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A PSYCHIC DIGEST

Edited by
Rev. J. T. Huston, N.D.

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The Harbinger of Light

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EDITOR: REV. J. T. HUSTON, N.D. ADELAIDE

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Things Old and New

THOUGHTS ON A BROADCAST CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

(By Rev. A. F. Webling, Author of "Something Beyond", "Deep in the Forest", etc.)

Many thousands of people listen to the "Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols", broadcast from the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge, each year on Christmas Eve. But to get the full flavour of this experience one must visualise the setting in which the service is held.

The Chapel owes its existence to the piety and generosity of Henry VI, and is a magnificent building in the Perpendicular style. Its walls are pierced by a series of enormous windows filled with rich and glowing glass. So skilful had the builders of those days become that they were able to complete the structure with a roof of stone in delicate fan-tracery, the whole vast mass being supported and kept in position mainly by buttresses, since the greater part of the wall-span is occupied by the windows—an astonishing feat of craftsmanship. The Chapel is divided by a screen of dark oak surmounted by the organ, and the east end is lined on either side by the canopied stalls of the Fellows

and other College dignitaries, and the seats for the undergraduates and the choir.

A truly regal mind was his who planned such a glorious building in which a handful of young men might say their prayers: "Labouring for a scanty band of white-robed scholars", as Wordsworth expressed it.

The shadows gather on the mid-winter day as the time for the service approaches, and the only illumination is that of a multitude of flickering tapers; so wise are the authorities in keeping far from this ancient church the glare of electric light. Thus, Wordsworth's description still applies:

These lofty pillars spread that branching roof
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells
Where light and shade repose.

There has been organ music, mellow and flowing, and rising at times into glorious harmony that reverberates through those dim spaces; then dying down, "lingering and wandering on as loath to die".

But now there is silence, and presently through the stillness there comes the clear fluting voice of a boy singing, unaccompanied, the first verse of the opening hymn. It is an indescribable experience to listen to those sounds as the choir proceeds up the ante-chapel. One feels one has never before realised the sublime and tender simplicity of the words:

Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle-shed,
Where a Mother laid her Baby
In a manger for His bed:
Mary was that Mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little Child.

The hymn is rightly sung with slow and measured pace, and rendered as a kind of awed meditation until, towards its close, the men's voices are added to those of the boys, and the organ joins the flood of music as it rises to the triumphant climax:

And our eyes at last shall see Him
Through His own redeeming love,
For that Child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in Heaven above . . .
Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him, but in Heaven,
Set at God's right-hand on high. . . .

Listeners will be familiar with the noble and affecting Bidding Prayer in which the purpose of the service is set forth: "Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmas Eve our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels. . . . And because this of all things would rejoice Christ's heart, let us at this time remember the poor and the helpless, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed, the sick and those that mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children."

The "Bidding" is conceived in the finest spirit of essential Christianity, and those tender words go forth from the beautiful fane, a benediction upon our sad and troubled world.

The Old Carols.

As is well known, the service consists of the reading of nine passages of Scripture, interspersed by carols. The latter are evidently selected with great care in order to represent what is best in this kind of composition both old and new. The old carols breathe the simple unclouded happy faith of the childhood of our race:

God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray:
O tidings of comfort and joy.

The note of exuberant joy cannot, it seems, be kept out. Even in the pathetic "The Holly and the Ivy" it keeps bursting in:

The holly bears a prickle
As sharp as any thorn . . .
The holly bears a bark
As bitter as any gall. . .

Yet after each sad verse there comes the utterly irrelevant lilting refrain bubbling up from a heart in ecstasy at the happy loveliness of God's world:

O the rising of the sun,
The running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.

The service of which I am writing was drawn up from ancient and modern sources by Archbishop Benson, and the carols (which vary somewhat from year to year) are grouped round nine lessons, which are not altered.

Difficulties Concerning the Lessons.

Certain difficulties concerning these lessons alone prevent the service from being to myself, personally, pure delight. The Bidding Prayer, to which I have already alluded, says: "Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child." The Preface to the service states that the passages of Scripture selected "tell the whole story of our Redemption." What is not made clear, however, is whether this "story" is told by means of symbol or of literal history. The first lesson, from Genesis, is headed: "God announceth in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Up till comparatively recent years the greater part of Christendom accepted the story of the Fall as an historical event. While some do so still, it is probable that most educated Christians now regard the narrative as a fragment of Semitic folk-lore capable of bearing some sort of symbolic meaning. But there is nothing in the structure of this service which suggests that view.

In the same way the second lesson is thus described: "God promiseth to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." Is this also ancient legend, or did He Who willed the stars, and holds them in their courses, converse on a given occasion with the Eastern Shiek? I can understand the viewpoint of those who deprecate what would seem to them a pedestrian way of treating narratives so venerable and capable of profound mystic interpretation. But I sympathise, too, with the difficulty of some one acquainted with the progress of modern thought who should chance to be present at this service. He has been deeply touched by the music and the beauty of the whole lovely scene. He has been moved by the simple piety of the carols. And now he hears in the lessons the Church's summary of the spiritual history of mankind. What is he to make of the first two lections? Does the Church still regard the narrative of the Fall, and the Call of Abraham, as fundamental facts in the history of the human race? Did the destiny of man really hang on these tenuous threads?

The New Testament Story.

But if the earlier lessons are to be regarded as legend, in what light is one asked to view the later ones—those, for example, which tell the story of the Virgin Birth and the coming of the Magi? The difficulty of accepting as literal history the story of the Virgin Birth is not its impossibility, but that, being outside the ordinary course of events, exceptionally strong evidence is needed to establish it. In the opinion of many scholars, the Scripture-narrative does not provide that evidence.

The Church does not, of course, lay the same stress on the Visit of the Magi, but the story is related in this service in precisely the same way as are the others. One does not willingly obtrude these difficulties when speaking of so beautiful a thing, but Christ is reported to have said that, "The first and great Commandment is: 'Thou shalt love the

Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind'." Religion is primarily of the heart, but it speedily degenerates when the mind has no proper share in it.

What will be the verdict of future ages on "the whole story of our Redemption" outlined in this service? Its basic conception of an historical "Fall" has dropped out of current orthodox teaching; will its corollaries—the Virgin Birth and the Propitiatory Sacrifice of Calvary, conceived of as historical events—go the same way?

If it is felt that conclusive proof, one way or the other, is not within reach of our normal faculties, a suspension of judgment might seem to be a wise and reverent attitude in face of these venerable beliefs, where honest conviction is not experienced. What does not seem possible is to regard as necessary to salvation belief in a "story of Redemption", of which perhaps not one in a thousand of those who have inhabited the earth have even so much as heard.

Common Ground.

But at least as symbols, the details of the story may, to the mind attuned to them, become of profound significance. The "setting" may conceivably have "had its day" and served its purpose, but the idea it embodies of a spirit-world from which messengers of the All Holy come with help and encouragement to men is no longer a matter of belief: it is demonstrably true. Modern psychic science is in complete accord with the spirit of this Christmas Eve service. "The angels keep their ancient places"; they have been reinstated by a revelation proportioned to **our needs**.

Above all, the great Master, the Lord Jesus, is being enthroned anew in men's minds and hearts. No longer conceived of as dependent on any of the extraneous trappings with which the mistaken piety of men has lessened rather than enhanced His majesty, He stands revealed as the King of Love.

(Please turn to foot of next page).

CHRISTMAS IN THE SUMMERLAND

The Presence of the Christ Child.

(By Rev. G. Vale Owen.)

I always pitied the people who did not like Christmas. Yet I have known, and still do know, many who are "always glad to get it over". As the years go on, the vacant chairs increase in number. Thoughts of the past, when those chairs were occupied with loved ones now absent, come back at this season of the year as at no other. And there it is. It is the loneliness which hurts.

Well, I am full of sympathy for those who feel thus. Somehow, I never did. I always had the feeling that my own dear ones who had gone were keeping their Christmas elsewhere in better sort than ever they did here below. Even in my unregenerate days I felt this. But I only felt it: I did not know.

Then, some sixteen years ago, I began to think about this strange body of people called Spiritualists. They asserted that they could talk with those who had "gone on". I was dubious. But I thought that, as the claim had been quite definitely made, it was worth looking into. I did look into it, and I found it was true. That discovery altered my outlook in many ways. It threw new light on old things, including Christmas.

When I and my family had once established communication with our own people who had passed over we kept up a constant companionship. Our dealings with them became as natural to us as with our friends in the flesh. They came to us and told us how they were going on in their brighter sphere,

Thus, all loving hearts may be at one with the triumph-song with which the service ends:

Hark! the herald angels sing

Glory to the new-born King.

