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SPIRITUALISM THROUGHOUT THE AGES THE TESTIMONY OF HISTORY

By M. A. St. CLAIR STOBART

ONE reason for the indifference of most people towards Spiritualism has been the notion that it was originally an American stunt, wafted to this country in the year 1848 by the Fox sisters. Now, the Fox family performed a most useful function. They invented, or possibly re-invented, an alphabetical code for communication with those who from the Other Side were responsible for the raps. But the Fox family did not invent the raps nor did they invent Spiritualism. Spiritualism is an inheritance of the human race. This would be obvious to any reader of Wm. Howitt's *History of the Supernatural*, from which much of the following information is derived.

As a matter of fact, the discovery of conversing with spirits through the alphabet was known to the Greek Spiritualists—philosophers as they were called—of the fourth century. For instance in the days of the Roman Emperor, Valens (A.D. 371), some Greek Spiritualists were brought to trial for having attempted to ascertain the successor to the throne, by magical arts. The small table, or tripod, which they had used for this purpose was produced in court.

To return to the times about 100 years before the Hydesville rappings, Germany and Switzerland had been favoured with Spiritualists of a specially distinguished character.

One of the great band of German Spiritualists of the latter end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century was the famous Dr. Ennemoser. He was a physiologist and a physician. I am specially interested in him, because he separates the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, as I have always done, from the spiritual, maintaining that what we call "psychic phenomena" have nothing religious about them, but are physiological in their origin and workings, and that these should be differentiated from loftier manifestations and from implications which may or may not be of a religious nature. As many of you know, it is these religious implications in which I desire that the Churches should interest themselves.

Dr. Ennemoser recognised spirit agency in all the various tales of supposedly mythological origin, and acknowledged the revelations of Böhme, Swedenborg, St. Theresa, St. Catherine of Sienna, and others.

Then, in France, nearly 100 years before the Hydesville rappings, there was a remarkable Spiritualist, Dr. Oberlin, a Minister of the Church in Alsace. When he first took up his work there, he found his parishioners all talking of apparitions of their departed friends as familiar facts. He was shocked and began to reprove them. Then his own wife died, and for nine years she appeared to him almost daily. She was also visible to others of the household. She told him not only of life on her plane, she also gave him advice as to his undertakings in this life.

Dr. Justinian Kerner had a great reputation in the medical and scientific world—he was also a poet. He was born in Germany in 1786. He startled Germany in the middle of its philosophical scepticism, by his revelations concerning the remarkable Spiritualist phenomena displayed by the celebrated seeress, Madame Hauffé, who was one of his patients.

In his preface to the third edition of his book on the subject of these phenomena, he says: "Truly it is hard, and who must not feel it, that a foolish weak woman should overturn learned systems and bring forward again a faith which the lofty wisdom of men imagined it was in the act of utterly rooting out."

One of the remarkable faculties of this Madame Hauffé was that of being able, when in trance, to read anything enclosed between two sheets of blank

paper, laid upon the pit of her stomach. She had originally been sent to Dr. Kerner as a patient and, as a sceptic of Spiritualist phenomena, he nearly killed her at first by his methods of curing her of her great gifts. Dr. Kerner was, however, soon convinced of the importance of the phenomena and amongst others whom he invited to test her powers were such men as Kant, the great philosopher Schubert, Eschenmayer, Gorres, and Werner.

In America there was, of course, at this same period (100 years before the Hydesville rappings) the well-known Spiritualist, Andrew Jackson Davis. Born in 1826, in New York State, he was one of six children of a very poor village weaver and cobbler. He received only five months' schooling at the village school, as it was found impossible to teach him anything. He saw visions and heard voices; and, five years before the Fox sisters' rappings, he gave demonstrations of clairvoyance for lecturers on mesmerism on public platforms. He had the power of diagnosing and healing disease, and during his clairvoyance stated that he saw the interior of men and animals as perfectly as their exterior. He prescribed remedies and named the shops where they were to be obtained.

Like George Fox and Swedenborg before him, Davis said that the whole of Creation was opened to him; that he saw the names of all things in their natures, as Adam is said to have seen them. He gave Greek and Latin names to things, though in his normal state he could not even write or speak correct English. In 1845, he delivered 157 lectures in New York, whilst in a state of clairvoyance, on a new philosophy of the Universe, and he became a voluminous inspirational writer of recognised value.

