

THE OCCULT REVIEW

EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

Contents

NOTES OF THE MONTH

By the Editor

WELSH WITCHES AND WIZARDS

By Mary L. Lewes

THE ELEMENTALS

By Herbert Arnold

THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW WAY

By Meredith Starr

TWO EXPERIENCES

By Vere D. Shortt

LOVE'S SECRET

By Frederick James

THE SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION

By Walter Winston Kenilworth

UNIVERSAL CORRESPONDENCES

By J. W. Frings

THE GRAND ARCANUM OF DEATH

By Eliphas Levi

CORRESPONDENCE REVIEWS

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

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OCCULT REVIEW

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INVESTIGATION OF SUPER-NORMAL PHENOMENA AND THE STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS.

EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

"Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri"

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

THE discussion on the subject of Reincarnation, which has been running in these columns since my first article on that subject, threatens to drift into an argument on points that are rather beside the mark as regards the original question raised, and I think, therefore, it is better to bring the correspondence to a conclusion. I mention this as, under the circumstances, I have decided to omit certain letters which carry on the argument perhaps rather beyond legitimate limits. But I should not feel myself at liberty to do this without touching on one point that has already been raised, and is further discussed in some of the omitted correspondence. This is one of those points which, though having no reference to the essential truth or falsity of the doctrine of Reincarnation, it is still natural that writers who discuss the question should raise in the course of the controversy. In the articles I wrote I purposely

REINCARNATION AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

avoided dealing with the Reincarnation hypothesis from the point of view of the Theosophical Society, or indeed of any specific body of opinion. Notwithstanding this, the attention of readers, as might indeed have been surmised, has been drawn to the fact that whereas the original programme of the Theosophical Society was on the broadest conceivable basis, and pointedly omitted to dogmatize on any tenet of religious faith, the subsequent history of the Society has been identified with certain very decided views, not only on the subject of Reincarnation, but on various other points of doctrine. It would be difficult to imagine, nowadays, any individual becoming a member of the Theosophical Society unless, in some form or other, he accepted the explanation of the evolution of the human race which the hypothesis of Reincarnation offers. It is little wonder, then, that readers of the OCCULT REVIEW have been reminded of the fact that when first the Theosophical Society was inaugurated in America, its founders not only did not lay stress on this doctrine of Reincarnation, but actually were disposed to regard it as a fallacious explanation of the present position and future prospects of the human race in its evolution upwards towards its ultimate goal. Mdme. Blavatsky herself, at this early stage of her career, had not adopted this central doctrine of Theosophy, as now understood. Had any dogmatic creed then been promulgated in the first instance by its founders, it is clear that a belief in Reincarnation would not have figured in this document.

The fact is, creeds are all of a gradual growth, and there is a tendency no less in Theosophy than was the case with Christianity itself, to acquire, in the course of time, a far more definite meaning than its first founders had in view. A society of men that begins its existence with a programme, partly social in character and partly that of inquirers into the essential truths underlying all exoteric forms of religion, is bound, it seems, as time goes on, to crystallize its faith into a more concrete and more dogmatic form. The founder of Christianity never lived to see the subsequent developments which turned his philanthropic attitude towards all mankind and his broad but childlike faith in an all-loving Father, into the most dogmatic of all the creeds. The founder of Theosophy, on the other hand, even in her own lifetime witnessed a marvellous change in this direction, and more than this, she herself participated in it. Personally I confess I am not disposed to cavil at a society which starts, in a sense, with a blank sheet and, undertaking the investigation of esoteric truths, arrives, in certain directions, at very different

conclusions to what were anticipated by its inaugurators. The fact that this should be the case seems to me to be in itself an evidence of the bona fides of the investigation ; but it is at the same time undoubtedly a warning against being too dogmatic in opinion before the questions at issue are thoroughly threshed out. The tendency is always to be dogmatic too soon, rather than to be dogmatic too late.

In another direction it seems to me that the Theosophical Society has hardly done justice to its original programme. The Brotherhood of Man has always been inscribed boldly upon its banners, but one may ask : what, of a tangible kind, has been effected to carry out this very important part of the programme on its social side—at least in the West ? In India it is doubtless

THE
BROTHER-
HOOD OF
MAN.

true that Mrs. Besant's activities have taken a very practical shape, and both by teaching, by social work, and by the founding of schools, she has made clear to our Eastern Empire that the device on her banner is a living reality to the President of the Society. One looks, however, in vain, either here or in America, for any such practical recognition of the brotherhood of the human race as has inspired the efforts, say, of Dr. Barnardo or of the founders of Toynbee Hall. Is it not time that some great social work was attempted, which would find scope for the energies of Theosophists in this country, and which, at the same time, would enlist the practical sympathies of the broader-minded philanthropic spirits of the Anglo-Saxon race ? It has always seemed to me that the social work of the Church, admirable in the case of certain parishes and certain missions where social work is most urgently needed, is hopelessly hampered by the narrow outlook of ecclesiasticism. To afford practical help and educational facilities to the struggling masses of our population, and at the same time to open out to them the wider possibilities which lie dormant to-day, but which the unfettered religious and intellectual life unquestionably offers, is a work which might well transform the face of our large centres of population. Surely it would be no slight achievement to bring

CAN WE
MAKE IT A
REALITY ?

into being a generation of workers whose chances of success in life were no longer stunted by the narrow interests and narrow faiths which blight them to-day, and whose outlook was directed to that wider horizon of human possibilities which the conditions of present-day life and the superficial commonplaces of a Board-School education are powerless to confer !

We have accepted the principles of democracy ; but democracy is ever a failure where education is wanting. Our mob orators will tell us that you can enfranchise a man by giving him the vote ; but there is only one true form of enfranchisement—the enfranchisement of the Human Spirit. The real problem of education is to explain to the learner the possibilities inherent in himself, and the means by which he may be enabled to develop them. Here, it appears to me, is a great possibility, given the capacity, the energy, and the funds for carrying it out. Rousseau fully recognized in his own day the inability of his countrymen adequately to discharge the duties of citizenship. “ If,” he said, “ there were a nation of gods, they would govern themselves as a democracy.” The true fulfilment of

WHAT
ROUSSEAU
TAUGHT. the democratic ideal implies the proper education of the citizen from his earliest childhood ; and the true ideal of manhood is ever the Greek ideal—the simultaneous development of the whole man : body, mind, and spirit—and not the warping of one side and the cultivation of another. Man, no less than the tree, needs light and air for his harmonious development ; and narrow, sunless streets, and warping creeds, especially in the early years of life, are equally inimical to his growth. The citizen of a great Democracy should learn from his earliest childhood the true meaning of the brotherhood of man. He should be placed himself in conditions such as would guarantee the natural and healthy unfoldment of his own personality, and he should be taught that it is a citizen’s duty when he reaches years of discretion, to secure for others those rights which he has enjoyed himself.

It is in no one class of the country only, but in all classes to a greater or less extent, that the country’s manhood is stunted by lack of opportunity on the one hand, and by false ideals of education on the other. The latter is as pernicious an influence with the wealthier classes, as the former is with the poorer. Both work together to the detriment of the nation’s manhood—physical, mental, and spiritual. These defects are

DEFECTS OF
MODERN
EDUCATION. to be found everywhere. It is not one branch alone of the Anglo-Saxon race that suffers from an inadequate system of education. If the Englishman is brought up to be narrow and prejudiced, the American Public Schools suffer from the defect of a fatal superficiality. All are alike vitiated by an almost total failure to grasp the true meaning of education in its highest sense, and

the necessity that devolves upon a Democratic State to bring up its citizens to a full sense of the rights and duties of citizenship—their duties, that is, first to themselves, and secondly to their fellow-citizens.

Who is going to take up this gigantic task? To attempt anything so bold in a wholesale manner would be to court certain failure; but there is no reason why a society that aims at securing the brotherhood of mankind, and the enfranchisement of the human spirit, should not attempt, on however small a scale, some educational scheme on broad lines of physical, moral and religious culture, for those who are without the opportunities which citizenship should confer.

One word of caution is necessary. The tendency of all educational schemes is to break on the rock of religious dogma, and the attempt to teach a dogmatic religion to children, whether Christian or other, must inevitably prove fatal. Children require to be taught how to live, to learn the rules of conduct, and to acquire a sense of right and wrong, and of their duty to themselves and their fellow-creatures, entirely independent of all religious faith. To link the question of religious belief with the question of conduct and morality, is to risk the undermining of the latter, should the former be proved to be false.

A WORD
OF
CAUTION.

. . . Because right is right, to follow right
Is wisdom in the scorn of circumstance,

says the poet. It may be added that it is also wisdom in the scorn of all the religious sects. The evolution of the physical form, and the parallel evolution of the human spirit, the fact that the spirit is the man and not the body, these are truths to be insisted on, as well as the main outlines of that religion which, as Sir Oliver Lodge well says, in his latest address, "has its roots deep down in the heart of humanity, and in the reality of things." For the rest, it is well to let the dead creeds bury their dead, and not to perpetuate beliefs in gods who

Will follow in a little while
Odin and Zeus to equal doom.

Do not, then, O teacher of youth! trot out your chosen Deity for the admiration of your pupils, and be warned by the mistake of Moses before you think to exclaim, "This is the only true God, beware of spurious imitations!" Perchance, like his predecessors, this also is nothing more than "Man's giant shadow hailed divine."

Thou sapient fool by dogma bound !
 Blind to what is not and what is ;
 While forward fares the world around,
 Worship thy tin-pot deities !

Yes, worship them if you will ; but, at least leave the children to breathe the freer air of heaven, and not the noisome vapours which germinate the soul-destroying microbe within the four walls of your little Bethels !

While I am on the subject of Reincarnation, it might not be amiss to cite the latest instance that has appeared in the Press of an alleged case which appears to be supported by some valid evidence. The record was given by Prof. Calderone to the *Filosofia della Scienza*, and is to the effect that the five-year-old child of a Sicilian doctor, shortly after her passing over, announced at a spiritualistic séance that she would be reborn on a certain day—"myself and another," she declared. Fourteen months later the doctor's wife gave birth to twin girls, one bearing on her face marks peculiar to the dead child, and evincing the same moral and physical tendencies as she grew older.

The conjunction of Mars and Saturn in the seventeenth degree of Gemini on August 24 last was attended and followed, as is usually the case with such configurations, by a long series of accidents, catastrophes, and disputes between master and man. It fell close to the ascendant of London, and within twenty-four hours of its completion the strike of the painters had broken out. This was followed by further strikes, such as those in the bookbinding trade and amongst the motor-'bus drivers of the Metropolis, and the transport workers of Dublin, where the military were called out to disperse the rioters. The conjunction was heralded by anti-militarist riots in Paris, and

THE CON-
 JUNCTION OF
 MARS AND
 SATURN.

was immediately followed by something almost in the nature of an ultimatum from the President of the United States to the Government of Mexico. Since the formation of this conjunction the papers have teemed with records of accidents and disasters, telling of the collapse of houses and people buried beneath the ruins (in Dublin) ; of homicidal maniacs running amok in Saxony ; of railway accidents in England, Ireland, France and America, the Aisgill disaster, in which sixteen were killed ; the French Railway disaster (September 17), in which twenty-three were killed and thirty injured ; a house blown into the air and children buried in the ruins at Coburg (September 15) ; four people beheaded by an aeroplane at the German Army manœuvres on September

12, etc., etc. These are mere incidents casually culled from the papers within three weeks of the conjunction, and most of my readers will be able to remember many more similar catastrophes.

In writing of Mr. Lloyd George's horoscope recently I alluded to the fact that the conjunction fell on Uranus at his birth, and in his own case it was immediately followed by a violent quarrel and altercation with Lord Wolmer. I pointed out at the same time that the conjunction threatened London in particular, and that, as London was the heart of the Empire, it also had a wider significance for the country as a whole. Nor, at the time of writing, is there any reason to suppose that its effects are yet exhausted. The last conjunction of Mars and Saturn in Gemini, as Zadkiel reminds us, took place in 1883, and was followed, as he foretold, by the daring Fenian outrages in London, while great depression in trade followed. An earlier conjunction of Mars and Saturn in Gemini was written of by Edlin.* "What notable effects (he exclaimed) followed that as notable conjunction of the same planets in Gemini, not only to the City of London and in the nation of England, but more particularly to the body and affairs of the late King (Charles I) and the Duke of Hamilton, the conjunction happening near the cusp of the tenth house in the nativity of the one and near the opposite place of the Sun in the nativity of the other!" A critical time is threatened during the first three or four months of 1914, when Saturn will be transiting, or stationary on, the place of the Sun at the birth of King George. Special caution should be exercised by our statesmen during this period, or a grave crisis is inevitable.

