

CLAIRVOYANT CHILDREN

ONE of the most significant features of the present psychic revival is the added sensitiveness of children, but whether the development of such sensitiveness be of advantage or no is a very moot point. It depends necessarily upon the outlook of those on whom the upbringing of the child devolves, and a rare wisdom is needed if the possession of psychic faculties is to prove anything except a hindrance to the child's normal progress towards manhood or womanhood.

The child who is psychic is hypersensitive of his visions, and, being abnormally affected by the thought and feeling of those with whom he comes in contact, an attitude of disbelief in his psychic experiences causes him inevitably to retreat within his shell. His elders may thereupon congratulate themselves that he has outgrown his strange fancies, but they are merely buried within his content of consciousness, and because they are denied a normal discharge they may become the seed of much nervous trouble in years to come.

A child is, of course, always affected by environment, and by the thought and tendencies of the people with whom he associates; it is generally admitted that his most significant characteristic is the power of imitation. If, however, we search a little more deeply we find that this imitation is in reality an almost automatic response to certain vibrations of thought and feeling, a child's mind and

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emotional nature reproducing sensitively and exactly the type of vibration impinging upon them.

Any strong current of feeling or opinion is bound to find a reflection in the minds of many people who remain unaware that their ideas are in no sense original, but are produced by the repetition of a thought-vibration from an outside source. Obviously the minds most ready to respond to a vibration, particularly to one which is persistently recurring, are those which are receptive, rather than positive, in nature. Children, therefore, are especially susceptible to any changes affecting the psychic or emotional atmosphere.

It cannot be too often insisted upon that the psychic is pre-eminently the realm of feeling or emotion, and that consequently with any emotional stress or turmoil the latent psychic or clairvoyant faculties are liable to become active. This is probably the cause of the extraordinary revival of interest in all psychic phenomena which has occurred since the first years of the war. It has nothing to do with an increase in the religious feeling of the nation, or a deeper realisation of the meaning of spiritual life. An increase of psychic power and an added sensitiveness to the influence of the unseen may, of course, result in an added spirituality, but it by no means follows as an inevitable sequence.

Those to whom psychic investigation appeals may be divided into two groups, those belonging to the first group, such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, looking upon such investigation as an aid to spiritual development; those belonging to the second group, such as Dr. Crawford, who is conducting such valuable psychic

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experiments in Belfast, looking upon it as a science. The first demand an emotional, the second an intellectual response.

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The tremendous upheaval caused by the war was not limited to the physical plane. In other spheres than the physical vast tides of feeling ebbed and flowed, and depths of emotion which had lain long undisturbed suffered an almost volcanic eruption.

One result of this disturbance, i.e. the reaction upon the psychic "make-up" of the nations, remains as acute to-day as it was in the early years of the war. Under any emotional strain, whether affecting nation or individual, the sensitiveness of the temperament increases, and is not readily lulled to dormancy again. Sensitiveness implies an increase of response to vibrations, either of thought or feeling, and is, in effect, an extension of the power to focus the consciousness upon a subtler realm than the physical.

The occultist speaks glibly of physical, astral and mental matter, and the separate phenomena resultant from their vibration. He claims that clairvoyance or "clear-seeing" and clairaudience or "clear-hearing" are the faculties of those who are able to respond to the subtle vibrations of astral matter, in the same way that he who sees and hears with physical eyes and ears is able to do so owing to a sensitiveness of response to the etheric vibrations of light and the air waves of sound.

A few years ago this assertion was laughed to scorn by the scientific world, because even the most delicate

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instruments failed to register the existence of vibrations of such intense rapidity as those of astral matter must necessarily be, but the admittance of the possibility of the existence of ether, which was necessary in order to account for the phenomena of light, radio-activity, etc., gave pause to think, and to-day the more progressive thinkers are not so ready to fall into the snare of a too frequent use of the baneful word "impossible."

If a possibility be admitted of a range of vibrations beyond the present register proven by science, it is seen that the phenomena of clairvoyance and clair-audience need no longer be considered the products of a diseased imagination nor dismissed with a cold shiver by the layman as "inexplicable" or "uncanny." For, as a series of vibrations in the ether acting upon the retina of the eye produce that which we term light, so a series of vibrations of an even subtler medium, which for the sake of convenience we term astral matter, may be perceivable by the clairvoyant.

It is common knowledge that the capacity of response to known vibrations varies with each individual, and that no arbitrary limit determining the register can be fixed. An interesting experiment in proof of this is to throw a clear spectrum on a piece of paper, and for each person present to mark the extreme limit to which he can see the violet and red colours extend. In no instance will the power of vision prove similar.

If, therefore, such difference of response be an every day matter, it can readily be understood that there may be many vibrations of subtler matter to

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which the normal human mechanism is altogether unresponsive, and that it requires an unusual degree of sensitiveness for their perception. The fact that they are unperceivable by the many, however, in no way bars the possibility of their perception by the few.

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Of late years this clairvoyant faculty or sensitiveness of response has become peculiarly common among children. This may be due, as we have suggested, to the great tides of unaccustomed emotion unloosed by the war, which accentuated the particular vibrations of the emotional (or psychic) plane. These vibrations, coming in contact with the receptive, sensitive consciousness of children over-stimulated the psychic or emotional element within its content, so that vibrations before unheeded became perceivable, and the faculty of clairvoyance was developed. Therefore there is little cause for surprise that instances of clairvoyance among children have become so general as almost to cease to arouse more than a passing comment.

But any investigation of such clairvoyance is hedged with difficulty owing to the fear of ridicule, which is ever-present in the child mind. Directly a child realises that his faculty of clairvoyance is in any way peculiar, and not the common possession of his associates, his instinct is to conceal the fact that he differs from other people.

A point that is worthy of note is that many children are normally clairvoyant until the age of six or seven, but as education begins and there is a demand on the

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mentality of the child the power begins to wane, until after a few years all trace of it has disappeared. The reason is a little obscure, but it may be that children possess the faculty of clairvoyance as a natural attribute in much the same way as the members of the animal kingdom possess it—as a form of instinct rather than as a conscious power.

For the first seven years of life the perfecting of the physical body is the primary activity of the spirit enshrined within. It is, therefore, the chief seat or focus of the consciousness, but when sensitiveness to mental vibrations is demanded, the psychic response is often cut off, sometimes, be it said, to the real benefit of the child, whose hypersensitiveness lessens with his lack of contact with the psychic world.

On the other hand, the sensitiveness increases if the change is not due to a normal alteration of focus, but to a blocking of the channels of perception by either ridicule or fear. Thus it will be seen that an elementary knowledge of psychic science is invaluable to the parents of psychic children. In passing it may be noted that there is scarcely a family of three or four, one of whom is not endowed with some measure of psychic perception.

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The visions of children are often full of the beauty of that other-world of faery which the poets have made peculiarly their own. To children the "little people" are as real as they are to any Irish or Breton peasant, and their conviction is not easily shaken that innumerable nature-spirits are responsible for the green

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of the earth and the beauty of flower and tree. They will tell you, if their confidence is yours, that they can see them at their work and play, in the deep woods where the sunlight never breaks, or where the blue-bells are woven into a perfumed carpeting.

If their vision be deemed imagination, let it be remembered that occultists throughout the centuries have testified to the existence of sub-human entities whose evolution runs parallel, but seldom touches, that of the human kingdom, and whose work would seem to have to do with vegetation and the life thereof.

Also it is not only the children who claim acquaintance with the faery world. The visions of artists and poets provide corroborative evidence. The Irish poet A. E. tells us that as he lies on the hill-side the lovely opalescent beings whom the Celts know as the Sidhe folks pass to and fro, and that the candle of his vision has been lighted since one ever remembered day when he was about seventeen years old, when the great heart of Nature beat for him, and has never since been stilled.

He is not alone in his experience. There are many, both children and grown-ups, to whom the little denizens of wood and hill are a vital reality in their subjective life. For all such vision is subjective rather than active. There is first the harmonising of the physical body, often through an intense realisation of the beauty of the world, before the focus of consciousness is shifted to the psychic plane. A certain lassitude of the body often ensues as vision grows clearer, and the peculiar translucent effects of the non-physical world are perceived.

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A child's difficulty in interpreting of his vision is heightened by his limited vocabulary. He cannot make clear to those who lack similar experience the nature of that which he has perceived.

"Isn't it funny," said one little boy, "that anything you've seen is always there? You've only got to think of a bit of it and it comes again."

"Like a picture?" asked his mother.

"No. It's quite real and it moves about."

To all but the psychics this may sound nonsense, but these latter affirm the existence of what may be termed the Memory of Nature, sometimes described in Eastern phraseology as the Akashic Records.

Every most trivial incident is perpetually visible in these "records," and may be witnessed and re-experienced, a veritable Book of Judgment which in the hither hereafter will be open to all. Psychics here and there catch glimpses of what is less a picture than a perpetual cinematograph of past experience.

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When we come to the more ordinary phenomena perceivable by the child clairvoyant we find that one of the most common is the possession of a little invisible friend.

The child persists in his assertion that he has a companion who is constantly with him. He speaks to him by name, and is so obviously convinced of his presence that often the mother—if not very understanding—feels "creepy," and forbids further reference to the subject.

One little girl—and her action is common to many—

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refused always to have her meals unless a place was laid beside her for "Dattony," her invisible companion, and she would turn naturally to the empty chair and carry on a conversation with her little playmate.

On one occasion her mother ordered her to stand in the corner—psychic children being highly strung, are often difficult to manage—whereupon the little one held out her hand to what appeared to be vacant air, and with a defiant "*We don't care, do we, Dattony?*" marched apparently hand-in-hand with her invisible companion to the corner, where she remained in deep conversation with her, until the mother, unable to bear the "spookiness" of it any longer, stopped the punishment.