—"Light."

how they visited us daily in our home, and entered into our worship in church.

One Christmas night, a few years ago, our daughter Ruby came to us. She had died in babyhood, and had grown up in the spirit world; much as children do on earth. We asked her if they kept Christmas in her land, as we do here. She answered that they most certainly did. How could we think otherwise? We inquired how she had spent that Christmas Day. She replied that she and other members of my wife's family and mine had assembled with us on the top of the Church Tower at seven o'clock to sing the old Christmas carols they used to love. They had then descended into the church with us for the early Celebration. Then they had broken up into groups to pay a round of visits to the homes of other members of our families. In the evening they were back again with us at the Vicarage, as they knew we would be holding a sitting for communion with them.

One thing they were insistent upon. They strongly resented our looking upon them in any way different from other members of the family still in the flesh. Last Christmas, for instance, Ruby came a few days before, and asked us to reserve a chair for her at the table when we sat down to our Christmas dinner. She said that, whether she was able to make her presence known or no, she would be there with us; not, of course, to help us with the turkey and pudding, but to join with us in our family gathering at the festive board. I need hardly say we carried out her wish.

I have asked many questions about the way in which Christmas is kept in the Heavenly Land. Another little girl told me that they had their festivals of the Christ Child, just as children do on earth. But the music is much more beautiful. I asked her whether they decorated their houses and churches with holly, as we do. The answer was that they did so, because it pleased the children. Their guardians not only produced holly but also Christmas trees,

because the children, coming over from Earth, looked for these things at that season.

But here, again, there was a difference. Their trees, she said, "were holy trees". They were suffused with beautiful glowing lights, and were very lovely. She had made a round of several institutions, where the younger children were tended, and found they all had these trees. She added: "They last for some weeks after Christmas, and then gradually fade away. They do not wither, like your trees. They just melt into the air. Then next Christmas they are put there again."

This linking-up of the two spheres gave me food for thought. If Christmas is kept Over There, what part, if any, does the Christ Himself visibly play? When I asked the older ones about this they became more grave. A wistful sadness entered into their conversation. They told me that the Christ had the power of appearing in many of the spiritual spheres—or heavens—at one time, simultaneously.

Also that, having passed through all the phases of human life, from babyhood to maturity, He could now reproduce any one of these phases in His Own person, and project it in visible form to any part of the Spirit World at will. They have a name for this method of self-projection. They call it the "Presence Form". Others besides the Christ are permitted to use it. Herein is a mystery that I do not attempt to solve. He once said: "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I." I leave it at that.

—————:O:—————

Spiritualism bestows upon those realising its heavenly truths a happiness "unspeakable and full of glory," surpassing far all other joys combined.

* * *

So-called death is natural law. Why question, then, when? When the summons comes from that all-pervading power to free the spirit from its timent of clay, we answer: king or slave?

RACKETING GHOSTS

(By Harry Price, in "John o' London's Weekly".)

It takes all sorts of ghosts to make a spirit world. From apparitions to astrals, and from ectoplasms to elementals, the investigator of such things—especially the armchair investigator—has a lively assortment to choose from. But it is those mischievous, gamesome, and rather loveable stone-throwing, furniture-moving, window-smashing, china-breaking, and nose-tweaking ghosts that are, to me, the most intriguing. Our enemies have a word for them: they call them Poltergeister, from the German poltern, to racket or rattle, and the name fits them like a glove.

If I find these playful little fellows the most amusing—and certainly the most convincing—of "spirits", so, apparently, does Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell. In his latest book, *Poltergeists* (Faber, 15/), he has devoted some 400 pages to the recording and examination of many of the poltergeist cases known to psychists.

Unconscious Inducers.

Psychical researchers use the term poltergeist to denote a certain type of haunting characterised by a seemingly senseless and noisy displacement of objects, and a mischievous destruction of property. The entities concerned appear to attach themselves to a particular building or person, often a child or adolescent, and usually a small girl. These young people are quite unconscious of the fact that they are causing the phenomena. They are inducers, and nothing more. The visitation may be long or short, but the trouble usually ceases as suddenly as it begins.

Mr. Sitwell's novel and delightful book is a veritable epitome of poltergeist activity in various parts of the world, and is so entertaining that the general reader, no less than the student of the occult, will be thrilled by its strange contents. Ac-

according to the author, the four classical instances of the poltergeist in England are: (1) the famed Drummer of Tedworth; (2) the haunting of Epworth parsonage, recorded by the Wesley family; (3) the Willington Mill case; and (4) our old friend the "talking mongoose" of the Isle of Man!

Mr. Sitwell has chosen wisely, according to the material that was available, and I consider that three of his "best" cases are indeed outstanding. But when he wrote "Poltergeists", he had not seen the Borley Rectory report, which he mentions. When this is published I am sure that he will consider the Essex poltergeist case the best-authenticated mystery of them all. As for the "talking mongoose", I am surprised that Mr. Sitwell considers that this has anything to do with poltergeists. I had the dubious honour of investigating this affair, and concluded that the case was of more interest to the psychologist than to the psychical researcher. The poltergeist did not perform for my benefit; neither did the mongoose.

Mrs. Wesley's Account.

Some of Mr. Sitwell's stories are so extraordinary as to be almost unbelievable, especially to the layman, though only the best-documented cases have been selected. And no story is stranger than that of the Epworth poltergeist, an account of which was sent in 1717 by Mrs. Wesley to her elder son, Samuel, then at Christ Church, Oxford. She said: "One night it made such a noise in the room over our heads as if several people were walking; then run up and down stairs, and was so outrageous that we thought the children would be frightened. . . . Sometimes it would make a noise like the winding-up of a jack, at other times like a carpenter planing deals."

Other contemporary letters to Samuel Wesley were sent by his sisters Susanna and Emily. They described rustlings, knocks, "bouncing thumps" under their feet, the "tingling of a latch and warm-

ing-pan'', groans, stone-throwing, feeble squeaks, and so on. We are also told that Mr. Wesley's trencher "danced upon the table a pretty while without anybody's stirring the table". These manifestations continued for two months, and then ceased gradually.

The Drummer of Tedworth.

Psychical research is usually considered to be of modern growth, but this is not really the case. For example, Ferris Greenslet, in his "Joseph Glanvill" (New York, 1900) tells us how Lady Conway gave a sort of house-party at Ragley, Warwickshire, in 1665, in order to discuss the supernatural world. Glanvill was there, and doubtless told the story of his investigation of the Drummer of Tedworth, who made such a noise in the world between 1661 and 1663.

Mr. Sitwell reprints in great detail the story of the drummer from Glanvill's report. Briefly, a vagrant drummer was arrested for attempting to obtain money by false pretences. He was given in charge by a Mr. Mompesson, of Tedworth, Wilts, who ordered his drum to be confiscated, and handed to the local bailiff. About a month later the drum was transferred to the house of Mompesson, who happened to be away from home. And then the fun began. That same evening there was such a terrific din in the upper part of the house that Mrs. Mompesson thought the place was falling to pieces. But nothing could be seen. When her husband returned, he, too, heard the racket—a loud drumming all over the house, especially on the roof. The "drummer" beat the children's bedsteads, from which they were raised by some invisible power. At request, the entity would "beat Roundheads and Cuckolds, the Tattoo, and several other points of war".

In order to exorcise the spirit, the local priest was called in, and prayers were said. The immediate result of this effort was that "the chairs walked about the room of themselves." At the

same time a bed-staff was thrown at the minister. This sort of thing went on for many months. About April, 1663, the living drummer—as distinct from his noisy astral—was tried at Salisbury for stealing, and transported. The phenomena ceased.

Driven from the Mill.

The Willington Mill case is another classic. This Tyneside mill house was subjected to the most amazing series of attacks by an invisible presence. Night and day, from 1835 to 1847, hammer-blows were rained on the house—blows that rattled the windows and displaced the furniture. Bells were rung, heavy footsteps were heard all over the house, phantasms were seen, and sleepers were precipitated from their beds. A “funny cat”, like a monkey, annoyed the children. The owner of the mill, a worthy Quaker named Joseph Procter, kept a diary of all that occurred. Finally, the family could stand it no longer, and made their home elsewhere. Mr. Procter’s son, who compiled the account of the manifestations, ends his narrative with the remark that “such questionable intimations of immortality are hardly calculated to soothe us.” He would prefer an honest-to-goodness hell.

