousness. Often have I asked myself with anguish, on waking from that formless state of denuded, keenly sentient being, which is the unreality?—the trance of fiery, vacant, apprehensive, sceptical self from which I issue, or these surrounding phenomena and habits which veil that inner self and build a self of flesh-and-blood conventionality? Again, are men the factors of some

dream, the dreamlike unsubstantiality of which they comprehend at such eventful moments? What would happen if the final stage of the trance were reached?"

These instances, taken from Professor William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*—which, by the way, is an excellent book to study if you are interested along these lines—explain, much better than I could, the difference between personal experience of a religious nature and the ordinary run of religious beliefs. They are, however, of the sporadic type, and are, after all, rather elementary. Much more valuable are the experiences to be gained by a definite scientific training towards that end.

In India, as you all know, training in this mystical insight has been known from the earliest times under the name of Yoga. Yoga means the experimental union of the individual with the divine. It is based on persevering exercise; and the diet, posture, breathing, intellectual concentration and moral discipline vary slightly in the different systems which teach it. The Yogi, or disciple, who has by these means overcome the obstructions of the lower nature sufficiently, enters into the condition called *samadhi*, and "comes face to face with facts which no instinct or reason can ever know." "He learns," writes Swami Vivekananda, "that the mind itself has a higher state of existence, beyond reason, a superconscious state, and that when the mind gets to that higher state, then this knowledge beyond reasoning comes. All the different steps in Yoga are intended to bring us scientifically to the superconscious state or *samadhi*. . . . Just as unconscious work is beneath consciousness, so there is another work which is above consciousness, and which, also, is not accompanied with the feeling of egoism. . . . There is no feeling of I, and yet the mind works, desireless, free from restlessness, objectless, bodiless. Then the truth shines in its full effulgence, and we know ourselves—for *samadhi* lies potential in us all—for what we truly are, free, immortal, omnipotent, loosed from the finite and its contrasts of good and evil altogether, and identical with the Atman or Universal Soul."

The Vedantists say that one may stumble into superconsciousness sporadically, without previous discipline, but it is then impure. Their test of its purity is empirical, its fruits must be good for life.

The Yogi, however, is not the only being who has practised along these lines and obtained these results. Let me quote one instance from the Christian mystic, St. John of the Cross,

who thus describes the condition called " Union of Love " which, he says, is reached by " dark contemplation."

" In this the Deity compenetrates the soul, but in such a hidden way that the soul finds no terms, no means, no comparison whereby to render the sublimity of the wisdom and the delicacy of the spiritual feeling with which she is filled. . . . We receive this mystical knowledge of God clothed in none of the sensible representations which our mind makes use of in other circumstances. Accordingly in this knowledge, since the senses and the imagination are not employed, we get neither form nor impression, nor can we give any account or furnish any likeness, although the mysterious and sweet-tasting wisdom comes home so clearly to the inmost parts of our soul. Fancy a man seeing a certain kind of thing for the first time in his life. He can understand it, use it, enjoy it, but he cannot apply a name to it, nor communicate any idea of it even though all the while it be a mere thing of sense. How much greater will be his powerlessness when it goes beyond the senses ! This is the peculiarity of the divine language. The more infused, intimate, spiritual and supersensible it is, the more does it exceed the senses, both inner and outer, and impose silence upon them. . . . The soul then feels as if placed in a vast and profound solitude, to which no created thing has access, in an immense and boundless desert the more delicious the more solitary it is. There, in this abyss of wisdom, the soul grows by what it drinks in from the wellsprings of the comprehension of love . . . and recognizes, however sublime and learned may be the terms we employ, how utterly vile, insignificant and improper they are, when we seek to discourse of divine things by their means."

The incommunicableness of this transport is the keynote of all mysticism, and this accounts to a great extent for the absolute silence so often kept on the subject, but another reason for silence is that the being's whole outlook on life has become changed by these experiences.

The point I particularly wish to emphasize is that we need not, and should not, be content with mere intellectual beliefs when the way lies open for us to obtain actual knowledge of these states if we will only take the necessary trouble ; also that the first step towards that end is to obtain knowledge of ourselves.

" Man, know thyself, and thou shalt know thy God " ; " Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven (which is within you), and all these things shall be added unto you," are sayings so familiar that they have perhaps lost some of their deeper significance

by constant repetition. I will therefore quote one or two less known quotations from the Upanishads, bearing upon the knowledge of the higher self.

Speaking of the Absolute, the *Atmabodha* says: "That should be known as Brahman, which, beyond the gaining thereof there remains nothing to gain; beyond the bliss thereof there remains no possibility of bliss; beyond the sight thereof there remains nothing to see; beyond becoming which there remains nothing to become; beyond knowing which there remains nothing to know."

And again, in the *Kenopanishad* we read:

"That which is not spoken in speech, but that whereby all speech is spoken. That which does not think in the mind, but that whereby the mind proceeds to think. That which does not perceive with the eye, but that whereby the eye receives its sight. That which does not hear with the ear, but that whereby the ear hears. That which does not breathe the breath of life, but that whereby life itself is kept up. Know thou that THAT is the absolute, not this that people worship."

Again: "If thou objectest 'how should I grasp this?' Pray do not grasp it; for the *residuum*, after all grasping is at an end, is none other than thy real self." (*Panchadasi.*)

"Where is the man who doubts the fact of his own existence? If such a one be found, he should be told that he himself, who thus doubts, is the self he denies." (*Svatmanirupana.*)

"Setting aside everything which becomes the object of knowledge in this world, there yet remains a *residuum*, the real essence of knowledge. The knowledge that this is the real self is true knowledge of the self."

Speaking of the Way, the *Yogavasishtha* says:—

"He continually sees the real self, who studies to unify philosophy, and the teacher's explanation, with the facts of his own consciousness."

"Forms of religion but forge so many bonds round the individual; spiritual consciousness alone disperses them." (*Mahabharata.*)

I think the above quotations will suffice to bring before your minds the fact that a little real knowledge is better than a great deal of belief. Some might perhaps reply that belief is *necessary* in order to assimilate the very instances I have quoted in favour of knowledge, but this I am not ready to admit.

I say that every one has the opportunity to prove these things, and that the ability to do so lies already within you,

not in the fact that you believe or disbelieve a single instance herein set forth. If you had never heard of a similar instance, but had voluntarily purified your minds and looked within yourselves in search of knowledge, the result would have been very much the same. But this I will also say: the search requires hard work, and those who are afraid of hard work had better perhaps remain content with their beliefs.

But to those who are unafraid, who are burning with the desire to help others, and who desire the definite knowledge which is essential before that help can be intelligently given (or withheld), I say that knowledge is already a part of yourselves; therefore let your effort be not so much to obtain as to *become* knowledge.

But how is this to be accomplished? This is a very natural question for you to ask. It is useless to tell you to "become knowledge" if you don't know how to accomplish this for yourselves.

This at once brings us to the "Way" or "Path," which lies within rather than without. The time has come when man, having vainly sought among the externals of life and failed to realize the ideal, turns again and retraces his steps towards the source from whence he came. Only when he does this consciously does he find the true entrance to the path. Then will begin for him that great struggle, which brings with it an ever-increasing joy.

Having once realized that the goal lies within and not without, his whole attitude must become changed. It is no longer a question of adding to his store, but rather of getting rid of or subduing all that is not essential to his one purpose.

He must become purified bodily and spiritually if he would attain the priceless "union" which will crown his labours. This cannot be accomplished at once, but without a very definite effort it cannot be done at all. The first thing then is a definite effort in the *right direction.*

But what is the right direction? To this I would reply that every man and every woman should strive to formulate and to unite their consciousness more and more with their own highest ideal. Whether this ideal be called the Christ, the Buddha, the Higher Self, the True Will, or whether we give it no name, matters little except to the individual. But such an ideal lies within each one of us, covered, it may be, with sheath after sheath of non-essential ideas. The important point is that we should formulate this ideal, however vaguely at first, and then work—

work so that every action we perform, however humble, may shadow forth the ideal to which we desire to become united.

More and more we must learn to control our lower personalities and conform to our higher ideas. More and more shall we cease to care for the fruit of our actions as long as the "work" itself is rightly done. Gradually we shall feel in closer touch with the life of all around us, and with the ideal within.

Another very important thing is that we should spend a few minutes every day in meditation upon our ideal. At such times we should endeavour to free our minds from all that is not according to that ideal. We should try to think as our ideal would think, while letting our little worries slip away from us for the time being.

Then, as we become more advanced, we may, during these meditations, begin to control the thinking principle itself, for the essence of the Eastern teaching lies in the perfect control, even the entire suppression, of the thinking principle. Nothing that can be thought is true. That alone is true which is above all thought as we understand it.

Gradually, step by step, we shall accomplish this difficult task, until the waves of thought in our minds are stilled, and the mind itself becomes clear and transparent, a fit reflector of the Highest, just as the sun may be seen reflected in a clear lake. Then, and then alone, will true knowledge arise. Then will the Voice of the Silence tell us that having reaped we must sow. Then shall we also learn to sow rightly, but not till then, as it is written in "Light on the Path." It is impossible to help others till you have obtained some *certainty* of your own.