Another very ordinary type of clairvoyance is the power to see those who have passed out of the physical body. Some children accept such vision as a natural and ordinary thing, but others who have begun to fear death, often owing to the foolish conversation of servants—are afraid if they happen to see one who is ignorantly labelled a "ghost."

An instance of this occurred a year or two ago. A mother heard a disturbance in her children's bedroom, and on running upstairs she found two of her children in a state of excitement, and the third sobbing in his bed. She asked the reason, and was told that all three children had seen their little brother, who had died a few months previously, standing at the foot of one of the beds. Two of the children began to question him eagerly, and he had smiled and held out his hand, but the third was frightened, and

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had thrown his pillow at him, crying to him to go away. Thereupon the vision of the little dead brother had faded, until none of the children could see him longer.

Another story of similar clairvoyance will perhaps bear quotation. During the war a little boy of three or four years was playing with his mother and her sister, when suddenly he looked up and said, "Unco (uncle) come in and say, 'Hello, little Pigeon.' " "Little Pigeon" was a nickname given to him by an uncle who was at the time abroad on active service, and the two sisters looked at each other anxiously as they heard the child's words. Later the news reached them that it was upon that day that their brother had given his life for his country.

Other children, although not normally clairvoyant, are peculiarly sensitive in the dream-state.

One little girl, throughout the war, insisted that every night when her body slept, she travelled in her "dream-body" across the water to her "Daddy" whom she adored, and who was serving in France, and although she was almost a baby, too young to have any knowledge of war-conditions, she gave details of much that he was doing, and actually foretold to within a week the date of his final return to England.

Sometimes the sensitiveness takes the form, not of clairvoyance, but of clairauidience.

A little girl of ten claimed that as she walked down a pathway bordered with flowers, every flower *sang*, reminding one of Saint Martin, who said, "I heard flowers that sounded, and I saw notes that shone."

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Nothing would shake her in her story, and there was a note of awe in her voice, as if she had undergone an experience too wonderful for her to find words for the telling.

A rather curious form of clairvoyance was that exhibited by another little girl, whose parents discovered that if they spread a pack of cards face downwards on the table she could pick up any card they chose to name. The same child, when she grew up, was obliged to forego the pleasures of Bridge because frequently when dealing, she would know every card as it left her hand.

These are very simple instances of ordinary clairvoyance, yet simple as they are they have been the cause of anxiety and disturbance to the children's parents. Psychic experiences occur daily, to both children and their elders, and if not understood often bring havoc in their train.

A child is peculiarly defenceless, receptive as he is to every vibration of thought and feeling. If a little of the veil be lifted and vision be his, a wise guidance is needed, so that if the faculty of psychic perception remain with him after the years of childhood be passed, he may forego the lesser psychism for the real spiritual vision.

There is so much of beauty in the vision of a child. If it can remain unspoilt until the difficult years of school-life are over, it adds much to the intensity and joy of living for its possessor. The psychic child becomes the sensitive man, responsive to subtler vibrations than those that affect his compeers. Where others are blind, he sees with an intensity of vision

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that reveals to him a little of the mystery lying hidden in the beauty of the world. For the sensitive temperament is always peculiarly affected by beauty, the quietude of the hills and wonder of the common country-side bring to such their message of peace and blessing more deeply than to those who perceive only with their physical eyes.

DOROTHY GRENSIDE.



AN APRIL SONG

Now running brooks proclaim with silver tongue
To every flower that opens lovely eyes,
Again is come the Spring that never dies,
And silent Winter's parting knell is rung
By bluebells down a greenwood glade, far-flung
Beneath the spreading flames of copper-beech,
Where happy throstles, piping each to each,
Greet April, ever fair and ever young :

Now surely God speaks, " This My world is fair ;
Know, all ye myriad creatures of My care,
Love shall endure, Death cannot vanquish Youth ;
Lo, in My harmonies ye shall rejoice,
Wait in My silence till ye hear My voice,
And through My beauty learn to know My truth ! "

ESTHER RAWORTH.



CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICS

Laurence Binyon

It is easy for the generality of men to accept the banalities of journalism : more easy than ever if the banal is presented in picturesque words with a lilt that makes those very words so easy to remember. Such words in such picturesque metrical form were the essence of the jingoism of Kipling, and it is not easy to forego his statements therefor. Indeed his flamboyant generalities were of just the quality of the quintessence, the trifling distilled perfume of the periodical Pressman. He had all the empressment of one whose finger is laid upon the public pulse, and he knew how to stir the imaginations, turgid though they be, of his fellow countrymen. Thus is it that he may declare the most improbable, and it will be accepted with applause. Thus was it that his famous jingoism, " For east is east and west is west, and never the twain shall meet " is quoted on all hands, and is deemed acceptable without evidence, and entirely sans explanation or material support.

The increasing interest taken in the literature, art, and philosophy of the east by the peoples of the west, and the advance of Japan on the lines of western civilisation, so-called, is sufficient indication that the facts are quite other than Kipling represented them. It is true that the world has advanced a little since the famous lines were written, and that no man can be blamed for giving voice to the general sentiments of his age—great are the rewards therefor—but nevertheless the world has not advanced so much farther along the road of progress, that there can be any essential difference in the spirit of the age.

And it is true that with the study of Oriental litera-

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ture, the appreciation of the technique of Oriental art, and the comprehension of Oriental ideals, the mind of the Occident is increasingly influenced. The growing number of the translations of Oriental verse into Occidental languages, the studies of Oriental art which are being published in Occidental tongues, and the influence of the eastern art upon western pictorial representation and decoration cannot be minimised. Similarly the east is drawing closer to the west in its desire to understand the ethic of the Occident. If it finds that ethic more substantial than its own, it will undoubtedly adopt it with the doubtful benefits it bestows, after the manner of Japan. If, on the other hand, it cannot morally adapt itself to that standard, it will, if only by holding its own, to some extent influence the development of the west. For to-day it is not within factitious and parochial limits that man desires to develop, but within those boundaries which are set to his activities by the sphere to which he is at present tied, and his thoughts are not turned towards the gaining of advantages for nationalities, but for the creation of a brotherhood of man, to which the contribution of any nationality is willingly accepted.

Yet it is still necessary for the western man to make an effort to understand the eastern, and it is to the interpreters of eastern art that the ordinary man is obliged to turn in his desire to comprehend. The ideals of the east and the west have hitherto been so fundamentally opposed that such interpretation has been essential. The west, hugging to its bosom the ideal of conquest, has regarded the east as somewhat from which wealth can be ravished by force of arms, and it has been successful in turning the only really military eastern people into a western type in this respect. Far from the mind of the west was any idea of the existence in the east of a culture, which it

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might be well to examine, and which would influence its own intellectual development very considerably.

The appreciation of the value of eastern culture is, however, gradually developing in the west, and that is due to the labours of a little group of students, the results of whose labours are becoming more prominent in the western world. In the ranks of this group stands Mr. Binyon, and his study of Chinese Art is valuable inasmuch as it shows the difference in the ideals held in the two systems. He has devoted considerable attention to the technique, which forms so essential a part of all Chinese art, equally in poetry and painting, and he has shown that, more than any of the evanescent nature schools of the west, China has given herself up to the presentation of nature at first hand. Now and then European art has turned once more from the great masters to the lessons of nature, but never has it appreciated, as does the Asiatic, the singleness of purpose, which can give a complete and beautiful significance to a drawing of one tree, or to the sentiment expressed in one or two lines of verse.

It is in the estimation of this kind of technique that Mr. Binyon excels. It is as if "he was meant, if people are ever meant, for the best sort of criticism; that criticism which is itself a kind of construction, or creation, as it penetrates, through the given literary or artistic product, into the mental and inner constitution of the producer shaping his work." And by this estimation of the value of Chinese art to the western artist for the fresh breath of a different inspiration which it brings with it, Mr. Binyon has provided a rule whereby the dimensions of his own creative work may be measured.

Perhaps, although it may be considered the best part of his work, and, indeed, of himself, it is a little unfortunate that Mr. Binyon has shown so clear an

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precise a conception of the technology of Chinese art. In other cases the very breath of the spirit by which that art is inspired, seems to have been inhaled by the translators of the poems. Nothing, for instance, could be more beautiful in the realm of poetry than Mr. Clifford Bax's *Twenty-five Poems from the Chinese*. It contains that fire of passion, which is not the flame of hell, and the very slender quality of the matter is supported by the fire of emotion. It is in truth rendered human, delicious, beautiful by that fire, and Mr. Binyon in his original verse lacks that consuming flame.

His spirit is tender but cold. He has caught the sparks of another's passion, as when he deals with the Tragedy of Attila he shows so clearly that the beginning of his inspiration was Meredith's poem on that subject. Choosing, as he does so often, the most magnificent drama for his subject, he somehow fails to convince the reader that the very fire of his thought is present in his words. It is absent, and in consequence the reader is forced, unwillingly it may be, to the conclusion that Mr. Binyon did not write poetry because he could not help it—the true criterion of any artistic production—but because he wished to do so. It is as if on the threshold of life he had been asked, "What go ye out to seek?" and had replied monosyllabically, "Fame." And to the naturally following question, "What wilt thou give for fame? Thy heart's blood, thy body's health, thy days to labour?" he had given only the answer, "I will give my dexterity."

It is not so much that he fails to create beauty. At times he touches the selfsame note as the Asiatics whom he so greatly adores, but English is not perhaps capable of the compression of the other language. An instance taken from the *Death of Adam* is a sufficient illustration of this quality.