Mr. Sitwell cites many other famous cases of poltergeist hauntings: The Great Amherst Mystery, the focus of which was a young girl named Esther Cox, who, each night, swelled visibly as if blown up with a pump. Suddenly a loud report would be heard, and she would immediately “deflate”. Then there is the curious affair of the manor house at Hilton Amptner, Hampshire, where, in 1771, there were more bangings, more knockings, more rumblings, and more racketsy spirits, which were exorcised by pulling down the house. Under the floor of one of the rooms was found a baby’s skull in a box.

A Shower of Medals.

The reader of Mr. Sitwell’s fascinating monograph will not fail to notice that poltergeists are of

one family: they all do the same things. They stamp and thump, and knock and smash, and push people out of bed, and ring bells. They lock doors, and throw pebbles. Some of these correspondences are truly remarkable. For example, in the haunted castle in Calvados, Normandy, a shower of Roman Catholic medals fell on the owner's wife as she was writing at her desk. This was in 1875. In 1929, several Roman Catholic medals tumbled down the stairs at Borley Rectory in full sight, as we stood and watched.

In spite of the number and variety of thrills that Mr. Sitwell provides for our delectation, there are certain poltergeist disturbances that should have been included in his record. For example, I find no mention of the haunted vault at Barbados, a famous case in which a number of heavy leaden coffins were, time after time, moved from their allotted positions. Lord Combermere, the Governor, in 1820, carried out some tests under controlled conditions. But the coffins continued to be thrown about. Finally, the coffins were removed to another vault.

Chairs Marched down the Hall.

Then there is the Battersea case that I investigated in 1928. The chief features of this extraordinary affair were that most of the furniture in the house was smashed to pieces; the owner died while the visitation was in progress; and the family were compelled to leave their home after twenty-five happy years in the house. I had a number of things thrown at me, and a policeman told me that he had seen a row of chairs marching down the hall in single file!

Mr. Sitwell asserts that missiles thrown by poltergeists never hurt the persons they strike. But there are exceptions. At Borley the rector's wife was thrown out of bed three times, and also received a cut under the eye, which bled profusely. At Borley, too, I had thrown at me the following articles: a half-brick, a glass candle-stick, two empty wine

bottles, some moth balls, and a few pebbles. None of these objects hit me, but I am quite certain that the intentions of the poltergeist were as bad as its aim.

The Disturbances are Real.

Are some poltergeist manifestations genuine, or they all due to fraud? In his academic survey of the subject, Mr. Sitwell—as I did after thirty years' personal contact with the phenomena—concludes that the disturbances are real. In spite of occasional trickery, and possible mal-observation on the part of those recording such things, the evidence for paranormality is vast and impressive, and the genuineness of many of these cases cannot be doubted. And this evidence comes to us from all parts of the world, civilised and savage.

And their causation? No one knows. Mr. Sitwell says: "What, by all the powers of good and evil, are these sights and sounds? No one can tell. It is still, and may ever be, a mystery." And yet the greatest mysteries are sometimes solved. Official science is taking an ever-increasing interest in psychic matters, and may some day provide us with an answer to the ancient riddle of the poltergeist.

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M. Aurelius to His Soul: Within ten days thou wilt seem a god to those to whom thou art now a beast and an ape, if thou wilt return to thy principles and the worship of reason.

About what am I now employing my own soul? On every occasion I must ask myself this question, and inquire, what have I now in this part of me which they call the ruling principle? and whose soul have I now—that of a child, or of a young man, or of a feeble woman, or of a tyrant, or of a domestic animal, or of a wild beast?

Look within. Within is the fountain of good, and it will ever bubble up if thou wilt ever dig.

CHRISTMAS IN PALESTINE

(By Catherine Betts.)

"The British Government: it is like a Mohamadan with two wives—he can please neither the one nor the other. It can please neither the Arab nor the Jew." So said our Arab friend in whose care we travelled many miles of Palestine in December of 1937. Trouble was abroad then, and visitors to that little land were few, even though it was Christmas time, which usually brings many pilgrims to Jerusalem. But when Christmas Eve came, in spite of alarms, and many fears to the contrary, the road to Bethlehem was safe, and the little white town, set on its hill top, kept its memories in peace.

Outside the walls of Jerusalem shops, hotels, hospitals and schools spread themselves down to the railway line, but within the gates life goes on in many ways unchanged by time, and unchanged by all the turmoil that time has brought to that ancient city. Once outside our hostel compound one was immediately involved in all the noisy traffic of the East. Noisy, not as our cities are noisy, with the whirring of wheels, and the clang and clatter of cars and trams, but with the cries of street sellers, the jingle of donkey bells, the low monotonous chant of the beggar, and the continuous, busy hum of human conversation. In the narrow, cobbled streets there is endless variety. There is the bread-seller with his rings of bread which he wears round his arm; the old Jew in his long cloak and furred hat; the Mohammedan woman, heavily veiled; the Arab townsman in European clothes, all except the head-gear, for he always wears his tarboosh; the countryman in his sheepskin coat and kaffeeya; the women with their babies and their bundles; the little loaded donkeys, often quite unattended, the owner having been left behind in dispute with a friend; and the stately camels with that air of superiority to whatever they are doing. And, to add a final touch of

colour to the picture, baskets in doorways, heaped up and overflowing with golden oranges from Jaffa.

It was late afternoon when we saw it first; dusk was beginning to fall in the little streets. Though beyond the walls the distant mountains of Moab were still transfigured by the evening sunlight; here it was darkening, and the charcoal fires of the sweets sellers were taking on an added glow. Then suddenly, pushing through the motley crowd, came four little children, bearing on their heads a wooden tray loaded with small flat loaves of bread. And as they came they sang. Shrill, happy little voices, words unknown and strange, but the air as familiar as one's own nursery songs. "To you in David's town this day, is born of David's line, a Saviour, Who is Christ the Lord: And this shall be a sign: The heavenly Babe you there shall find to human view displayed. All meanly wrapped in swathing bands, and in a manger laid." To-morrow was Christmas Day. To-night we were going to "David's Town", Bethlehem, the House of Bread. It stands on a hilltop, and by day can be seen from a distance, a little white town of flat-roofed houses, among which rise the bell towers of convents and monasteries, and here and there the grey and green of olive and cypress trees. One may walk the five miles of winding, hilly country round from Jerusalem. People of the villages travel mostly on foot, the animals being used only for baggage, and little processions are passing all day long. One hears the musical tinkle of camel bells, and here is a string of them, three or four, nose to tail, their dignified owner walking at the head of the leader. Perhaps you may see a shepherd boy crossing the road with his flock, shaggy sheep with brown patches and markings, and as he comes he plays on a reed pipe. Here is a group returning from market. The men lead the way, deep in talk. Behind come the women dressed as if they had stepped out of the Old Testament. On their heads they carry baskets, and between the men and the women are the children

struggling to keep a few black goats from straying off the road. These people have always journeyed so: the men first, then the children, then the women. They journeyed so when Mary and Joseph took their Son from Nazareth to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover.

If you do not walk to Bethlehem, you may go by the bus that leaves Jerusalem outside the Jaffa gate. It is rather a reckless ride, and probably you are the only European on board. Arrived, it is not difficult to find someone who will show you the town. The people of Bethlehem are all Christians, and they have a gracious friendliness for the stranger. If you buy from one of the little shops the owner will offer to act as your guide, but he will refuse the guide's fee when the time comes to say good-bye. He will show you much that you might not find for yourself. He will take you up little lanes so narrow that if a donkey passes, you must get into a doorway; and up stairways into little homes where women sit on the floor embroidering in cross stitch. There is little furniture in the houses, a water-pot or two, some cooking vessels, perhaps a bed, or merely a roll of mats. These homes might have remained unchanged since the time of Christ. Some are built over caves in the rock, the entrance to the cave being on the street level. One climbs a steep, crooked stone stairway, and arrives on a little courtyard, on to which opens the door of a house. In one such courtyard, besides the family lived a sheep, some hens, and a tiny kitten, and in the floor was a round hole, through which we were told to look. Directly below was the head of a camel, for this was the stable. It is in such a cave, below the Church of the Nativity, that tradition has it Jesus Christ was born.