This must be the certainty of knowledge and not of belief, and even if the attainment of knowledge is not the final goal (for it still implies duality, viz., a knower and a thing known)—and some day, perhaps, this too must be transcended—still until then let us work, let us will to know, let us forget ourselves in our striving to become that greater self which is all Knowledge, so that for each of us the day may dawn when, wrapped in adoration, we shall LOVE and WORSHIP, "knowing as we are known."

THE STRANGE CASE OF OSCAR WILDE

By G. D. CUMMINS

LAST summer, in little less than two months about twenty thousand words were communicated through automatic writing, and also by means of the ouija board, from what purported to be the spirit of Oscar Wilde. These messages were received by Mrs. Travers Smith and by a Mr. V., who worked together, and also by Mrs. Travers Smith alone. I was present at all save two of the numerous sittings held in Chelsea for this purpose, and so have had the unique opportunity of observing the two mediums when they worked together, and of observing Mrs. Travers Smith when messages were spelt out through her hand at the ouija board. In the latter case I was the recorder.

During the last eight years I have studied psychical phenomena in conjunction with Mrs. Travers Smith, one of my objects being to disprove the dogma of survival as postulated by the spiritualists. It seemed to me they knew too little to form any theory, to lay down any rule; that, in short, it was a time for experiments, not a time for conclusions. Mrs. Travers Smith was the medium, who received a message from Sir Hugh Lane on the night the *Lusitania* was sunk, and a message—about three sentences—from William Stead on the night the *Titanic* went down. In neither case was she aware that these individuals were on board these liners. But telepathy from the living might have accounted for the messages, as the news at the time of the séance was probably arriving in the newspaper offices.

In the course of our research we have met with other instances even more arresting but still incomplete in their evidence of survival. And it was not until last summer that my faith in scepticism, in a natural or human source for the phenomena, was rudely shaken. For the first time in the course of a fairly wide experience of psychical research, I felt that, here in this case, the explanation that the personality of Oscar Wilde survived and was communicating seemed more probable and plausible than that it was due to telepathy, cryptesthesia, subconscious impersonation, or any other explanation advanced by the sceptic. I knew one medium intimately, and I had a slight acquaintance with the

other. Given the past histories of these two mediums, given the extent of their acquaintanceship with Wilde's works, given the conditions under which the communications were received, the theory of subconscious impersonation seemed altogether too miraculous to be entertained. It postulated mental powers which I could not bring myself to attribute to either.

Here was the complete presentation of a personality of a peculiarly original kind, the reproduction of a characteristic handwriting, of a very distinct style, and the relation of facts unknown to the sitters. It was a rare, and possibly unique, achievement in psychical research.

There have been cases in which the handwriting of a deceased person has been correctly reproduced by a medium; but, then, there has either been failure in the reconstruction of the personality of the deceased or failure to obtain facts unknown to the mediums and other persons present.

Oscar Wilde objected to " descending into the dull abyss of facts," but when he condescended to do so, they dealt with details in his life which in several instances could not conceivably have been known to the mediums. The latter knew very little about Wilde, were not interested in him, and had not for many years read any of his works. At the first sitting he gave the correct name of the street in which he had lived in Chelsea. This was not consciously known by either Mrs. Travers Smith or Mr. V. But it is possible that at some time in their lives they may have read this fact in a newspaper or a book and it may have sunk into their subconscious mind, where, we are told, the memory of everything that ever happened to us is stored.

At a later sitting Wilde alluded to a summer which he spent in his childhood at a farm near Dublin. He wrote: " One of my earliest recollections is of a little farm in Ireland at Mc—Cree—Cree, no, that's not the name, Glencree . . . where we stayed with Willie and Iso . . . and there was a good old man who used to look after our lessons . . . a priest . . . Father Prid, Prid, Prideau." This message came through double mediumship, i.e. Mrs. Travers Smith's hand rested on Mr. V.'s when the message was written in a facsimile of Wilde's writing. Mr. V. had never been in Ireland, and knew very little about the country; Mrs. Travers Smith knew that about ten miles from Dublin, far up in the mountains, there was a reformatory school for boys—in Glencree valley. Nobody present at the séance knew who " Iso " was. Mrs. Travers Smith had heard of " Willie," Wilde's brother. We learnt subsequently that Oscar had a sister, to whom he was

much attached, called Isola, who died when she was eight years old.

How were we to verify the statement that Oscar Wilde had stayed in early childhood in the valley of Glencree and had been taught by an old priest named Father Prideau ? This episode, if it had occurred, had taken place so long ago there was probably hardly anyone living who was aware of it, or who could furnish us with information about it. From my knowledge of Dublin and its surroundings, I felt it was quite likely that the Wildes had spent a summer at Glencree when Oscar was a boy ; but that was mere supposition. The influence communicating had chosen the form of his evidence wisely ; there seemed at first no possibility of any verification.

Eventually Mrs. Travers Smith wrote to the Glencree reformatory and inquired whether, about sixty years ago, a priest named Father Prideau had been there. " Yes," the present master of the school replied. Sixty years ago Father Prideau Fox held the position he (the master) now fills.

It seems to me that here is a piece of evidence which cannot be explained away by telepathy. It is too far-fetched to suggest that someone, at the time Mrs. Travers Smith held this sitting, was thinking of a priest who had lived in a wild, remote valley in Ireland sixty years ago, was thinking so vehemently of Father Prideau as a good old man who used to look after Oscar Wilde's lessons in his early childhood, that the thought had forced its way to the consciousness of two mediums one hot, drowsy July afternoon when the temperature was eighty-four in the shade. It is easier to believe that Oscar Wilde was communicating a memory of his early life which had been lost to the world. Any human or natural explanation of this piece of evidence would imply such miraculous powers of mind on the part of the two mediums.

On this particular July afternoon Wilde also wrote : " I was M. Sebastian *Melnotte* in those days—Sebastian in memory of the dreadful arrows, *Melmoth,* after an ancestor of mine." Neither Mr. V. nor Mrs. Travers Smith knew what name Wilde had taken after he left prison. The name Mel*m*oth was soon confirmed as being correct. The incorrect spelling of the name in the first instance was difficult to explain. It was possible, of course, that the mediums had seen the word Melmoth somewhere and memorized it incorrectly. A little later a paragraph appeared in *The Times* referring to a sale of some of Oscar Wilde's letters. The first batch, written after he had left prison, were signed

"Mel*m*oth." In a subsequent letter he asked that he should be addressed as "M. Sebastian Mel*n*otte"—"a fantastic name which I shall explain later," he adds.

There are details in connection with notable persons—some of an amusing kind—narrated by Oscar in the script which have yet to be investigated. An episode connected with John Ruskin, narrated in the script and unknown to the mediums, has subsequently been proved to be correct. It would be interesting to know whether there were any truth in a statement made about Pater. "I would like the world to know that the story of Pater wanting to kiss my hand was, after all, only a charming exaggeration. Pater admired me immensely, but he was far too sensible to do that. As an artist, of course, I had a perfect right to invent anything I liked."

It is impossible to deal adequately with the abundance of material in a short article when the script consists of hundreds of foolscap pages covered with a facsimile of Wilde's distinctive handwriting, and when it includes the long communications received by Mrs. Travers Smith alone at the ouija board, amounting in all to at least twenty thousand words. I will quote two further messages purporting to come from Oscar Wilde, received by Mrs. Travers Smith at the ouija board and subsequently traced to an interesting source.

He has, on several occasions, described the twilight region, which he at present inhabits, where he says people can see each other's thoughts; and at one of the earlier sittings, the following message was spelt out through Mrs. Travers Smith's hand: "I like to speak to you because you remind me of the time when I too was a creature hampered by that garment you call a body. I really do not miss it much, because there is a joy in that nakedness which leaves all the thoughts and ideas of the mind, whether foul or fair, open to the public gaze. I feel now as if the extreme reticence of wearing a body was almost indecent. It is far more decent to go about blaring one's loves and hates, blowing them in the faces of those we meet—as it were being so much on the outside that we cannot be said to have an inside. My dear lady, what will it be for you to lose your little shape, to have no shape, to be a fluid and merely stream about in such an undecided way that it is like drifting before a heavy tide?" On another evening he wrote: "The shades here are really too tumultuous. They are overcrowded, and we get confused by seeing into each others' thoughts. . . . I see you have made up your mind that I am not a reasonable shade, that I am a kind of capricious ghost who

merely behaves as if he had no reason to guide his mind, which now, without a body to act as pilot, strays about fluid-like, in space."

When Mrs. Travers Smith received these messages, she was unaware of the fact that at a sitting held at the house of André Gide, the French novelist, soon after Wilde's death, he had described his state in the "Beyond" in a very similar manner—as, for instance, "a chaotic confusion of fluid nebulosities, a cloaque of souls."

The handwriting in the script is a strong link in the chain of evidence. It has been compared with letters written by Wilde and with the various specimens of his handwriting reproduced in his bibliography, and it appears to be almost identical, granted the fact that one was probably written with a quill pen, the other with a thick pencil. There are two very marked characteristics in Wilde's MS. and in the automatic script: the occasional, but not invariable, use of a Greek *a* and a Greek *e*, the *a* more frequently than the *e*. The other characteristic is a wide division between portions of the words; such as d -eath, vin -tage. Neither of the mediums had read Wilde's work nor seen his plays for many years, nor had they, so far as they could remember, ever seen his handwriting. But even supposing they had made a study of it, the remarkable rapidity with which it was written would make forgery to my thinking an impossibility. One long message was written at the speed of nearly 800 words in an hour. Is it possible to forge at that rate? For it must be remembered that the handwritings of Mr. V. and Mrs. Travers Smith are totally dissimilar from that of Wilde.