That the effects of the conjunction of Saturn and Mars are not mere coincidences will be readily seen by looking back during the past few years of history. The conjunction in Taurus coincided with the great strike in August 1911, and the imminent danger of a European war on the question of Morocco, the conjunction falling in opposition to Morocco's ruling sign, and signaling by its presence in Taurus, the sign of Ireland, the passage of the Home Rule Bill through the House of Commons. The preceding conjunction in Aries was shortly followed by the death of the late King. Looking back a little further, the transit of Saturn through the preceding sign of the Zodiac, Pisces, the traditional ruler of Portugal, and its conjunction with Mars, was promptly followed by the Portuguese Revolution and the assassination of the King and

* See *Zadkiel's Almanac for 1913*.

the Crown Prince. The sign of the Zodiac immediately preceding Pisces is Aquarius, the traditional ruler of Russia. Twice during the transit of Saturn through this sign it formed the conjunction with Mars. The first conjunction was immediately followed by the Russo-Japanese War, and the second coincided with the Massacre of Moscow. These "coincidences" could be multiplied indefinitely; but it is worth mention that even outside the ranks of avowed astrologers all are not blind to such significant indications, and the remarkable coincidences in connection with the conjunction of Saturn and Mars in August, 1911, were duly noted in the pages of *John Bull* at the time as a striking corroboration of the contentions of the Astrologer.

It is curious to note, in connection with the troubled state of affairs over the projected changes in the government of Ireland, that whereas the present King's horoscope is specially favourable in its relation to that country, that of the present Prime Minister is quite extraordinarily evil. It is much to be feared that no lasting solution of the Irish question is to be hoped for during Mr. Asquith's premiership. To the dispassionate observer it might appear that some modified form of Federalism with separate representation for the four Irish provinces in a central Parliament, and with proper safeguards for the local independence of Ulster, might meet the situation; but it is to be feared that passions are too much inflamed to render feasible any solution on moderate lines of what is doubtless the most thorny problem with which the statesmen of the United Kingdom have to grapple.

Curious stories reach us from Alzonne, a village in the South of France. The people there, we are told, have for two and a half months past been seeing visions not only of St. Michael, St. Catherine, and Joan of Arc, but also of the Virgin Mary herself. A reporter of the Paris paper *Le Matin* was sent to investigate them, and brought back some strange tales. It appears that certain of the inhabitants of the village collect in the evening in the cemetery and march thence in procession, when they claim to witness these apparitions. The subjective, or at least partially subjective, character of the phenomena seems indicated by the fact that no two people give a similar account of what they see. Where one claims to see the Virgin Mary alone, another sees Joan of Arc in her company. Another, again, sees neither of these, but claims to see St. Margaret instead. Joan of Arc is of

course identified by the fact that she appears as a young girl on horseback in full armour, but how the villagers identify the other saints is not equally clear. Many of the visionaries appear to be quite young children. It would be interesting to hear how far visitors from other parts were liable to the infection. Are there no readers of the OCCULT REVIEW with sufficient leisure to take the journey and make a first-hand and dispassionate report? One account that reaches us from this strangely haunted district is of a child, Henriette, who appears to be among the most psychically endowed of these visionaries. The child's most usual vision is that of Joan of Arc. An abbé in the neighbourhood, on being informed by the child that Joan spoke in Latin, put to her a question in that tongue, requesting that, if she had come to announce war, she would make a star appear in the sky. The sky at the time was very cloudy, but shortly afterwards the clouds separated and half a dozen stars immediately appeared.

The following note on the subject of the passing away of Mrs. Annie Bright, Editor of the *Harbinger of Light*, of Melbourne, has been sent me by Miss Edith K. Harper, Secretary to the late W. T. Stead. Mrs. Bright's paper was always one of the most interesting and up to date of the various periodicals dealing with spiritualistic phenomena, and her loss as Editor will be very widely felt:—

The saddest news brought by recent Australian mails was that of the sudden passing out, on June 21 last, of Mrs. Annie Bright, the gifted and much-loved Editor of the *Harbinger of Light*, of Melbourne. Sad to us who read of it, because in an earthly sense we have lost yet another of the most ardent of our gallant body explorers of the World Invisible. W. T. Stead, Archdeacon Colley, and now Mrs. Annie Bright, all within the lapse of fifteen months have passed "from out our bourne of Time and Space" to the larger life beyond. Three personalities as widely-differing as one could conceive, yet one in regard to their faith in the Things Unseen which are Eternal.

I had been in correspondence with Mrs. Bright for some time, particularly since the loss of the *Titanic*. Her kind and sympathetic letters were always a happiness to receive. One felt one was in touch, not with a stranger separated by thousands of miles, but with an old and intimate friend. Her last was written in March, to introduce some Australian friends who were coming to England on a visit. Mrs. Bright was then apparently in the best of health, but in June had a severe attack of influenza, and after a

MRS.
ANNIE
BRIGHT.

week's illness heart-failure supervened. A memorial service was held on the following Sunday, in the "Snowdon Theatre," when a great number of Spiritualists gathered together, representing the various town and country Spiritualistic Churches. Not only in Australia, but in all parts of the world, wherever the Higher Spiritualism is an accepted faith, Mrs. Bright's name will be honoured for her enthusiastic work on its behalf.

For the past seven years she had edited the *Harbinger of Light*, which, under the sway of her vivid and sympathetic personality, came to be regarded as the leading exponent of Spiritual Philosophy in Southern lands, and earned the warm commendation of Mr. Stead, who spoke of it as "the recognized exponent of advanced views on the subject of psychic phenomena of all kinds."

Mrs. Bright was not, I believe, an Australian by birth, but was a native of one of the English Midland counties. Her novel, *A Soul's Pilgrimage*, published in 1907, suggests a vein of autobiography. It was honoured by a preface from Mr. Stead, who wrote that "the value of such a work as this depends chiefly upon the fidelity with which it interprets the real experiences of real people. Its fundamental thesis is one which is gaining an increasing vogue in modern fiction and modern thought; namely, the probability of inter-communication between those who are in their bodies, and those who are disembodied."

"To me," added Mr. Stead, "this thesis has long been a verified fact, and I rejoice at every earnest effort that is made to familiarize the public with a truth which, although much derided and despised, is destined ere long to obtain universal acceptance."

The principal feature of the *Harbinger of Light* for the past year or so has been a series of extremely interesting communications received by Mrs. Annie Bright through her automatic hand, which bear strong internal evidence that they come from the dis-carnate spirit of W. T. Stead.

In reference to the paragraph that appeared in *Olla Podrida* in the August number on the subject of Roubiliac's monument in Westminster Abbey, in which Death is depicted as launching

"MRS."
NIGHTIN-
GALE. a dart at "Mrs. Nightingale," my attention is drawn to the fact that the lady in question was not Mrs. Nightingale, but Lady Elizabeth Nightingale, a daughter of the second Earl Ferrers, and sister to

Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, whose religious vagaries are still borne witness to in a few chapels here and there about the country which are still carried on by a sect entitled "The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion."

WELSH WITCHES AND WIZARDS

By M. L. LEWES

EXTRAORDINARY though it may seem in this practical age, the professional "witch" and "wise man" are, I believe, scarcely yet extinct in the more remote parts of Wales, though of course their number, already few, is dwindling yearly. Also it is very difficult to hear of them nowadays, as, like "Brer Rabbit," they generally "lie low" as regards any open display of their talents. But there is no doubt that every now and then ailing people still consult the local "wise man" as a last resort when the ordinary doctor's treatment has failed. At all events, it is only two or three years since I heard of the last case of this kind, and the wizard then consulted was an elderly farmer living (and still alive for all I know) about three miles from my own home. He worked cures with yarn; like another "wise man" greatly noted in the parish of Trawscoed, Cardiganshire, and not long dead, who used scarlet wool for "measuring the yarn." This way of charming has always been a great specific in Cardigan and Merionethshire against the "Clefyd y Galon" (heart sickness). Elias Owen gives an interesting example of this belief in his *Welsh Folk-lore*, and as it seems to be a typical instance of the treatment as it has always been practised, I will quote it here:—

Mr. Felix was told to take his coat off . . . and then bidden to tuck up his shirt above his elbow. Mr. Jenkins (a respectable farmer and deacon among the Wesleyans) then took a yarn thread and placing one end on the elbow measured to the tip of Felix' middle finger. Then he told his patient to take hold of the yarn at one end, the other end resting the while on the elbow, and he was to take fast hold of it, and stretch it. This he did and the yarn lengthened, and this was a sign he was actually sick of heart-disease. Then the charmer tied the yarn around the patient's left arm above the elbow, and there it was left, and on the next visit measured again, and he was pronounced cured.

I was interested to read that this case of "charming" took place at the village of Eglwfsfach, in North Cardiganshire, which has always been a noted place for the working of these "cures." I know a woman very well who comes from this village and tells me she has often known of the ceremony being performed, and declares that cures did take place. Nor is there any reason for reflecting people to disbelieve this assertion, realizing as we must nowadays how powerfully the mind can affect the body, and how potent a factor real faith may be in the healing of disease.

In another case he encountered in Montgomeryshire, Owen

says that "the thread was measured daily . . . to see if she was being cured or the reverse. Should the yarn shorten it was a sign of death, if it lengthened it indicated recovery."

As regards the use of *scarlet* yarn for the "charming," I believe there is an old idea that a special healing "virtue" attaches to this colour. When in childhood one suffered from colds, a piece of scarlet flannel was clapped on one's chest; it had to be scarlet—one was told—to do any good; white was no use. I have no doubt this idea was a relic of ancient folk-lore, as are so many of our little daily customs and observances. In olden times a bunch of brightly coloured threads was supposed to ward off the Evil Eye; and the country custom of tying up horses' manes and tails at a fair with scarlet braid or worsted has its origin in the same idea.

The connection between witches and hares seems to have always been very widely spread. Addison mentions the belief in one of his Essays, writing of an old village witch called Moll White. "If a hare makes an unexpected escape from the hounds, the huntsman curses Moll White. . . . I have known the master of a pack upon such an occasion send one of his servants to see if Moll White had been out that morning."

Not only was it thought that witches transformed themselves into hares, but Elias Owen tells us that in his day aged people in Wales believed that witches by incantation could change other people into animals. He quotes instances of a man being turned by witchcraft into a hare, in the neighbourhood of Ystrad Meurig (Cardiganshire). Another case he relates is that of a woman in North Wales who knew before any one told her that a certain person died at such a time. The Rector asked her how she came to know of the death if no one had informed her and if she had not been to the house. Her answer was: "I know because I saw a hare come from towards his house and cross over the road before me." Evidently the woman connected the appearance of the hare with the man's death.

Here there seems to have been a trace of the belief which formerly obtained in Wales of the transmigration of souls; the idea being that the parting soul went into the body of some animal.

But it is probable that all through Wales the hare was vaguely regarded as a herald of death. It is said that this animal was much used by the Druids for purposes of augury, prophecies being made according to its various movements when set running. So it is quite possible that the uncomfortable atmosphere which seems to surround this harmless beast in all Celtic countries is due to its traditional connection with far-away Druidical mysteries.

In olden days Welsh witches used to "put spells" on the animals of neighbours who annoyed them. If a cow was the victim it would sicken of no apparent disease, cease to give milk and, if the spell were not removed, would die. The effect of "witching" a pig was to cause a curious kind of madness, something like a fit; this again ended fatally unless a counter-charm was forthcoming. Quite recently I saw one of these "charms" quoted in a local paper by a collector of folk-lore. "An old witch living not far from Llangadock (in Carmarthenshire) . . . on one occasion when she had witched a pig, was compelled subsequently to unwitch the animal. She came and put her hand on the pig's back saying, 'Duwa'th gadwo i'th berchenog' (God keep thee to thine owner)." Which seems a mild way of calming a frenzied pig.

A noted witch used to live about a mile and a half from my own home. She was known as "Mary Perllan Peter," from the name of her house, Perllan Peter, deep down in a thickly wooded ravine, or dingle, as we call it in Cardiganshire. This way of designating individuals is common in our part of Wales, where surnames amongst the peasantry are chiefly limited to Jones, Davies and Evans. So that a person's Christian name, followed by that of their house, is far more distinctive than using a surname most probably common to half the people in a parish. So the witch was "Mary of Peter's Orchard," "perllan" meaning "orchard" (though who "Peter" was I could never find out), and she was undoubtedly a powerful one, as the following stories will show.

One day she asked a neighbour to bring her some corn which she required, and the man very unwillingly consented, as the path down to the cottage was very steep, and the corn heavy to carry. On the way he spilt some, and Mary was very angry and muttered threats to her friend when he left. And when he got back to his home, and went to the stable, what was his amazement to see his little mare "sitting like a pig" on her haunches and staring wildly before her. He went to her, and pulling at the halter tried to get her on her feet, but in vain, she did not seem able to move. Then the man, very frightened, bethought him of the witch's threats, for he felt sure the mare was spellbound. So he sent off for Mary to come and remove the spell, and when she arrived she went straight up to the animal and "*Moron fach*,"* what ails thee now? " was all she said, and the mare jumped to her feet as well and lively as ever.

Another time Mary Perllan Peter went to the mill at a neighbouring village to get some corn ground. The miller was very slow over the business; so slow that Mary grew annoyed and cursed

* "Little Carrot."

the mill! Whereupon the mill instantly began to turn round the wrong way, and went on like that, till the witch was appeased and removed the spell.

These instances were related by a cousin of "Mary's," an old man still living, called John Pwllglas, who apparently quite believed in the uncanny powers possessed by his relative.