Laurence Binyon

"He sits in idle stillness, yet at times
From the dark wells of musing some old hour
Floats upward, as the tender lotus lifts
Her swaying stalk up through the limpid depths
Of pools in rivers never known to man,
And buoyed on idle, wet, luxurious leaves
Peaceful opens white bloom after bloom."

But such quality is rare in the poems, and in spite of the emphasis laid by Mr. Binyon upon the technique of Chinese art he commits one fault, though by some it may be held no fault, of technique which is certainly not allowable. He writes sonnets. And he writes Shakespearian sonnets, true to form in rhyme sequence, not always so accurate in octet and sestet content, and in eight-syllable verses. The last he should on no account have done. If the footsteps of a master are followed, they must be followed exactly, otherwise the path is strayed from, and the wayfarer may easily become lost amongst the brambles and thorns of the thickets.

So often in modern times does the reach exceed the grasp, so often is it possible to dream dreams, to see visions of most perfect beauty, and alas—impossible to reproduce them in their full content for others. Verily the worship of beauty is a hard worship, and the utmost devotion is so frequently scorned, unrewarded, that man gives very proof of his true spirit by his unfailing readiness to give up all and follow that dread path, the pitfalls in which are so many and so secret, and the rewards so intangible, invisible, of the spirit only, even when they are obtained, the which is but seldom.

And the spirit of man is so indomitable, it craves so perversely for more difficulties to encounter, more dragons to slay, than those it would naturally and normally meet, that he will turn aside from the path that lies so open and inviting before him to the track-

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less waste wherein he may encounter these other heart-searchings, which he so clamantly desires.

Having all the qualities of a most constructive critic, Mr. Binyon must needs turn his face towards the field of creation, little realising that in doing so, he was turning from the bread of his life to seek sustenance from stones. Such is man, and such is the demand of beauty upon man, but it would, indeed, have been better had he not been led astray from the unobstructed path, for, even though that path appeared to him easy to follow, it was not the less difficult in reality, except that his peculiar talents fitted him better to cope with the difficulties it presented, than to find a different road to the Temple of Beauty for himself.

G. E. FUSSELL.



THE QUEEN'S EASTER

I THINK she called upon His name,
That first He came
To her, when no one else was near ;
And spoke of everlasting cheer.

As she had known how He would die,
And when and why,
So in her heart was no surprise—
But a great welcome in her eyes.

A while He stayed with her—and then
Came Magdalen
With speed a perfect gladness gives,
And sobbed : " Mother, the Master lives ! "

ARMEL O'CONNOR.

ANOTHER TELEPATHIC EXPERIMENT

SCIENCE, as everyone is aware, has bit by bit approached nearer to that widely frayed selvedge of physical knowledge that has never yet been hemmed ; and the thinker, holding the web of Science in his hands, has known that frayed selvedge to be attenuated to intangible finenesses of texture, and to merge into the unknown and the invisible.

Telepathy is accepted as a proved fact, but here again we find ourselves, when, so to speak, we approach its farther edge, losing that sense of woven solidity that showed us, neatly docketed and arranged, the thought-transference of A to B in diagram or word or name ; and, as in one or two of the instances quoted in my last article (January number of *Vision*), one may even find the attendant symbolism emerge, or the surroundings clairvoyantly perceived. What may be said of this power that is able to embrace not the thought only, but also its atmosphere ? And what of the realm of abstract thought ? Can that realm, too, be entered by the telepathic seeker after treasure, or must its subtle vibrations lose themselves in the mist of technical phraseology where the terms of the scientist and the occultist become entangled ? Who is to define and control such uncharted magnetic channels ?

In continuation of those experiments in Telepathy mentioned above, "M. P." and "E. C. M." decided to attempt to transmit pure abstract thought ; and, as a preliminary to possible further trials, achieved the following suggestive and interesting result. M. P. concentrated on the thought of "The perfect equilibrium"—meditating on the "rhythmic swing of the Soul"—the giving and receiving—symbolically expressed by the scales, supported on a golden upright

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shaft, and carrying the blue and white flames of Aspiration and Inspiration. E. C. M., the recipient, conceived first of all the following idea: "A twofold substance—Shadow and Reality; and that in which the Reality subsists is woven into your consciousness even as the colours of the rainbow are blended." A greater clarity then grew within this thought, and she perceived and wrote: "Prayer; an upward aspiration symbolised by the hands placed together and fingers pointing upwards. Meditation; symbolised by the hands folded flat upon the breast. Submission and Obedience—the contemplation of the Eternal Divine Spark within. And lastly, a Candle or Flame that symbolises the Spirit. I am conscious of a tremendous force of concentration which is centralised in your personality, and the symbol of the Flame with its halo of pale yellow and blue predominates."

In comparing these two thoughts—that of the sender and that of the receiver—the following points of resemblance are very striking.

Firstly, the intense concentration on the part of M. P. helped to give the thought—purely external as it was—a personal centre or focus which was felt by E. C. M. as such, and as being "woven into your consciousness as the colours of the rainbow are blended."

Secondly, the "twofold substance" described by E. C. M. as the Reality and Shadow (or reflection), corresponded with Aspiration (the reflection of the Divine), and Inspiration (its Reality or Action) conceived in the thought of M. P.

Thirdly, in E. C. M.'s later and clearer impression, *Prayer* represented the Aspiration, *Meditation* represented the poise between those two qualities of the Soul; *Obedience* or *Submission* represented the Inspiration or resultant action.

The single Flame, coloured in E. C. M.'s vision blue

Another Telepathic Experiment

and pale yellow, represented the perfect blending of those two qualities, united—only when the rhythm was harmonised—into one spiritual attribute. That Prayer and Meditation were symbolically pictured in E. C. M.'s mind as folded hands, in no way disturbs the conception. It was a gentle reinforcement of the thought, presented to the consciousness pictorially, rather than the naked symbol itself from which the thought of prayer and meditation had to be extracted.

There is a strange fascination in contemplating this dim country that may yet be traversed . . . where the highest conceptions of the mind may be traced from point to point like the faint track of a falling star.

E. C. MERRY.



SONNET

On Reading the Apocalypse

DEAR LORD, in pity, come not thus to me,
Trailing Thy majesty through streets of gold,
Where Night's vast pinions never can unfold,
Nor Beauty, scared by Time's grim visage, flee :
Oh, come not thus, I pray, lest sudden'y
My soul, enmeshed within Thy nimbus caught—
A fragile Semele with fear distraught—
Consumed amid such dazzling splendour be.
But breathe my name with tenderness as sweet
As Thou the weeping Magdalen didst greet
That first glad Easter morn beside Thy grave :
And let my weary head one moment rest,
As did the loved disciple's, on Thy breast—
This is the Paradise alone I crave.

K. M. MURPHY.

FANCIES

SOMETIMES it seems a depth of mystic meaning
Lies hid behind the things of every day :
The wall that bounds my garden may be screening
Enchanted woods where gnomes and fairies play.

I like to think that near to me are portals
From this dark planet into regions bright ;
The rustling breeze, the whispering of immortals ;
The raindrops' pattering, their footfalls light.

Could I but look beyond that far-off mountain,
The pathway to Olympus I might see.
There may be bubbling up in yonder fountain
The long-sought draught of immortality.

And sometimes under guise of man or woman,
Approaching through the narrow gates of birth,
It seems to me some god in semblance human
Has come to walk with us the ways of earth.

The flickering fire within a lantern burning
Is kin to that which with Prometheus came.
The road that lies beyond that distant turning
May lead direct to Algol's heart of flame.

And often, as I ponder in the gloaming,
The veil of flesh grows thin, and far and wide
I see, beyond the world's edge, green waves foaming
About Hy Bresil, where the gods abide.

R. A. V. MORRIS.

CONVENTUAL REFLECTIONS

IT is being impressed upon me with such sudden force that I feel almost as though I were making a great discovery, yet in my heart I have always known : it is the essence of wisdom to cut oneself adrift sometimes from all the thralldom of secular life ; to lay the surface self aside and let the hidden self emerge from its long captivity ; to relax—to “ let go.” When our lights burn low and the winds of the world threaten to snuff them out we go away to have them kindled afresh. It is essential that we should go, for what use is a lampless woman—or rather a mere bearer of a lamp whose flame has failed ? And, likewise, for the ultimate attainment of some degree of equipoise it is essential—on the seventh day, the Sabbath—that we should rest. And what than the cloister is better conducive to the necessary regenerative repose ?

And, oh, the glory of it all : the aching weariness ; then the sudden silence and absolute calm. The dread commotion of the mind is stilled ; the heart's distress eased. Somehow one's half-beliefs have merged into convictions ; somehow one's doubts are dust. Here, all round, life is beautiful yet busy—full and yet incredibly serene. It ascends to super-sense. It walks the earth, but it touches the stars ; contemplation and action linger, like lovers, lip to lip, and are one. “ We serve our purpose,” said a Sister of Mercy, once, to a materialistic critic, “ We balance things up a bit ! ” And indeed, I am beginning to feel that this little world in itself is one which is leant upon by the wider world without, infinitely more than is generally supposed. For the basic strength of a nation is—*must be*—spiritual strength.