In order to produce the automatic writing, the double mediumship seemed absolutely essential. When Mrs. Travers Smith took her hand off Mr. V.'s, the pencil used to stop dead. Only at one sitting at Mrs. Travers Smith's house, where there was an exceptionally strong circle of psychics present, was Mr. V. able to write alone; and the message that came through on that occasion was very doubtful in style and manner. It was probable that the psychic power of Mr. V. was not sufficiently strong alone to enable him to receive a clear and definite message from the influence purporting to be Oscar Wilde, and that in this particular instance his own subconscious mind coloured the communication.

I have closely observed the two mediums when at work on many occasions, and it seemed to me that when Mrs. Travers Smith's hand rested for some little time on Mr. V.'s, it led to his falling into a condition of slight hypnosis which was favourable,

leading probably to an almost complete control of the mediums' brain for the time being by the communicating influence.

The style of the messages received at the ouija board is of a more conversational nature than that received in automatic writing. The method, of course, is very different. The alphabet lies on a table under a glass, and upon the glass is laid a pointed piece of wood called a traveller. The medium rests her hand on this wood, which points to the various letters in turn, spelling out words with great rapidity. Mrs. Travers Smith has in the past frequently been blindfolded, and coherent messages have still been spelt out at a rapid rate.

Sometimes, even at the ouija board, the style of what purports to be Oscar Wilde becomes florid and over-ornamented, as when he wrote about the influence women had upon him when he was alive :

> Woman was to me a colour, a sound. She gave me all, she gave me first desire, desire gave birth to that mysterious essence which was within me. And from that deeply distilled and perfumed drug my thoughts were born ; and from my thoughts words sprang. Each word I used became a child to me. I loved my words and cherished them in secret. They became so precious they were hidden from the gaze of men until I nurtured them ; and in their fullness I brought them forth as symbols of the woman. . . . [Mrs. T. S.—Were all women the same to you ?] Women came to me like clustered stars. I gathered them as flowers might be culled from a rich garden. All their varied perfumes came to me as an intoxicating draught—not singly, but combined. This twined wreath encircled me through life and made my days both sweet and bitter.

At a séance held on July 13th for automatic writing, he alludes to women in a lighter vein :

> Tell me, dear lady, what are the virtues that are necessary for a happy life ? Tell me in a few words. I don't want to know anything about the vices ! I have no views. I wish I knew. If I did, I should not tell you, since it is always bad advice that is given away. [Mrs. T. S. made a remark here.] I was afraid you were going to say work. Never having done any in my life, I am naturally an authority on it. Ah ! I forget ! I once trundled the barrow for poor old John Ruskin, and in a moment of weakness I almost renounced the great cardinal doctrine of the indignity of labour. But during those few days I learned so much about the *body* of man under Socialism that afterwards I only cared to write about the soul . . . I told people that I never even walked. But that was a pardonable exaggeration. I always walked to bed. Don't talk to me about work, dear lady. It is the last refuge of the mentally unemployed, the occupation of those too dull to dream. To be eternally busy is a sign of low vitality. They who go to the ant to learn her ways always come back antiquated, but seldom wise. And while it may be true that Satan sometimes finds mischief for idle hands to do, even God does not know what to do with the industrious.

So, dear lady, live to do nothing and be happy. Eschew work and be fine. No one should ever do anything. At least, no woman should. The woman who was content merely to *be* was always charming, but the woman who did was often detestable. This is a maxim which might be taken to heart by our modern business girl. Then instead of hunting so diligently for their husbands in dusty offices, they would stay at home and their husbands would come to them.

The reconstruction of personality in the whole content of the script is of great interest, and, to my mind, more convincing as evidence of survival than the giving of certain facts unknown to the mediums. When a message is being spelt out, I feel as if a very pronounced and original personality were conversing, one very different in its characteristics from that of the medium's. The communicator is in turns arrogant, charming, bitter, ironical, and extremely courteous. He is at present communicating a play with a clever intrigue in the Wilde style of the nineties. He writes and rewrites his dialogue and becomes furiously impatient if interrupted, or if his ideas are not instantly understood. We have asked him to modernize the play in treatment and manner, so that it might have a more popular appeal. But this he seems quite unable to do ; he continues to treat it in the Wilde manner, which is now decidedly old-fashioned and out of date.

If sufficient care and time are devoted to the labour, it is fairly easy consciously to parody a certain style ; and it is not impossible to parody Oscar Wilde through the subconscious mind. But can it be done through four different psychic channels ? Mr. V. has obtained messages with two other ladies in double mediumship, and Mrs. Travers Smith by herself has also obtained long communications in the Wilde manner. Of these four individuals, only Mrs. Travers Smith has had any connection with literature. Her father was the late Professor Edward Dowden, the famous Shakespearean scholar. Mr. V. is a mathematician.

The time devoted to such composition is an important factor which must not be disregarded. Recently Mrs. Travers Smith went to a production of " The Importance of Being Earnest," at the Haymarket. In a communication on the ouija board, "Oscar" stated that he had been able to use Mrs. Travers Smith's eyes in order to see his play. He then spelt out a bitter, caustic criticism of the production, and also of the audience, of about fifteen hundred words in length. Persons, who had known Wilde during his lifetime, declared the style of this message to be characteristic of him. I was the recorder ; it came through at the rate of about seventy words a minute, and I was compelled to use shorthand signs in

order to keep pace with it. It may be suggested that it was possible for the medium to compose and memorize this criticism. I was present with her at the performance at the Haymarket; and unless she composed it in her sleep, she would not have had the time necessary for such a composition and for its subsequent memorization. It is a fairly difficult feat to write a comprehensive criticism of a theatrical performance. I should be interested to know if any critic could write one in the Wilde style at the rate of seventy words a minute, in which he would embody ideas opposed to his own preconceived opinions.

As an instance of the ironical temper of the communicator, the following message is of interest. Mrs. Travers remarked: "A legend sprang up concerning Oscar Wilde. It is believed by some that he did not die when he was supposed to have died."

He replied: "Men are ever interested, my dear lady, in the remains of those who have had the audacity to be distinguished, and when added to this, the corpse has the flavour of crime, the carrion are eager to light on it. In my case the corpse was taken from the humble place where it was cast off by my mental portion and conveyed to a retreat where it might decay quietly and in peace. It had none of the gaudy obsequies which would have fitted such as I was. And hence this legend, which had a charm in spite of the fact that I had passed from the public gaze long before this dissolution took place. It is really delightful to think that when one has striven and conquered London—for I conquered London partly through my supposed crime—it is delightful to think that after the carcase has been conveyed to its modest hole, a legend is woven round its decaying particles. You, I am sure, give me credit for the fact that I really accomplished the feat of dying when I was supposed to die. I did not fly from the world a second time in order to create fiction."

An eminent archæologist, who was present at a séance, was defined in the following terse but apt manner: "A curious restoration this. . . ." (The traveller was pointed towards the individual in question.) "Here I find a mind in whose intricacies I should like to plunge. Permit me, sir, to probe your ideas. . . . This is a strange construction. Here I find the mediæval mind, and on it is perched like a pert bird the spirit of the twentieth century."

Doubtless, with the publication of the script of all the Oscar Wilde messages, much contention and argument will be aroused. If so, it would be well if all the various points in the case were considered in relation to each other and not separately. Style,

handwriting, personality, the speed of the communications, the facts unknown to the mediums should all be carefully considered before any judgment is passed thereon.

It is a pity that in psychical research there is no centre party, which in controversy would weigh and sift the evidence and hold the balance impartially between the sceptics and the spiritualists. The sceptics are as credulous in their unbelief as the spiritualists are in their belief. But perhaps it would be better still to adopt the irresponsible attitude of one of the characters in the drama called " The Extraordinary Play," which is being communicated at the moment from what purports to be Oscar Wilde. It is as follows :

S.—Do you believe in the supernatural, sir, may I ask ?
R.—I do not even believe in the natural, Strang. Belief is the refuge of those who are too dull to imagine.

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.]

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—It will doubtless be of interest to a large number of your readers to learn that there has recently been inaugurated in London a new movement for the purpose of perpetuating the memory and work of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, under the title of *The Blavatsky Association.*

There is no need for me here to deal with the unhappy condition of the Theosophical Society which has called forth this new movement, and others of a similar nature in other parts of the world. How widely the Society has departed from the original teachings and ideals of its Founders is now pretty generally known. Even the very word *Theosophy* has become associated with so much that is the direct opposite of its original meaning and intent, that it appears to be necessary to drop the use of the term in connection with the present movement. Under these circumstances, and in order to deal purely and simply with the original teachings and ideals, the Blavatsky Association has been formed. It includes a number of the original pupils and co-workers with H. P. Blavatsky, as also many who at one time or another have been members of the Theosophical Society, but have been compelled to sever their connection with it for the reasons above stated. This will guarantee that the Association will be under good guidance, and that everything which experience has shown to be a cause of dissension will be as far as possible eliminated from its constitution. There will, for example, be no President, but the executive will consist only of the Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, and a Council of five. A few simple rules have been adopted. There is no fixed subscription, but the Association will depend for its activities on voluntary subscriptions and donations. Head-quarters have been secured at 22 Craven Hill, Bayswater, and a considerable reference and lending library is already in existence.