In Cardiganshire, as in many other rural districts, it was always firmly believed that when the butter would not "come" on churning days, the churn or cream had been bewitched. There were many remedies against this trouble, one being a branch of the rowan tree hung over the dairy door; another was a knife put into the churn, for all witches, like fairies, hate iron.

I know a house where some few years ago the dairy-maid left her situation in a fit of temper. Never had there been any trouble over the churning in that particularly well-regulated dairy, but, strange to say, from the week when "Jane" left the place the butter refused to come!

Churning, which in spring began early in the morning, went on for hours, every one in the house taking a turn at the handle, and at length, towards afternoon, the long-delayed butter appeared. But what butter! it was scarcely fit to eat, and this state of things continued for several weeks, no theory of temperature, unsteady churning or any other reason that scientific butter-makers appreciate accounting for the extraordinary behaviour of the cream. Of course all the local people said that Jane departing had bewitched the churn; how that was I do not know, but there is no doubt that after five or six weeks, and quite without apparent cause, the butter suddenly "came" properly again, the "spell" presumably being ended.

When staying at Aberdovey a year or two ago I noticed a curiously-shaped depression, called The Witch's Grave, on the hill behind the schools, and was told that a witch is supposed to have been burnt and her ashes buried on that spot. The old village green used to be on the little plateau where the "grave" is, so that if any such burning did take place, it is quite likely to have been there.

This is the only tradition I have so far heard of witches being ill-treated in Wales. My own idea is that, unlike many other districts, witches and wise men were never much molested in the Principality, but were rather feared and looked up to. This witch-burning at Aberdovey, if the tradition be true, was perhaps the back-wash of that terrible wave of persecution and burnings that swept over Great Britain and the Continent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

WELSH WITCHES AND WIZARDS 205

The practice of "charming" with yarn was, I found, well known in the Aberdovey district, though not much of it is done now. "Witches' butter" is also much believed in round there. This is a kind of fungus which shakes and trembles when touched. It is very unlucky to find it, for it means you are bewitched! The remedy is to take up some of the fungus very carefully, put it in paper and stick it full of pins. These pins will prick the conscience of him or her who has bewitched you, and they will remove the spell.

I heard a quaint little story of an old sea-captain at Aberdovey, whose garden was infested with worms which he declared was the result of a spell laid on it by a witch whom he had offended!

"Wise men" seem to have flourished from time immemorial in Wales, every village having its wizard or "dyn hysbys" in the olden days. It is said that their numbers were kept up by the superstitious practice amongst the very ignorant country folk of "sacrificing" children to the devil in order to make "wise men" of them. The Rev. Rees Prichard,* of Llandoverly, in a hymn against conjurers alludes to this dreadful custom:—

Tynnu'r plentyn trwy ben crwcca,
Nen trwy'r fflam ar nos g'langaua,
A'u rhoi ymhinn y felyn uchel,
Yw offrymwm plant i gythraul.

Meaning that to drag children through a hoop or a flame of fire, on All Hallow E'en, and taking them to the mill bin to be shaken, is the way of sacrificing them to the Evil One.

Of course the Prince of Welsh wizards was Merlin, of whom many wonderful tales and traditions still linger in the neighbourhood of Carmarthen, in which town the great astrologer and soothsayer is supposed to have been born. A prediction of his in Welsh is preserved foretelling the attempted landing of the French at Fishguard in 1797, and its frustration by Lord Cawdor; the lines are very curious, but I will spare readers a further infliction of the vernacular.

It is said that Merlin also prophesied the inundation of Carmarthen, a calamity which fortunately has not yet occurred.

Leaving the shadowy personality of the great wizard, with the host of lesser lights who followed him, and coming to historical times, we have many records of celebrated "wise men," of whom it may be said that on the whole their influence amongst the people was for good, and that their talents turned in the direction of benevolence rather than spite. One of the best known of these wise

* Born 1696. Author of *The Welshman's Candle*.

men was Harris of Cwrt-y-Cadno in Carmarthenshire, and there are many tales yet told of his marvellous faculty of "second sight," but of him I have written elsewhere.* "Mochyn y Nant" was another wizard of North Wales, who died about a hundred years ago. It is said he was held in great terror by all the evil-doers of his district on account of the uncanny knowledge he possessed of their crimes, however secret. De Quincy once visited "Mochyn y Nant," and gives an entertaining description of the experience in his *Confessions*.

Not long ago I read a good story of another wise man in a Welsh local paper, which I will quote, as it well illustrates the kind of affairs about which these seers were constantly consulted.

A gentleman in Denbighshire lost a large silver cup of much value which had been an heirloom for many generations. After making diligent inquiry respecting the cup without success, he determined to place the affair in the hands of Robin Ddu the Wizard. Robin attended at the hall, and after placing his red cap on his head, he called the inmates of the hall before him, and declared he would find the thief before midnight. All the servants denied the theft. "Then," said Robin, "if you are guiltless, you will have no objection to a magic proof." He then ordered a cockerel to be placed under a pot in the pantry, and told all the servants to go and rub the pot with their hands. If any of them were guilty the cockerel would crow whilst the guilty person was rubbing the vessel. After all had gone through the ceremony the wizard ordered them to show their hands, when he perceived that the hands of the butler were clean. His conscience had stricken him, so that he could not touch the pot. Robin accused him of the theft, which he admitted, and the cup was restored to its owner.

The following stories, told me on excellent authority, relate to the parish of Llanfihangel Geneurglyn, Cardiganshire, and the "John Price" referred to was living a very few years ago, and is alive still for anything I know to the contrary.

There was a man belonging to the village of Llanfihangel who had a sick cow. He could not find out what was the matter with her, and at last in despair he went to consult John Price, the wise man, who lived at Llanbadarn-fawr a few miles away. John immediately declared that the cow was bewitched. "Because," said he, "you will find when you look that every tooth in her head is loose." "Why, who has done that?" asked the farmer. "That I cannot tell you," was the reply, "but this I will tell you, that the person who bewitched her has visited your house to-day." He would say no more, and the inquirer hurried off home.

He lost no time in examining the cow's mouth, and sure enough every tooth was loose! Then he asked his wife, "Who has been here to-day?"

* *Stranger than Fiction*, by M. L. Lewes. London: Wm. Rider & Son, Ltd.

"No one," she answered, "except indeed So-and-so"; naming a poor girl who came sometimes to get work. Then the farmer knew who had ill-wished his cow, which, by the way, recovered.

In the same parish of Llanfihangel there was a child very ill, so ill, in fact, that the doctors gave him up. The father went secretly and consulted John Price, who said the child was bewitched but would recover, and he did.

I know the clergyman who was Vicar of this parish at the time these instances occurred, and it was he who made notes of the two cases. He is now Rector of Llansamlet in South Wales.

Another wise man* lives at a farm near Borth in Cardiganshire, and is constantly consulted. I heard of the case of a girl who was ailing and thought by her relatives to have had a spell put on her. So they took her to the wizard, who told them that on the way home the first person they met on the road would be the "witch" who had put the spell on the girl. They set off home, and before they had gone far whom should they meet but a poor harmless old man whom they knew could not have worked the mischief. So they hurried back to the wise man who coolly replied, "It was not he, but his brother who is dead. And the girl will be ill till the brother's body is decayed—about twenty years." History does not relate if this charlatan was believed on this occasion, but the person who told me about him said he had many clients, and one of his accomplishments is the writing of charms for people to wear.

At the same time I was told of this wizard, my informant—who, by the way, was a perfect mine of interesting gossip on such subjects—asked me if I had ever heard of "Vicar Pritchard of Pwllheli" (now dead), who in his time was a noted layer of ghosts and whose fame as such still survives in Merionethshire, for he was in great demand throughout the county whenever an uneasy spook gave trouble. Armed with candle and book in the orthodox way, he said to one ghost, "Now will you promise me to cease troubling this house as long as this candle lasts?" The spirit gladly promised, thinking that was but an hour or so to wait. But the Vicar promptly extinguished the flame, put the candle into a lead box, sealed and buried the box beneath a tree, where it lies to this day, and the ghost can do no more harm.

I make no apologies for concluding my article with this short digression from the subject, thinking that most people will excuse the irrelevancy on account of its interesting mention of a more or less modern cleric as a professional ghost layer.

* My informant unfortunately could not remember the man's name.

THE ELEMENTALS

BY HERBERT ARNOLD

Descend, ye hovering Sylphs ! aerial Quires,
And sweep with little hands your silver lyres ;
With fairy footsteps print your grassy rings,
Ye Gnomes ! accordant to the tinkling strings.

Loves of the Plants : Dr. DARWIN.

THE question "What are the elementals?" is difficult to answer in a few words, because the subject deals with such recondite problems, and the terminology used by writers like Kunrath and Levi confuses students still more. But now that Science has discovered that even metals have life, the Occult conception of the Universe as One Life and Consciousness embodied in innumerable forms, both visible and invisible, is much nearer recognition than formerly. Long ago the alchemist Robert Fludd wrote: "It is most certain, that, as there are an infinity of *visible* creatures, so there is an endless variety of invisible ones, of divers natures, in the universal machine."

In the Introduction to his *Monastery*, Scott speaks of the "beautiful but almost forgotten theory of astral spirits or creatures of the elements, surpassing human beings in knowledge and power, but inferior to them as being subject, after a certain space of years, to a death which is to them annihilation." A modern authority also writes, "It seems not at all contrary to reason that both matter and mind, in knowledge of which we have not gone so very far after all, may exist in forms as yet entirely unknown to us. After all, beings with bodies and personalities different from our own may well inhabit the unseen world around us." * The adept in *Zanoni* says: "Well then, can you conceive that space, which is the infinite itself, is alone a waste, is alone lifeless, is less useful to the one design of universal being . . . than the peopled leaf, than the swarming globule. . . ? Now in space there are millions of beings *not literally spiritual*, for they have all . . . certain forms of matter, though matter so delicate, air-drawn, and subtile, that it is, as it were, but a film, a gossamer, that clothes the spirit." Many more quotations from Kabalistic and Occult writers might be given on the subject,

* *The Living Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries*, p. 120. By W. Y. Evans Wentz.

and as is said in *Isis Unveiled*, "Under the general designation of fairies and fays, these spirits of the elements appear in the myth, fable, tradition, or poetry of all nations, ancient and modern. Their names are legion—peris, devs, djins, sylvans, satyrs, fauns, elves, dwarfs, trolls, norms, nisses, kobolds, brownies, and many more. They have been seen, feared, blessed, banned, and invoked in every quarter of the globe and in every age." The Kabala mentions four classes of shedim, the Persians call them devs; Egyptians, afrites; Greeks, demons; Brahmans, daityas. Answering a query, a cultured Irish seer says, "The lower orders of the sidhe are, I think, the nature elementals of the mediæval mystics." *

It is impossible to deal here in detail with any one of the three great classes of elementals mentioned by Occult writers. One class we may just refer to is composed of semi-intelligent entities, destined to evolve into men in the course of far distant cycles of evolution. But these are not "the 'elementals' proper, which never evolve into human beings, but occupy as it were a specific step of the ladder of being, and, by comparison with the others, may properly be called nature-spirits, or cosmic agents of nature, each being confined to its own element and never transgressing the bounds of others. These are what Tertullian called the princes of the powers of the air." Further, according to the seeress Anna Kingsford, "a distinction is to be made also between astral and elemental spirits and *genii loci*. These last are the spirits of forests, mountains, cataracts, rivers, and all unfrequented places. These are the dryads, kelpis, fairies, and elves. . . . The astrals, or blood spirits, chiefly inhabit cities; and between them and the former classes there is antipathy and mutual avoidance. . . . There is an intermediate class, the elementals These spirits are more material than any of the others, and have an independent existence." †

As regards appearances of elementals, those of the fairies in thinly inhabited Celtic countries are the best known. But such do not stand alone by any means, and in the opinion of some Occultists, modern Science has more than once come into contact with them without recognizing the nature of the phenomena produced. Thus an eminent scientist, the late Professor Tyndall, while experimenting with the vapours of volatile liquids in tubes exposed to concentrated light, describes the following appearances: "In one case the cloud-bud grew rapidly into

* *The Living Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries*, p. 58.

† *Life of Anna Kingsford*, vol. i., p. 412.

a serpent's head; a mouth was formed, and from the cloud, a cord of cloud resembling a tongue was discharged . . . once it positively assumed the form of a fish, with eyes, gills, and feelers. The twoness of the animal form was displayed throughout, and no disk, coil, or speck, existed on one side that did not exist on the other."