Benediction, soon after my arrival, was delightful ; so simple and so inexpressibly pure ; beauty in itself

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so beautiful that it needed no adorning, and the heart throbbed *Deo Gratias* for the sweetness and the freshness of it all ; felt the ebb and flow of the seas of a great tranquillity ; felt a Hand descend and lay it gently down to rest. When the priest exposed the Blessed Sacrament, a bird, perched high in a neighbouring tree, sang out as though some inner ecstasy was suddenly set free, and the golden-red glow of the sunset kissed the white Host to flame. There is always an air of indescribable pathos about this mere handful of Catholics kneeling before the ruby-red light while, over the meadows, the bells of the big grey church hail Protestants from far and wide to adore so differently. And I who am nothing—I kneel here in the wonder of it all and close my eyes and see with some inner vision the world, even as each separate soul, clamouring to touch the fringe of the garment of God ; even as each separate soul, thirsting for the Benediction of the Beloved.

Here, gradually it is borne in upon one that all life, correctly lived, is sacramental, and by degrees one comes to learn that service is the most blessed thing on earth. As the wonderful days elapse no tears are shed for their departure ; deep in the heart one knows that when all this is over (as, in a sense, it can never be) an abundance of thanksgiving will blot out regret ; one will pass, that is to say, as one who has gathered roses to lay at the Master's feet—in a word, with a sense of the glory of gaining only that one may give.

Yesterday, being Sunday, I wandered down the white lanes and across the fields to the chapel now built above Robert Hugh Benson's grave. I was very early, and so I lingered in the meadows round the silent, sleepy house, and stood on the bridge near the garden where the chickens roam at will, and the flowers are in bud, and the wooden gate swings to

Conventual Reflections

the touch of other hands than his. And while I lingered, dreaming, he was there—everywhere—pointing out a thousand little loved things in the grounds he gloried in. (Long ago I used to read and hear of him, and then one day I found his *Life* in the dust of a railway bookstall. Later, his *Poems* came my way; pearls beyond price as the Open Sesame to the very Sanctum Sanctorum of his soul; then yesterday, at last, I found him.) Presently a bent old man hobbled up and lifted the latch of the chapel gate for me to pass through. And we talked as we climbed the white stone steps—his poor “rheumatics” rendering progress sadly slow. When I mentioned “Monsignore” he smiled across at me, “Bless you, lady,” he said, “we calls him ‘Father Hugh!’” And later, “Folks say he were a great man. That may be. We knows he *were a werry dear one.*” And as he lifted his cap and bent his head, he was sobbing like a child. During the service he stood behind me, singing lustily, and from further back came the soft, sweet voices of the nuns who had joined us.

Here again was the same simplicity and purity; except for the little red bowl of lighted sanctuary oil, everything was white—pure white—like the sweet, pale face of a virgin with a red rose tucked in her hair. And again the heart throbbed *Deo Gratias* for the absence of that galaxy of colour, fragrance, warmth, which combine to grasp the soaring spirit, drug it and hold it back. And, bereft of the exquisite, plaintive music and all that intoxicating sweetness in which so many Catholic churches abound, it seemed to me that the Faith suffered nothing—almost, with wondering eyes, one witnessed loss miraculously moulded into gain—for did I not once more detect (or did I dream it?) a strength too often draped, a naked sacerdotal strength that holds? Once, during Benediction, I tried to read the wording on the centre slab which

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marks Monsignore's resting-place. But I got no further than his name ; my eyes were full of tears. Assuredly, thought I in wonderment, he must, indeed, have been " a werry dear one."

Returning in the glow of the sunset and the hush of the dying day I realised why, of all convents in the world, the one I had chosen called to me. I had found Monsignor Benson—found him in the hearts of the simple folk who loved him ; in the country and the garden he adored ; in the lovely little chapel to which one wanders to pay homage to the dead, only to find that such men, thank God, cannot die. . . .

Sunset. Life is a series of dazzling skies ; down in the garden the still pool mirrors back their radiance and gradually the glory grips the heart—the sunrise, the sunset, the weird white radiance of the moon, the starlight of the evening, the starlight of the dawn—till the beauty becomes unbearable and the eyes close and one sleeps. Night folds a star into the heart and leaves another lingering in the skies to greet one as one wakes. And even as it pales, fanned by the breath of dawning day, and the lights in the Novitiate House and Presbytery go out, one steals across the garden, through the twilight and the brisk, pure air, to the little silent chapel which calls softly, like a mother, through the flickering candlelight. Ere the bell rings out and Mass begins, one has knelt alone a moment with one's soul. The nuns are there, but their presence never clashes with that sacred solitude. There is music in the jingle of beads caressed and cast aside ; there is poetry in the dreamy eyes, half closed. Instinctively one shuts one's own and prays—for those who have ears, but do not listen, for the thousands who have eyes, but cannot see. At the elevation of the Host the breath catches till the exquisite, poignant moment has passed, and then—somehow the silence ceases : something is singing—singing in the soul.

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And so the day—the busy day—begins. And how more beautifully?

Oh, there is an air of super-sanity about such a system of life as this! But it scarcely comes within the confines of my intentions, to advance the cloistered life as a system practicable for all, nor yet to plead for a Faith to which I do not belong. For myself, it is Christ whom I love, and because the Catholic Faith led me far on my way towards Him I am grateful, and I love it more than most. But to some of us there comes a time when we, as it were, bend the knee to Christ in the Tabernacle, cry "Hallelujah" to Him in the church, and rise and go on our way to seek our Love in the valleys, on the rough roads and over the sunlit hills. Orthodoxy, primarily an aid, once it has passed a given point becomes an obstacle. And Heaven forbid that men should ultimately be judged by whatsoever particular creed they adhered to rather than by the progress of their souls. The pity is that, speaking generally, the members of some one creed are lamentably blind to the beauty in all the rest, and to those who follow Christ *outside* the church they show that utter lack of sympathy, that intolerance and dread antagonism which takes the undisciplined, passionate heart and snaps it like a twig. Apparently they fail to see that the creature "converted" by force is small asset to any creed; that, indeed, paradoxical as it may sound, faith, by its very nature, is invulnerable to force. It is notable that the more advanced members—those who, so to speak, delve down to the depths and hold their dogmas truly—employ far subtler means. Thus, harping back to Catholicism, one finds that the most Catholic Catholics in the world (e.g. its monks, its nuns, and, commonly—I speak from my own experience—its priests) "mould," as it were, "by contact"; silently, for the most part, they draw one on by the sanctity and

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beauty of their own pure lives until, if it is to be, one comes upon the great heart of their faëry Faith, and there, should the soul be all asob for anchorage, one can but kneel and so seek sanctuary. It is the heart that holds, but, alas, too few of us find it; prejudice and bigotry and calumny keep many from the quest—and, too, times without number, it is the would-be “converters” who all unconsciously conceal it. It is my misfortune that I have come to hear the voices of the latter even here and I, as I listen, am drawn forever closer to the pool by the white gates. It is so like my life: pebbles are tossed from the world without; a ripple to disturb the stillness, a little sound to break the quiet—then, thank God, peace again. It may be there will come a day when the world will fling a rock into my pool, but the water’s wounds heal swiftly; it buries its dead, dreams on and its lips are dumb.

They are all jumbled up—the many members of the wide world’s many Faiths—but though we stand on different ground we reach out to the same God—and is it preposterous, even, to presume that each Faith may serve its purpose in helping towards a better balance the complex life of the world which nurtures it? Surely the vision to strive for is that which detects the beauty, not of, alone, *one* Faith, but of faith itself—that element divine which, adapting itself to individual demands, leads men by diverse paths to the one stupenduous Truth? I have come to think that the spirits of the wise are fundamentally nomadic, treading softly in the knowledge that *all ground is holy ground*; that it is right and wise to wander upon a holy quest. And though wandering must lead us, if to Christ, then inevitably to Calvary and His Cross, the wanderer’s way is a way worth while, and his death is the gate of Life.

But, oh, seek solitude sometimes—silence and

The Wind

peace and shelter in a place apart. Leave room in your week for the essential Sabbath that the winds of the world may never extinguish your light. For there are dismal corners, calling—and it does not take a Florence Nightingale to be the Lady of a Lamp.

VERA G. PRAGNELL.



THE WIND

THE Wind blew through the body of me,
So wild and pure and wondrous and free,
As though this form of pleasure and pain
Were fine as mist and clear as the rain.

The Wind swept through my tissues, like wings
Of music sweeping responsive strings,
So sweet and swift, so mighty and sharp,
As though my flesh and bones were a harp.

The Wind ran through the vail of my breast
So sure and so straight, from East to West,
As though my blood and my breath were not,
And Soul transparent life's weight forgot.

And Dream of Truth through my Spirit passed,
As through my heart went the Wind so fast ;—
And this is How GOD's Dear Breath will go
Through the blessed Spirits in Heaven, I know.

And here—beside my hearth and its flame—
Another Truth to my wonder came :—
'Tis thus the wind of my little songs
Blows through the Heart where their Hope belongs.

MAY DONEY.

THE DOOR

THROUGH slow, soft-driven rain,
Past the huddled houses, waiting dumb
In a muted street, for dawn, I come
To it, and knock again.

And waiting there, hear clear
Above the whispering of the leaves.
And the little sounds the silence weaves,
The quick steps drawing near.

Aye ! though the feet be dust
They ring out where rang echoes alone,
Down strange paths with the dark overgrown
Running swift to my trust.

Although the hands rest cold,
They shall turn the key, open to me
On a peace and a warm ecstasy ;
On a faith that shall hold.

On that side of the door
All yesterday and all to-morrow,
The ebbing, flowing tide of sorrow
Shall be no more, no more. . . .

I. B. LEGGATT.

WITHIN THE ROSE

DEEP in the heart of a rose new-born
Stands a wicket-gate ajar,
To the shining path of the Golden Morn
To the Silent Lands afar.

