

What the poet meant by this statement, was not that the body did not die. That is self-evident. But that the man, the soul, the ego; lives on; although the "temple" in which he dwelt in this life, was now vacant and useless: the spirit; the real man, having ascended from it.

There was probably no better known man in the whole of this community than the Rev. Father Roche, priest in charge of this extensive Roman Catholic parish for the past twenty years, and the startling news of his sudden death from heart failure on Thursday morning, caused quite a shock to the community. Although not by any means of robust health, no one but his medical adviser and friend, Dr. Ley, had any suspicion that his passing, when it did come, was likely to be of a very sudden nature, owing to heart trouble. So little did the reverend gentleman or his friends anticipate that the end of this life, was so near, that he with them, attended a meeting of the Warragul Golf Club, on the previous evening, at the Warragul Athenaeum. As President of the club, he presided over the meeting in his usual urbane manner, and when they dispersed none had the faintest idea that they were parting, to meet him here no more.

Father Roche went home to the Presbytery and retired for the night. As the next morning, Thursday, was Ascension Day, he left instructions with his housekeeper, that he and Father Buckley, should be called at 7 a.m., as they had special services at the Warragul and Neerim churches in commemoration of Ascension Day. Was it not a remarkable thing that he should participate in his own ascension from the natural body on that self-same day?

When the housekeeper of the Presbytery went to the room of the deceased gentleman to call him at 7 a.m. on Thursday morning, he appeared to be sleeping peacefully on his side, but as she could not arouse him, she went and informed Father Buckley, who, thinking it was merely a sound sleep, suggested she should again go and call him. So she again returned to the room of the Rev. Father Roche, and then she was able to realise that the priest who had presided so long

over her household and the parish, had at last left it forever. Medical aid was at once sent for, and Dr. Ley was quickly by the bedside of his friend. But he was beyond all earthly aid, for the Rev. Father Roche had passed on to the next existence, where he will doubtless continue to influence the work in which he was so deeply interested here. In the words of the poet whom we have already quoted:—

"The spirit-world around this world
of sense
Floats like an atmosphere, and
everywhere
Waits through these earthly mists
and vapors dense,
A vital breath of more ethereal
air."

In the interesting work entitled, "Life after Death," the Right Rev. Monsignor Vaughan, Canon of Westminster, a very charming writer, says:—"When therefore, the changing corruptible flesh cannot longer renew itself, when, to express the same truth in another form, the continual progress of decay exceeds the native powers of recuperation, and the physical portions of our beings resolve into primordial elements, the soul, unaffected and uninjured, lives on, and enters upon a higher and grander form of life, in keeping with its new surroundings."

But the works of a host of intellectual and spiritually minded men, now bear eloquent testimony to the fact of life's progression, so that the process of dissolution which we habitually call "death," and for which it is customary to assume a garb of dismal black, so indicative of hopelessness; is really our "spiritual bath" into a more beautiful and ethereal realm. Death therefore, is but an incident in continuous life, where to again quote Canon Vaughan's inspiring work, "each soul leads even a truer life, an intenser life, and is, if I may so express it, far more fully self-conscious and alert, than he ever was, or could have been when bound to a corruptible body . . . For death is not life's close. Quite the reverse. It is but the beginning."

And so we may rest assured that the active life which has passed from our visible ken, will still feel the keenest interest in the work

FROM OUR VISITOR KEN, WILL STILL FEEL the keenest interest in the work which he accomplished here. In fact he may hardly realise his passing at all, for it was so peaceful, and might aptly be described in the words of the 19th century poet, W. Cullen Bryant: for he:—

“Approached his grave
Like one that draws the drapery
of his couch
About him, and lies down to
pleasant dreams.”

The Rev. Martin Augustine Roach was born in County Clare, Ireland, in 1868, and was therefore 57 years of age this year. He was educated in Ireland, and at Dublin University took his degree of M.A., and going over to Paris he completed his education at Paris University. He possessed great intellectual gifts, though his health was not robust. When contemplating going abroad, while resident in Paris, he was offered a position by the Bishop of Montreal, and was on the verge of accepting it and going to Canada, when he was impressed that his life work lay in Australia. He sailed therefore for this country, and for twenty years he has been the faithful pastor of his flock in this important parish. What he has accomplished in that time, through the instrumentality of his people is well-known, and the splendid brick church in Warragul, as well as other churches in Neerim South and Drouin all free of debt, are the lasting monuments to his zeal and influence.

As a public citizen the Rev. Father

Roach took an active interest in most public movements, his activities in this direction sometimes bringing him into conflict with those who held divergent views. He was a staunch friend of those whose cause he espoused, and although there were times when with equal zeal we felt it necessary to cross swords with him; this fact in no way detracts from our admiration of his many excellent traits of character, one of the most salient of which was his gentlemanly conduct on all occasions as a controversialist. When however, he wished to carry out any particular purpose, he did not hesitate to seek to impose his will upon those who differed from him, and zeal some-

differed from him, and zeal sometimes outran discretion. This occasionally caused trouble. Nevertheless the motives which actuated him, on these occasions, may have been perfectly sincere and earnest; and it is not for us, or any man; to judge our brother man, harshly. “Judge not, that ye be not judged”. But this impartial review of the public life of a public man, would not be complete—or indeed impartial,—if this aspect of his public actions, were not referred to. His great devotion to the interests of his flock, was an inspiring example to every ardent worker in his church. As a foundation member of the Warragul District Hospital, and its President for the past three years, he has rendered invaluable service to that institution. His natural gift for organisation, in co-operation with the secretary (Mr Copeland) has been largely responsible for relieving the committee of much financial anxiety.

The Funeral.

The interment took place in the Warragul cemetery on Saturday afternoon. The funeral cortege left the Roman Catholic Church shortly after 2 p.m., and was probably the largest ever seen in Warragul. Members of the hospital committee, the bowling club and the golf club, together with many of our leading townsmen walked behind the hearse to the graveside to pay their last respects to the deceased. There was also a long array of motor cars, including that of the reverend gentleman, which was heavily draped and conveyed many beautiful wreaths to be laid upon the grave. A striking feature of the procession was the band of school children from St. Joseph's school, and little girls in white, in charge of the Sisters, at the Convent Notre Dame de Sion. The coffin was of polished oak, and bore a simple inscription of the name and age of the deceased priest. The service at the graveside was conducted by Father Curran, of Matfra, who also was the celebrant at the requiem Mass, which preceded the funeral, practically all the priesthood of Gippsland being present. The mortuary arrangements were entrusted to Mr. J. A. McGillon, who had everything in order.