Several authorities have described the numerous varied forms assumed by elementals, which they appear to change at will, as the sidhe of Ireland are said to do. A member of the Manx House of Keys gives the following account of his experience with a friend who also saw: "I looked across the river and noticed a circle of supernatural light, which I have now come to regard as the 'astral light,' or the light of Nature, as it is called by mystics . . . and into the circle of light . . . I saw come in twos and threes a great crowd of little beings smaller than Tom Thumb and his wife. All of them appeared like soldiers and were dressed in red." Two daughters of a well-known clergyman describe a vast swarm of soundless phantasmal shapes, dressed in old-fashioned garments, most of them dwarfish, and two with sparks round their faces, by which they and a maid were once accompanied for about 200 yards in a lane near Oxford.* On one occasion, Mrs. Kingsford "beheld a dwarf figure, which she recognized as that of an elemental of the order of the gnomes, or earth-spirits; for it was costumed as a labourer, and carried a long-handled shovel, their distinguishing symbol," muttering to itself and searching among her papers. An account appears in the *London Spiritualist* of June 29, 1877, when, "a thunderstorm approaching, the seeress saw a bright spirit emerge from a dark cloud and pass with lightning speed across the sky, and a few minutes after, a diagonal line of dark spirits in the clouds." These beings appear to be akin to the Maruts, or storm gods, of the *Rig-Veda Samhitā*. The well-known lecturer and authoress, Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, has also given accounts of her experiences with the elementals.

In popular accounts and ideas, the elementals of the fairy class are greatly mixed up with the dead, but concerning this, a Cornish antiquarian writes: "I do not believe that the piskies were ever definitely held to be the spirits of the dead, and while a certain confusion has arisen, as some of Mr. Wentz's informants show, I think it belongs to the confused eschatology of modern Protestants." There may be another cause for the misunderstanding above mentioned, and this one arises

* *Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research*, iii, p. 77.

from the idea found in certain Occult works that some classes of elementals can be used by certain disembodied beings for the production of phenomena. It is thus put in *Isis Unveiled*. "They (the elementals) may be termed the forces of nature, and will either operate effects as the servile agents of general law, or may be employed by the disembodied spirits—whether pure or impure—and by living adepts of magic and sorcery, to produce desired phenomenal results." If then various occult phenomena are due to a complexity of causes, these different factors may easily be confused.

The most baffling problem to scientific investigators in the field of *Psychical Research* is to find an adequate cause or causes for the phenomena. As the eminent astronomer, Camille Flammarion, observes: "I may sum up the whole matter with the single statement that there exists in nature, in myriad activity, a *psychic element*, the essential nature of which is still hidden from us."* We are not here concerned with the discovery of the causes producing *all* kinds of occult phenomena, but with only such sorts of the latter as may be reasonably ascribed to the elementals alone. Bearing in mind, then, the character given to these by a host of authorities, the following opinion of Flammarion's respecting the nature of most of the phenomena in question is very much to the point; he writes: "The greater part of the phenomena observed—noises, movements of tables, confusions, disturbances, raps, replies to questions asked—are really childish, puerile, vulgar, often ridiculous, and rather resemble the pranks of mischievous boys than serious bona-fide actions. It is impossible not to notice this. Why should the souls of the dead amuse themselves in this way? The supposition seems almost absurd."

Going still further into the matter, we can select the universally known *Poltergeist* phenomena, as offering the very best evidence of the action of a mischievous, irresponsible, semi-intelligent class of entities, behind the scenes. Such happenings are ascribed to *follets* in France, *domovaj* in Russia, *nerheids* in Greece, and *djinn*s in Egypt. There is no doubt of the truth of *Poltergeist* phenomena, because on⁵ this point we can summon as our witness a modern learned and sceptical writer. He says, "The *Poltergeist* phenomena were known in ancient as well as in mediæval and modern times, and they still occur among savages and civilized men. The phenomena, as yet unexplained, rest on sufficient evidence in certain cases to establish their authenticity. . . . These

* *Mysterious Psychic Forces.*

phenomena, whether caused by unseen agency, or trickery, or the result of hallucination, are uniformly ascribed to ghosts or to fairies." *

It is, indeed, impossible, in considering these stone-throwing (Poltergeist) cases to ascribe them to any other agency than the one we are now dealing with.

The stone-throwing itself assumes different forms. Thus a maid belonging to Mr. Wentz had a so-called elf-arrow thrown at her by an invisible agent, † believed to be a fairy; this was in the open air; but very often households are upset and large quantities of furniture destroyed by missiles discharged from inside the house. The eminent investigator Lombroso has given an account of his experiences in a cellar, alone, when wine bottles were smashed wholesale by some invisible cause, and such instances could be multiplied.

The phenomena due to the action of the salamanders, or fire elementals, are widely known in the East, and also in some parts of the West. This occult agency shows itself in the form of mysterious fires, the cause of which cannot be otherwise accounted for; ‡ and in the command which certain men have over fire; walking with impunity, barefoot, over red-hot stones, etc., feats often performed in various parts of the world. According to Lafcadio Hearn, the Japanese have a firm belief in the existence of dryads, which are to be often seen, they say, standing as shadowy forms near the trunks of their trees in the dusk of the evening.

Going back to the origin of the elementals proper, we learn, "according to the ancient doctrines, that the soulless elemental spirits were evolved by the ceaseless motion inherent in the astral light."

Speaking of the elementals directly connected with humanity, Éliphas Lévi says: "At the birth of a child they influence the four temperaments of the latter: the element of the gnomes predominates in melancholy persons; of the salamanders in the sanguine; of the undines in the phlegmatic; of the sylphs in the giddy and bilious. . . ."

In his *New Light on Immortality* Monsieur Fournier D'Albe makes some sound remarks on the disappearance of belief in occult happenings which also well apply to modern disbelief in the elementals. He speaks of the "gradual prevailing of the

* Art. "Fairy," *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*.

† *The Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries*, p. 88.

‡ A curious story dealing with this form of superstition is narrated in *John Silence*, by Algernon Blackwood.—ED.

THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW WAY 213

organized will of the civilized community which has not much use for supernormal phenomena, and eventually succeeds in banishing them from its fields. . . . And thus it comes about that all the fairies, pixies, sylphs, and gnomes fly before the flaring light of science. They are not so much sent away as explained away, and that, in a large and well organized community, is very nearly as good, and suffices for all practical purposes."

THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW WAY

BY MEREDITH STARR

IF I should merge my life in thine, sweet singer of the saddest
songs,
Whose voice is like the sighing pine that tells the tale of ancient
wrongs,
I should not to myself be true, the laughing god would hide his
face,
And all our world would feel anew the emptiness of time and
space.

Divided are our ways and far apart we travel, till at last
We meet in some supernal star when all the barriers have been
past
That lie between us and our goal, and in that meeting there shall
be
The world-throb of a cosmic soul vibrating through eternity.

TWO EXPERIENCES

BY VERE D. SHORTT

[Both the undermentioned experiences occurred to me at different times, separated by a period of some eleven years. There seems to be a certain resemblance between them, but I am utterly unable to give any explanation of either. Both of them appear to be connected with what I may call, for want of a better word, anti-human and malignant forces, but perhaps some reader of the OCCULT REVIEW can provide an explanation. Both experiences are absolutely and literally true, and are told as they occurred.—V.D.S.]

I

THE first of these occurrences happened on the 17th of August, 1897, when I was serving in the Cape Mounted Riflemen. I had left my station, a camp called Bizana in Eastern Pondoland, for the purpose of "riding express," i.e., taking despatches to the town of Kokstad, the capital of East Griqualand, and the headquarters of my squadron. It was the first time I had taken the journey, and I made several mistakes as to the road; however, about sunset I crossed the border line of Pondoland into East Griqualand, and passed the abandoned camp of Fort Donald.

I must explain that after leaving Fort Donald the road curves round under a stony precipitous hill called the Spitzkop, or Foggy Hill. I had been riding for five or six hours, and to my tired eyes the road seemed to stretch away interminably. As I rode along I noticed on the right-hand side of the road a track leading across the bare veldt, and joining the main road further on, forming as it were the arc of a circle. It struck me that this was a most desirable short cut, the veldt was level, I could see that the grass-grown track joined the main road further on, cutting off almost two miles, and I decided to follow it. The time was about 6 p.m.* on a South African winter evening, that is to say about sunset, and perfectly light. I turned my horse on to the track, and proceeded along it at a slow canter for about a mile, and then slowed down to a walk. Then hanging the reins on my bridle arm, I took out and proceeded to fill a pipe. While I was engaged in doing so I suddenly felt my left shoulder grasped

* Query 5 p.m.—Ed.

by what seemed to be a hand of enormous strength, and I received a wrench which nearly jerked me out of the saddle.

The country, I must state, was in a serious state of unrest—almost of rebellion—at the time, and as soon as I recovered my balance I jerked my revolver out of the holster, and swung my horse round to face whatever danger there might be. To my utter astonishment there was nothing whatever to be seen! There was still a certain amount of sunlight, and look as I might in every direction I could see no sign of any other human being except myself. Then I noticed that my horse was very restless, and kept backing away, and was covered with sweat. I particularly noticed this, as the day, being winter, had not been very warm, and I had not been riding hard. Also at the same time it began to be borne in on me that there was something wrong with the whole atmosphere of the place I was in. I can only explain what I mean by saying that I was conscious, in a sort of subconscious way, that there was something near me which was not natural, and which was violently hostile to me. I felt an overmastering desire to leave the place, and getting my horse round (almost on his hind legs) I sent the spurs home and rode at a gallop until I struck the main road. I had no further experiences.

That night I stayed at the hotel at Brooke's Nek, about nine miles from Kokstad, and met there a comrade of mine named E——, who was going home from Kokstad to one of the outlying Pondoland stations. As I was going to bed he came into my room, and sat on the bed chatting as I undressed. As I took my shirt off he looked at me and then said, "Good Lord, man! what on earth have you been doing to your shoulder? Just look at it!" I turned to the glass and looked at my left shoulder. On the front of the shoulder were four deep, discoloured bruises, and one behind, nearer the neck—it looked exactly as if some one with a very large and powerful left hand had grasped my shoulder from behind, and absolutely dug their fingers into the flesh. I told E—— what had happened that evening, and he said, "Oh! that's the old wagon road, that they had to stop using because they couldn't get a native to go along it at any time of the day or night. About five years ago they found a nigger driver lying in the road with his head twisted nearly round. There's something wrong with the place, but no one knows exactly what."

I may state in conclusion that this was all I could ever find out—simply vague stories of "something wrong," and the road

avoided like the pestilence by natives. Personally I have no explanation to give, but then many strange things without explanations happen in Africa.

II

My second experience of this kind happened on the 9th of November, 1908, in the island of Jersey, and while not being so terrifying as the first, shows a certain resemblance to it, and was sufficiently unpleasant.

On the above date I had an engagement to sup with some friends who lived about five miles in the country from St. Heliers. About a quarter to nine I left St. Heliers on my bicycle, and rode along the main road through the Vallée de Vaux. It was a very dark, still November evening, with no wind, and though cloudy was quite fine. I knew the road well, having ridden it often in the daytime, and as I had a powerful lamp on my machine the darkness gave me no concern. As one leaves the town of St. Heliers, one enters a stretch of lonely road, quite straight. On one side is a high garden wall, and on the other a low wall about three feet high on the road side and on the other dropping about six feet to a meadow. After about half a mile the road drops out of the straight and has several turnings. At the first corner on the right-hand side of the road is an avenue gate with stone gateposts, the avenue at that time leading to an empty house.

As I entered the straight stretch of road, for no apparent reason I began to feel vaguely uncomfortable, and the further I went the more the uncomfortable feeling increased. As far as I can describe the feeling, it was that I ought not to go on, that there was an Influence that did not wish me to go on, and that was hostile to me. At last the feeling on me grew so strong that just opposite the avenue gate I stopped and dismounted to pull myself together. I was angry with myself, and called myself several hard names for what I considered my foolishness. As I stood by my bicycle I felt more and more nervous, and looked into the darkness, but could see and hear nothing.

At that moment I felt exactly as if some one *inside* my head had said quickly and insisently, "Go back! *Quickly! Quickly!*" I turned my bicycle, mounted, dropped my feet to the pedals, and began to ride hard. All the time I could hear or feel this interior voice urging, "Be quick—oh! be quick!" I had hardly covered ten yards of road, when I felt as if the handles of my machine had been grasped by some unseen person and that they were being violently jerked to right and left, as if for the

express purpose of giving me a bad fall. So strong was the force that I found it quite impossible to steer the bicycle. I dismounted, falling on my knees in the process, and raced down the road as hard as I could, wheeling the machine beside me. After another fifty yards, the feeling suddenly seemed to leave me, and I halted to recover my breath. I still wanted to get to my friends' house, but I freely confess that I lacked the nerve to proceed along the Vallée des Vaux, so I remounted, rode back to St. Heliers, took another road, and arrived about half an hour late, which I explained by saying that I had had a spill.

I have often ridden and walked over that road since in the day time, but never at night. That some hostile force was abroad that evening, I am morally certain, but as to what it was or to what its presence was due, I have no explanation to offer.

LOVE'S SECRET

BY FREDERICK JAMES

PRINCESS, I yield thee all,
 My body, soul and spirit all are thine,
 Unworthy, yet I worship at thy shrine,
 Commune in prayer and drink the precious wine
 From mystic coral lips, once pressed to mine—
 Princess, I yield thee all.

Princess, I understand :
 To gain my bliss at thy expense were blind,
 And then to chide thee for thy words unkind,
 A vain rebuke, the grief of wayward mind ;
 Through scorching pain I learned, but now I find
 By giving all, Love's golden threads unwind :
 Princess, I understand.