As I enter the heart of the mystic rose
Swings the wicket-gate behind,
And I gaze on a dreamland no one knows
Save the wise, all-seeing blind.

H. L. HUBBARD.

TWO PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

[These notes have been sent by Mrs. John, the mother of the brilliant young poet, Edmund John, whose posthumous work, "*Symphonie Symbolique*," has recently been published.]

I MAKE no comment on the value of the following instances as evidences of that truth that

"The spirit-world around this world of sense
Floats like an atmosphere,—and everywhere
Wafts thro' these earthly mists and vapours dense
A vital breath of more ethereal air,"

but leave it for others to judge. I merely record an experience which was related to me by one whose intellectual powers, strong, well-balanced mind, and high sense of rectitude allow no doubt as to the reliability of the narrator, and another which actually happened within my personal knowledge.

I. Some years ago a friend of ours, whose wife had passed away several months previously, was awakened in the early hours of the morning by the violent and prolonged ringing of a bell that hung upon his bedroom wall. Greatly startled, he rose to see who could be ringing at that hour, but no one was about, and the servants—who slept in another part of the house—had heard nothing. Somewhat puzzled he returned to his room, but was unable again to sleep. And then he became aware of a presence, advancing slowly and noiselessly towards the foot of the bed. Our friend was one of the last men likely to be the victim of hallucination, or to become the prey of over-wrought nerves, neither did he believe in the supernatural.

In the dawning light the form was plainly discernible, and he perceived that it was of a soft, greyish, cloudy appearance; a sort of nimbus from out of which he recognised his wife's face. She smiled at

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him, gravely and sweetly, and then spoke words of affection and guidance too sacred to be inscribed here. As gently as she came she disappeared.

Once more in the dimness of another dawning day she came to give him comfort and courage, and then—her mission apparently accomplished—she appeared no more.

II. It is well known to psychical researchers that some animals, notably horses, dogs and cats, are more highly developed sensitives than human beings, and the following events certainly appear to corroborate this. At the time of these occurrences we were living in the charming pine country near Sandhurst, through which passes part of the ancient Roman Road. One evening my maid (who has been our devoted servant and friend for thirty-four years) had occasion to go to a neighbouring village one and a half miles away. As the road was lonely she was always accompanied by our collie,—Jock—another faithful, loving and most intelligent friend.

The road, so steeply undulating that it was called "the switchback," was bordered on one side by glorious pine-woods, and on the other was sparsely dotted by a few houses standing far back in their well-timbered grounds.

Within quite a short time of their departure, to my astonishment, the two returned, Jock slinking in sheepishly, with waggling, self-conscious gestures only observable when he had done something of which he was much ashamed.

"What is the matter?" I exclaimed. "What has happened to bring you back so soon?"

"Oh, something *most* strange, Madam," replied the maid excitedly. "What it means I have no idea. I can't get Jock to go on to C—— anyhow; he has been scared nearly to death, and I didn't care to go on by myself."

Two Psychic Experiences

It transpired that at a certain part of the road, about half a mile away, my maid, for no apparent reason, felt a sort of nervous dread take possession of her, as if some strange, unfriendly influence that might develop into active harm, was there; but as she had experienced this sensation, less strongly, when passing this spot before, without mentioning it to anyone for fear of ridicule, she strove, as previously, to shake it off. She was proceeding swiftly when the dog, who was ambling happily along just inside the wood, began to whine, and suddenly rushed out to the maid endeavouring to induce her to turn back by every means in his power. In the bright moonlight she could see him, tail tightly tucked, eyes beseeching, mane bristling, yet quivering in every limb. Back towards home he ran then, unwilling to leave her, back to her side again—whining, pleading, excited in the highest degree. He was no coward, for once he had saved her from an insulting man by his fierce attack along that same road, and no human prowler would have daunted him.

The moonlight streamed for some distance into the wood, which was not very thick near the highway and neither man nor beast was there.

Dragging Jock along by his collar the maid went forward, but not far, for the big straining animal was too determined for the struggle to continue long. Coaxing and scolding were equally unavailing. Past the spot he would not go, and when he was loosed he simply shot back for some distance and waited for her to rejoin him. All the time the sensation of something sinister and terrifying never left her, and when at length she followed the dog he welcomed her with barks of joy, and a relief that they both shared.

Now, of all things in the world a walk in the woods was Jock's delight, and never before, nor since, in all his long life was the dog known to desire to return

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home or leave the few companions whom he would allow to take him out.

As the story was being related I recalled a strange occurrence that had happened on that identical spot a few years previously which was entirely unknown to my maid.

Late one winter evening my son was driving home along this road when, so suddenly as almost to pitch him out of the dogcart, the mare stopped. This was surprising as Kitty was the most willing of creatures. My son whipped her up, but with the exception of danc-ing a few steps sideways, she would not budge. As neither threats nor persuasions prevailed, my son got out and examined the road by the light of the carriage lamps, but no obstruction was there, not even a puddle nor a scrap of paper to frighten the mare. He then discovered, to his amazement that she was trembling violently, and that her breath was coming in short gasps, as if from fear. Seeing that she could not be driven, he tried to lead her, and, after a short tussle, by dint of soothing words and encouraging pats, he got her, half backing, to proceed ; then jumping in, he drove her swiftly and without further trouble the rest of the way to her own stable.

After the *second* of these incidents we made enquiries of some of the " old inhabitants " in the village, and ascertained that at various times, few and far between, other people had passed through somewhat similar experiences at the spot, but we failed to learn whether any tragedy had taken place there, within *modern* days, at any rate. It would be interesting to know whether the proximity of numerous " barrows " which are all about this part could afford a clue to the mystery.

MARGARET JOHN.



Some say that gleams of a remote world
Visit the soul in sleep.—SHELLEY.

THE PILGRIMAGE

It was a very cold winter. Before Christmas it rained, cold and hard were the drops, so that they stung people's cheeks and the backs of their hands. In those days men drew their brown cloaks about them, and went with their heads bent to the wind. The women could not knit but sat in their doorways with their stiff fingers spread out over *scaldini*. As for the children, they cried a good deal, the weather hurt their tender skins, their little legs grew rough and red, and the frost nipped the ends of their ears. Indeed they were to be pitied. Even on Sundays there was little meeting and talking in the Square. Why, the very road was grey with cold.

"To look at the fountain gives me the toothache," said Lucia the fruit-seller of Santa Croce. It chilled her to see the greenstuff in her shop, endive and dandelion, lemons, an orange or two, scanty fennel, so she shut it up and took to her bed for warmth, the wise woman.

"Will it be warmer soon?" said Nello to the Chestnut Vendor.

"No," said the Chestnut Vendor.

"Not warmer. . . ."

"Colder," said the Chestnut Vendor. As they were standing on the bridge, he bade Nello look down on the willow trees and osiers by the water's edge. There was a fig tree naked and grey, and here and there bunches of reeds glowed red.

Nello said: "Is it the Burning Bush?"

"I wish it were," said the Chestnut Vendor. "What do you see on the trees?"

"Birds," said Nello.

"Few or many?"

"Why, a great many," said Nello, "a very great

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many, they are close together on the willow branches. I can see yellow feathers in their wings. If the water did not make so much noise I believe I could hear them sing."

"They have come from the mountains because it is too cold for them there. Soon it will be too cold for them here."

"Where will they go then?" said Nello.

"Further south."

"Ah . . . further south. . . . Shall we have snow?" Nello said.

"Who knows. Here's two chestnuts for you, one to warm each hand. Now run home to your mother."

Nello gave one of the chestnuts to his mother, but she was not hungry she said. Then he ate them both.

The Chestnut Vendor was right. It grew colder yet. On Christmas Eve, at midnight the three masses were chanted in honour of the Lord God and of His Son. The incense hung and floated on the air and with it was mixed the breath of the praying people.

"It is true," then said Nello, "I can see my prayer going to God; now when it reaches Him I wonder what He will do with it."

Nello and his mother knelt for a long time upon the stones of the church floor. She never spoke but told her beads. At the altar there were three priests in white, the light shone upon their robes which they had bedecked with the golden roses of Paradise. One of them covered his face with a white and shining covering.

Nello said: "Is it wings? . . . or perhaps, poor man, he is crying with the cold." But his mother did not hear him for the priest chanted "*Sursum Corda*."

And "*Habemus ad Dominum*," sang the choir.

"Mother, mother," cried Nello. And when his mother looked down at him, "Oh, mother, what can

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have happened to my legs. From my knees I cannot feel them any more."

Then his mother spread out her skirts and made him kneel upon them, and a piece of them she tucked over his legs for her skirts were wide. She took a shawl from her shoulders and wrapped it round Nello. Besides, she took his hand in hers.

"Nello, lean against my side," she whispered. When the third mass was said they went their ways home.

"Oh ho," cried Nello, "I can feel Holy Water on my forehead, and the Holy Water is cold——" His mother laughed. "Why, silly boy, it is snowing—come quickly," she said.

On the San Silvestro a girl came into the *Ruina* from a side street, balancing a pitcher full of water upon her head. Here she met her lover suddenly face to face. She started, the pitcher fell and the water streamed over the *Ruina*. There were two pairs of wet feet, but it is likely the lovers did not cry over the mishap. It is certain Nello did not. The next morning there was a fine strip of ice on the *Ruina*, so that Nello and his friends could slide. Slide they did all day long, and the nipping wind whistled through the *Ruina*. Nello did not heed it. The baker's wife stood at her shop door to talk with Fra Ginevro the mendicant. He was stamping his bare sandalled feet upon the ground to warm them. Already he had drawn his brown cowl over his head, and his eyes gleamed out of the shadow.