The Association regret that they are unable to admit as members any who are already members of the Theosophical Society so long as they continue to be members of this society; because in the first place these must be assumed to be already obtaining what they require, and in the second place the admission of these might tend to introduce a disturbing element. Naturally this does not apply to every member

of the T.S., but it is not possible to make distinctions in individual cases.

As time goes on there is an increasing interest in and demand for the works of H. P. Blavatsky, and the Association will endeavour to meet this demand, and to give assistance in every possible way to students of the *Gupta Vidya*, the Ancient Wisdom, of which this remarkable woman was the gifted exponent.

Yours faithfully,

IONA DAVEY,

Hon. Secretary Blavatsky Association.

22 CRAVEN HILL, BAYSWATER, W.2.

A PSYCHIC CAT.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—I am not a particularly psychic person, and the following experience may have been purely imagination, yet I should be interested to know whether other people have the same sensations.

Yesterday morning about six o'clock I awoke suddenly out of a terrifying dream, thinking that a burglar was in my room. I soon reassured myself that my sensation of fear had no basis in fact, but I *distinctly felt* the light pressure of the paws of my little cat upon my body. He seemed to pass from the end of my bed to my shoulders and back again to the foot, and then to stand still at my shoulders. Now, he always sleeps in the kitchen, the door of which is kept shut, as is the door of my room. I knew, therefore, that it could not be his bodily presence on my bed. The impression was too strong to resist, however, and I opened my eyes to find, as I had known, that nothing visible was there. Now, was this an example of a trick of imagination, or can it be that my cat's astral was actually on my bed? Possibly I, being between sleep and waking, was in the condition to be aware of it? I am very fond of the little animal and had been thinking of him before I fell asleep.

The only other occasion when I had a similar experience was one February morning some years ago, when I was staying with cousins who had moved to a new house where I had never before visited them. I awoke in the grey light of seven o'clock and could feel my room full of invisible presences. More and more appeared to swirl into the room, until the place seemed full, and the sensation was so vivid and so uncanny that, when they appeared to lay hands on the bedclothes, I forced myself into full wakefulness in order to rid myself of these disturbing beings (or imaginings?). It is only fair to say that my cousins have always been deeply interested in the occult and that I should not be surprised if they possessed latent psychic powers.

Yours truly,

A. S. L.

NO GOD IN BUDDHISM!

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Your analysis of the Buddha's teachings should prove illuminating to those who, in this tortured and discordant world, find interest, hope and solace in the comparative study of religions. I confess that my one-time interest wanes as my head whitens and I approach the one great certainty of life. I am inclined to declare with the inspired poet:—

> I am an omnist and believe in all
> Religions—fragments of one golden world
> Yet to be relit in its place in Heaven—
> For all are relatively true and false
> To those who practise, or have faith in them.

It has been said that Buddhism has no God. In that deeply thoughtful book, *The Inward Light*, by Fielding Hall, the writer, after a long stay in Burma as the guest of the monks, gives answer to this assertion.

"Truly," he writes, "it has no God such as the Semitic God who sits apart in heaven; no God who judges men; no God who is a personality and therefore has his limits. They have no God like this. To them God is in the world, and all our life and soul are rays that come from his refulgence. Shall not the ray that fails cry to the sun to strengthen it; shall not the tiny light that dies call to the source of light for help? No God in Buddhism! There is not anywhere so great a realization of Infinite God as here."

Gautama has "slipped into the shining sea" whence no earth-bound ship departs. May some such Great One guard your life and inspire your pen through the coming year.

Yours truly,
J. SCOTT BATTAMS.

[I wrote of what the Buddha himself originally taught, not of Burmese Buddhism, or any later development, of which there were many. I think in describing Buddha as the greatest of the agnostics, I did not go far wrong. He would doubtless have adopted the expression himself had it been in use in his day.—ED.]

HAVE ANIMALS SOULS?

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—The interesting letter under the above heading made me wonder whether the writer's hypothesis be the only one. There may be other reasons why *Friend* should have behaved as she did.

That animals are cared for by those on "the other side" I am firmly convinced. It may well be that an unseen friend of either the

writer or the dog—or of both—brought about that meeting and the dream experience later on.

I wonder whether my experience with a cat would interest you ?

It points to psychical qualities in the cat, and to the probability that certain intelligences in the unseen can influence some—perhaps all—animals.

My cat was from its nature and upbringing an unusual one, shy of strangers, never going beyond the garden wall, never, as far as I know, having killed anything, he had ten years of happy, peaceful life. Then we removed to a locality less peaceful and secure. A few days after settling there the cat was missed. I searched in vain, and for several nights my rest was broken by anxious thoughts of its fate. One afternoon, utterly weary, I sat down to my ouija board. The first thing spelled out was a comment on my anxious state of mind " about the cat." After a while I was told that it was " fast "—which I took to mean shut up—but that I should see it ere daylight. In the winter dark of the following morning I opened the outer door and saw the cat coming towards me. It seemed to have been shut up.

Soon afterwards the same cat developed a painful swelling inside one ear. It grew until it was as large as a walnut, and we were all very sad at the thought of having it destroyed. The task would devolve upon me, and as one day I sat with the board, the cat on the rug in front of me, I braced myself to meeting it. After a few comments the communicating intelligence wrote, " We can ease it "—the cat was moving its head in pain—then " You doubt, see." I saw a quiver pass over the cat's body, and before I put the board away he had settled into a quiet sleep. The same evening he was cleaning the diseased ear, which he had not done for months. The swelling went down at once, it never suppurated, but the ear remains misshapen, although I think the hearing is in no way affected. This happened nearly four years ago : the cat is still with us, and people remark, " What a beautiful cat, but what is the matter with its ear ? " And we answer, " An old trouble cured."

Yours truly,
ANNIE GARDNER.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

PROFESSOR HEINRICH WEINEL'S account of Religious Life in Germany at this fateful epoch of the world is one of the notable contributions to THE HIBBERT JOURNAL, and will come as a revelation to many whose ears are filled with the debate on the Ruhr occupation, the position of the mark and junker iniquities, but of the German mind and soul no word or rumour comes through that universal medium of communication which is the daily and weekly press. The professor of New Testament theology at Jena is speaking from the centre of things and calls it " an indescribable chaos in which there is as yet no creative light." What has become of religion in this condition of things ? What does it mean now, if, indeed, it means anything ? He looks first to the post-war poets as to the direction of strongest utterance, voicing " the terrible agitation." They reveal the German soul shaken to its depths and yet looking from " the grave of its culture " to " a new and higher existence in brotherly love and human happiness," as if for a new heaven and a new earth. There is among these new singers, whose names are to us unknown and whose outpourings are chaotic like the time, a vague turning towards God, sometimes conceived in the terms of Nature-pantheism, sometimes as Lord of life and death, and as the Creator of a great future. The yearnings seem to attain more serious expression among poets of the working classes, seeking and feeling God not only in " the blue calm of evening " but in " the day's wearying labour," even in the machine and the mine. There are also the voices of philosophy, and in some of them religious feelings are said to be finding a vent, even amidst disbelief in religion, and " yearning for the Beyond " amidst dissatisfaction with existence and agonies of intellectual despair. With this may be contrasted an attempted marriage between Eastern mysticism and Christian capacity for action which has originated a School of Wisdom under the auspices of the Grand Duke of Hesse. We hear further that " the occult is much more in request than before the war," that Spiritualism " raises its head," and that theosophy of all kinds is growing from more to more, including that of Steiner, who is described as " a gifted dilettante " pouring forth a mass of those " fine generalities, with which no really practical work can ever or anywhere be accomplished."

These things are outside official faith and far from the " old good ways " of which Professor Weinel is spokesman, and he turns therefore to the Churches, now in separation from the State. After this and the revolution which it involved, we are told that " there is evidence almost everywhere of an increase in Church interest, in Church attendance, and participation in Church organizations," while—on the other hand—oppositions are opened wider and " everything gentle

and tranquil is thrust into the background." Free Protestantism is organized in various associations; the orthodox school opposes liberal theology and attacks German idealism; there has been produced also within the Church itself a new movement which is directed at once against orthodoxy and liberal doctrine, which rejects human culture and affirms that nothing can endure except "the reality of God." In contrast with these is the mystical movement, which in one direction has developed a new modernism, in another has produced a sacramental tendency even in the Evangelical Church, is developing in a third aspect a new culture for the adornment of life with a garland of mystical rites, and is apparently a living element in the German High Church, which—there as here—has leanings in Latin directions. Whether there is life's reality in some or any of these movements, whether they are surface-moods and fashions of a hectic day, is another and very open question. It is not discussed by Professor Weinel, but in any case he has done good service by showing us, as in a glass and clearly, how it stands with religious life in Germany "after the hate and enmity of the war."

