

received the following remarkably interesting letter in reply:—

THE EVIDENCE STATED.

Crow's Nest,
August 8th, 1923.

Dear Sir,—

Kindly pardon my remissness in not replying earlier to your letter concerning Nurse Hemsworth. She has been absent in the country, and I have awaited her return before replying. Hers is certainly an outstanding case, and has created a tremendous impression in Sydney. Shall I give you a detailed history of the case?

Several years ago Nurse Hemsworth developed eye trouble, and consulted in successive order the following Macquarie Street specialists:—Dr. Macleod, Dr. Sheppard, Dr. Temple Smith, Dr. Jones, Dr. Rutherford, Dr. Scot Skirring, and Dr. Guy Warren. Dr. Temple Smith being her main adviser. They all averred that she suffered from glaucoma, and ultimately Dr. Temple Smith operated on the eye at the Darlinghurst Private Hospital. The glaucoma operation scar is still discernible.

Six years ago the eye operated on went totally blind, and she was gradually losing the sight of the other eye, and could but dimly see. A few months ago, in great distress, she came to see me, sorrowing because the prospective blindness would make her a burdensome care to her two sisters who lived with her. She had heard of Mr Hickson's coming, and being a deeply spiritual woman, believing in the efficacy of prayer, she prepared for it, realising that if it were God's will that no restoration of sight should be given her, then, as a Christian, she must humbly accept the Divine will.

In this spirit she attended the Cathedral services on the first Monday. The moment Mr Hickson's hands touched her eyes she felt a burning sensation, and partially swooned, so that she had to be assisted by the nurses to the door. The first few moments she saw but dimly; then soon after there came a restoration of vision, and she could tell the time by the adjoining Town Hall clock. Returning home, she left a message asking me to call and return thanks to God.

That evening, as I was on the point of seeing her, Dr. Baring Deek, a city consultant, with a very extensive practice (though unfortunately for the purposes of attestation he is not a British Medical Association man, being a homoeopathist), phoned me. Dr. Baring Smith has specialised on the eye, and when I told him about Nurse Hemsworth he consented to come and scientifically examine her. To his amazement she had the glaucoma operation scar, and yet her

eyes were not strained and tense, but normal. He disbelieved her testimony for the moment, but soon discovered that she could see fairly well out of the blind eye, and perfectly with the other; and exclaimed, this is a remarkable miracle. Next day she could see the Blue Mountains fifty miles away, and all the intervening land-marks, and since then her vision has improved in a remarkable way, so that she can see further and more distinctly than the majority of folk.

Now this case occasioned a great deal of sceptical denials, and, on the other hand, confirmed faith, and enabled others to be treated with greater confidence and bigger faith. I remember mentioning the matter at a Town Hall gathering, and a mother, hearing of Nurse Hemsworth's recovery, sent up a special request for prayer that her paralysed boy, who had never walked properly for 13 years, might be helped. Within an hour he came running from the Cathedral into our Town Hall service, and he has been romping round the city ever since.

Several doctors of North Sydney, disbelieving that Nurse Hemsworth had suffered from glaucoma, visited the local chemist and asked him to verify the reports by turning up the prescriptions of the Macquarie Street specialists, as he had dispensed them. He did so, and they were astonished to find glaucoma drops repeatedly prescribed. A fortnight ago Nurse Hemsworth went to Dr. Temple Smith, whom she had not visited since the operation several years ago. She said she was Nurse Hemsworth, and he said, "You could not possibly be one and the same woman." However, her identity was quickly established, and his amazement deepened when he saw from his records that all she said was true—the diagnosis as glaucoma, the operation, the subsequent blindness—and he asked her for an explanation of the obvious miracle. She said, "God did it," to which he replied that evidently she was a religious fanatic, and her explanation did not appeal to him. Then she mentioned Mr Hickson, and drew from him a denunciation of that "humbag."

However, he proceeded to test her, and placed her in a specially darkened room, preparatory to the ocular test. In the dark room he said, "I will ask you soon to tell me what you can see on this board," and then God performed a miracle. In the pitch-dark Nurse Hemsworth saw the letters and numbers. Trembling with excitement, Dr. Temple Smith said, "Good God, woman, you cannot see in the dark! I haven't turned on the light yet." And when he did she saw his excitement. And then, exam-

ining her eyes more closely, he said, "You have the most perfect eyes I have ever seen; your optic nerves are as clear and strong as those of a girl." However—and this is the strangest part of the story—Dr. Temple is so opposed to Mr Hickson that, despite this miracle, he refuses to allow his name to be publicly mentioned, and will not give Nurse Hemsworth any indication in writing that she ever was his patient, ever suffered from glaucoma, or even that now she has clear vision. She has his prescriptions showing a glaucomous condition, and can get a hospital certificate that she was operated on for glaucoma.

Of course, documentary evidence, though helpful, is really unnecessary in this case. The glaucoma operation scar is still there, and any medical man can attest the fact. Now any evidence you want me to send I will, at once; but meanwhile suggest that you should ask your New Zealand surgeon friend to nominate any doctor in Sydney. Nurse Hemsworth will visit him, and he can report direct to you the results of such investigation. I can furnish, in addition, a statutory declaration, if necessary, from those who during the past few years knew Nurse Hemsworth's affliction to be glaucoma; knew that she took regularly glaucoma drops; knew that she was totally blind in one eye, and going blind in the other; knew that the day she attended and returned from the mission she could see—and get medical certificates that she is now perfectly normal.

Please pardon the length of this letter. We have had wonderful fruits from the mission—several cases of organic trouble removed. I enclose copy of article I wrote for the "Church of England Record," which contains my impressions, and I will be very glad to forward any additional information you may require. Please pardon my delay in replying, and hurriedly written in tram to catch the mail.

Yours very sincerely,

W. CLEUGH-BLACK.

THE MEDICAL POINT OF VIEW.

The Auckland surgeon mentioned above comments as follows on Mr Cleugh Black's letter:—

The absence of any medical report whatever is the weakness of this case as yet. There is no account of the physical findings associated with glaucoma. What is required is a report of the condition of the eye itself—not merely of the patient's power to see—prior to operation and at a date some months at least subsequent to operation; and at the present time. The great difficulty that the layman has in assessing the evidence in all cases of faith healing is to understand the relations of organic