But our first visit to Bethlehem was at night, the night of Christmas Eve. We were to attend the carol service in the courtyard of the Church of the Nativity, and as this did not begin till nine o'clock, it was dark when we left Jerusalem. Bethlehem,

when he arrived, seemed full of people, light and noise, as it must have been crowded and noisy on that night when Mary and Joseph ended their journey from Nazareth, but the courtyard of the church, though full of people, was quiet. Here and there a lighted window in the high encircling walls illumined the crowd; English people and Americans, mostly residents in the country, for visitors were few, a few Jewish Christians, a fair sprinkling of Arabs, men in uniform, military police and soldiers, and the Bethlehem women in their high, pointed head-dress. Above was the darkness of the sky, and the stars bright and clear. Someone has said that the stars seem to come closer to earth in Palestine than anywhere else—perhaps they do. "A little town of Bethlehem," we sang; "Hark, the Herald Angels", "Once in Royal David's City". As long as one could remember these names had always meant somewhere far off in space. Yes, and far off in time as well. It seems almost a physical wrench of the mind to realise "that means here".

The carols ended, we passed into the Greek Church adjoining the courtyard. Here every year the English Protestant Church and the Orthodox Church unite in a short Christmas service. It is not a large building, and is divided lengthwise by a screen, behind which there was much sonorous chanting and lighting of candles. A lighted candle was handed to the English bishop before he read the lesson, and with his prayer and blessing the service ended.

Centuries before Constantine reared his Roman Church it was believed that the little cave beneath where it stands was the stable where our Lord was born. Perhaps Christmas is the loveliest time to see it; perhaps it is the only time when it should be seen. Certainly that night it was a holy place. From the Greek Church one comes again into the courtyard, then down a dark, narrow, twisted stone stairway, so dark, one has to feel one's way; so low the roof, that one must stoop one's head. It is not

really a bright light that is given by the hanging silver lamps, but coming from the darkness it seems dazzling. The little room was full of people that night, and hushed with adoration. In almost a breathless stillness they moved across the stone floor and knelt for a moment before the stone with its Latin inscription, "Here Jesus Christ was born." In front of me was an Arab girl, a teacher from Nablus, behind an Irishman, of the British military police. The way out, as dark and narrow as the entrance, leads up the great Church itself, the oldest Christian Church in the world, in the darkness a place of massive pillars rising austere to the dimness of the roof. A tiny door leads from it. At its threshold stood the bent figure of a man. He was barefooted, clad in a long straight robe, girdled at the waist. His head was turbaned, and in his hand he held a alntern. He held it low over the door sill, a light to our feet, and he spoke to us in Arabic. And as one saw him there framed in doorway, one remembered that keeper of an inn, who nearly 2,000 years ago had told a tired man and woman that he had no room for them. Had he looked much like that?

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God speaks to Man, through Man: The purer the channel the clearer the stream.—J. P. W.

* * *

Christ, by His appearance after bodily death, brought life and immortality to light and gave perfect demonstration of the continuity of life.

—Rev. C. L. Tweedale.

* * *

Hail to the present, with all the work that it brings! Its restlessness, if looked at aright, becomes a golden prophecy. We will not read its prose, and count our stops, as schools have taught; but the heart shall chant it; and tones shall change words to music, that shall write itself on all coming time.

THE DIVIDED BROOCH

An Amazing Story of the Strange Adventures that befell the Purchaser of One-half of an Old Egyptian Royal Seal.

(By John de Burgh Leake, in "Prediction".)

Some time ago a "talk of mine entitled "An Irishman's Adventures in Two Chinatowns" was given over the radio. That "talk" was based largely on my experiences following purchase of a drug store near Pennyfields, London, twenty-five years ago.

A hundred enthralling tales could be told of the unusual people who frequented that East End drug store, but, for the present, one must suffice—the story of a very strange coincidence. Whether this story can fairly be called a "coincidence", or whether it has an occult significance, I leave each individual reader to determine.

Among the visitors to the drug store was an Egyptian. Unlike most of my customers, this man was neither poor nor illiterate. He was a Doctor of Medicine, and had travelled widely, thereby acquiring a singular fund of knowledge about several out-of-the-way subjects.

Here is the story of the Divided Brooch, as told to me by my Egyptian friend who was not, however, the principal actor in our strange narrative. He was merely the story-teller relating the adventures which happened to a friend of his grandfather's—some time about the middle of the nineteenth century, I gathered. Let us, for convenience, call this gentleman whose strange experiences of a hundred or so years ago we are about to examine, Mr. X.

Mr. X Buys the Brooch.

One day in London, attracted to an old shop, Mr. X saw in its window an elaborately carved honey bee, of Egyptian craftsmanship, and in the form of a brooch. Now, Mr. X knew that bees were held in high honour by the ancient Egyptians, and

that a design of a reed and a bee was the **Royal** rubber stamp, so to speak, the reed signifying Reed Land or Upper Egypt, and the bee, Bee Land or Lower Egypt, the combined signs being used as a kind of signature by the Pharaohs of Upper and Lower Egypt. Mr. X therefore decided to buy the seal, in case it might prove of value. The reed portion had, apparently, been broken off, and only the bee, sign of Lower Egypt, remained.

Mr. X put the broken seal into his pocket, and thought no more about it. But from that day forward a train of most unaccountable and unpleasant incidents started to happen. Things began to go wrong with his practice; Mr. X, a victim of plots and slander, became discredited and eventually sold the practice for a fraction of its actual value. He had difficulty in obtaining another suitable post, but, after some delay, was called for an interview to one of the provincial cities, to which venue he hastily proceeded in a hired coach, which he drove himself. Though a careful and experienced driver, he met with an accident, and when he recovered from his injuries several months later, he was obliged to face trial, as a result of which he had to pay heavy damages. Finally, his health gave way, and he was threatened with a complete nervous breakdown.

At this juncture, on the advice of his doctor, one of the few friends who had not deserted him during the days of his adversity, Mr. X invested most of his small amount of cash remaining to him in a ticket back to the land of his birth. Here he arrived without serious incident, and started to look round for a job.

Encounter in Cairo.

One day, while he was aimlessly strolling through gay Cairo's shopping centre, a girl, accompanied by an elderly duenna, attracted his attention. Something about this particular girl set her apart. She fascinated Mr. X. In novelette language, he fell in love with her at first sight.

He stood beside her for some time, quite unable, so he said, to move away. Then, realising that he might be regarded a sa nuisance, he made an effort to depart. Just then, the girl turned. To his amazement Mr. X saw she was wearing an antique brooch similar in design and workmanship to the one he himself had purchased in London. But instead of the bee, symbol of Lower Egypt, the girl was wearing its opposite number, the reed, symbol of Upper Egypt. Thus she seemed to be wearing the other half of the ornament which Mh. X had in his pocket.

Mr. X approached the girl, thinking to discuss the extraordinary coincidence, but the duenna, with a scowl, hurried the girl away. He then and there made up his mind that, come what might, he would investigate the affair, but realised that a more conventional approach would be necessary. Though the journey bit deeply into his small remaining capital, he followed the lady home, at a judicious distance, took a note of her address, and soon found out her name also. As Mr. X was well known in Cairo, he had little difficulty in finding a colleague who was acquainted with the girl's father. Through this friendly agent he soon obtained a formal introduction, and lost no time in bringing the subject of the brooch into the conversation.

Happy Ending.

When the two parts of the Royal Seal were placed side by side it became evident that they had originally formed one piece. Allowing for attrition due to the lapse of time, and to the fact that someone had filed smooth a part of the brooch worn by the girl, the two halves joined together tolerably well. An archeologist expressed the opinion that the seal dated from about 3,500 B.C., and stated that similar seals had been in use by Egyptians since the days of the First Dynasty. He had examined an identical specimen which had been traced to the reign of Men-kau-Ra of the Fourth Dynasty.

(Please turn to foot of next page).

PEACE AND GOODWILL

(By Maurice Barbanell, in "Psychic News".)

Hundreds of preachers will pay lip service during Christmas to a simple man, Who preached a simple message. He told them to "Love thy neighbour as thyself."

That was two thousand years ago.

In the intervening period, the world has witnessed scenes of bloodshed, war, torture, inquisition and cruelty.

It was said of this simple man that He came to bring peace on earth and goodwill towards men

All the orthodox religions of the Western world have enthroned Him and deified Him, but His message has been ignored.

The religious history of the last two thousand years is full of stories of bickerings, quarrelings, persecutions and endless disputes. They have failed to practise the cardinal maxim on which their Founder built the whole of His teaching: "Love thy neighbour as thyself."

They have betrayed Him by approving of the slaughter of fellow human-beings in times of war,

Who broke the original seal, why it was broken, or how the reed half came into the girl's possession, Mr. X was never able to ascertain, except that the reed brooch had been an heirloom in his new friend's family for several generations.