As I have continually pointed out in my books (*Torchbearers of Spiritualism* and *The Either-or of Spiritualism*) records of psychic phenomena are to be found in the history of all nations, beginning thousands of years before the Christian Era. It was by means of their psychic faculties that the great religious leaders of the world were enabled to perform the signs and wonders which attracted the multitudes to their Teaching—Orpheus, Pythagoras, Moses, the Buddha,

Mahomet, Swedenborg, etc. Should we ever have heard of Jesus, but for his so-called Miracles which we now recognise as phenomena which are being paralleled to-day?

I would specially like our sceptics who are of an intellectual turn of mind to note that at the time when Greece was at the apogee of her intellectual glory—a glory which has never been surpassed or equalled—her great men were unadulterated Spiritualists, who regarded divination, as it was termed, as a divine philosophy.

Socrates, recognised as one of the world's greatest teachers, gave his life for the sacred cause. He was condemned by the State for teaching "pernicious" doctrines concerning the world of spirits. He could have saved his life by recantation. We to-day should be proud of this early martyr to our cause.

Listen to what the great philosopher Plato, who had learned from Socrates, said concerning the anti-Spiritualists of his day: "Me too, when I say anything in the public assembly concerning divine things (that is Spiritualist things) and predict to them what is going to happen, they ridicule as mad; and although nothing that I have predicted has not turned out to be true, yet they envy all such men as we are. However, we ought not to heed them but pursue our own course."

And what of Cicero, born B.C.106, distinguished Roman advocate, Praetor, Consul, and Governor? He wrote two essays which might have been written by Sir Oliver Lodge to-day, one on "Divination" (Spiritualism), and the other on "The Nature of the Gods" (or spirits). And in his vehement defence of Spiritualism he cries impatiently: "If both reason and fact are on my side, if whole nations and peoples, Greeks and Barbarians, and our own ancestors, also confirm all my assertions: if also it has always been maintained by the greatest philosophers and poets and by the wisest legislators who have framed constitutions and founded cities, must we wait until the very animals give their verdict?"

Spirit communications—the facsimile of our modern communications, are recorded in the sacred books of all religions (our own Bible is a store-house of psychic stories) as also in the writings of the early fathers of the Christian Church. And finally, Spiritualism has been vouched for in our own day by some of the greatest scientists of the Age—and this after many years of laboratory research into every phase of mediumship.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has decided not to publish the Report of his Commission of enquiry into Spiritualism. We are told that it was "private and confidential." I now contend that history provides us with a Report which is neither private nor confidential, but is available for all to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest. This Report, from history, has been conducted by some of the greatest intellects and the noblest saints of all time, who had at their disposal a wider range of material than was available to the well-meaning amateurs of the recent ecclesiastical Commission. And the historical Commission has been at work amongst all classes and all races, in all ages, in all countries of the world. Its verdict is unanimous, and it assures us that Man is primarily a Spirit-being, and that at the death of the physical body the soul-body passes to its own spirit sphere, whence it can communicate with spirits still encased in their physical bodies on Earth. The historical Commission assures us that Man is heir to an eternal heritage, of which no earthly tyrant can dispossess him.

In these days when spiritual values seem to be crumbling into nothingness; when, to those who have no wider vision, the light of the world seems in danger of extinction, when it is hard to see the hand of God in the prevailing chaos, this knowledge of the reality of the spirit-world, and of our heritage in that world, stands as a sheet-anchor to save us from floundering on the rocks of Materialism, Atheism, and Despair.

(From an address delivered at the Spiritualist Community Service, at Wigmore Hall, London, on Sunday evening, July 21st.)

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DREAM AND CONFIRMATORY MESSAGE

A VERY good piece of evidence of Survival has come my way.

About three weeks ago, a boy of my acquaintance, and a very great friend of my daughter, was accidentally killed under very tragic circumstances.

There was a great friendship between this boy of twenty and my girl, and she was very much upset by the tragedy. A week after his passing, she told me she had had a very vivid dream of him. He spoke to her and she said: "But you are dead." He said "I am not dead;" then she said: "You have had a funeral" (this was a few days after his funeral) and he said: "I know I have, but I am not dead—that is all a mistake, and in twelve months everyone will know it is a mistake."

My daughter, of course, knows about Spiritualism, but is afraid of it. She told me, however, that that night she had asked this boy, if there was any truth in Survival, to come to her and tell her so.