Princess, I love thee well,
 And time and distance are to me as naught,
 I have thee prisoned where I never sought,
 A living symbol has my dream-soul caught
 With eyes of amethystine hue, and wrought
 In ivory, thy form in sculptured thought :
 Princess, I love thee well.

Princess, I learn to live,
 The daily threnody has ceased to swell
 By transmutation of my passion's spell,
 That is Love's secret He can never sell,
 The alchemy that angels know so well,
 And mortals' fear would only sound Death's knell :
 Princess, I learn to live.

Princess, I come in sleep,
 In gardens where the crimsoned poppies reign,
 Where Naiads 'neath the lotus chant their strain,—
 A melody of love bereft of pain,
 The pure epithalamium we fain
 Would reach through earthly pleasures, but in vain :
 Princess, I come in sleep.

Princess, I see thy soul,
 In ambient mist of gleaming auric light,
 A flaming splendour only for my sight,
 That I might vision His transcendent might
 In this sweet silent rapture of the night :
 Princess, I see thy soul.

Princess, my fair Princess,
 'Tis thy dear wondrous self that I enfold,
 The Adonai resplendent in thy mould,
 Love's promised gift to those both wise and bold.
 I for thy kiss give passion's dross for gold,
 Renouncing all, I know that I can hold :
 Thy heart, my fair Princess.

THE SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION

BY WALTER WINSTON KENILWORTH

NO matter how keen a man's reason may be, no matter how discriminating his judgment, how lucid his thoughts, and how penetrating his insight, he can never arrive at the truth of things by these alone. There is but one method by which the soul of things, their real life and the meaning of their forms and influence, may be appreciated. This is by the educated feelings that arise in the heart of man when his soul is attuned to the finer and purer things of life. These feelings are feelings of unselfishness, of sympathy, of genuineness, of loyalty, of honesty, of integrity and of sincerity.

Feeling is, after all, the only direct and immediate mode of perception. It is the only direct and actual means whereby consciousness becomes related to the substance and the qualities of truth as they are expressed in the laws and forms of the universe—mental, psychic and spiritual. Feeling is the most intimate connection between the sentient, self-conscious subject and its object, be this animate or inanimate.

Reason has developed from instinctive feelings and their play in the physical area of expression, but there are feelings that are above all forms of logic and before whose onrushing certainty the so-called truths of reason take speedy flight, for reason, though important in the education of the real thinker, does not completely and solely explain those rare forms of intuitive and æsthetic feeling that compose whatever is inspirational, super-sensuous and truly beautiful in human life.

Sensation is the first manifestation of conscious life, but as sensation, in the evolutionary course, grows more complex, heterogeneous and integrated, it becomes at the same time more full of meaning, and the purpose and the design behind nature is seen to have, in its divine foresight, a great scheme in which the scene is gradually becoming more perfect and beautiful and ever enlarging in perspective, colour and quality.

The possibilities and susceptibilities of sensation are indefinite. They are not limited by the boundaries or by the binding influences of time. Space is infinite in its relations to conscious-

ness, and is replete with endless myriads of forms and with planes upon which these forms develop into more and more statuesque and complete proportions to allow the soul of them to expand more and more in the direction of self-illumination and spiritual perception.

Nature has not absolutely conditioned the perceptions of life within the boundary lines and the area of experiences of five physical senses. Nature does not need to limit itself with regard to the forms it builds for the inhabiting of different forms of consciousness. Nature contains within itself the possibility of every possible combination, just as the mathematical scale contains within itself the potentiality of producing any number of different sums.

The universe is infinite as to space and infinite as to time. It is infinite in its relations and infinite in the number of its myriad combinations. Study for a moment the human face. Notice that on each face nature has imprinted her signal, differentiating stamp, so that no two faces in the world are exactly alike.

Man, in the normal state of development, can become conscious of the universe only with the aid of extremely limited faculties, only with poverty-stricken means of limited sense-perception. The universe is revealed to man in many forms, but this revelation, no matter how extensive or how numerous its presentations, can only be partial, and the all-containing and all-satisfying truth is as far from us as we are from the realization of what we term the soul. Just as we may satisfactorily analyse the separate states of our consciousness, as we may throw the light of reason upon the status of different workings of minds, so we can definitely appreciate and comprehend the separate relations of the universe, but we find that the universe itself escapes us, even as does our consciousness, because it is subjective. Just as consciousness is subjective to any of its individual states, so the universe, as a whole, is subjective to any of its myriad revelations.

After all, the universe, in its revelations, can never be anything but partial. For this reason there is always knowledge beyond what is known and there is also an infinite store-house of possible knowledge within the spirit of man himself. The universe, being unlimited in the process of its revelations, is limitless also in its position as an eternal source of knowledge and an eternal producer of its objects of knowledge. For this reason what is known is only partial knowledge, and there is always the immediately unknown before the mind.

No matter how great the knowledge the many may acquire, it is ever conditioned. The universe reveals itself in

an endless series of combinations and every new combination becomes a new object of knowledge, and this revelation, co-extensive with the infinity of space and time through which it manifests, is also infinite.

Man with his conditioned modes of perception is unable to comprehend the universe. That is why the great problems which have caused the minds of the race to ask and re-ask will ever remain unsolved. Whatever answer exists to the fundamental questions of life, it must be individual. Man seeks to know the universe. The very fact of his seeking shows that something exists within the deeper strata of his being that corresponds with the universe as such, for it is impossible to conceive that nature should have endowed man with the super-sensuous feeling that something beyond the physical senses exists unless a faculty of perceiving that super-sensuousness is also potential in the heart of man. Where a question may be asked there must be an answer. Perhaps the answer cannot be formulated immediately; neither have any of the answers of science been suddenly revealed. There is a faculty belonging to the realm of pure spirit and to the spiritual portion of man's nature that is one with the universe, but this faculty is something vastly distinct from what is commonly understood as mind. Reason is only a modification of it. Ordinary sensation is only a limited expression of it. Possibly the extension of the human faculty, the extension of reason and the spiritualization and refinement of feeling, may develop a super-normal perception, an attenuated consciousness, a higher range of susceptibility to external impressions through which facts and truths, hitherto unrevealed and unknown, can be known and revealed.

It is exceedingly difficult to present the truth to the ordinary sense-craving and sense-grasping and sense-living mind that there are spiritual and psychical realities and truths beyond the limited horizon of mere physical existence. The statement of the man of spirit that the universe is indefinite in extension and vibration, that intelligence and spiritual life exist from lowest to human and from super-human planes upward, is met with the smile of the cynic or disbeliever. Yet science is coming to recognize these very things. Day after day she is delving into the secret mysteries of the universe and discovering an array of facts that must make the intelligent man pause and reflect, and believe that there are revelations still to come from the hidden spring of the investigating mind, and that until

these revelations are brought from their superior heights, we can only hope. The morn of scientific discovery is rich with the promise of a spiritual day in which the sun of new revelation shall herald the supreme light. For in such a direction does the tide of human thought point.

He who condemns without understanding the circumstances and phenomena accredited to certain modes of life, cannot be called wise. He alone has the right to criticize who has reasoned along the lines of his criticism and appreciated to the full the subject matter discussed by him. Therefore in relegating the conditions and realities of the spiritual life to general sense growth, speaking of them as the outcome, natural and physical, of life's upward and evolutionary trend, a man is liable to err because of the want of true information concerning the meaning and the value of life in general. It would be conceited in the extreme on the part of any person to declare that we have reached the acme of spiritual or intellectual insight into the ultimate nature and essence of the universe.

The biased mind can see nothing but the negative side of any hypothesis, and presuppositions bias the mental tendencies so that it cannot see the positive and complete side. A biased mind in this sense has reference to the natural, and unjustified bias against the spiritual, interpretation of life. It is a sad state of affairs when prejudice blinds the view. It is a sad state of affairs when self-will blinds the rational sense and with intentional deceit cries that no light exists. There are these two—light and darkness—and the light exists in itself and is seen by reason of its own radiating glory, but darkness too exists,—only in this sense, however, that in the inherent soul of nature ignorance shuts out the perspective and can only be removed by the bitter experiences of pain in the long lapsing of time.

Life is open, patent, clear. It is not confused by logical terms nor blinded by the so-called light of reason. There is only one self-illuminating light in the cosmos, and this is the light of the soul. Whatever other light exists is only the borrowed reflection of that spiritual and central light.

A man does not reason when he observes natural phenomena. So far as he is concerned he is satisfied that they exist, that they are, and no array of argument could convince him that they do not exist. That which is immediately perceptible by the senses is that which we call real. So, if there are super-physical truths and phenomena in life, they should be perceived, not by the borrowed light of intellect, but by the perfect vision of the soul.

Is such vision possible? Yes. Reason has its important and appropriate position and sphere in the schedule of perception, but reason does not explain. After all, reason leaves us as we were before. Did not Sir William Hamilton say: "A learned ignorance is the end of philosophy"? That which is of supreme importance to the individual is personal and actual perception concerning what others believe to be the truth and what the individual himself believes is the truth.

Men may reach conclusions after conclusions, but the trouble is that they will never reach the same conclusion. If all philosophers reached the same conclusion it would be well for the race in so far as it would believe that the truth had been revealed, but this cannot be. Were the ultimate truth to be proved to be this or that, man could follow the corresponding course of conscience and conduct. But the greatest system of thought can only be incomplete, for though it may have reached the veriest pinnacle of thought, that which it declares to be the truth still remains subjective, still hidden from view, still immersed in a sea of doubt, and the conduct of a man will bear this out through his irresolute and wavering will. The goal is individual realization.

Feeling must work out the assertion of thought. It must explain in terms of accurate and clear vision the metaphysics of thought. Logic may say what is truth, but feeling, alone, can make truth tangible and provable. There is no question that logic arrives at truth, but this truth is theoretical. It is subjective, and to become living and active and effective it must be brought to the plane of practical, objective experience. In other words, truth must be sensed and directly perceived as man may perceive a table or a chair or anything that has form.

The mystery of truth is a mystery because it cannot be rendered tangible in our lives. The blindness of desire leads the mind into paths other than mental or spiritual, and thus it cannot rest on or earnestly desire the practical forms and interpretation of truth. The mind is busied with the thousand myriad things that are external to itself. It does not ponder over its individual mysteries. It is least concerned with its own life. It has no consideration for truth outside of its practical, economic area.

Truth, to the average man, is expressed in so many commercial figures. It is not something that is ideal, subjective, enlarging the scope of feeling or refining the discrimination and judgment of reason. Before the mind can hope to conceive the truth

concerning itself, or the truth concerning the outer arrangement of life, it must give up the fancied necessity of a complete physical consciousness. It must cease thinking that this body-life is the only life, and that the body-cares are the only cares.

The mind must thread the broken thought of spiritual life and endeavour to reach beyond that which is passing, living for the moment, enduring as the life of a shadow might endure. There are radiant truths beyond the truths that concern the life of the body or the needs that concern the body. The mind must arouse the latent powers it possesses. As it is, it is content to rest in the commonplaceness of its smallest effort. It would rather stagnate amid the passing forms of fleeting life of physical existence. Whatever push or energy the mind has is the result of the spur of pain, quickening the soul to the necessity of utilizing its hidden faculties, impelling it, by the force of circumstance, into wider avenues of thought and expression.

Whatever presentation the universe may reveal to us, it does so through feeling. The universe is like a vast, infinite being that continually surprises the limited mind of man with the appalling manifoldness under which it expresses itself. Feeling reacts upon this manifoldness, and through this constant reaction knowledge is born. This knowledge manifests in philosophy, chemistry, physics, embracing all the arts and sciences and all philosophy.

When this vast cosmic being acts upon our lives as a whole through those peculiar feelings commonly termed religious, it is very important just what character these religious feelings assume, what moral and intellectual character they may embody and what value can be attached to them.

Religious feelings arise through the action of the universe, in its general sense, upon the soul of man. This feeling is as positive as any other feeling ; in fact, much more positive. We may speak of the universal wholeness of God. That term, to some extent, approaches the true concept of the cosmic whole. In ordinary manifestations God or the Absolute, or whatever else the supreme principle of nature may be called, reveals itself in any of the phenomena of nature from the most crude, inferior and commonplace to the most refined, spiritual and exalted. In a finite sense it reveals itself in the thousand details of human life and in the myriad aggregations of inanimate matter. In its complete, absolute and unlimited manifestation it superimposes the wholeness of its life and form upon the soul, and the soul is thereby raised into a mode of special perception and conscious-

ness which necessarily differs, in every particular, from the usual modes of perception and from the usual modifications of the mind and consciousness.

That is why mystic feelings are incommunicable. Still, they may be expressed to some extent, but the ultimate value and reality of such feelings are too exalted to be forcibly and intelligibly expressed because of the poverty of human thought, for thought, even, is poverty-stricken in conceiving the range and extent of mystic feelings, and, as thought is antecedent to language, these feelings are and can be only partially described.