There is little more to tell. Mr. X became engaged to the girl, married her, and in the traditional manner, lived happily ever after. Peculiarly enough, from that day when Mr. X handed over his half of the ornament to his fiancée, his luck changed, and he once more commenced to receive his due share of good fortune.

Is the story one of yet another "coincidence", or has it an occult interest?

believing that God had chosen their country to be His divine instrument for purging the world!

Ten million lives would not have been wasted in the last war if all the religions of the world had denounced war as contrary to the teaching of their founders.

Now, from the other side of life there comes an urge that Spiritualists must play their part in ensuring world peace. The Other Side is demonstrating that nations can live together in harmony, by showing that they do so in the spirit world, where barriers of race, of nationality, and of colour disappear.

Let there be no mistake about it. Wars are not made by God, but by man.

It is man who, through misguided methods, has sought to exalt his nation above others, and has caused war.

How dare we assume that one race is superior to another, because the colour of its skin is white, and his fellow being black?

How can there ever be peace when races are held in subjugation, and children are serfs from the moment of their birth?

Man has tried to rule the world by the sword. It has produced almost universal bankruptcy and chaos. It has resulted almost in the complete collapse of the social systems which human beings have built.

Spiritualists can point to the havoc wrought not only to this world, but its effects on the next plane of life. Because of it, returning spirits urge on us that we must live, not by advancing at the cost of our fellow beings, but by serving one another.

Materialism has been tried and has failed.

Spiritualism teaches that until we love our neighbour as ourselves, there will never be peace in the world. It is not a pious hope, but practical politics.

EXPERIENCES AND REFLECTIONS ON SURVIVAL AND HEALING

[From an Address given at the L.S.A. on Thursday, June 28, 1945, by Major-General H. A. Cummins.]

General Cummins began by relating an incident which happened in 1915, when he was temporarily in command of a battalion in Mesopotamia. The battalion was involved in what he described as a "big show", and on the morning of November 22, when they were all prepared for what they knew was likely to be a severe engagement, the general (or colonel, as he was then) was speaking to a young subaltern, who appeared to be very worried. He asked him what was the matter, and the young officer replied: "Well, colonel, you will think I am quite mad, but I know that I am going to be killed to-day." The general told him not to be silly. Why should he be killed more than anyone else? Quite possibly they might all be killed, but there was no reason for him to worry more than another. During the day's action the subaltern was wounded once, and then again, but still carried on gallantly. Then General Cummins was knocked out himself, and after the wounded were picked up, in the evening, he met the lad, who had been wounded a third time, in the abdomen, and was dying. The youngster remarked: "You see, I was right, sir." General Cummins expressed his regret as far as he could, but said he did not think the lad had much to worry about.

At this time he had no acquaintance with the evidence for survival, and very much regretted that he knew nothing to help the young officer.

[General Cummins is sorry that, during his address, he omitted to make the point which was his real purpose in relating the above story. He had intended to emphasise the fact that, had the subaltern not been ignorant concerning demonstrated survival and the after-life, he would have faced the

future, come what might, with more confidence. It was not fear of death he felt—his gallantry proved that—it was fear of going into the unknown. But, as the general asks, why should it be unknown? Had the general himself then had the knowledge he now possesses, he would have been able to give the dying man more authoritative assurance. The whole incident illustrates the urgent need for a far more widespread knowledge of the truths of Spiritualism.]

About the middle of 1917, continued the speaker, he was a prisoner of war in Turkey, and among the books sent out to the camp was a copy of the first edition of Sir Oliver Lodge's "Raymond". After reading this, six of them got together to discuss the subject of the book. The rest agreed that it was all "tommyrot", but General Cummins pointed out that the evidence was there, and you couldn't get away from it. He did not hear the subject mentioned again for a long time, not, in fact, until after his return from India in 1926. But in 1927 he met Major Mowbray, and in conversation with him the topic of Spiritualism cropped up, as might be expected. Major Mowbray asked him if he would like to have a sitting with a medium, and he agreed to do so. He was about to say that he hoped to be able to talk to his mother, but Major Mowbray stopped him, and would not let him give any indication as to what communicators he hoped for.

The sitting duly took place, and nothing startling happened, but gradually he felt sure that he was in touch with his mother. He asked if his mother could take the control's place for a while. Assent was given, but nothing happened for some minutes. Then Major Mowbray intervened and said to the control: "Look here. Get Penanne for me." (Some readers may remember that Penanne is a little girl communicator who "adopted" Major Mowbray.) Penanne came, and Major Mowbray asked her if she would bring a lady who was there,

but was afraid to "come in". Penanne replied: "Yes; I'll push her in." Two minutes later they heard a faint voice which gradually grew stronger, until General Cummins was convinced that it was his mother speaking.

In connection with this incident the speaker said that, during a visit to Dorset he was telling one of his cousins about his seance experiences, and mentioned Penanne. His cousin said: "Why, I knew a girl called Penanne. She died here." It turned out that there had been a girl of that name in the locality who, while playing in the fields, chewed some grass, and contracted foot-and-mouth disease, which caused her death. The girl's surname was not known, but General Cummins immediately wrote to Major Mowbray, asking him to send a postcard simply stating Penanne's surname, he having known Penanne and her parents on this plane. The card was received bearing the name in block letters, and they were able to verify that this had been the surname of the girl his cousin had mentioned.

At subsequent sittings, said General Cummins, his mother regularly took control, and he was able to ask her direct questions, and get answers. One day he asked her whether, in her progress over there, she had remembered anything which she particularly regretted. One thing had worried her very much, but that was all over now. She had been used to look upon all those who were not Christians as heathens, and had, in a way, despised them accordingly. "How did you get that put straight?" asked the General. The reply came: "Last Christmas I was taken to a higher plane, temporarily; I was not allowed to stay there. It is very difficult to describe what I saw, in your language, and the nearest I can get is that there was a huge temple, with roads leading to it from every direction. On these roads were thousands of people all making towards the temple. Then I saw what it meant. The roads radiated from the temple like spokes of a wheel, and on them were people of every religion, Mohammed-

dans, Hindus, Buddhists, Confucians, all sorts; and all were making their way towards a common hub. And the hub was Christ, to whom all people will eventually come, no matter what their religion on this earth may have been."

General Cummins then went on to relate his introduction to the healing side of the Movement. He had been told at one sitting that his job was healing and, while he was living in Bournemouth, some friends there said they would arrange to have him trained, but something always prevented it. The night before he left to go to the Hebrides on a fishing holiday he had a sitting with a medium. Someone came through who claimed to be his healing guide, and gave the name Abdul. Abdul mentioned his trip to the North, and suggested that as he would be quiet there he might give some thought to the matter of healing work. "And don't forget," added Abdul, "that thought involves prayer." "Yes, but what am I to pray for?" asked the General. "There are only two things to pray for," was the reply, "love and purity: they cover everything." Abdul went on to say that he would have a patient very soon, within three months. General Cummins was away for two-and-a-half months, and then returned to Bournemouth. There he made the acquaintance of two ladies, and, in conversation one evening, one of them remarked: "I wish you were a healer." She was suffering badly from neuritis, and the pain had spread from her neck, down her arm to the fingers. The party were listening to a broadcast concert, and, during a pause, the General said that if the lady was willing he would endeavour to take the pain away. After the concert was over he proceeded, by using a light touch with his fingers, to work down the arm from the neck to the fingers. He got the idea that there was some good effect; his fingers felt it, he said. Next morning he was on his way out early, to go shooting, when he met the lady at the front door. He asked how the shoulder was, and she looked at him and said: "You are a most

uncanny man. Last night I slept for the first time in three months without a twinge of pain." After that he gave her three or four more treatments, and she had no more neuritis for eight years.

Later, said General Cummins, he trained in healing work, and soon got more patients than he could cope with. Then he went on to try absent healing, and his method in this was to visualise the patient lying down, and then use his hands as though the person were there. He described how he used this method when his niece's husband met with a hunting accident, and was diagnosed as having a dislocated but not fractured pelvis. Progress was very slow, and he did not feel at all satisfied. Then at a sitting in London his healing guide came through, and he was reassured that the case was going on all right. This was in the week following Christmas, and he was told that, with luck, the patient would be able to go home in April. Then the guide added: "Tell the doctor there is a crack in the pelvis." (Several X-ray photographs had been taken, but had not revealed any fracture.) The General wrote to his sister that night, and caught the last post, about midnight. She could not possibly have got the letter before the second post next morning, but he learnt later that when she went to the hospital that morning the doctor told her almost word for word what the guide had said. The patient did leave hospital in April, and eventually made a complete recovery, though the surgeon had said there was very little hope of his living, and that in any case it was mostly unlikely that he would ever be able to walk again.