A week after this, at our circle with Mr. Austin, he asked if I had a leather wallet with a photograph in it of a man who was dressed in sports clothes—he didn't know whether it was tennis he was playing, as he could only see his head and upper part of the body, and *couldn't see his legs*. I could not place it, and asked for a name; he said "I get Emma." That gave me a clue, as my girl's name is "Ella" and I thought it might be for her. On my return home I asked her if she had a wallet with a photo in it, and she said she had one with two photographs, one of which was of this boy, so I presumed it was this to which Mr. Austin referred. (He had rather put me off the scent as he gave the age as about forty, and this boy was only twenty, but on looking at the snapshot I noticed he looked much older).

The incident passed from my mind, until a week afterwards, when Mr. Austin said to me: "That man who was here last week has been here all the afternoon and he asks me to tell you he was very fond of sport" (he used to ride with my daughter) "*and rowing*." Then I knew without doubt, as the snap in the wallet was of him rowing in a dinghy, and *his legs did not show*.

I said I recognised him and asked if there was any message, and he said: "Tell her I kept my appointment, but was rather disappointed at the result." This no doubt refers to what my daughter said when she told me of the dream—that it was horrid and she did not want to have anything more to do with it. This struck me as being good evidence, as telepathy is entirely ruled out.

(Mrs.) L. B. ROBERTS.

RELIGION IN ACTION

The following story is told by Diwan Lalchand Navalrai in the course of an article on "Religion" in THE KALPAKA (Tinnevely, India):

IT is said some dacoits looted the house of a rich man and left destitute the family consisting of a husband, wife and child. They were thrown on the street with no one to take care of them. A tongawalla took pity on the child, brought him home and reared him up. The father remained roaming about like a mad man; the wife became a maid servant, but lived in distress on account of the separation of her son and the husband.

At this juncture, a big magnate of the town suddenly got ill; several doctors were called in for aid, but all to no purpose. One of them opined that the patient was ill as well as not ill. His illness was only imaginary, having been influenced by some fearful thought. He declared that disease was nothing but—neurasthenia, and advised no medicine but change of thought by some pleased occupation and engagement. Money he had at his command, and an attempt was made by his friends to engage him in doing some patriotic work.

He followed the advice and looked for some laudable act to perform. As fate would have it, he came to know

MESSAGES BY RAPS

HAVING read with great interest Major Howgrave-Graham's articles on "Knocks and Raps" (LIGHT, April 11th to July 18th), I think the following may be of interest since it corroborates several of the experiences described by him: (1) Raps heard by one individual in a room alone with no Medium present; (2) Raps were for a profitable purpose; (3) Foretold through a Medium; (4) Subsequently correctly demonstrated through a Medium; (5) Further raps later referred to through a second Medium; (6) Confirmed through a "table sitting."

At a "sitting" with Mrs. Nash at the London Spiritualist Alliance in August, 1939, I was given: "J.— has *tried* to knock in your bedroom, later on you will hear faint at first, getting stronger at night time . . . no, not psychically, but normally."

I thought nothing further of this until, in the first week of October, 1939, while lying awake, a sudden feeling of peace and lightness came, and there immediately followed distinct clear taps on the window, at even intervals, one, two or several taps at a time.

At the end of October, at a second sitting with Mrs. Nash this was given: "Mary (second name of J. and often used) has been knocking for you as she promised, when you mentally spoke to her she responded; she knocked like this" (then as far as I could judge an exact repetition of the knocks was tapped on the table by Topsy, the control).

I heard no more till May, 1940, when, in the early morning, there sounded many tiny taps, "more rapid than machine-gun fire," on (or in) the shade over the bedlight. They ceased and recommenced several times. When they finally stopped, I tried in various ways to bring about these "elfin taps," again without success, but three nights later they came once more.

At a sitting with Mrs. Vaughan at the L.S.A. three-and-a-half weeks later, J., who controlled her, said: "I tried to rap for you about three weeks ago near the electric bulb, but it is very difficult to get the stuff for raps." "Can I help you?" I asked, and the answer was: "No, all you can do is just to listen without being anxious."

At a table sitting a fortnight later, in reply to a question: "Have you rapped lately?" at once came "Yes, twice, light."

On these three occasions the raps have conveyed a definite message of hope and comfort. G. VIVIAN.

of the aforesaid worried and distressed family. He rescued the child by liberally paying consideration to the tongawalla and engaged himself day and night in search of the child's father and mother. His thought power remained all time in one and one groove, only to find out the lost parents of the child. His malady thus began decreasing. To his happiness, he after all found the father of the child, and subsequently got emancipated of the mother of the child by paying ransom to her mistress in whose keeping she was. With this benevolent act and fixation of his thought in one direction, his illness disappeared completely.