One may peruse the devotional books of every religion, and even come in contact with living examples of the principles taught by devotional books; one may observe the mystic experiences of the saint, yet he will always find that the mind cannot grasp the super-physical element in religion, and that it cannot comprehend the momentous value of spiritual life and feeling, for these things are beyond ordinary sense experience, and partake of a nature that is more developed and expressive than the nature of the mind itself.

The reality of all spiritual teaching must remain hypothetical so long as man seeks the realization of physical desires and gives the greater part of his time and thought to the working out of sensuous existence. One cannot serve Mammon and the spiritual Self at the same time. While physical desires have their appropriate and consistent place in the order of being, they are secondary to the all-important considerations of spiritual life and expression. Man places all consideration on the body. So long as this continues he cannot see any light beyond the borrowed light that gives colour, life and form to physical nature.

The great men of the world credit the mind with a superior importance and value and existence than the value, importance and existence of the body. The greatest men of the world, those who have left their vital impress on the life of nations and who have given the upward trend to civilization through the formation or rehabilitation of racial morality, say that the supreme existence is that of the soul, which manifests as mind and body. It is the life of the everlasting soul, free from the desolate bondage of body and the feverish distempers of man's physical constitution, that these spiritual giants champion.

It would be well if the soul stopped to consider, stopped for a moment this ceaseless identification of itself with the body, and pondered over the existence of the Self within.

UNIVERSAL CORRESPONDENCES

By J. W. FRINGS

PERHAPS the most fundamental concept which appears to us to be axiomatic is the law of causation. That a thing could occur without being caused seems to be almost a contradiction in terms. And though, metaphysically, we may endeavour to override the concept and to see in things a sequence or succession of experiences only, which we relate in time and space as a continuity rather than a causative relation, we fail to escape the issue wholly. Things happen of necessity—because they must. Then, almost as fundamentally, arises our concept of periodicity. The succession of experiences is seen to alternate. There is a diversity of experience, accompanied by the notion of the repetition of the alternating experiences. Day and night, heat and cold, summer and winter, black and white, are the terms of common alternations. Inspiration and expiration, life and death, motion and inactivity, are modes of such alternations. And these alternations occur, and recur, in cycles. Causation, alternation and periodicity are, then, our foundation stones. Upon these we erect the superstructure of our sensory experience. Our knowledge is based upon a comparison of similarities and differences. It is on the distinctions thence arising that our philosophic systems are founded.

Broadly speaking, philosophical schools themselves are both alternating and cyclic. They alternate between the monistic and dualistic, the materialistic and mechanistic, the idealistic and spiritual. They recur in cycles as an exposition, on a wider horizon, of the earlier systems. And here we must pause. For two schools stand widely opposed. The doctrine of "eternal recurrence," newly rediscovered by Nietzsche, is now again confronted by the "creative evolution," of Bergson. The difference is between the closed circle of Nietzsche and the ascending spiral of Bergson. Recurrence there may be, but it would seem to be always on a higher plane than that previously covered. It is desirable to note, however, that the cycle is the predominant note of both. The cycle itself may be as minute as that of the birth, growth and death of the tiny organism which is measured

in its time period by hours ; or it may be the great sidereal cycle which almost evades human computation, in which the universe is manifested and reabsorbed into the bosom of non-being, the mighty *mahayuga* of the Hindu astronomy, to which millions of years are but as days. And each cycle is intimately related to the others. The smaller cycles are functions of the larger. The simplest arithmetical explanation to apply to this would be to say that the largest cycle is the least common multiple of all the others. In astronomy—and astrology—this is seen to be strictly true. The greatest cycle of all is a multiple of all the others. To periodicity we must now add progressions of cycles.

Viewing the universe as the monad, the aggregate in unity of all manifestation, we note the interrelation of these four concepts. Their connection is essential. It is vital to our purpose. It connotes for us the principles of law, order and harmony. It denies the possibility of chance or accident. It impels us to the acceptance of universal correspondences. A raging sunspot, millions of miles away, disturbs the magnetic equilibrium of our globe ; nay, more, it disturbs the mental poise, to a greater or lesser degree, of every individual. This is not so remarkable as it might at first sight appear. Man is not only the symbol of the universe, the cosmos. He is not only an atom of that cosmos. He is, essentially, flesh of its flesh, compounded of its own elements in its own way, subject to, and bound by, the same laws. He is more. He is a cell in the complete vital structure, alternating, periodically, in his progression. Vibrant and responsive to the eternal and infinite outbreathing and inbreathing, man is the micro-cosmos. He is of the universe. He is the universe. Sweeping onwards, in an ever ascending spiral, through the cycle of the never-ending eternities, man is the supreme symbol of universal correspondences. He is the apotheosis of cosmic symbolism. He is the regent of the stars. He is Lord of all that is. And this because man, though apparently the merest ephemera, the drifting creature of circumstance, Ixion bound to the wheel, the fly in the web of the spider, in spite of this, or perhaps by virtue of it, man is able to know, think, and act, conformably to the laws of universal correspondences. He plans and projects, if he so desires, in harmony with universal law, and becomes its dynamic director instead of its static slave. He is then its overlord.

In a most suggestive and scholarly book, *Cosmic Symbolism*,*

* *Cosmic Symbolism*. London: Wm. Rider & Son, Ltd., 8, Paternoster Row, E.C. Price 3s. 6d. net.

"Sepharial" has dealt systematically with the various aspects of this profound subject. The author views the cosmic system as a unity. And this unity is a symbol. The universe, whether regarded as the evolving monad, or as an aggregation of parts and particles, is symbolic in its significances. Beneath the merely phenomenal lies the noumenal. The cosmos is the vestment of the real Being whose projection it is. The world of sensation is real because by relation to it our consciousness of it arises. We apprehend, by virtue of that relationship, the cosmic laws we perceive to be in operation. As symbol the cosmos is "the revelation of all time, of the past and present; the repository of all history, the source of all prophecy, the synthesis of actuality. . . . Man is a centre of consciousness in the Divine mind from the time that he realizes his spiritual existence." . . . "As such he becomes subject to the higher spiritual laws of Being and enters into the Divine Conspiracy" (Sepharial). The symbolism of the universe, therefore, is seen to be its universal correspondences and their capacity for alternative interpretations.

The keys to the correspondences are manifold; astronomical, astrological, mystical, alchemical, mythological, physiological, geological, etc. And pervading all the interpretations is the law of analogy—as above so below. For this is the master key.

Causation is seen in operation in the gradual emergence from the Divine mind of the spiritual and material orders of the universe. Descending from the purely spiritual planes, it objectivates itself. Man, as the microcosm, is the final symbol of the universe. For, as the spiritualized individual, he is both conscious and self-conscious. In him are synthesized all the orders and powers of that universe he symbolizes. But the very principles of his being are alternative. For man is a composite. There are within him the alternations of body and soul, mind and spirit. His life, like that of the cosmic bodies, is cyclic. It moves in periods. Man is a being of ages. He progresses by cycles. Formed of the same ultimate essence as the greatest and the smallest bodies in interstellar space, he obeys the same laws of flexion and reflexion. "The criterion of consciousness is response to stimulus" (*Cosmic Symbolism*). As a conscious entity man responds to stimuli. As a self-conscious being man responds also to the higher vibrations—to spiritual stimulus. "Occultism," says the author, "is a broad and comprehensive system of thought . . . aiming at self realization"; and again, "In the pursuit of such studies as astrology, kabalism, yoga, hypnotism, etc., (occultism) reaches out from such vague begin-

nings into regions of thought and aspiration that transcend the average mind and are seen to culminate, in specialized cases, in the attainment of powers which may be called miraculous and of attributes that are truly godlike."

Occultism, as presented by "Sepharial," takes cognisance of universal correspondences through the whole gamut of manifestation. Causation underlies objectivity, whether it be in the appearance of the sidereal system or that of man as a self-conscious organism. Alternation is the universal law, whether it be the daily rotation of our globe, the weekly phases of the moon, the septennial period—of decades—of man's life, the precession of the equinoxes in its term of thousands of years, or even the greater astronomical periods. The relationships between the alternating phases of each, and between the cyclic movements of each, is fundamental and absolute. It is no less so than the universality of progress. These vital correspondences are traced in the symbolism of the cosmos. Numerical ratios, and geometrical figures, are the very basis of form. Motion, as evidenced by periodicity, in alternating phase and cycle, is its parent. These relationships are traced to the primal monad—the ever-becoming. The symbolism of all ages and all climes is nothing more, nor less, than this. In symbolism is seen the attempt to externalize the evasive perceptions of the inner truths. "Sepharial" pursues these truths, divests them of their grosser cloaking, and offers them as a synthetic system of universal law; interdependent, interacting and radically related. Cosmic symbolism is the exposition of the highest truths, retrieved from the confines of the most profound consciousness.

Viewed as a whole, the book may be regarded as an excellent introduction to the study of Occult Science and Spiritual Philosophy, through the medium of symbolism. As has been said, it is suggestive rather than dogmatic. The author in the first place points the way by references to the fragments of experience gathered through the whole life history of humanity and crystallized as myth and symbol. But he does more. He outlines the possibilities of the higher knowledge; he demonstrates the potentialities of the spiritual man when awakened to the consciousness of the higher planes. "The Law of Sex" and "The Law of Vibrations," two later chapters in *Cosmic Symbolism* to which reference may be made in passing, should be helpful to the eugenist and the physicist respectively. It may be that they will be wise enough to see in these the indications of the relationships and correspondences persisting throughout the universe

in the realms of spiritual and physical law. To the lay student *Cosmic Symbolism* should be even more valuable. It brings together, in a small compass, a vast fund of material that will aid him in tracking down, in a more detailed study of the subject, those universal correspondences which make of the cosmos a symbol and of man its chief interpretative key.

In its explanations of the universal correspondences, Occultism, the Divine science, submits for practical test, the test of experience, its generalizations. It is no merely speculative system. It offers freely for analysis and examination the results of its investigations. It asks for no faith. It is prepared to prove the truth of its pronouncements. On its scientific side experiment is immediately possible. It offers for trial worlds of supersensuous experience to those willing to fit themselves for such experiences. It shows the possibility of the extension of consciousness to other planes of being than the grossly physical of everyday science. Such superior planes are more intimately related to the Divine Mind. They are less distantly removed from the source of causation and eternal and supernal consciousness. They afford the inquirer a glimpse *de omni re scibili*. He sees, for the first time, causes in operation, whereas before he had been vainly endeavouring to realize effects. He begins to perceive the principles which underlie the causes. It is suggested that further research into the correspondences of the universe will amply repay the most careful study. For this purpose a vast body of literature is already available. To it is being added, day by day, the results of further research, and of fresh view points. Studies in Mysticism and Occultism, Psychic Phenomena and Cosmogesis, all bear a message that he who will may read. Each, in its way, suggests some features of the mosaic that requires to be matched and harmonised, and compared and contrasted, to execute in its fulness the unity of the scheme. And, as Philosophy itself may be regarded as concerned mainly with the abstraction of those larger generalisations which we conceive to be the fundamental, or first, principles, so may Occultism and its kindred studies, regarded as a Philosophy of spirit, be valued principally as affording to us the keystone of the arch of Cosmic structure—the interpretation of Universal correspondences.

THE GRAND ARCANUM OF DEATH

BY ELIPHAS LEVI

The forthcoming number of "The Equinox" will contain a valuable addition to the translations of Eliphas Levi's works now in existence in this country, in the shape of the first complete edition in the English language of "The Key of the Mysteries," by the celebrated Abbé Constant. This is undoubtedly one of the most striking and suggestive treatises of the French Magus. We take the opportunity to cull from its pages the lines on the Grand Arcanum of Death, in which the life and death of man is compared and paralleled with the experience of the human embryo in its prenatal existence.—ED.

WE often become sad in thinking that the most beautiful life must finish, and the approach of the terrible Unknown that one calls death disgusts us with all the joys of existence.

Why be born, if one must live so little? Why bring up with so much care children who must die? Such is the question of human ignorance in its most frequent and its saddest doubts.

This, too, is what the human embryo may vaguely ask itself at the approach of that birth which is about to throw it into an unknown world by stripping it of its protective envelope. Let us study the mystery of birth, and we shall have the key of the great arcanum of death!

Thrown by the laws of Nature into the womb of a woman, the incarnated spirit very slowly wakes, and creates for itself with effort organs which will later be indispensable, but which, as they grow, increase its comfort in its present situation. The happiest period of the life of the embryo is that when, like a chrysalis, it spreads around it the membrane which serves it for refuge, and which swims with it in a nourishing and preserving fluid. At that time it is free, and does not suffer. It partakes of the universal life, and receives the imprint of the memories of Nature which will later determine the configuration of its body and the form of its features. That happy age may be called the childhood of the embryo.