After practising healing work in this way for some time, the General was told that the process of visualising the patient and using his hands was quite unnecessary. The method was good in its way, but elementary. The essence of healing, and all that is really necessary, is to give the patient all possible love and sympathy and understanding. Put yourself in his place, and make him think that he

will get better, and then lay him on the altar of Him Who is the only source of healing.

The speaker stressed the importance of recognising the fact that a person practising healing was only an instrument, a channel through which the healing power flowed, and it was vital that he should not take any credit to himself. He had found in his own experience that he had to remember this all the time. If ever he found that he was, as he put it, "getting above himself", and feeling that he was doing the healing, he had to stop work for a time. Your job as a healer, he said, was to keep yourself fit to be used; to keep fit physically, mentally, and spiritually. Don't talk about your successes or, if you do talk, don't use "I", "me", and "mine". Always remember Who is the Healer.— "Light."

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THE BADNESS OF GOODNESS

Which does God prefer: a loving sinner or a loveless saint? The question is asked by a writer who says that the streets of heaven will shock the respectable as they peer through the gates from outside. Jesus, he says, was no prophet of respectable goodness. He seems to have sought the company of those whom society had cast from its midst. This reminder is salutary; the Puritan, great though his virtues, is often in danger of showing us how bad the good can be. The man who is particular about everything, who imagines he is sticking up for a principle when only trifles are concerned, may not be righteous at all, but only self-righteous. Jesus valued love more than law, and He went to the social outcasts to find bigness of heart and the generousities of which life at its best consists. Though they were sinners, their love lifted them above the impeccable, the pernickety Christians who are so fond of inventing new sins.—"The Western Congregationalist."

GHOSTS IN FOLK LORE

(By "Solon", in "The Age", Melbourne.)

The once widespread belief that the darkness is inhabited by supernatural beings of many descriptions lingers now mostly in occasional dialect words. These bear testimony to the tremendous influence the shadowy world exerted upon men and women of not many generations ago.

They had many names for these creatures of the night; and that superstition is not the monopoly of the half-educated is shown in the discussion by the Brain Trust over the B.B.C. some time ago. "A ghost", claimed Lieutenant-Commander Gould, "is in the nature of a persistent hallucination". How persistent it is, a glance at the records of English folklore in this connection will amply prove. Julian Huxley was not sure whether the biologists were right in suggesting that ghosts were the product of disordered digestions. Commander Campbell evidenced an experience in which he and the chief steward on a voyage to Australia saw a man walk down the alleyway, through an iron bulkhead and vanish! C. E. M. Joad asserted that he had never seen a ghost. "But", he said, "I have seen many objects moved without visible agency," climaxing the assertion with the fact that he had been once hit in the eye by a lump of soap "thrown by no hand".

The Witness of Words.

The world of yesterday—or maybe the day before—was largely peopled by strange creatures, monstrous animals, goblins, elves, pixies, and the like, in which the ghosts of the departed occupied but part of the stage. The dialect words of England abound in references to such; the terms "fearing", "frittening", "summat", "things" implied ghostly appearances of any shape, not necessarily human. The word "know" had a peculiar meaning in this connection, the "know" of a dog being its shape when the dog itself was not there. The word "hog-

gart" or "boggard" was used generically of all apparitions, whether human or subhuman, and from this word has presumably come the familiar term "bogy", and many other derivatives.

When a horse trundling along a dark country road started at some unexpected object in its path or in the hedge, it was said to take the boggart. Perhaps the expression "to bog at something", meaning to hesitate about it from a sense of fear or dread, may come from the same source. In Cheshire the word came to mean a scarecrow, and it can be readily seen how the meaning of the word was transferred from the apparition to the fright it was hoped the birds would get when they saw what is illustrated in "The Three Jovial Huntsmen":

"They hunted, an' they hollo'd, an' the first thing
they did find
Was a tatter't boggart, in a field, an' that they left
behind."

That such was not always effective, even in those far-off days, is shown in the Coverdale translation (Baruch 6.69) of 1535, where the scholarly Miles writes: "Like as a fray-boggarde in a garden off cucumbers kepeth nothings, even so are their goddes of wod, of silver and golde."

These apparitions were frequently local. Many an old manor had its particular boggart; some of them, like the Clock House boggart, would stalk through the house at night, stripping bedclothes from unsuspecting folk, or, like the Clayton Hall boggart, clanking heavy chains across rooms, much to the consternation of light sleepers. Fortunately these boggarts were generally dull-witted, and a little human ingenuity—in which mediaeval men abounded—was sufficient to disconcert them. Doubtless the whole proceedings enlivened the lives of those who could not get their horror from Frankenstein. One of the best ways to beguile a boggart was to prevail upon it to stay away "while hollies

are green". It could then not easily return, and was well and truly "laid".

Ghostly Habits.

Attempts to trace the origin of the word have suggested that it is derived from "barn-ghaist", "bier-ghiest" or even "bar-ghiest" from the habit the monster had of sometimes sitting upon the top bar of a gate or fence waiting to leap upon the shoulder of the unsuspecting traveller. Of a pretty wit, the boggart would sometimes toll the church bell at midnight, and on other occasions would be seen at a window of the church tower during a burial service. In the north of England the word came to be associated with noise, from the habit the boggart had of bellowing. So the expressions, "You noisy bargust"; or with anyone who got in the way, "Y'er allus i' th' road, yer young bargust; ger out!"

It is of interest that the word "ghostlin" was a contemptuous term for an apparition, and could safely be used by anyone born on Christmas Day, for that person was reckoned ghost-free all his life. The latest addition to the hierarchy of sprites—"gremlins", the little creatures who festoon the edges of aeroplanes—has the same suffix indicating its inferiority. The supernatural appeared in old times to men in many ways; sometimes a spectral dog whose feet as it padded along made a splashing noise like a person walking in old shoes. It was known by the name of "trash", the word signifying to walk silently or warily through slush, and "trashes" are worn-out shoes. The leader of these spectral dogs was Gabriel, who was condemned to follow his hounds as they swept through the vault of heaven until the day of doom for the sin of having hunted on Sunday. Let all golfers beware lest they chase an elusive ball not only in their sleep: For overhead are sweeping Gabriel's Hounds,

Doomed, with their impious lord, the flying hare,
To chase for ever on aerial grounds.

From the word boggart has possibly come the

simple form "bug", now obsolete, sometime met in the phrase "to take bug", be frightened, and more frequently in "bugbear" or "bugaboo", a fancied object of fear, according to the concise Oxford dictionary; "a frightful object, a walking object, imagined to be seen . . . generally now used to frighten babies", according to Dr. Johnson. The present day usage would seem to be of something that is a nuisance.

Underground Legends.

Very different from pixies and fairies were the boggart tribe of workers, whose business it was to terrify mortals with horrid sounds and shapes which they prepared in mines. According to some, there was historical evidence for their association with the souls of Jews, for after the conquest the tin mines of Cornwall were worked by Jews, to whom charters were granted by Several English kings for that express purpose, hapless King John being among the number. Wicked practices came to be credited to them, and they were supposed never to be allowed to rest on this account; they could be heard working underground through the centuries. The legend took other forms: that they were the ghosts of the Jews who crucified Jesus, and were sent by the Roman emperor as slaves to work in the tin mines of the distant tin islands. The mine refuse was called "Jews' leavings". The old smelting houses themselves were known as "Jews' houses".

The Devil himself became incarnate on some occasions, and the references to this event in dialect sayings and ancient legends depict him sometimes as a beast with horns, or sometimes as a giant. The term "the very old 'un" is the expression most usually associated with him, and is used as the original of most bogies. Plant names, bird and insect names, show how widespread was the hold he had on the popular mind, which, however, never lost its shrewdness or its humour, which even the Devil could not quench!

PSYCHIC SCIENTISTS AND THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

(By Edward C. Randall, Author of "The Dead Have Never Died" and "Frontiers of the After-Life".)

Religious history has and will repeat itself until the ultimate be known and universally accepted. Every people, since it came up out of savagery, has had a form of religion suitable to its condition. As the intellect has developed and the horizon broadened, the old has been abandoned, and new forms have been adopted in the search for truth.

The vast empire extending from the Indus to the Mediterranean, received with unquestioned devotion the religion of Light as the emblem of the Creator, and the Magians swayed the destinies of the Persian civilisations; but those nations and their gods perished—their temples are in ruins.