Men serving in His Majesty's Forces, who are interested in Evidence for Survival, may have free literature sent to them on application to

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"AGES NOT SO DARK"

"IT is known to Archæologists and Anthropologists that man in the remote Ages was a truly remarkable being." So, in his preface to the little book of the above title (published by the Council for Prehistoric Research), writes J. Foster Forbes, F.R.A.I., F.S.A.S., author of *The Unchronicled Past*.

Many of us still believe, he points out, "that there was no cultural religious or spiritual civilisation until the years A.D., and that the British Isles received no civilising influences until the coming of the Romans;" a grave error which, we are here told, is completely disproved by a serious study of such archæological remains as have been left to us from those far-off days.

To Mr. Foster Forbes it is inconceivable that scientific men can still doubt the former existence of Atlantis, the lost continent, whose inhabitants, so he is "convinced," at various times possessed "all, if not many, of the secrets of life; life that we would term to-day as being of an advanced spiritual or mystic order;" but that, "side by side with this culture there grew up conditions set in motion by those who sought to abuse and misuse spiritual powers whereby the whole world was ultimately affected, and which brought about in course of time the complete disruption of this area of the globe, resulting in repercussions from which the world has scarcely recovered even in these days."

Following this disaster, in the period when the present eastern seaboard of the Atlantic stretched much further into what is now sea, when Britain was still united with the Continent, vast numbers of Atlanteans reached and settled on both eastern and western shores of the Atlantic; carrying with them evidence of their culture, as is borne out by a survey of the outermost fringe of this seaboard on either side, from the Iberian Peninsula, the Basque coast, Western Brittany, the Channel Islands, the Scillies, West Cornwall, Pembroke and Anglesey, up to Western Scotland in the east, and Mexico and the coast of Central and South America in the west.

THE ESOTERIC ASPECT

Probably, however, it is the esoteric aspect of the author's research work rather than the purely historic that would appeal most to readers of LIGHT.

The prehistoric settlers in Britain, descendants of those migrating Atlanteans, were primarily sun-worshippers, with a profound knowledge both of engineering and the laws of balance and mechanics, but also of the "hidden powers of life." "They were not mere astronomers and astrologers in the sense that they were capable of recognising the true nature of the stars, of their functioning as well as of the real influence (in a cosmic sense) which they exerted from one to another at certain conjunctions and seasons. . . . The more one approaches this angle of the subject, the more one is impressed with the profundity of understanding that the Ancients had of the Celestial Universe."

"To these people the constellations were most assuredly *live* worlds, exerting direct and indirect influence, not only on the earth itself, but on all its inhabitants."

As to the stone monuments, vestiges of which can still be traced along the districts indicated, most notably perhaps in Brittany and Ireland, we read:

"Cromlechs or stone circles are, alas, only vestiges of great Sun and Star temples, set up and used by the Atlanteans primarily as replicas of the Sun, Moon and Stars themselves, and, secondly, as great places of Assembly, Worship, Initiation and, indeed, every phase of their advanced spiritual culture and ritual."

"These blocks were moved into position at the instigation of Master Masons. . . . Our ancestors knew stone as a highly radio-active substance, composed of minute particles of that which had its correspondence in ethereal realms. As such it was almost as near being

alive as anything else could be. Being of this nature, the element was responsive to law, and therefore in harmony and accord with the purposes for which man used it."

"Thousands (almost millions) of years ago, this earth was so different, it was in a state which can be best described as one of *spiritual* perfectionment; what we see around us now is the *reverse* of the operation of spiritual law, for that which has become fixed, solid and material was once volatile and spiritual. In these former days man understood and was himself part of the law of perfect spiritual response, in this wise he knew how to control element, and he did not give vent, as we do, to brute physical force; that which we now know, therefore, as stone *responded to correct command and was subject to law—law which included sound, tone, utterance, invocation and intonation, in short, the power of the WORD*. This is what confronts us in the mystery of the great stories of the Morbihan (Brittany); their riddle will never be solved if approached from the realm of material reason; it would be vain and useless to try and arrive at any adequate solution as to their being placed in position if viewed from the point of view of ordinary human and physical means. One can only give just the vaguest outline of these eternal mysteries; even so, they would seem to be beyond the grasp of mortal mind and belong only to the concept of that which is realised by a process of recovery and initiation."