"Madonna, how that child coughs!" he said.

"Cough," said the baker's wife and glanced at Nello. "Oh," she said, "children always cough."

"I've a long round," said the friar. "May be it will warm my feet." He laughed.

"San Antonio be with you," said the baker's wife, and they parted.

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When Nello went home to ask his mother for dinner he found her at her prayers. On the wall near the window there was pinned a picture of Our Lady with her Son as a Child in her arms. The Madonna pleased Nello, he liked her fair pink cheeks, her blue robe and her golden crown. As for the Bambino he did not look at it overmuch. In very truth he could not away with babies, he feared them. But he told no one of this, keeping his own counsel. Under the picture was a rude shelf of wood; on the shelf a glass vessel, coarse and broken, holding a sprig of rosemary.

One day Nello asked: "Does she like the rosemary?"

"Yes," his mother said.

"I wonder why, it is not very pretty."

"No, it is not very pretty, but it is the best I have."

"It is dusty," Nello said.

His mother did not answer but she touched the picture and the shelf and the sprig of rosemary lightly with her apron.

When Nello went home to ask his mother for dinner, he found her at her prayers, kneeling beneath the picture of the Madonna. As for himself, he stood in the open doorway.

"Ai. . . . Ai. . . . I want to eat," he cried. "I am hungry."

His mother did not rise from her knees but turned to him kneeling as she was. Her two hands were clasped and held against her breast. When she saw Nello she opened her eyes widely. "Giovanni," she cried in a loud voice, "Giovanni . . . ah. . . ."

Nello stood in the doorway.

His mother swayed to and fro as she knelt. She sank and dropped her hands to the floor. There she was on her hands and knees. And she looked at Nello.

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He was afraid and cried : " Mother—mother—mother."

He ran to her, he clutched at her arm and her skirts tears running down his cheeks. " Mother . . . what . . . what ? " he said.

She answered him : " Nothing," and " I took you for another . . . no matter . . . it is finished."

After she had said this, she kissed him. Then she set him at the table and she gave him soup in a bowl and bread and bade him eat. While he did so, she went about the room. Here she put a chair straight against the wall, there she folded up a garment and laid it away ! She drew up the coverlet upon the bed, and smoothed it with her hand.

Nello said : " Mother are you to have no dinner ? "

" No," she said.

Presently she sat down opposite to him, her arms on the table, her chin on her hands. So she sat and looked at the child.

" Mother, why do you look at me ? "

" Do I look ? " she said.

" Are you cold, Mother ? "

" Mortally cold," she said. But presently she cast aside her shawl, so that it slipped to the floor. She paid it no heed so there it lay.

Then she said, " I burn."

" Mother," said Nello, " I do not like you very much to-day—and I do not think you like me."

She laughed.

" Go and play," she said, and out he went at the door not looking back.

When he was gone she laid her head down upon her arms, hiding her face.

The next day Nello told the Chestnut Vendor that his mother was ill.

" Ah, poor soul," said the Chestnut Vendor.

" She has the fever," said Nello, nodding his head.

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"Who told you that?" said the Chestnut Vendor sharply.

"Why, they said so . . . and I heard them . . . the women that came to our house this morning. My mother lay still in bed, she said nothing, but the women they talked—and talked. Oh, Chestnut Vendor, what is the fever?"

"It is a sickness. Many have the sickness because of the cold. Here are two chestnuts, Nello, to warm your two hands."

Nello laughed. "Why," he said, "do you know my hands are very warm indeed!" Still he took the chestnuts.

"Eat them," said the Chestnut Vendor.

But Nello laughed again shrilly. He said, "It is splendid, I am not even hungry—and so God be with you, Chestnut Vendor." He waved his hand and made to cross the bridge.

"Whither away, pair of red cheeks?" called the Chestnut Vendor.

"I go to pray," Nello answered over his shoulder.

"To play?" said the Chestnut Vendor.

"To pray . . . I am going on a pilgrimage to the Three Shrines to pray for my mother to Madonna." He signed himself and away he went over the bridge. Quickly he went for he felt gay and light-hearted.

"It is very strange," he said to himself, "and I should be sorry instead I am glad and hot, it seems to me that my feet do not touch the ground."

He came to a place where the roads divide. The big plain road goes on; white and broad it is, and it goes gently down the hill. The little rocky road leads up, steep it is and narrow, it goes to the Shrine of "Our Lady and the Angels."

Where the roads divide there were three boys playing with dice. Their names were Desidero and Julio and Mario. There they were under an olive tree

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playing with dice. One of them said, "Stay with us, Nello, it is cold, but see we have made a good little fire of green olive sticks."

Nello shook his head. He said, "I am going to the Shrine of 'Our Lady and the Angels.'" He signed himself and went up the little rocky road.

There was Our Lady in her Shrine. She was dressed in a white and blue gown and had flowers in her hand. Down went Nello on his knees.

"*Ave Maria*," he prayed, joining his hands. "*Ave Maria gratia plena. . . Dominus tecum . . . benedicta tu. . .* I am tired. . . *Ora pro nobis. . .* Oh, I am tired. . . ." He shut his eyes and put out his hands. "Oh, Madonna," he said, "very cold is your blue and white gown." And he laid his head against her foot. The grey olive trees swayed to the wind, the clouds moved and hung lower in the sky.

When Nello opened his eyes he thought his mother stood beside him in a white long night-gown.

"Oh, Mother," he said, "I did not know you were here. Are you better? Why are you in your night-gown? Let us go home, I am *so* cold, and so are you . . . your feet are like stone. Mother, mother, I am cold, can you not warm me, can you not cover me? . . . Unkind, unkind, you are not my mother. Who are you, cruel woman, with the cold feet? Where is Madonna . . . *gratia plena. . .* Oh, I am cold—cold."

Nello rose to his feet. Down he went stumbling upon the stones of the little rocky way. Once he fell and cut his cheek. It was dusk and he could no longer see well. Besides, he shivered and shook from head to heel. . . . "Cold—cold, cold," he moaned. At the place where the roads divide there was a little heap of white ashes. Desidero and Julio and Mario had gone home long since. Nello took the big plain road down the hill.

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"Haste, haste," he said. "I have not finished my pilgrimage." He began to run. He ran from side to side of the big plain road, not straight ahead. He knew that he was doing this, but he could not tell why he did it. He was little pleased that a red cat ran with him following him and laughing aloud all the time. Presently there was a white cat with the red cat, and they told each other secrets and laughed. Soon Nello knew there was a great crowd in the road, little men with long long arms, women with no feet.

"Ai . . . Ai . . ." he cried. "I am afraid." Faster he ran and faster from side to side of the big plain road. And still the red cat was after him and the white cat and the little men with long long arms and the women with no feet. . . . Oh, the weary, weary way! Suddenly he came to Our Lady's Shrine, Madonna of the Quintiliolio. Our Lady was in a gown of blue and crimson and she came out of her shrine to meet Nello. He threw himself crying and panting on the ground.

"Save me, save me . . ." he cried. "I am followed by the red cat and the white cat and the horrid little men with long long arms and the fearful women with no feet. Save me, save me," he cried.

But Our Lady smiled. "See, Nello," she said, "and look behind you. Surely you are not afraid of your own little school-fellows?"

Nello looked. Sure enough there were Desidero and Julio and Mario and Gigi and Fiametta and Cecilia and all the children out of school. They had books and slates in their hands, their hair and their garments streamed out in the wind. They went shouting and dancing and singing.

"They are glad," said Our Lady, "because holidays have begun."

Nello laughed till he cried.

The Pilgrimage

When he looked again there was no one in the big plain road. It was quite empty.

"What shall I do now?" he said.

"There is only one Shrine more," Our Lady told him. "You must go there and then you may go home."

"Aha! . . . Aha!" cried Nello. . . . "I know you now, who you are, Lucia, the fruit-seller of Santa Croce. I can see your basket full of figs." He turned off the road into the olive yard that was upon the left-hand side. How rough, how rough was the path. Nello found himself upon his hands and knees. When he saw blood upon his fingers, he was afraid and cried for a long time. He said: "Now why am I here all alone among the sharp stones? There is something that I have forgotten, something cold and heavy. If I could remember it, I should be happy. This cold and heavy thing is with me, it weighs me down, it makes me very tired. . . . If I could forget it I should be happy. . . . I cannot remember it and I cannot forget it."

As he was on his hands and knees he played at being a dog and barked as he crawled. It seemed to him that he did this well, for between each bark he drew breath with a strange noise like a dog's growl. He began to laugh with pleasure and to cough, but stopped short. "The thing," he moaned, "the cold and heavy thing. . . ."

When he came to the third shrine, there was Our Lady sitting upon its steps with the Child asleep on her knees. She was dressed all in white. The moon had risen and shone upon her bright robe bedecked with the golden roses that grow in the garden of Paradise. She had a lily in her hand.

"Gabriel gave you that lily," said Nello.

"Yes," she answered, "long, long ago."

Nello moaned. "The thing, Madonna, the cold and

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heavy thing. . . . I cannot remember it and I cannot forget it. . . ."

She said: "It is that your mother is sick of the fever and that you are sorry."

"Yes," said Nello, "she is sick and I am sorry. I know—that is the cold and heavy thing—but it is so far away I cannot touch it."

"It will come nearer soon."

"Will you bring it nearer?"

"No."

"Will the Bambino bring it?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"Soon, he is keeping it inside his little white frock . . . near his heart. . . ."

"Madonna, I have no rosemary for you, I am sorry. . . ."

"Have you nothing for me, Nello?"

"I have two roasted chestnuts."

"Well then put them in the Bambino's two little hands."