The Chaldeans sacrificed to Bel and Hea; the Egyptians bowed to Ptah, Ra, Osiris and Isis. The Medes worshipped Fire; the Babylonians Merodach; the Assyrians chanted praises to Assur and Ishtar. The Greeks built temples to Zeus, Neptune and Venus, and the Romans worshipped a hundred gods.

* * *

Then came the Christian religion, and the worship of one God. A book was written, said to be His word, which, to this day, some Christians not only accept without question, but even worship. The priesthood grew powerful, and the Church, rich and arrogant, demanded belief and obedience, and taught the doctrine of fear and of salvation through faith. Many great thinkers were imprisoned and tortured as long as the priesthood dominated kings and kingdoms.

In the sixteenth century, men began to think for themselves—to investigate and to reason. Galileo and Bruno were among the first to question the teachings, interpretations and doctrines of the

Church. Then came Francis Bacon, Spinoza, Voltaire, Paine, Kant, Schopenhauer, Spencer, Nietzsche, Henry Bergson, and with them a school of modern philosophy. By its side marched a group of scientists who take nothing on faith and accept only facts known and provable.

Slowly and surely the discoveries and writings of these two groups have caused the masses to think; facts have been demanded. As a result, tradition has lost in value, and a religion based on faith and belief fails in its appeal. Thinking men care nothing for the opinion of their ancestors—nothing for creeds, assertions, or theories, unless they are logical and appeal to reason.

* * *

Protestantism rests upon the Creation as set forth in Scripture and teachings promulgated and narrated nearly two thousand years ago. To-day not only philosophers and scientists refuse to accept its dogmas, but many of the clergy, as well as members of their congregations, have revolted and demand the right to make their own deductions.

Protestantism, if it is to endure, must recognise that this is an age of fact; it must investigate and urge its members to search—not in a single book, but throughout the universe—for truth. It can, and should, mould the thought and lead the world in its intellectual regeneration. It cannot occupy that position with its eyes on the past, clinging to old traditions and beliefs, with each denomination jealous of each other, and all combining in the condemning of such modern discoveries as those of the psychic scientists and the new-thought teachers.

One would think Protestantism would welcome proof of that future life it believes in and hopes for, but to the science of Eschatology—that branch of theology which treats of immortality, the resurrection, the future state of existence and man's condition or state after death—modern religionists have never devoted their attention. In such research,

and from that field of investigation, has come, and will come, facts that will satisfy those who yearn for knowledge of the after-life.

* * *

Alfred Russel Wallace, Richet, Lombroso, Stead, Doyle, Lodge—names that are household words—and thousands of others who are unknown, have done what the Church should have done long ago—worked along the lines of Eschatology, and discovered, not a new continent, but another world peopled by the living dead. They have, by long and careful work, found conditions in which they have had speech with these people, and, from that source, they have learned something of where and how they live, and something of the conditions in the after-life.

It is contended by the psychic scientist, that if mankind understood the law and appreciated, to some extent, the plan and purpose of creation, he would live more spiritually, and enter the next state intelligently. The psychic scientist contends that he deals in facts—proved and provable. If his contention is true, the duty of the Church is made clear. It can and should investigate such contentions without prejudice or preconceived notions, enter the field of Eschatology, and if it finds the discoveries of psychic scientists true, it should proclaim them from every sanctuary in the world. Then its future will be safe.

* * *

It should ever have in mind that truth is safe, and error dangerous. Consideration of how to live here, and consideration of the future state of man, is the prerogative of the Christian Church, and it will fail in its endeavour if it continues to ignore, as it has ignored, new discoveries and new contentions.

The heart of the Christian world longs for some word from loved ones who have made the change

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BOOK REVIEW

"Building the New Age", by E. B. Castle, M.A.
Published by Hutchinson & Co. Ltd. (Price in
England, 7/6; postage, 3d.)

We are enetring upon a new age in the history of man. How are we to face it?

The author examines the causes of our past failures, the retreat from principle to expediency in national and international affairs, the decline of morals and culture.

The final cause is seen to be loss of nerve due to the absence of an over-riding Christian purpose in men's lives. The Church has failed to unite the Christian and the social—our judgments are critical, but not creative; we have learned how to analyse but not how to believe.

The author formulates an acceptable Christian faith and ethic, and reminds us that society will not be saved by planning alone—men's hearts must be changed as well as their wages. He appeals for "an undivided mind" in our thinking, and sketches in outline the principles that should produce a Christian society in the spheres of social organisation and education. The theme is continued in chapters on the International Society and the British Commonwealth, and concludes with a discussion of the family as the vital social unit. In the end society depends on men and women who know the God-centred life and its creative power.

known as death. The psychic scientists have heard that call, and are answering it, and it is just possible that if the theological teachers would investigate their contention they might find that Jesus is still, in the plane where He now lives and labours, the greatest spirit teacher this world has ever known.

AN OPEN LETTER TO MR. AND MRS. SMITH

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Smith,

Smith is not your real name, of course, but we have chosen it as representative of that large number of Australian families who have lost a son in the war.

He was a fine youngster, that boy of yours, and, quite naturally, you feel that fate has dealt very unkindly, both with him and with you.

We extend to you our deepest sympathy, and will attempt in this short letter to say something which we hope will be of great comfort to you. That which we are going to say may appear to you at first glance to be mere assumption; let us assure you that this is not so. The brief description given of the life on the other side of death is vouched for by competent psychic investigators of undoubted integrity. It in no way discredits the Christian belief in immortality, but increases our knowledge of that other life as revealed in the Scriptures.

We will assume that your son was an Air Force man, and that he was killed when his plane crashed. Contrary to popular belief, he did not suffer exceedingly, as death was instantaneous. Shortly after the crash he found himself gazing upon his broken body, wondering how such a thing could be, until one of his mates (who had already passed on) came up to him and told him he was "dead". He was then led away to his new home, and was amazed at the beauty of his surroundings, which he could best describe as "Earth made perfect". Among those who greeted him were some of his "dead" relations, as well as other "dead" comrades and friends he had known on earth.

It was explained to him that in his new life he was free to choose any occupation he wished; as on earth the happiest people were those who gave the greatest service. He would probably find the most satisfaction in returning to earth and helping to train young Air Force men as pilots and navigators.

He would be able to impress their minds with his greater knowledge of flying, and could endeavour to save them from disaster when they found themselves in serious difficulty. He could visit his old home if he wished, and try to comfort his loved ones. They would not, of course, be able to see him, but he would be able to see them, and to hear what they had to say. It would distress him if he found them despondent, but would comfort him if he found them bearing their loss bravely, and smiling through their tears. He would also be able to help them with some of the problems which were bound to arise in the course of their daily lives.

So you see, dear Mr. and Mrs. Smith, you have not lost your boy in the sense that the loss is absolute. You may not see him again on earth, but he will frequently be beside you, nevertheless. When you feel that he is near, speak to him as you did before he was killed. Tell him that you think he did a fine job in the Air Force, and that you are very proud of him. When you pray, ask in God's name that he be ministered unto in his new life by those whose duty it is to help and encourage the newcomers.

To those who have endeavoured to lead an exemplary life on earth, death is actually promotion. The life which opens up before them is much grander than that which they had previously known and there are greater opportunities for advancement. Your boy may have been saved much suffering by having "dead", particularly if he possessed a nature on which the horrors of war make a deep and lasting impression.

The remaining years of your own earthly lives will quickly pass; think of the joy of ultimate reunion with your boy, and of the wonderful welcome he will extend to you.

At some time or other sorrow comes to us all; it would seem that it has an important part to play in the moulding of character, making us more sym-

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CHRISTMAS FEASTING: THEN AND NOW

The modern human is healthier, bigger, and probably better behaved than any other before him. He eats less and drinks far less.

Drink: The Bishop of Treves, addressing his flock in the 16th century, is reported as follows:

"Brethren, it is written, 'wine maketh glad the heart of man'. Now, there is, doubtless, none of my male hearers who cannot drink his four bottles without affecting the brain.

"But whoever, after drinking his ten or twelve bottles, can retain his senses sufficiently to support his tottering neighbour . . . let him take his share quietly, and be thankful for his talent. . . .

"It is but seldom that the Creator extends to anyone the grace to be able to drink safely sixteen bottles, of which he hath held me, the meanest of His servants, worthy."

Food: Samuel Pepys tells in his Diary of the meal he and his wife gave to four ladies and two gentlemen to celebrate his "cutting of the stone".