Adolescence follows; the human form becomes distinct, and its sex is determined; a movement takes place in the maternal egg which resembles the vague reveries of that age which follows

upon childhood. The placenta, which is the exterior and the real body of the foetus, feels germinating in itself something unknown, which already tends to break it and escape. The child then enters more distinctly into the life of dreams. Its brain, acting as a mirror of that of its mother, reproduces with so much force her imaginations, that it communicates their form to its own limbs. Its mother is for it at that time what God is for us, a Providence unknown and invisible, to which it aspires to the point of identifying itself with everything that she admires. It holds to her, it lives by her, although it does not see her, and would not even know how to understand her. If it was able to philosophize, it would perhaps deny the personal existence and intelligence of that mother which is for it as yet only a fatal prison and an apparatus of preservation. Little by little, however, this servitude annoys it; it twists itself, it suffers, it feels that its life is about to end. Then comes an hour of anguish and convulsion; its bonds break; it feels that it is about to fall into the gulf of the unknown. It is accomplished; it falls, it is crushed with pain, a strange cold seizes it, it breathes a last sigh which turns into a first cry; it is dead to embryonic life, it is born to human life!

During embryonic life it seemed to it that the placenta was its body, and it was in fact its special embryonic body, a body useless for another life, a body which had to be thrown off as an unclean thing at the moment of birth.

The body of our human life is like a second envelope, useless for the third life, and for that reason we throw it aside at the moment of our second birth.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

HYPNOTISM AS A HEALING AGENT.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Allow me to thank you for your kindness in calling attention to the cure of blindness which I effected through the medium of hypnotic suggestion. I am very pleased to inform you that Miss Gertrude Yates not only still possesses her sight, but that it grows stronger week by week.

In the whole of my fifteen years' hard work in this branch of therapeutics, the case under review is, I think, the most successful I have ever had or known. There surely can be no greater cure than to restore sight in the case of a girl who was blind from her birth. It is the only case of that particular kind I know of, although, as you are aware, there are several cases on record where sight has been restored to persons who became blind, after their birth, from some means or the other, one being the case of Miss Violet Winter, a report of whose cure appeared in the *Daily Express* in May of this year. I too shall be pleased to hear from your readers regarding cases of sight being restored to people who had been blind from birth.

It is very gratifying to me to know the great interest this case has aroused among medical practitioners particularly, and the public in general. I have for more than fifteen years been fighting against the prejudice that exists in this country regarding the possibilities of this great science of hypnotic suggestion. There has, however, been a decided advance of late years, and I believe it is only a matter of time when hypnotic suggestion will be understood by the English public as it is accepted in France, America, Germany and other countries. When this object has been achieved this branch of therapeutics will be the chief method employed to cure all functional diseases and disorders.

Again, with many thanks for your kindness,

I am,

Yours faithfully,

ALEX. ERSKINE.

68, PARK STREET,
PARK LANE, W.

SCIENCE AND THE INFINITE.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Permit me to thank Sydney T. Klein for his courteous and explanatory letter, in your September issue, which I fully appreciate.

My comments on *Science and the Infinite* were based on your reference to the book in "Notes of the Month" in the June issue, not on the book itself, which I have not seen. I have, however, ordered it and am looking forward to reading it with both pleasure and profit.

I entirely agree with the writer "that the Riddle of the Universe is not to be solved by the intellect, but by attaining to a 'Loving and Knowing Communion with the Absolute'"; that it is "impossible for the finite to even approach the infinite by 'Intellectualism'"; as the author clearly points out in his letter, "we cannot fix a point (in time or space) so as to exclude the thought of a point beyond."

What I wanted to emphasize in my letter was that metaphysics alone will never take any one to the heart of God; that intellect is—or should be—the servant of love. The difference between Sydney T. Klein and myself is more apparent than real.

Yours faithfully,

OMNIA VINCIT AMOR.

CANDLES IN THE ROMAN CHURCH.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Can any one tell me what is the real reason of the traditional practice in the Roman Church of having tall lighted candles placed round a bier? The explanation, so-called, that the flame "is symbolical of the soul rising" seems too easy, too *banale*, especially as a great many people hardly know even that. What is the *real* occult reason, for I presume there is one?

Yours truly,

INQUIRER.

[Is not the idea to keep away the evil spirits?—ED.]

STRANGE HYPNOTIC PHENOMENA.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—With regard to Mr. Joy's question: he will find the experiments he wants properly authenticated in *An Experimental Study in the Domain of Hypnotism*, by Dr. R. von Krafft-Ebing, Professor of Psychology and Nervous Diseases in the Royal University of Graz, Austria. Translated from the German by Charles G. Chad-dock, M.D., Assistant Physician Northern Michigan Asylum. New York & London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, The Knickerbocker Press. 1896.

Yours faithfully,

ALEISTER CROWLEY.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

AS a matter of intelligent compilation inspired by a very clear purpose, it will be difficult to point to a better article than that which occupies the first place in a recent issue of *The Open Court*. Under the title "Tammuz, Pan and Christ," it traces through the Christian centuries what it terms a typical case of myth-transference, by which the annual Accadian and Babylonian mourning for Tammuz became a lament for Great Pan and was presented by Eusebius—seriously or not—as an instance of the overthrow of demons at the advent of Christ. Perhaps it is difficult to see that there is really a myth-transference. The whole thing began in misconception concerning a ritual verse, first reported by Plutarch apart from all religious intention. But the blunder, perpetuated by Eusebius, took root, and the article is an exhaustive account of its bibliographical history through the centuries, down to the days of Mrs. Browning and Sir Richard Burton. The same issue has a rendering of the romance of Joseph and Asenath, from the complete Greek text published by Batiffol in 1889. A brief introduction gives a satisfactory account of the text and its history. The story is founded, of course, on Gen. xli. 45: "And he gave him to wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest of On." It would be an interesting introduction to the play of *Joseph and his Brethren*.

We observe that *Le Voile d'Isis* sees fit to insist on the fact that it is absolutely independent and attached to no school; it might do worse, therefore, than adopt on its own part the familiar device of THE OCCULT REVIEW—*nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri*. Whatever its general dedications, the interest continues, and there are two notable papers in the last issue. The first gives account of the consideration extended to gold by old therapeutics under the ægis of alchemy, when it was administered sometimes in the form of calcined and sometimes of the so-called potable gold. There is a concise history of the subject, of the disrepute into which the use of the metal has fallen in modern times, and a note on such signs as there are of its return into favour under certain auspices of homeopathy. The question stands at its value, but outside its own subject, though arising therefrom, there is what seems to us a wise distinction on the question of past and present methods. Time is no longer a matter of consideration

with us when preparing medicaments, or only in the sense that it must be saved as best we can. "We produce in a few hours distillations over which weeks and even months were devoted in other days," and the suggestion is that the therapeutic value is reduced or destroyed. We remember to have heard the same criticism made by a practical student of metallic transformation who believed that the graduated fire on which alchemists used to insist produced different results from the rapid and violent processes of modern chemistry. The other article is the beginning of a series by Sédir on the mission of Jesus Christ. While refraining from judgment on something still in progress and perhaps only at its inception, we cannot fail to be impressed by the zeal and ardour of language which the writer brings to his subject. The whole body mystical of theology seems to have been assumed by M. Sédir, and Jesus of Nazareth is (1) the cosmic Christ, (2) the Word and (3) the Builder as such of the universe with His own hands. We should not call attention to views of this kind in England, but we feel that the author stands alone as a Parisian occultist, and the remarkable thing is that he seems to draw numbers to his conferences, which are held continually. The present paper dwells on Christ as a healer of human ills belonging to the physical order.

We understand from *La Revue Spirite* that automatic writing or some method of this kind has produced an answer on the part of unseen guides to the question whether the possession of God can be truly the soul's recompense here below. The testimony is that he who desires truth and justice intensely has God dwelling within him, abides in God and enjoys a foretaste of eternal beatitude. . . . Our contemporary continues to be of solid and serious interest in all its issues, though the statement does not signify either agreement or need of agreement. There is another number before us which discusses the doctrine of an Absolute Being from the standpoint of pantheism and disposes of the Christian Trinity on what may be called dialectical considerations, leaving a thoughtful reader, amidst all his possible detachment, a little surprised at a method so assured and peremptory—perhaps even, intellectually speaking, a little scandalized. The confession of a modern gnostic respecting the Gnosis of old appears in another place, and we observe that the writer submits to be written down as a heretic because he is assured in his mind that the Gnosis is science itself, knowledge in the vital sense, and that God and His Christ are on the side of him and his belief. We have heard that there is a Gnostic Church in Paris, having strange ceremonies and an elaborate ritual.

In a recent issue of the *Proceedings of the American Society for Psychical Research*, Professor J. H. Hyslop introduces "A Case of Poltergeist," the examination of which fills over 200 pages. It is an old instance, going back to the year 1874, and it did not come into the hands of the editor till 1905, while it is now only that he has found an opportunity to deal with it in his usual careful and adequate way. Among persons interested in the case at the time and subsequently were Professor Elliot Coues, Dr. Richard Hodgson and Professor William James. But it is impossible even to summarise the account within the limits of these notes. There is one other article in the number before us, and it embodies a criticism of symbolism in mental processes, with reference to Freud's theories of symbolism in dream, for which it is thought that there is a large general basis. We feel in agreement with the statement that "language is a universal symbolism and is the means of making the experience of one sense convertible in terms of another or intelligible by means of constant association." From our point of view thought itself, which is never formulated in the mind except in words, is also symbolic, and the sacramental theory of the mind is based thereon.

We spoke last month of an old friend in the shape of *The World's Advanced Thought*, and now another has reached us not less unexpectedly, namely, *The Progressive Thinker*. It has suffered no alteration in the course of the years and seems to hold its own, devoted to spiritualism and just now giving great space to a National Spiritualistic Association, in convention assembled. A number of familiar names and some welcome portraits are met with, but there are few perhaps which would be known on this side of the Atlantic. A declaration of principles adopted by the Association is printed in large type, and it is one that embodies a catholic expression of belief which must appeal to every spiritualist throughout the world. There are also others not included in the specific category who might endorse it line by line, for it testifies to the Infinite Intelligence, the expression of that Mind in nature, the part of man in eternity and the eternal hope.

Muslim India gives a paper on "Special features of Islam," read before the Sixth Congress of Religions at Paris in July last. We observe that the following important claims are made by the writer. (1) That the Quran admits the divine origin of religions outside its own and that every nation has been blessed by a teacher from God. (2) That it makes religion a simple practice of life, obtaining in all thought and action. (3) That it is said to provide a complete code of life. (4) That it glorifies God in the

regeneration of man. (5) That the idea of Islam is contained in obedience to God and benevolence towards His creatures. (6) That it does not teach inheritance of sin ; this is not in man's nature but is acquired by him. (7) That communion with God is not impossible now as it was not impossible but actual, *ex hypothesi*, in the past. The paper is at least a good example of pleading, and it is supported by extracts from the sacred book on which Islam depends.

We have received for the first time a weekly periodical entitled *O Clarim*, which has been in existence for eight years as the organ of a spiritualistic propaganda in the states of Brazil. It is a thin sheet containing in one of the issues before us a paper on reincarnation, which appears to understand the words of Jesus, " unless a man be born again " and " except a man be born again of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God," in the sense of material rebirth. It quotes of course the familiar reference to Elias in St. Matthew xvii. There is another article which suggests that the paper is on the Christian side in religion and regards spiritualism as having a work to do on that side. . . . Mr. Roy Mitchell writes on the symbolism of Maeterlinck in the current issue of *The Path*, with particular reference to the drama of the Blue Bird. It is all very carefully done, but one feels irresistibly that here and there it might occasion some surprise and confusion in the mind of Maeterlinck himself. There is also an interesting article on the Chinese philosophy of the *Tao*, which depends for its quotations on Mr. W. Gorn Old's rendering of *The Simple Way*. . . . We mentioned quite recently that a new journal, *The Kosmon Light*, had been instituted under the auspices of a Kosmon Fraternity, " devoted to the teachings of a new era " and accepting a new Bible of humanity known as *Oahspe*. The last issue has an article on the mystic and occult paths, the first being a way of light and of that power which abides in light, the other being a path of darkness. The Society seems, however, to give instruction in the knowledge which belongs to both, so that the seeker may be guided in his choice. . . . We have now received the first issue of *The Faithist*, which has been founded in the same interest and is the official organ of the Faithist Confraternity, *Oahspe* being again its source of inspiration and authority. It is the revival of an old periodical under the same title. The idea of consociation, understood as the blending of minds with minds in the course of their ascent through the spiritual planes, is substituted for reincarnation, and may appeal to some who resist the theory of successive returns to earth.

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REVIEWS

THE BROKEN HALO. By Florence Barclay. Cr. 8vo. 408 pp.
London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. Price 6s.

THE charm of Mrs. Florence Barclay's stories has won her a place amongst the foremost writers of fiction of our time, and after reading *The Broken Halo* it will be found that the delicacy and fragrance of her work fall in no way short of that manifested in its predecessors. How Dr. Dick, starting with ideals of the "get-on-or-get-out" type, falls beneath the spell of one of his patients and ultimately realizes that there is something sweeter and better than any of the prizes offered to Ambition, is told in a story that carries the reader along with it, enchanted to the end. The love of the doctor for his Little White Lady is of that purest, most idealistic type that borders on the mystical; for he was able to confess to her in all sincerity and humility, that "I saw the Christ in you"—and to see thus clearly is to love indeed.