"He is asleep."

"Yes, do not be afraid."

Nello put the chestnuts in the Bambino's two little hands. When he did this, Madonna drew the veil from her golden head and wrapped it about Nello.

"It is warm," he said laughing gaily. It lay about him like a mist, or like the sweet incense in Church, it lay upon his breast and upon his forehead; lightly it covered his eyes. He could not see well any more. An angel came and took him by the hand. Now the angel's face was covered with his two wings.

"Are you perhaps crying?" Nello asked.

"No," said the Angel.

"Are you Gabriel?"

"No," said the Angel, "but I am like him! Will you come home?"

The Pilgrimage

"Willingly," Nello said.

As they went, Nello knew that a brown cowed monk had hold of his other hand. How dark it grew—and what a mist. It lifted a moment, and there was the Chestnut Vendor close by him.

"Aha, Nello!" said the Chestnut Vendor. "You are in great company to-night."

Down came the mist and Nello saw him no more. Again it lifted. Desidero and Julio and Mario came flying through the air on bright wings. On their heads were crowns of olive. They held one a tambourine and another a pipe and another a trumpet.

"Wonderful!" said Nello. "I did not know they were angels."

Nello stood on his own threshold. There was no mist and no Angel. The brown-cowled monk was gone. He opened the door and there was a blaze of light. His mother lay upon her bed. There was a tall candle lighted by her head and a tall candle lighted by her feet. Between the candles a Little Sister knelt and prayed. By the table sat Lucia, the fruit-seller of Santa Croce. The baker's wife went about the room with soft padding steps.

Nello came among them. He cried, "Mother . . ." with a loud voice and fell face down across the bed.

"Ai . . . Ai . . ." screamed the baker's wife in anger, "his muddy clothes upon the sheet!"

The Little Sister went on praying.

"Poor lamb," said Lucia the fruit-seller of Santa Croce. She went and touched Nello. She said, "Come, my poor little boy." She stooped and lifted him in her arms. "Come, Nello." His head slipped sideways and the candle light fell upon his face.

"Oh, my God," said Lucia, "the child too . . . ! The child too . . . !"

GRACE JAMES.

MEDITATION

OFTEN I lay me under the silver willows, my chin resting in my hands, and gaze into the deep still silent pool. Beyond—the sunshine woos the gay green meadows, bright with golden kingcups,—but here is a drowsy murmurous shade and a deep sweet sense of infinite peaceful rest. Often I come in the hot shimmering summer days and naked, plunge into the cool green pool under the willows ; and then I lie outstretched upon the grassy bank, refreshed, gazing into the water, thinking, while the fragrant breeze sighs and whispers through the long lush grasses that nod half-dreaming in the shadows.

Still I lie and gaze unseeing into my pool, a great stillness creeps over me as I listen to the birds' sweet tender song, and I know that I and the Beloved are but one, with all things ; and that though pent up within the bondage of the flesh, yet am I also something wonderful, infinitely beautiful,—an immortal soul. My senses fade away in dreams such is the hidden magic of my sleepy pool, and then I seem to wake again, only the dappled shadows playing on the water, only the mysterious silence which soothes me with its soft clinging fingers.

The dusk is falling, and the soft night air grows chill. The wild fowl are streaming off into the sunset, whither all things go. When shall they return ?

A. CATHCART BRUCE.



IN truth the Weaver of Tears abides in the heart of woman. O Mother of Pity, of Love, of deep Compassions ; with thee it is to yearn for ever for the ideal human to bring the spiritual love into fashion with human desire, endlessly to strive, endlessly to fail, always to hope in spite of disillusion, to love unswervingly against all baffling and misunderstanding, and even forgetfulness.

FIONA MACLEOD.

THE DAY'S RULE:

A MYSTIC'S CALENDAR FOR APRIL

READERS are invited to assist in the compilation of this monthly calendar of quotations which is intended to serve as a daily rule for the direction of thought and meditation. See *Vision Prize Competition* at the end of this number.

Apl.

1. When the soul loses the limit of selfishness—a limit which fixes the soul in itself—it has no limit but in God, who is without limit. When self dies in the soul, God lives.
MDME. GUYON.
2. All rising swelling Pride, which contendeth about Opinions, is an Image of Self.
JACOB BOEHME.
3. In all acts whatever, whether of commission or omission, there is nothing save absence of attachment, to distinguish the fool from the man of wisdom.
THE UPANISHADS.
4. I stand with awe before the mysteries of the heavens, and adore the creator. I kneel with reverence before the greater mystery Man—God becoming manifest in the flesh.
ALFRED G. BACON.
5. The highest aspect of alchemy is the transformation of vices into virtues by the fire of the good, the purification of the mind by suffering, the elevation of the divine principle of man over the animal elements of his soul.
PARACELSUS.
6. Words are the Daughters of Earth: deeds are the Sons of Heaven.
INDIAN PROVERB.

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7.	I go to prove my soul. I see my way, as birds their trackless way. I shall arrive.	BROWNING.
8.	Liberation is not on the other side of the sky, nor in the nether world, nor on earth ; liberation lies in the mind purified by proper Spiritual Knowing.	THE UPANISHADS.
9.	Within ourselves we have a hope which always walks in front of our present experience. It will never accept any of our disabilities as a permanent fact ; it sets no limit to its own scope ; . . . and its wild dreams become true every day.	TAGORE.
10.	One equal temper of heroic hearts, Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will, To strive . . . and not to yield.	TENNYSON.
11.	To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite To forgive wrongs darker than death or night, To defy Power, which seems omnipotent, To love, and bear ; to hope till Hope creates From its own wreck the thing it contemplates ; Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent : This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free ; This is alone Life, Joy, Empire and Victory.	SHELLEY.
12.	Poets are the trumpets which sing to battle ; . . . poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.	SHELLEY
13.	Ah, little reck's the labourer How near his work is holding him to God.	WHITMAN.

The Day's Rule

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| 14. | <p>Ah, Love, could you and I with Fate conspire
 To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire
 Would we not shatter it to bits—and then
 Remould it nearer to the heart's desire ?</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">OMAR KHAYYAM.</p> |
| 15. | <p>Relate thyself not with the future, nor with what
 has gone by ; live the present out with smiling
 heart.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">THE UPANISHADS.</p> |
| 16. | <p>Thou, O my God, Who art rich in all things, give
 food to him who is so weary ; and stitch him
 together who is torn.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">S. AUGUSTINE.</p> |
| 17. | <p>O grant thou unto me a Path whereon I may pass
 in peace.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">LITANY TO OSIRIS.</p> |
| 18. | <p>I have learned to understand dimly the truth of
 three great paradoxes—the blessing of a curse
 —the voice of silence—the companionship of
 solitude.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">MICHAEL FAIRLESS.</p> |
| 19. | <p>The net-work of words is like a big forest ; it is
 the cause of curious wanderings.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">INDIAN SAYING.</p> |
| 20. | <p>Words alone are often of no effect, but example
 speaks to the heart. Be yourself the most
 humble and patient, the most contented and
 obedient, the most docile and regular of all
 whom you govern.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">FÉNELON.</p> |
| 21. | <p>In the hollows of quiet places we may meet, the
 quiet places where is neither moon nor sun, but
 only the light as of amber and pale gold that
 comes from the Hills of the Heart. There, listen
 at times ; there you will call and I hear : there
 will I whisper, and that whisper will come to
 you as dew is gathered unto grass, at the rising
 of the moon.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">FIONA MACLEOD.</p> |

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| 22. | <p>I am he that walks with the tender and growing night,
 I call the earth and sea, half hid by the night.
 Press close, magnetic, nourishing night,
 Night of the Southern wind, night of the large,
 few stars.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">WHITMAN.</p> |
| 23. | <p>It cannot be that such intensest yearning,
 Such fierce and incommunicable care
 Starred on your face, as though a crystal burning,
 Is wasted on the air.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">HERBERT RENCH.</p> |
| 24. | <p>The very day my spirit did inspire,
 The world's fair beauty set my soul on fire.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">TRAHERNE.</p> |
| 25. | <p>And because I love this life, I know I shall love
 death as well.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">TAGORE.</p> |
| 26. | <p>A healthy mind is a castle that cannot be invaded
 without the will of its master.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">PARACELSUS.</p> |
| 27. | <p>Things that are considered now to be impossible
 will be accomplished ; that which is unexpected
 will in future prove to be true, and that which
 is looked upon as superstition in one century will
 be the basis for the approved science of the next.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">PARACELSUS.</p> |
| 28. | <p>Beware when the great God lets loose a thinker
 on this planet.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">EMERSON.</p> |
| 29. | <p>Beautiful is it to understand and know that a
 Thought did never yet die : that as thou, the
 originator thereof, hast gathered it and created
 it from the whole Past, so thou wilt transmit it
 to the whole Future.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">T. CARLYLE.</p> |
| 30. | <p>I have entered in as a man of no understanding,
 and I shall come forth in the form of a strong
 Spirit.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BOOK OF THE DEAD.</p> |

EX LIBRIS

A GUIDE TO THE LITERATURE OF VISION

LAST LETTERS FROM THE LIVING DEAD MAN. By Elsa Barker. (William Rider & Son, 4s. 6d. net.)

The attention of anyone who reads a great number of books of the automatic type, cannot but be arrested by a certain quality in the book under consideration. It is a quality of conflict, and this quality is made evident by the transcriber in her Introduction.