Among other articles in THE HIBBERT JOURNAL there is that of Mrs. Couling, who has discovered a marked likeness between New Thought and the Higher Taoism, alike in doctrine and practice. It transpires, however, that Christian Science, Modern Theosophy, "Emersonianism" and all "kindred movements" are conglomerated under the general title of New Thought, which is otherwise labelled Mysticism and at once therefore connected as to its sources with Cambridge Platonists, followers of Jacob Böhme and the Society of Friends. We question whether a more fantastic genealogy has ever been propounded; but it happens fortunately that it does not prevent the writer from establishing a number of natural analogies between the views and counsels of distinctive American teachers of New Thought and Taoistic sacred books. It seems to us that they are inevitable and that nothing follows therefrom; the world's thinkers are made in each other's likeness, in their concord and their diversity. . . . There should be mentioned in conclusion Dr. Archibald Duff's very interesting speculation on the Spiritual Legacy of Egypt, and Mr. James Collier's admirable account of Cardinal Bessarion, Archbishop of Nicæa in the fifteenth century, "the chief living link between East and West," as well as "a constant mediator between Emperor and Pope, between Greeks and Latins." In this latter capacity he was an important personality on the side of reconciliation and union at the Council of Florence, with the salvation of the Byzantine Empire rooted in his heart. He survived, however, its fall.

Mr. G. R. S. Mead continues his studies of Mandæan documents in the new issue of THE QUEST, presenting further arresting translations of the JOHN-BOOK, from the German version of Professor Lidzbarski, concerning the marriage of John the Baptizer, his birth and upbringing, his first appearance, his own passing, and his answer to Jesus concerning the Angel of Death. The nature of the documents may be indicated

by explaining: (1) that as regards the Baptizer's conception he is said to have been taken by heavenly messengers out of the basin of Jordan and laid in the womb of Enishbai; (2) that Jerusalem quaked at his birth and "the wall of the priests" rocked; (3) that as a child he was carried by Enoch to "the white mountain" and brought up on holy drink; (4) that he remained there until he was twenty-two and acquired his wisdom; (5) that he was clothed with vestures of glory, veiled with cloud-veils and so brought back to Jerusalem; (6) that as regards John's marriage, his wife was fashioned from "the Region of the Faithful," that is, the Mandæan Abode of the Blessed; (7) that the children born of their union were heavenly beings, as indicated by the names they received; and (8) that the wedding was therefore mystical. The translations also include certain extracts in which the Gnostic Community is personified under the name of Miryai, as the "manifestation of a Miryai on high." They tell of her expulsion from Jewry, the settlement of the exiled community on the Euphrates, their persecution by the Jews and the consequent destruction of Jerusalem, its temple and the dwellers therein. It is to be understood that Mr. Mead's annotated translations are a necessary preliminary to a subsequent work in view, which will be one of interpretation. . . . There is important translation of a different kind elsewhere in THE QUEST, dealing with certain Taoist Legends in Chinese treatises, rendered originally into German by Professor Pfizmaier of the Vienna Academy. They are termed alchemical, in the psychical sense of the word, and are concerned with the liberation of the adept in his immortal part by the loosening or dissolution of the corpse or material body, because this is "incapable of changing together with the spirit." It is described otherwise as "the refining and skin-sloughing of the True Man." It would seem that at the end there is sometimes a return to life, presumably physical life; at others, the corpse appears to be dissolved literally and the adept disappears as an Immortal. But the accounts are very difficult to follow and by no means easy to harmonize, the English translators making no claim to understand the hidden meaning, while "Pfizmaier himself gives no explanation at all." Finally, the Taoist texts offer on their surface very little correspondence with those which criticism has been disposed to class as belonging to spiritual alchemy in the western world. The words "dissolution" and "metamorphosis" are, however, common to both. Meanwhile, we are in accord with Mr. Mead when he suggests in one of his notes that there are probably no greater "curiosities of literature" than these strange legends, of which we are promised further examples in the next issue of THE QUEST. It remains to say that Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter's historical study of "the spirit which seeks the common good" in its warfare with "deadly egotism," fear, suspicion and ill-will, does something more than deserve that place of honour which it occupies, for it is throughout admirable reading, the manifesto of one who knows that "the war-spirit dies hard" but that "either we must end war, or war will end us."

PSYCHE recurs in its editorial to the experiments of M. Jules Romains in extra-retinal vision, otherwise "eyeless sight," which have been mentioned previously in these pages, and an excellent portrait is presented of him who must be accounted the discoverer, should further investigations confirm those which have been pursued on his own part. These are of two kinds, being (1) experiments with the blind, but there are at present no particulars before us of attained results, and (2) his own experience, in the course of which he found himself "capable of heterocentric and especially of sternal vision." The records speak of "most varied verifications, experiments, measurements," and so forth. It is satisfactory to learn that a full account of the theory will appear shortly in an English translation. Meanwhile, the PSYCHE editorial regards the personal experiments of M. Romains in developing "the paroptic sense" as not to be set aside lightly, though the evidence is by no means conclusive as to the hypothesis itself. On the personal side it rests upon the good faith of the witness and on the question whether his prolonged exercises in "attention" did or did not produce occasional hallucination. The case as presented by him seems to set aside the second alternative, and he is, of course, challenged by no one in respect of the first. At the same time, scientific hypothesis cannot be based on good faith, and on this side of the issue there can be suspension of judgment only. There remain, however, the experiments conducted with the blind, about which we shall know better when the promised translation appears. There have been "successful demonstrations" before Anatole France, and it is admitted by PSYCHE that "admirers of M. Romain's literary work . . . will find it hard to believe that the Sorbonne professors are right in supposing him to have been the victim of some clever trick or hallucination." We are prepared to expect that others besides mere admirers may find themselves in the same position. . . . There are excellent articles otherwise in the issue before us. Many readers are sure to be drawn by Mr. E. M. Standing's account of experiences in the dentist's chair under nitrous oxide. We have been attracted on our own part by Col. Mantell's plea for toleration on the question whether religious beliefs are "mere products of the imagination, especially when they take the form of mystic experiences." The alternative hereto is that they are by no means the simple result of delusion and auto-suggestion. Col. Mantell proposes to reconcile the opposing points of view by maintaining that "religious beliefs are essentially of the same nature as non-religious beliefs," both being grounded in mental images—or imagination, in other words,—and both also being tested by reference to experience. The article proceeds to unfold a "remarkable parallelism" between religious and non-religious imagination, and to argue that any difference between them is one of degree only. The plea for toleration is justified in this manner not a little ingeniously, though one feels that it will be scarcely of real effect, as intellectual toleration is about the last thing that is wanted on either side, while, for the rest, the day of the Holy Inquisition is over

and scarcely expects another. A word must be added on Dr. Reinheimer's re-examination of Darwinism, which is said to be in "a parlous condition," here and abroad. It "fails to account for failure," meaning the extinction of species, and has miscarried chiefly in interpretation, "being too scantily supported from the side of pathology and from that of sociology." No countenance, moreover, is lent to it by philosophy, physiology or palæontology. The re-examination seems therefore unsparing in all respects, but the fact is, that a mere summary like this can do no justice to the moving spirit and intention, which are broad, impartial and deeply sympathetical towards the great naturalist and his work. It seems to us an important contribution to the subject, and there is one pregnant sentence which might almost mark an epoch in scientific research: "We must not blink the fact of the eternal difference between right and wrong, even in matters biological." The meaning is that "sane ethics and sane physiology inseparably go together." An illustration in Nature is the evidence of the rocks, which "shows that the failing species were those which made themselves guilty of bad habits and excesses." It is "good bio-moral qualities which have led to genuine success in evolution."

THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH opens its eighteenth volume with a letter from Sir William Barrett to Prof. Charles Richet, pointing out some inaccuracies in the latter's now famous record entitled THIRTY YEARS OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH. They connect with the origin of the Research Society in England, the discovery of telepathy and investigation, and the Divining Rod. The reply of Richet is printed and is that which would be expected from all that we know regarding him. In the second article we find that the International Congress at Warsaw is still with us: the proceedings are digested in a good summary account. Mr. Stanley de Brath reviews Dr. Eugène Osty's LA CONNAISSANCE SUPRANORMALE as "by far the most important original contribution to Subjective Metaphysics that has recently appeared," the result of experiments prolonged through twelve years. Mr. Bligh Bond contributes a London Letter, which constitutes a new departure and will be continued from month to month. It speaks of the growth of interest in psychical research among more critical and unbiased minds and regards the propagandist work represented by Conan Doyle and Vale Owen activities as a necessary antidote to those of "the great advocates of social and industrial enterprise," betterment on the material side, and so forth. In the Research Department, Dr. W. F. Prince collects recent statistics on premonition, apparitions and death-bed experiences. There are also the minutes in detail of a sitting with Mrs. Lottie Folsom Kent, recorded by Frederick Edwards and carefully analysed. These were communications claiming to come from deceased relatives and friends, and their particulars were not to be explained as a result of guesswork or as matters of common knowledge.