"We had a fricasse of rabbits and chicken, a leg of mutton boiled, three carps in a dish, a great dish of lamb, a dish of roasted pigeons, a dish of four lobsters, three tarts, a lamprey pie (a most rare pie), a dish of anchovies, good wine of several sorts."

pathetic than we otherwise might have been. How is it possible for us to fully appreciate joy unless we know what it means to be sorrowful?

Finally, please endeavour to comfort other folks similarly bereaved by telling them the facts as outlined in this short letter. Your own good example will be of immense value to them, by helping others you will surely help yourselves.

With sincere regards,

"THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

(per R.V.H.)

CHRISTMAS HAPPINESS

(For the "Lyceum", by Lucie Mallory.)

"It wouldn't be Christmas at all for Marjorie if she didn't receive a nice wrist watch," declared Mrs. Vandiver as we stood looking at the display in a jeweller's window while we waited for a bus. We were on our way to a club meeting at the home of a mutual friend.

"Does Marjorie need a watch?" I ventured to ask.

"It's the only thing she wants for Christmas," her mother replied. "She's been talking 'watch' to her father and me for some time. I suppose we'll have to get one for her. We want her to be happy at Christmas time." My friend sighed as our bus stopped at the corner, and we turned away from the window.

I knew that she had been looking at the prices and wondering how she could fit the purchase of a watch into a limited budget.

It was hard for me to keep from saying, "Why do you have to get Marjorie a watch? There are dozens of less expensive gifts that would make a twelve-year-old girl happy."

Instead of that, I kept silent, and wished Mrs. Vandiver might know how the matter of Christmas giving is handled in the home of my friend, Edith Stocton. If any one of her five children ever asks for a Christmas present, I've never heard of it, and I see them all very often.

"Do the children ever tell you what they want for Christmas?" I asked Edith one day, not long after my conversation with Mrs. Vandiver.

"No", she replied, smiling, "though Bobby always keeps us aware of the fact that he could use some new gardening supplies. We ruled out making suggestions for our Christmas presents a long time ago, for two reasons—we think it isn't good taste, and it spoils a surprise. Other families may have

different ideas, but this is our way. I must have a quiet talk with Bobby one of these days and explain this to him. We think it is better to emphasise giving rather than receiving presents at Christmas time."

"Yes," I agreed, "the whole idea of Christmas giving is in commemoration of a supreme Gift to the world. But how do you help children to understand that it is better to give than to receive?"

Edith looked thoughtful. "Mostly by having each child make or provide little gifts for brothers and sisters," she said. "Dot even helped baby David colour some pictures for the others last Christmas time. If a child's interest is centred on the presents he is giving, he is not apt to think so much about the gifts he wants to receive.

"We always prepare a Christmas basket for some family that has been deprived of the means of providing for themselves. The children help with that. Helen made a cake for our basket last year, and Dot made some sweets. Jack and Bobby furnished fruit and vegetables, and my contribution was some things I had preserved.

"Of course the children enjoy the presents they receive," Edith concluded. "We have great fun surprising each other. I think one reason nobody looks for anything very special is that the children have a share in making the family budget. They know the amount of their father's salary, and the expenses it must be made to meet. Their father and I do not talk of hard times or financial stringency. We just want them to know what we can and what we cannot have, without quibbling or discontent. But we always feel very rich at Christmas time, for Christmas happiness cannot be measured by money or expensive gifts. ———:o:—————

Spiritualism is more light in the valley of darkness. It enables us to gather glimpses of the beautiful Summerland, and to grow old gracefully and naturally, not fearing annihilation or perdition.

HOW CHANGE WORKS MIRACLES OF HEALING

(By Dortch Campbell, in 'Nautilus'.)

Naaman, captain of the host of the King of Syria, choked his life with so much false pride that he fell victim of leprosy. He was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria; he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper. He was a leper because of erroneous fixed opinions about himself and life which festered into a complex. Elisha cured Naaman by changing his beliefs about himself.

You can be healed of nearly every affliction, and attain most anything you deserve, by changing yourself. You can change yourself, like Naaman, in a very simple manner. But, like him, you fight desperately to remain as you are, nursing your ego, hoping and praying to change everything but yourself.

We are living souls! To continue to live we must constantly make all things new by change. I am positive that the great universal panacea for all the ills to which flesh is heir is mental, emotional and physical change. Occasionally we may go back to what we have mentally built up within ourselves, like Naaman, in which we take so much pride. But we had better move out of our old selves quite often. Elisha cleansed Naaman's soul of the old, and he was healed of leprosy.

And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy."

So, finally, Naaman came with his horses and with his chariots in great pomp and show, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent

a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean."

Naaman had expected a great display of prayer. He was wroth, and went away, and said: Behold, I thought he will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

Elisha, prophet of Samaria and man of God, had insulted him by refusing to come out to see him. The prophet had given him a clownish prescription. Naaman's pride was hurt.

"Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" cried the captain of the king's host. "May not I wash in them and be clean?"

So he turned and went away in rage. But Naaman's servants, wiser than their master, came near and spake unto him, and said: My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather, then, when he saith to thee, wash, and be clean?

Then went Naaman down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean—clean because he had washed himself of violent and vicious pride!

How like the sons and daughters of men! Tell them there are deep-seated mental, emotional or physical causes of their leprosy that first be removed before you can call on the name of the Lord your God, and they leave you in a rage.

"I ask for the mighty power of prayer", they cry, "and you give me a rag and a bone and a hank of hair."

What is it that makes such persons unclean? Pride! Pride of belief! Their fixed dark ideas about themselves and life, and the power of God hold them in bondage. That which has ever blocked

the progress of mankind are beliefs—disbeliefs, half-true beliefs.

Elisha did not recover the leprosy but the leper. He removed Naaman's false pride, and God healed the outward manifestation of leprosy.

God's power is always rushing in to save us, but we hold it back, not always by false pride, but by mental and emotional fixations. The whole life is often incited and directed by fixed ideas. We must keep our minds as free and fluidic as possible. We must always be willing to change our relative position. Such a mind is not unstable but fluent, and flowing, and growing, and becoming.

"Yes, indeed," gloated the man who was searching everywhere for a healing of divers diseases: "Yes, indeed, I believe what you say. I am a free-thinker, you know. Egotism spread all over his face.

I tried to look deep down into that man's soul. Can it be, I thought, that this man suffers from false beliefs—from foolish pride? You have known atheists with such violent fixed beliefs that you could not remove them in a thousand years. I think they usually suffer from some sort of ailment—physical, mental, emotional, or in world affairs. False beliefs are found in every department of life, and they set the direction of life.

"John," I said, "I know what will restore you."

I studied the man's face—kindness in his brown tired eyes, and sorrow had put its lines upon his face. But I knew that his spiritual aura was saturated with false pride.

John said he was willing to listen.

"Join the Church," I said.

There was an explosion of humour. "I know church members who are worse off than I am," he expostulated.

"But maybe they suffer from false pride, too," I said.

Years went by, and I heard no more from John.

But one day I met his son at a political convention, and I asked about dad and his ailments.

John's son smiled, and said: "Dad is a great old boy."

I nodded, wondering. "When I was a child," John's son went on, "Dad was an atheist. That was probably when you knew him. He was in terrible ill-health when I was a child, mother says. Physicians said he could not live. It is funny about dad—mother persuaded him to join the Church, and, do you know, he got so interested in being a Christian he forgot himself and stopped complaining. Mother says it was a miracle."

But though I lack details, I say John was healed when he got rid of false pride in being an atheist.

—:O:—

DO IT NOW !

The old saying has it that "in the midst of life we are in death". "Behold, I die daily." We are dying daily, as regards the physical form. But we are living the spiritual life now, thinking the spiritual thoughts now. Who knows when the death-knell will sound that will close the book of this life? That book once closed, we can never inscribe any fresh records therein. One of the greatest regrets of many who pass out of this life is, "Oh, if I had only known, I would have done so differently." "I should have liked to help So-and-so." Do it now!

The great message that the spirit people are constantly impressing upon us may be expressed in the words, "Now is the accepted time." Now is the time for us to let the good thought flow out into action, and in all sincerity to strive to be good, wise, true, loving, helpful, just, honourable; and by our example and influence to help others, to stimulate them, to make the pathway freer for them, and then Death's surprise for us will be our entrance into a state of beauty and harmony where the past weaknesses will be outgrown and evils forgotten.—From "Death's Chiefest Surprise."—E. W. Wallis.

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