In this (which is not without its egotistical side), she is obviously exasperated at being interrupted in her own literary endeavours, and is at pains to account to herself—as much as to the public—for the precise nature of this last batch of Letters from "X." She argues strongly in favour of the acknowledgment of unnamable phenomena, which, however, she proceeds to label very carefully from the terminology of the Psycho-Analyst, to whom she has fled for intellectual refuge, and takes comfort in Jung's assurance that "the irrationality of the great powers (of human life) is shown by its so-called *accidentalness*."

Her keen and energetic mind is of the type that cannot accept blindfold all that comes to her in the way of psychic power. She possesses a critical faculty that has been so trained and leashed that it is able (by exhaustive comparison) to obliterate from her mind every *definition* of God, and to accept Him "without words." And it is this intense and vital critical faculty which can be traced almost right through the letters. That may be a rather startling statement for the many who believe that the whole of these three volumes of Letters were dictated by the discarnate personality of "X." That all the earlier ones were so dictated one can have little doubt; but in the present volume there lurks a sense of the alternate surging upwards of two distinct personalities, that of Miss Barker and that of "X."

One may observe in passing that Miss Barker unconsciously "gives herself away" when she admits that anything in the nature of direct prophecy that occurred always "startled her out of the passivity" necessary for automatic writing. On page after page one can trace the per-

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fectly natural workings of Miss Barker's own subconscious mind—or intuitive personality. She is an ardent patriot; she is a clever writer; she is interested—tremendously—in all the social and religious, political and philosophical questions of the day; her intellect filters this keenness through to her “unconscious,” that has been trained to passivity by her previous years of psychic experiences and has learnt also to construct out of the tendencies of the “universal subconsciousness.” Not for a moment do I wish to cast any doubt on the reality of the discarnate personality of “X”; but it seems not at all improbable that as the influence of “X” appeared to wane, and the positiveness of Miss Barker reasserted itself and strengthened itself by ardent study in scientific psychology and analysis, an inevitable blurring of the thought-power of either personality over the other was bound to occur.

“Always the pull of the opposites,” as she herself quotes from the Letters . . . and one can observe how the more the critical faculty and the absorption of the mind in analytical psychology prevails in the *consciousness* of Miss Barker, so the veiled mystical and occult phrases and arguments emerge in the letters of “X,” thus strengthening the argument against Repression—that “exclusion of the irrational possibilities of life, which have, however, just as good a right to be lived.”*

This point of view is interesting because in the light of analysis, it helps to account for the preponderance in automatic writings, etc., of matter that is in accordance with the natural expression of the medium's temperament (a stumbling-block to many would-be believers)—because the great majority of mediums have allowed their passive or negative side to far outstrip their positive or active side. Very few have the critical faculty of Miss Barker; very few desire to exercise their positive nature when they feel the subjective mood overcoming them; and so in contrast to this, we get the impression of conflict between Miss Barker's intellectual consciousness and the emergence of “X”'s thought, tinged by all that she has striven to suppress.

* Jung. Quoted in the Introduction.

Ex Libris

I will conclude by quoting once more from the Introduction: "I am glad that these Last Letters from the Living Dead Man are a call to courage, to restraint, to faith in the great and orderly future of America and the world, a call to all the positive qualities so gravely needed in these days of the rebuilding of Peace." E. C. M.

WAY OF HEALING. A little book for those who know suffering. By Estelle Blyth. (Cambridge, W. Heffer & Sons, 2s. 6d.)

This little book is one of the best of its kind that we have seen since the publication of *A Little Book of Life and Death*. It is a collection of quotations from very varied sources, but it escapes the rather disjointed effect that many such anthologies produce. A very definite purpose has guided the author in her selection. She has set herself to demonstrate through the words of many great writers and thinkers the wonder of healing, and the power of healers to cure, not only by means of "physic and knife." The result is a little book, full of wisdom and beauty, that will bring very real healing and an atmosphere of restfulness to many who suffer. A. L.

THE INITIATE. Some impressions of a great soul. By his Pupil. (Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 7s. net.)

The anonymous author of this book writes with that undeniable sincerity of purpose which is bound to invest with a certain amount of interest any work of its kind. The book is divided into two parts, the first consisting of incidents from the life of the writer, during his ten years' intercourse with his "teacher," and the second being an allegorical story symbolising the journey of the soul, the ideas for which, according to the author, were inspirationally impressed upon his brain by the aforesaid teacher through the medium of telepathy. The book is well written and very readable, but rarely touches more than the outermost fringe of the great philosophy with which it deals, and the ideas running through it, differ in no way from those to be found in any elementary text-book on Theosophy. V. B.

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HINDUSTANI LYRICS. Rendered from the Urdu by Inayat Khan and Jessie Westbrook. (Sufi Publishing Society, 2s. 6d. net.)

These poems are admirably translated and form a very interesting collection. They are selected from the mass of lyrical poetry produced in Northern India during the nineteenth century, and are the work of writers occupying diverse positions in life.

The poems in this collection are mostly mystical love lyrics, and several of them are of considerable beauty. The following fragment to the nightingale, for instance, is perhaps worth quoting :

In spring, O Bulbul, go not in thy grief
To seek the garden, wandering apart ;
But wait—one day within thy very heart
It shall arise, in bud and bloom and leaf.

Or this :

O kind imagination, thou hast given
Eyes to my heart, and though she veil her grace
Fold behind fold, they seek the hidden heaven,
They find the secret beauties of her face.

The longer poems are of equal merit, but do not lend themselves easily to quotation.

There is a short foreword by the translators and a glossary of Indian words occurring in the course of the book.

V. B.

THE JESUS-HEALER. By James Leith Macbeth Bain. (Theosophical Publishing House, 2s. 6d.)

Mr. Macbeth Bain has a wide circle of readers who will welcome the latest addition to the long list of books for which he is responsible. *The Jesus-Healer* is a testimony of Love, and the ideal of loving service is the lodestar of the writer. The book breathes the simple and deep sincerity of one who is a visionary and yet known to many as a natural healer.

A. L.

Ex Libris

THE OTHER SIDE GOD'S DOOR. By Mabel Nixon Robertson.
(Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 6s.)

A record of table-sittings and automatic writings, including supposed communications from Lord Kitchener and Mrs. Eddy—and many others. It is always a question whether publication of messages of this kind is not liable to hinder rather than help the cause of Spiritualism. Even allowing (as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle remarks in his short introduction to the book) for "multiple personality and other stumbling-blocks," the fact remains that the promiscuous inclusion of every "communication" received, though undoubtedly of great interest to those that receive them, is apt to give any but the most voracious reader a certain indigestion.

As it is probable that all literature of this sort will eventually take its place as a general leaven in the word of thought, the occasional rather raw contributions must be accepted in the spirit in which they are offered.

E. C. M.

LOVE, HUMAN AND DIVINE. By Sherifa Lucy Goodenough.
(Sufi Publishing Soc., Ltd., 2s. 6d. net.)

This is a record of lectures given by Inayat Khan written down by one of his pupils. The Sufi mystic believes that the service of all good deeds is love, and the selfless love is the only one that gives illumination—whether it be for God or man. "The beloved is all in all, the lover only veils him. The beloved is all that lives, the lover a dead thing."—Concentration, a natural attribute of human love, is shown to be of vital necessity in religion and mysticism. The little book is full of charm, and contains many beautiful anecdotes.

THE MYSTIC BUILDERS. By G. Prior. (Published by C Maurice Dobson, 1s. 6d. net.)

This little book is the simple narrative of a vision experienced by the writer while temporarily driven out of the body as the result of a serious accident. Any interest it may possess is of a purely psychic nature.

VISION COMPETITIONS

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR FEBRUARY

1. The prize of HALF A GUINEA for the best mystical poem has been won by K. M. Murphy, The Terrace, Tulla, Co. Clare. The contribution is published in this number.

Four other poems deserving special mention were submitted by the Rev. H. L. Hubbard, Esther Raworth, J. B. Leggatt, and A. Hastings.

The following competitors, whose names are mentioned in order of merit, submitted work reaching a certain standard:—

Rupert Haywra (Bingham), Joyce Eveleigh (Folkstone), Lucy Malleson (London, W. 14), "B. J." (Margate), M. W. Osmond (St. John's Wood), J. A. Palmer (Crewe), D. Gardiner (Blandford), Una Malleson (London, W. 14), M. Smart (Harrogate), B. Mallinson (Harrogate), C. Anderson (E. Devon), A. B. S. Scott (Birmingham), E. P. Gill (Cornwall), E. Dunkley (Exeter), A. L. P. (Lancaster), Margaret Ormiston (London, S.W. 5), Lily E. Call (St. Cloud), Paris.

2. The prize of one year's subscription to *Vision* for the best set of quotations is awarded to Meredith Starr, Anne Port, Gorey, Jersey, C. I.

Other sets specially commended were sent by G. M. Robinson (Southport), L. Penny (Goring on Thames), and R. Vivian Davies Rhondda).

APRIL COMPETITIONS

1. A prize of HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best mystical poem. A statement to the effect that the poem is original and has not appeared before in print must be enclosed. (Criticisms of poems will be given if a reading fee of 2s. 6d. for the purpose is enclosed.)

2. A copy of *Vision* will be sent post free for twelve months to the sender of the best set of quotations (either prose or verse) of not more than four lines from a mystical writer suitable for inclusion in a Mystic's Calendar, and three copies of *Brookdown* will be awarded the senders of the three next best sets of quotations.

A second and even more marvellous series of GLASTONBURY MESSAGES are quoted, described and authenticated by F. Bligh Bond, author of "The Gate of Remembrance" in his new book *THE HILL OF VISION* (7s. 6d. net). These war prophecies are, perhaps, the most extraordinary triumph yet recorded of

AUTOMATIC WRITING

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