H. J. S.

BARBARA OF THE THORN. By Netta Syrett. London: Chatto & Windus. Cr. 8vo. 314 pp. Price 6s.

FINDING herself left without ties and with independent means, Barbara Thorne is seized with an unaccountable desire to leave England and visit Rome. This intention she carries out in spite of the protests of friends who cannot understand this somewhat eccentric development in a hitherto untravelled and unenterprising girl. The psychic experiences, pointing to remembrance of a former life, that befall her in Italy, after the manner of the experiences of the two English ladies at Versailles as told in *The Adventure* (Macmillan), together with the love interest that is skilfully interwoven with the theme, combine to form a plot which, in the hands of a practised craftswoman like Miss Syrett, holds the imagination in its grip from start to finish. A psychical story which should prove of great interest to readers of the OCCULT REVIEW.

H. J. S.

THE MIRACLE OF RIGHT THOUGHT. By Orison S. Marden, editor of *Success Magazine*, and author of "Peace, Power, and Plenty," "He Can Who Thinks He Can," "Getting On," etc. London: William Rider & Son, Ltd., 8-11, Paternoster Row, E.C. Price 3s. 6d. net. Vol. 16 of the New Thought Library.

THIS is a new edition of the companion volume to the author's last book, *Peace, Power and Plenty*, for which the demand was so great during the first two years of its issue as to call for nearly an edition per month. Like all New Thought writings, the motive of *The Miracle of Right Thought* is to arouse the reader to discover "the wonderful forces of the Great Within of himself, which if he could unlock and utilize would lift him out of the region of anxiety and worry, eliminate most, if not all, of the discords and friction of life, and enable him to make of himself everything he ever imagined he could and longed to become."

In fifteen breezy, tersely written chapters, full of practical wisdom and homely application, Mr. Marden elaborates the old-time truth that "As a man thinketh so he is." When the great Apostle of Perfection,

Matthew Arnold, preached his gospel of Sweetness and Light to a mid-Victorian generation, he spoke of thoughts as "the furniture of the mind." We of to-day are realizing that they are much more than that. Thoughts are the "electrons" of the vast Mind-Stuff which lies behind all visible matter. Centuries of wrong thinking have produced a corresponding physical condition which acts almost automatically. People talk about being "too old," as though age implied mere bodily deterioration instead of spiritual advancement. Fear hath torment, and to hold fixed thoughts of worry, anxiety, anger, and jealousy, literally poisons the blood and produces disease. As beauty exists in the eye of the beholder, so health, happiness, success and peace, are formed first in the crucible of the mind, by the simple process of realizing that we are a necessary indivisible, part of the life-stream of the Universe, which is ever flowing Godward, and that, in the words of the author, "man is mighty or weak, successful or unsuccessful, harmonious or discordant, in proportion to the complete consciousness of his one-ness with the Power that made him."

EDITH K. HARPER.

SOME OCCULT EXPERIENCES. Described by Johan Van Manen and annotated by C. W. Leadbeater. Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar. Price 1s. 6d. net.

THERE is but little to be said for Mr. Van Manen's *Occult Experiences*, despite the running comments Mr. Leadbeater keeps up concerning each of the slight occult narratives throughout the volume. Mr. Van Manen's adventures on the astral plane appeal too strongly to the sense of the ludicrous (a feeling which is only heightened by Mr. Leadbeater's solemn footnotes) to be taken seriously by the reflective psychical student. The great thing in occultism is to realize how far subconscious suggestions of the personal imagination influence the astral vision, and how much of it is true or real vision. While again, one must beware of optical or mental delusions, due either to a disordered physical system or some imaginary malady of the brain. When we have steered clear of what Eliphas Levi terms "the realm of illusion" and avoided the triple snares of Morpheus, Phantasos and Phobeter, then only can we speak of our visions with the veracity of the true seer. And on this point Mr. Van Manen's evidence appears a little doubtful. Thus Mr. Van Manen gives the following childhood experience as his first "case":—

Astral Nakedness. I was asleep, and was walking in one of the streets of the little town in which I was then living. I was amusing myself, as children do at that age, but suddenly I became aware that I was clad only in my nightshirt (pyjamas being a fairly recent invention as far as Holland is concerned). I experienced a feeling of intense shame, and felt as if all passers-by in the street were looking at me. I awoke with a start and felt still very much ashamed. Later on in reading about the astral plane I found the clue to this dream which, by its extraordinary vividness, made a strong impression on me.

The superfluous reference to pyjamas at once provokes a sense of the ridiculous and makes one comprehend that Mr. Van Manen has not yet learnt Schiller's lesson that "The artist is known by the art of omission." And also, despite Mr. Leadbeater's dramatic annotation to this juvenile dream, one feels inclined to suggest that it was more due to an over-dose of turkey and plum-pudding than to celestial inspiration. But, as Mr. Van Manen is a Dutchman, perhaps "the hotspout" he describes so vividly in

another case—a dish of mashed potatoes and carrots, from which he dreamt a continuous stream of earwigs crawled—may have been at fault.

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

REINCARNATION : A STUDY OF FORGOTTEN TRUTH. By E. D. Walker.
London : Messrs. William Rider & Son, Ltd. Price 3s. 6d. net.

IN this cheaper and more popular reprint of Mr. E. D. Walker's standard work on the fascinating subject of Reincarnation, with its attendant transmigrations of the soul and pursuing Karmic laws, Messrs. Rider have done yet another good service to occult literature.

For Mr. Walker's book is not the usual slender volume akin to that of the minor poet which we generally obtain on these abstruse theories, it is a good, solid piece of penmanship, written by one who felt the poetry of Spiritualism deeply and cried with Whittier, the minstrel of the austere Quakers :—

I am : how little more I know !
Whence came I ? Whither do I go ?
A central self which feels and is ;
A cry between the silences ;
A shadow-birth of clouds at strife
With sunshine on the hills of life ;
A shaft from Nature's quiver cast
Into the future from the past.

It would be interesting to compare Mr. Walker's volume on Reincarnation with the inspired teachings of Thomas Lake Harris, which were reviewed in the September number of the OCCULT REVIEW, and are antagonistic to the idea. And yet whom is one to believe ? The conception of a solitary genius like Harris or the almost immemorial faith of all the wisest nations of the earth ? And yet I do not think that the lessons of the initiate Thomas Lake Harris harm the old accepted idea of reincarnation very vitally. For he dilates upon the incarnations which are necessary in creating the climatic human incarnation—the long chain of mineral, vegetable and animal lives that precede the mortal babe, and which, according to him, are, as each of these lives die, succeeded by a period of " Devachanic bliss," a kind of Nirvaic time, between each incarnation. But reincarnation proper goes onward from the finished human spirit, it is the completion of this divine soul created of stones and flowers and butterflies, and thus, unconsciously, Thomas Lake Harris was a staunch advocate of the very theory he flouted so passionately, although he did mankind a service by describing certain remote phases of the soul in his inspirations from the founts of unknown knowledge.

And Mr. Walker contributes another conclusive volume to this stable idea. He deals dispassionately both with the Western evidences and objections to Reincarnation, and traces the belief down to the very dawn-spring of the world.

And when one realizes that such wise, philosophical people as the Brahmans, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Sufis, the Egyptians and the Jews, such immense minds as those of Pythagoras and Plato, Kalidasa, Hafiz, Schopenhauer, Lessing, Milton, Shelley, Blake, Emerson, Goethe and Victor Hugo are but a few of the thousands numbered amid its adherents, then Reincarnation once more arises like a triumphant phoenix from the ashes of

the past and becomes a matter for the most serious thought and scholarly discussion. For, as Mr. Walker says with such graphic conclusiveness, "Immortality demands it." REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

HISTORICAL MINIATURES. By August Strindberg. Translated by Claud Field, M.A. London: George Allen & Co., Ltd., 44, Rathbone Place. 1913. Price 5s. net.

THIS is a collection of historical incidents extending over a vast area of the world's history, beginning at the Egyptian Bondage and the finding of Moses in the bulrushes by Pharaoh's daughter, to the close of the eighteenth century and the termination of the French Revolution of 1789. The ground covered is enormous and exhibits a profound knowledge of history, both ancient and modern, on the part of the author.

There are twenty-two episodes in all: Greeks, Romans, French, Huns and Russians appear on the stage in turn, and such characters as Peter the Czar, Attila, Socrates, Peter the Hermit, Nero, Cardinal Wolsey, Julian the Apostate, and Voltaire, figure in each story in a manner interesting and realistic.

If we have any fault to find it is that the stories are lacking somewhat in "atmosphere," and we miss those descriptive passages that constitute the charm of work of this sort. And though the book does not contain the deep human interest of *The Inferno*, it has the advantage of being more varied and less morbidly introspective. VIRGINIA MILWARD.

THE MARBLE APHRODITE. By Anthony Kirby Gill. London: Stanley Paul & Co. pp. 324. 6s.

THE GREY COUNTESS. By Theo Douglas (Mrs. H. D. Everett). London: Cassell & Co., Ltd. pp. viii + 311. 6s.

THE offence wrought against the Goddess of Love by the vulgarity of *The Tinted Venus* is never likely to be atoned for by the author of that story; but perhaps *The Marble Aphrodite* may be accepted as some sort of vicarious compensation. Mr. Gill imagines that an English sculptor, longing to have a model worthy to pose as Aphrodite, was amazed to see a naiad appear out of the fountain in his Chelsea garden. Passionate love seizes the painter; and the nymph withdraws, but returns later tenderly ardent. He copies her perfect form in marble, and the marble exercises a power in opposition to the love which he has for his model. It is as though, in representing Aphrodite, the statue became adorable. Inexperience is shown in adjusting the naiad to a modern setting, and one feels that the episode of an actress who committed suicide from disappointed love is intended to have a significance and appropriateness which are not obvious. Nevertheless, Mr. Gill has written a story of more than average interest and intellectuality.

The Grey Countess will haply excite and confuse a section of the public that still occasionally utters a fervent and serious "Oh Lor'!" A Russian female spy, expert in disguising herself, gives her inconvenient guest unwholesome cigarettes, and imposes her will upon him with a view to his obliging her by suicide. As he tells the tale the reader does not feel too alarmed on his behalf, especially as a pretty heroine is provided to make his life worth living. Those—and they are many—for whom a kind of regulated nightmare, a nightmare with a happy ending, has a decided fascination, will enjoy Theo Douglas's performance. W. H. C.

THE KEYNOTE TO SPIRITUALISM: Constituting a Definition of the Facts and Principles of Spiritualism. By the Spirit Friends of Madame A. Montague and Albert Card. London: The Psychic Science Institute, 99, Selhurst Road, S. Norwood, S.E. Price 6d.

MUCH in little has been gathered together in the fifty-two pages of this useful little handbook, which contains within its compass a brief and practical survey of what is meant by the term "Spiritualism." It is clearly and concisely written, its argument being that as the human soul can during the earth life develop spiritual faculties and powers apparently without known limit, such attributes are capable of infinitely further development when freed from the restraints imposed by the physical envelope. The various forms and phases of mediumship are tersely defined, with an appeal for the higher aspect of Spiritualism rather than the merely phenomenal. The assertion, in the preface, that Spiritualism and Christianity are "as far apart as the poles," is surely meant to apply to dogmatic sectarianism, for true Christianity, as embodied in the Sermon on the Mount, is in essence one with the purest philosophy of Spiritualism.

E. K. HARPER.

BLAIR'S KEN. By William Sylvester Walker ("Coo-ee"). London: John Ouseley, Ltd., Feet Lane, Farringdon Street, E.C. Price 6s.

WITHOUT any pretensions as a creator of character Mr. Walker has set out to tell a story, but he evidently set out before being himself quite aware of the sequence of the events he was about to portray. Incidents there are in his book in plenty, but he lacks the power to set them dramatically, and they lose the vital force which Life would have given to them.

There is sufficient grim strength in the main idea of the plot to have made a powerful story. Andrew Blair, Laird of Barluar, the elder of twin brothers, having involved himself in debts and indiscretions, determines to renounce his birthright, leave the country and give over the management of his estate to his younger brother Malcolm, a sharp-witted lawyer. Among his sins Andrew had not only failed to read but had burnt the sacred scroll of "Blair's Ken," containing the secret of the family legend, which every new laird was bound to know, so that he might avert the dreaded Ban of the family from his house. As a result the Ban appears to Andrew heralded by Three Pipers, the ghostly followers of the House of Blair, and with this mystery hanging over him and this dread haunting him, he makes his way to Australia, where many of the incidents of the book take place. In the end, as the story laboriously works itself out, Andrew regains the family secret, but how, and after what troublings of body and spirit, we leave the book to tell for itself.

It would have been better if the author had given a little more care not only to the dramatic action of the book, but also to the avoidance of such meaningless phrases as "the saucy assurance which blushing became her," and to the general construction of his sentences. Too often they remind one, unfortunately, of the classical examples given by Mark Twain in his incomparable dissertation on the "Awful German Language." The most interesting part of the book is where Mr. Walker is able to introduce some of his knowledge of Australian life, and one or two of his descriptions of Australian scenery are welcome purple patches.

A. A. LOCKE.