REVIEWS

THE ORIGIN OF MAGIC AND RELIGION. By W. J. Perry, M.A. $7\frac{1}{2}$ ins. $\times$ $4\frac{3}{4}$ ins., pp. x + 212 + 1 plate. London: Messrs. Methuen & Co., Ltd., 36 Essex Street, W.C. Price 6*s*. net.

IT is a remarkable fact that the mythologies, the magical practices and religious beliefs of races widely separated geographically and otherwise from each other exhibit so many points of resemblance. The usual explanation makes use of some such formula as " the similarity of the working of the human mind " ; but Mr. Perry does not think that any explanation along these lines is satisfactory, and he seeks to establish a common origin for magical belief and practice throughout the world. His thesis, put briefly, is that " the world-wide spread of civilization must . . . be regarded as originating in Egypt," and that magic (*ex hypothesi* the parent of religion) is a heritage of the ancient Egyptian culture. He claims to show that the Egyptians, or rather the members of the royal family, self-styled " Children of the Sun," were led to the uttermost parts of the earth in their search for " The Earthly Paradise," a land where substances endowing man with life abounded, and where immortality might be achieved. It is a large thesis, and, stated thus boldly, it may not sound a very probable one. Yet Mr. Perry has amassed a good deal of evidence in favour of it, and there are certainly many facts which seem to fit it very well.

But whether he has done more than establish a case worthy of further investigation is, I think, open to doubt. Not lightly is to be set aside the findings of modern psychologists concerning " the similarity of the working of the human mind." In any case I do not think he has really explained why primitive man came to regard—if, as seems the case, he did—certain substances as " Givers of Life." It is, I submit, not sufficient to say that red earth is of the same colour as blood, the loss of which spells loss of life, or that the shape of the cowrie is the same as that of the portal whereby man enters life. If we may postulate animism, however, and regard the use of such substances as these as symbolic prayers addressed to the spirits who guard the life of man, the whole matter becomes clearer. Nor does Mr. Perry explain why magical beliefs persisted, e.g., the Chinese notion that jade and gold administered internally endow one with immortality, when attempts to put them into practice must inevitably have failed, and as concerns the example chosen " often ended disastrously." The origin of all magic may be found in Egypt; but the mystery of it still remains. Nevertheless, Mr. Perry has written a most interesting work, one embodying valuable research, and one worthy to find a place in the library of every student. H. S. REDGROVE.

CEUX QUI NOUS QUITTENT, Extraits de Communications Médianimiques. Obtenus par Mme. de W. Paris: Henri Durville, Imprimeur-Editeur, 23 rue Saint Merri. Prix 1 fr. 25.

" LE spiritisme n'est pas une religion, mais c'est en lui qu'on trouve la preuve de la vie future qui, elle, est à la base de toutes les religions."

The foregoing sentiment, as expressed by a communicator under the initials " C.R.," through his intermediary, Madame de W., will commend itself to all who look seriously and without prejudice into the subject. The messages of " C.R.", and " R.L.", form the chief portions of this concise work, and form quite a *vade mecum* in their way, very much of which,—though not quite all,—will find general agreement amongst sympathetic readers. The doctrine of reincarnation is strongly insisted on, which is not surprising, as the Allen Kardec atmosphere is apparent throughout, and the sitters were of the French School of Investigators.

A great deal of the information is extremely interesting, covering much ground, and including dissertations on Occultism and Theosophy, Astrology and Fatalism, Dreaming, Somnambulism, Psychometry, Clairvoyance, Photographing Thought, etc., etc.

" C.R." gives a wise admonition—which cannot be too often repeated on behalf of long-suffering mediums, heckled by " test " seekers. He says :

" Dans les expériences de coups frappés comme dans celles d'écriture, ne prononcez jamais le mot *preuve* quand vous nous demandez quelque chose—cela met toujours le médium principal dans une sorte de nervosisme qui nous gêne en donnant aux fluides une insouplesse et une indocilité."

" Direct writing," we are told, should not be left exposed to the air—it is on the principle of the undeveloped negative in photography, and if so left, will soon be obliterated.

A most comprehensive and interesting Introduction by M. Gabriel Delanne adds greatly to the value of the book, reiterating, as he does, his firm conviction that those whom we have loved on earth are still around us, and that their loving tenderness will accompany us during this " notre exil terrestre." EDITH K. HARPER.

THE OMNIPOTENT SELF : A Study in Self-Deception and Self-Cure. By Paul Bousfield, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. $7\frac{1}{4}$ ins. $\times$ $4\frac{3}{4}$ ins., pp. viii + 171. London : Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., Broadway House, Carter Lane, E.C.4. Price 5*s*. net.

THE title of Mr. Bousfield's work is ironic : the omnipotent self is that of the infant, inhabiting a world in which it " is the centre and ruler, in which its every want is attended to without an effort on its part, save that it may sometimes have to call attention to its wants by means of that magical cry which it soon learns how and when to use, and which acts in a truly magical manner in accomplishing the fulfilment of all its desires." It is this attitude of mind—this belief that the rest of the world subsists only to minister to one's desires, and that these can be obtained without effort on one's part—carried over into adult life, which constitutes what psycho-analysts term " Narcissism." This is the main topic of Mr. Bousfield's book, in which he relentlessly exposes the foibles of human nature, in a manner which should have a salutary effect. At the same time the picture he draws of the normal person—" normal " being defined as " performing the proper functions "—seems to be extravagant and one-sided. Some of his more exaggerated statements are modified in the concluding chapter, but it would have been better had they not been made. Narcissism, we are told, leads to fantasy-thinking, in which the desires are satisfied by means of imaginative creations, as opposed to

directive thinking which manifests in actions producing a real change in the environment. Novel-reading and the drama are both stigmatized as forms of fantasy-thinking, and, of course, the play of children falls into the same category. "How many adults," asks Mr. Bousfield, "could [in the manner possible to a child] take a bath-tub into their dining-room, sit in it, and with the aid of a vivid imagination thoroughly enjoy a pleasant sail at sea?" This, for Mr. Bousfield, marks the superiority of the adult over the child; but one feels inclined to suggest that if such a feat were possible to adults they might be all the happier for it. Moreover, in dealing with impatience and bad temper as forms of Narcissism, Mr. Bousfield seems to forget that there is no absolute line of cleavage between the world of the child and that of the man. Holding up for criticism a man who becomes impatient because he is not served immediately at a restaurant, he writes, "he merely shows he wishes for an immediate meal, that his sense of perfection is thoroughly disturbed, and his unconscious idea is that if he be sufficiently impatient, what he wants will come to him immediately, just as it did in childhood." The fact of the matter, as everybody knows, is that the impatient man, who knows how effectively to express his impatience, is frequently more rapidly attended to than the patient man. There are times when bad temper achieves its owner's ends in the adult world as effectively as it did in the world of childhood. On the whole it would seem that the truly normal person—keeping to Mr. Bousfield's definition of the term "normal"—lies somewhere midway between the extreme narcissist and the cold-blooded, unimpassioned and almost inhuman being that Mr. Bousfield holds up for our admiration.

H. S. REDGROVE.

VAISHNAVA LYRICS. Done into English Verse by Surendranath Kumar, Nandalal Datta, and John Alexander Chapman. Published by the Oxford University Press. Price 5*s*. 6*d*. net.

THIS would be a charming volume, as it is unpedantic and impulsive, but for one besetting sin. Not one of the translators seems to be able to use the English language with ease and fluency. Mr. Chapman tells us that the renderings were Englished by his two Indian colleagues and put into verse by himself. Yet he did not pause to polish the phrases ere turning them into rhyme, and even his introduction is couched in most curious terms, as witness his declaration: "I have seen enough of the Radhas of my own day to know intimately what Krishna's Radha was like. Not only to look at: I know inside her." One wonders that no intelligent reader at the Oxford University Press underlined such unhappy statements. Take the heart-cry in Lyric XVII:

> "For all my pumping of the nectar-sea
> Nothing but bitter venom comes to me."

I assume that the reference is to the mythological churning of the legendary ocean of milk by the gods of Hindustan, when the dread Serpent emitted the poison Halahal which would have destroyed the world had not the god Siva bravely swallowed it. Surely "churning" would have been more apposite and melodious than "pumping"?

Yet the volume is valuable to the student who can sense the poetry of the context. It consists of some delightful Vaishnava poems of the epic

loves of Krishna and Radha—that Oriental Virgil, all addenda to the literature whereof should be treasured by the conscientious scholar.

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

THE GREAT PYRAMID OF GHIZEH: ITS SYMBOLISM AND PURPORT. By Francis W. Chapman. $8\frac{1}{4}$ ins. × 5 ins., pp. 156. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Fenwick & Wade, 1923.

ONLY a small part of this book deals directly with the Great Pyramid: in that part is detailed an interesting theory. It is well known that the Pyramid in its present state has been denuded of a covering of what probably was sandstone, but of which very little trace now remains. Mr. Chapman considers that this outer covering was inscribed with a "bold ancient deep-cut character on every side," in the form of a golden "illumed" circle. On the eastern face of the Pyramid this circle contained a point, symbolizing the Sun, Horus, "more fraternally called Sol." The southern side bore only the circle, representing Ra, "but its common name was O." On the western side the circle held a horizontal zigzag, symbolizing the spirit, but standing for the letter M. The northern symbol in the circle was a plain cross, meaning the junction of the divine with the temporal, and represented by L. The whole in connected order read, according to Mr. Chapman, "Solomon(el), meaning 'All Wise.'" The idea is attractive, but has no foundation in fact, and is rather fantastically developed.

THEODORE BESTERMAN.

HYPNOTISM AND SUGGESTION. By Louis Satow. Translated by Bernard Miall. $8\frac{1}{2}$ ins. × $5\frac{1}{2}$ ins., pp. 240. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., Ruskin House, 40 Museum Street, W.C.1. Price 10*s.* 6*d.* net.

LOUIS SATOW is, perhaps, neither a very original nor a very profound thinker; but he has written an interesting and, in some respects, instructive book, and our thanks are due to Dr. Miall for this translation. The last two chapters of the book, dealing with suggestion in the realm of politics and its baneful influence in maintaining a belief in the value of monarchism, militarism and war can, indeed, be unreservedly commended as excellent; and there is much also that is excellent in the chapter dealing with psychical epidemics in the religious life. But Satow makes the not uncommon mistake of running a theory to death, and endeavours to make suggestion explain far more than that of which it is capable. Undoubtedly suggestion is an important—perhaps the most important—factor in hypnotism; but to repeat the word "suggestion" is hardly to give an adequate explanation of all the remarkable phenomena of hypnotism. The theory of suggestion, for example, leaves quite unexplained why the sleep of hypnosis is different from ordinary sleep. Moreover, it seems to me that Louis Satow's analysis of psychic phenomena suffers from the defect of superficiality. The phenomenon of stigmatization, for example, is no doubt produced by means of suggestion. But to say this is by no means to explain the phenomenon: we still need to inquire exactly by what mechanism suggestion achieves this remarkable end. Nor can Louis Satow be congratulated on his attempt to abolish the soul: however much argument is indulged in concerning the nature

of consciousness, the fact remains that we know everything that we do know in terms of consciousness and nothing otherwise. Nevertheless, in spite of the defects of his book, Louis Satow has done good service in pointing out how easily mankind is led astray through the force of mass-suggestion, and in emphasizing the need for each one of us to be on his guard against its influence and to learn to think and to act for himself. "Whoso thinks," wrote Multatuli, "gains the victory. But thinking has to be learned." H. S. REDGROVE.

AD MAGNAM AMICITIAM. Anonymous. Published by Jonathan Cape. Price 2*s.* 6*d.*

THIS little volume forms a welcome addition to the dainty *Life and Colour Series*, in which distinctive contributions by W. H. Davies and Teresa Hooley have already appeared.

Though they have not yet the flame of a soul fully awakened, these new anonymous verses bear the ensign of one searching for expression and the Higher Jerusalem of the unresting spirit. "The Sanctuary," "The Soul's Vigil" and "L'Union Mystique" are all the outcome of this crying need of a craving idealism. "The Quest" is dignified and appealing and cast in the same cadence :—

> "In days of old the knights of mail
> Went forth to seek the Holy Grail.
> I too in these degenerate days,
> Through the dark city's noisome ways,
> Through haunted wood and quaking mire
> Have followed that elusive fire."

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

LOVE AND DEATH. Notes on the Life beyond the Grave. By the Rev. Donald Hole, with Preface by Sir William Barrett, F.R.S. 111 pp. Size 7 × 4. The Faith Press, 22 Buckingham Street, London, W.C.2. Price 2*s.* 6*d.*

THE author of this attractive little book has himself passed through the trial of separation from a deeply loved one, and his thoughts may well bring hope and comfort to other mourners who ask in bewilderment : What *is* death ? What has left this body now so cold and still ? Where is the person we loved, and who loved us, a moment ago ?

He examines the answers given by those who profess to know about the hereafter—through spiritualism, psychology, philosophy, and the Church. Sir William Barrett in his weighty Preface truly says it is inexplicable why almost all religious teachers have so long held aloof from psychical research. Father Hole, in his examination into the reply given by spiritualism as to life after death, considers that the messages received prove the continued existence of those we call dead—their interest in, and love for, those still on earth. But he suggests that just as we no longer believe that those who die at once pass to a state of complete bliss, so possibly the dead do not at once gain full knowledge, hence their inability to tell us much of the after state.

Father Hole next contrasts the teaching of the Church with that of spiritualism, and here he shows himself to be an orthodox believer, accept-

ing the Biblical and Church teaching fully, though he is very open-minded. Philosophical systems, he contends, teach that death is a transition, a progress, but the message of Christianity is that it is an *enemy* from which man must be delivered by some external power, not from within. He then points out how the earliest prayers for the dead are found in the inscriptions in the Catacombs—these at first are triumphant, but soon a minor key creeps in, an admission of defeat. (Does not this suggest that gradually people got farther from Christ's teaching ?) He then draws a distinction between those he calls Holy Saints and those he calls Holy Souls : the former are in Paradise, the latter in Purgatory, where undoubtedly progress, purification is possible. He suggests that " hell " is the state of the disembodied, that judgment is a continual process, not one special time or event, and his conclusion is that the departed are always with us and that it is our own failure to reach out to them that cuts us off—if there is Love they never lose touch with us, we can pray for each other and they grow *nearer*, not farther from us. So he ends on a note of hope and courage, and this clearly written expression of his faith may help to carry conviction and hope to other sorrowing souls.

R. M. B.

LOVE BEYOND THE VEIL. An Echo of the Great War. London: Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

IN the Foreword of this interesting love-story, we are told that the story of the communications received is a true one,—much of the material, agreeably set forth, certainly seems to bear the stamp of unvarnished truth.

The book is well worth reading from the ordinary reader's point of view, for here the author has given us a very beautiful story of the pathos, and withal great tenderness, of a love that blossomed and bore fruition in spite of an almost insurmountable difficulty that, during the lifetime of both lovers, stood always in the way.

A moving story of the ultimate triumph of Purity in earthly love ; as such it will be welcomed by all those who tempted, and having conquered, have sometimes found the way of Righteousness hard to travel when human passions assail the heart. Moreover, there is food of interest for the middle-aged, as well as for the young ; in this rare book, much of Romance remains still with the happy lovers, reunited thus strangely long after the flush of youth is safely passed, though now a deeper and much fuller understanding of the inner meaning of all true love takes the place of the more ardent devotion that once existed in the years before the supreme tragedy of the Great War.

The story is poignantly pathetic from beginning to end, yet, everywhere throughout the various communications, Hope is whispering her message of Love Eternal and abiding, for them both, while in the case of the one still living on her rather lonely life in London, the joy of perfecting and refining, what had been only partly selfish and imperfect love, is of paramount interest to her growing soul.

All the sadness of their separated past seems slipping away from her, and is soon almost forgotten ; her spirit, after long years of drooping, is becoming vivified and altogether renewed.

There is much more food for thought in this book than may at first

appear; even the casual reader of the occult will be curiously impressed, whatever may have been his opinion, or theory evolved, at the opening of the story.

A word of praise is due to the publishers also, for this is a book delightful to handle as well as most pleasing to read.

CHRISTIE T. YOUNG.

THE MYSTICAL THEOLOGY OF DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE; with Elucidatory Commentary by the Editors of *The Shrine of Wisdom*. London: *The Shrine of Wisdom*, Lincoln House, Acacia Road, Acton, W.3. 8½ ins. × 5½ ins., pp. 13. Price 1*s*. 3*d*., post free.

As the editors point out, whoever the author of the works of Dionysius the Areopagite was—and it is certain that he was not St. Paul's Athenian convert—they have exercised a profound influence on Western mysticism, and are of importance not only because of this historical fact, but also because of their intrinsic merit. The tiny tract on mystical theology, Mr. Waite in his recent *Lamps of Western Mysticism* calls "the Dionysian pearl of great price," and he suggests that its doctrine concerning the achievement of divine union by the *Via Negativa* constitutes the esoteric side of the teachings of its author. This new and convenient translation of the work is, therefore, very welcome; and a word of praise should be added as concerns the Commentary. The definition of God by negation is in reality only negative in form, since to deny to him all those attributes which seem positive to finite minds is to ascribe to him a transcendental positiveness; or, as the editors put it, "that the Negative Path is not really negative in essence is demonstrated by the fact that the negation of negation is equivalent to an affirmation; and so the negation of non-being is consequently a positing of being."

Mr. David Lewis's translation of the poem on "The Superessential Radiance of the Divine Darkness," by St. John of the Cross, and a number of quotations from Christian mystics who have been influenced by the Dionysian writings, such as Albertus Magnus, Eckehart, Tauler, Ruysbroeck and others, are included in the volume, and add to its attractiveness.

H. S. REDGROVE.

SEEING LIFE! AND OTHER STORIES. By Marjorie Bowen. London: Hurst & Blackett, Ltd. Pp. 285. Price 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

MARJORIE BOWEN is clever enough to perceive that a good short story is an anecdote raised to a higher power, and that it succeeds or fails according as it has or has not a point at which to surprise those who read it for the first time. Among the twenty stories in this volume is one ("He Made a Woman——") which every pro-occultist will like, and which even people who attribute wonder to folly and the wonderful to indigestion will admire for its artistic quality. The occult subjects illustrated by her anecdotal skill include somnambulism, clairvoyance, reincarnation, and the projection of a man's double. I permit myself a plaintive protest at the rosebuds which, in the story called "Decay," "stank to Heaven," to symbolize the abandonment to sensuality of a poet and his rich wife.

The collection contains a tale which won a prize of £100 in "Eve." It depicts pathetically the stages from the height of a faithful servant's

hope to the deep disappointment which she nobly accepts. In a story where " the princely Chandos " figures as " the proud Pomfret," the first symptom of a return of a memory of a past life is admirably invented. Satirical touches abound in the volume : Marjorie Bowen's sense of humour is formidable enough to protect her in most purely literary emergencies.

W. H. CHESSON.

SOULS OUT OF EGYPT. By Jill Penbrooke. London : Arthur H. Stockwell. Price 6*s.* net.

THIS is a story with modern Egypt for background. A rich and fashionable widow stays at Cairo with her ward. Nenna, the ward, is a young lady with a past. Her past is very old indeed, ranging back to the days when she incarnated in the Egypt of the Ptolemies.

Nenna keeps a tame panther, preferring it to the generally more fashionable pekingese. While in Egypt she meets a " mystery man," Mr. Quevara, a half-caste, who practises hypnotism according to the fakir method. This method (into the details of which we are not initiated) appears to be very potent indeed. It enables Mr. Quevara to put the panther to sleep with half a dozen hypnotic passes and to compel Nenna to get up suddenly, put on her hat and cloak, and accompany him on a camel expedition across the desert. To disclose what then happens would be to spoil the story for prospective readers.

Needless to say, Mr. Quevara is a very bad man indeed—in melodrama he would be described as a blackguard—and he associates with people who are not at all nice.

In the end everything comes right. Nenna is saved from the villain's clutches by a nice English boy who talks the proper slang of smart society —quite an old bean, in fact. The descriptive passages are nicely done, but the author would do well to take greater pains with her style. She should not write " and beside him hunted the Gods of the Dead, in unseen silence," when she means " beside him hunted the unseen Gods of the Dead, in silence."

R. B. INCE.

XXXI HYMNS TO THE STAR GODDESS. By XIII : which is Achad. Chicago : C. Stansfeld Jones, P.O. Box 141. Price 3 dollars 50 cents. London : J. G. Bayley, 37A Tressillian Road, London, S.E.

ONCE I knew an ancient serpent. He delighted to bask in the Sunshine which penetrated through a tiny hole in the roof of the cave.

He was old and very wise.

He said : " Upon me is concentrated the Light of the whole Universe."

But a little brown beetle, who had long lived in the cave with him, looked up, and spreading his wings passed out through the hole in the roof—into the Infinite Beyond.

Thus forsaking wisdom, would I come to Thee, Beloved Lady of the Starry Heavens. (Hymn VI.)

There is a hole in the roof of Thought. And he who can pass through this hole will find the Life that is beyond thought and therefore beyond what he has hitherto regarded as himself. In this way, a man may come to Himself, unless he becomes Another, as may very well happen if he renounces Thought before mastering it. The manner in which this may be accomplished is the theme of Frater Achad's *Hymns to the Star Goddess*,

and though his music proceeds from a borrowed lyre, the notes are vibrant with his own endeavour and the images are skilfully transposed.

MEREDITH STARR.

MY COMMONPLACE BOOK. By J. T. Hackett. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., St. Martin's Street. Price 12*s.* 6*d.* net; in leather binding, 16*s.* net.

THE fact that the present book is now in its fourth edition, new and enlarged, and has several columns of most appreciative and widely representative press notices to its credit, has left the present reviewer with little else than the pleasure of endorsing them.

Mr. Hackett tells us in his Preface that he brought out his "Commonplace Book" against the most authoritative prophecies that it would be "an absolute failure. . . ." All honour, however, to the keen discernment of Sir Langdon Bonythorn, who strenuously urged its publication, and to Professor A. H. Sayce, the famous orientalist and archæologist, whose commendation was no less emphatic.

That the book is dedicated to the author's "dear friend, Richard Hodgson," who had much to do with its compilation, will be of especial interest to all admirers of that fearless and ardent believer in facts psychical and transcendental.

The quotations, prose and verse, cover innumerable subjects, grouped under no stereotyped headings, but coming one after another like flowers of spring in an Old English garden. They range from Homer and Sophocles to Rudyard Kipling and Richard le Gallienne, gathering so copiously between these that every reader must find something which touches a chord of memory or lays before his mental vision something new.

Here are some lines by Betty Bray, a child of thirteen, who has been writing since she was seven, "fresh, spontaneous verses," says Mr. Hackett, which bring us "the message that we may still hope for the revival of English poetry." They are entitled, "Beneath my Window":

> "Beneath my window, roses red and white
> Nod like a host of flitting butterflies;
> But, faded by the day, one ev'ry night
> Shakes its soft petals to the ground, and dies.
> And that is why I see, when night doth pass,
> Tears in her sisters' eyes, and on the grass."

Mr. Hackett's own Notes and Annotations form a running accompaniment to the book, and are as stimulating as they are fascinating in their intellectual grasp and depth. But he is a breaker of idols! and I confess to a certain sympathy with Sir John Cockburn in his "disapproval" of some of the author's Notes on the Ancient Greeks.

Deeply interesting, however, is the author's luminous dissertation on "the Superconscious" (pp. 170–82), following a quotation from F. W. H. Myers on "Multiplex Personality." Mr. Hackett's substitution of the term "Superconscious" for the wholly inadequate and overworked "Unconscious," is justified by his elaboration of this absorbing theme.

Reluctantly I close my review, feeling I have conveyed all too little of the charm of a book which it is an increasing joy to possess, not as a mere acquaintance, but as a constant friend.

EDITH K. HARPER.

WHITE BIRDS. By Frances E. Pearce. London: Arthur Stockwell, 29 Ludgate Hill, E.C.4. Price 1s.

WHILE it is evident that the writer of these verses has not had much experience, there is promise of greater ability in the future. The contents of *White Birds* are extremely unequal and many otherwise good lines are spoilt by an unexpected break in the rhythm which jars the reader. Perhaps the most successful poem is "Pilgrim's Progress":—

"Adown the darkening vale I go,
I shall not see nor understand,
I shall not find your guiding hand,
But stumble where dark waters flow.

"A mountain path of light you tread,
You will not see nor understand,
You will not feel my caressing hand
In benediction on your head.

"The way for you shall not be long,
And I shall weary be and late,
But we shall meet at Evensong
Beyond the River, by the Gate."

MEREDITH STARR.

THE CHURCH AND DARWINISM. By John Leslie. 7 ins. × 5 ins., pp. ii + 28. Aberdeen: W. Jolly & Sons, Ltd., 38 Bridge Street. Price (paper covers) 6d.

MR. LESLIE represents a school of thought that is now, happily, obsolete. He believes that, whereas in the book of Genesis "we have . . . a very definite and intensely scientific record of the origin of man, . . . the chief characteristics of Darwinism are its lack of coherence and lack of logical sequence." Darwinism, he writes, "is charged with wild assumption, wild assertion, and even wilder contradiction. Of all false doctrines

which have been sprung upon the world from time to time Darwinism is the most false, the most absurd, the most unscientific, and the most pernicious, and yet this is the doctrine which is now being preached in the Hall of the Aberdeen United Free Church College, and though diametrically opposed to the teaching of the Bible it is being received, nevertheless, by the professors and students with Simian simplicity, and Simian complacency."

That the teachings of Darwin are not the last word in biology must, of course, be admitted. They have suffered modification, and no doubt will continue to do so as research continues. But Mr. Leslie's pamphlet gives no indication that he has any real understanding of the evidence for the Darwinian theory or of the difficulties that confront it. The quotation I have given is typical: Mr. Leslie has yet to realize that criticism does not consist in abuse and the repetition of adjectives. Science is superior to—and, incidentally, more arduous than—the mere logic-chopping and playing with words in which Mr. Leslie delights to indulge, a pastime which, if it has any influence upon his readers at all, can only be that of bringing the high poetry of the Biblical legends into disrepute.

H. S. REDGROVE.

THE OLDEST LETTERS IN THE WORLD TELL US—WHAT? By Mrs. Sydney Bristowe. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. Pp. 96 and a frontispiece. Price 5s. net.

IF the proverb "Straws show which way the wind blows" were invariably applicable we might form a poor opinion of the qualifications for erudite controversy of a lady who consistently goes wrong in the spelling of our useful if not impeccable friend the Encyclopædia Britannica. When

however we examine her work it is apparent that she possesses considerable controversial ability, and that her theory that Amenhotep or Amenophis IV was of the same faith as Moses and not simply a monotheistic worshipper of the sun is at least not easily dismissed. The base of her study is those Tell el Amarna tablets discovered in 1888 which contain letters to Pharaohs of the XVIIIth Dynasty. She hopes to show that Professor Sayce's Hittite empire was an Aramæan empire, ruled over by Dusratta of Mitanni, and that Subbliuliuma (presumed to have been the name of a Hittite king) was a pseudonym of Dusratta. The book would gain considerably if the documentary evidence were arranged with a keener instinct for parade ; but it deserves the attention of all who are interested in priestly or other frauds practised on historians.

W. H. CHESSON.

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