SYMBOLISM

Those interested in symbolism will find much to stimulate thought in what is said *re* the timeless figure of Father Christmas and his garb; *re* the sun-shaped Christmas pudding and its flames, the Morris Dancers, Whitsun or White-suntide, the various "White Horses" on our hillsides, and so on. The tradition, still extant in some parts of the kindly "Little People" as opposed to the unfriendly elemental troll people suggests a possible explanation of the Scottish Hogmanaye:

"Houge men (or Hill men), Aye!
Troll men, Naye!"

Readers who have been privileged to know, and perhaps study under, Miss Olive Pixley, "one of the most accomplished Psychometrists of the day," cannot fail to be attracted by the section describing her work both with Mr. Foster Forbes and with the late Major F. C. Tyler.

"What a gross betrayal," concludes the author, "has been foisted on this world by those who set out to convince everyone that civilisation (as far as Britain was concerned) merely began at the opening of the Christian era! Even more, what a negation and denial of Truth was perpetrated when documentary evidence conveying much concerning the true nature of man, religion and culture was ruthlessly destroyed and burned by the misguided promoters of a religion that has failed to establish true spiritual conditions in this land!"

"I would have you try and think that in very truth '*Man was created in the Image of God, and the Image of God is the reflection of Christ, which is the Cross*'—the cross which figures on the ancient monuments erected thousands of years before the so-called Christian Era."

"Let us see what Man was *meant* to be. What Man really was in the true Golden Age and successive golden ages which have been swept away by those who sought to impose a vastly different régime from what obtained when this earth was young and truly beautiful."

There may be readers who would find this little book "dull"; but those (and there should be many!) who are stirred and fascinated by all that is implied in its pages will find they want to go back again and again, and re-read and ponder.

M.A.B.

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST

SIR,—Mr. Hector Waylen, writing under the title of "Number of the Beast" (LIGHT, June 25th), evidently feels the necessity of a duality or polarity in postulating the use of 666 in its normal and also "in its reversed sense." This, however, is rather like regarding the red *Stop* light of the traffic signal as the green *Go* "in its reversed sense." What is essential is a duality of symbol to correspond to a duality of manifestation.

666, the symbol derived from the last book of the New Testament, is the counterpoise to the number 3.1416, the "Pi" sequence derived from the first book of the Old Testament. It is the numerical equivalent of the word "Elohim," translated "God," in the first verse of Genesis. This number represents the length of the circumference of the circle with diameter unity, and typifies the Divine, or the Christ number, as opposed to the 666 mark of the Beast, the number of action as opposed to reaction, of the positive as opposed to the negative.

These two symbols are as complementary and mutually necessary as are North and South, or Male and Female. It is impossible for one to stand by itself, even if used in a reverse sense. The two are essential, duly provided, and used like some inspired Morse Code to spell out messages, marking events, dimensions, people, and places with their helpful or sinister implications.

H. ERNEST HUNT.

(NOTE.—Was it more than a coincidence that the article on "The Number of the Beast," 666, appeared on page 333?—Ed.

THE ULTRA-PERCEPTIVE FACULTY

Sir,—Mr. Prevost Battersby (LIGHT, 25th July) repeats one misrepresentation and adds a more formidable one.

Throughout my book, *The Ultra-Perceptive Faculty*, the word "alleged" was used in no other sense than the one in which judges, K.C.'s and even newspapers employ it in connection with statements which have yet to be proved. The book gives, *inter alia*, an account of statistical experiments undertaken solely with *mental Mediums*, with a view to ascertaining whether their *alleged* ability for perceiving beyond the normal (*ultra-perceptive cognition*) could be ranked as a probable fact. The results confirmed the allegation and this is clearly set out in the work. Why does Mr. Prevost Battersby object to a form of presentation which is

generally accepted as the proper one whenever a case has to be proved?

As regards the question of precognition of future events, Mr. Prevost Battersby reaches the climax of misrepresentation. He reproduces just one paragraph, completely disregarding several other passages throughout the book concerning the same question, for instance: "However, sensitives sometimes perceive items which cannot possibly be ascribed to reasoning" (see page 195). I made it abundantly clear that the research did not include an investigation of precognition of future events. My reference to them was only incidental, because apparent precognition of such events did occur during the experiments (see the joke about *ladies' corsets* on page 168).

Bearing in mind the context, the paragraph objected to cannot possibly be interpreted to imply a denial of the possibility or probability of precognition, not even a verdict of non-proven. Yet the way Mr. Prevost Battersby singles it out and the manner in which he refers to it lends that meaning thereto and I submit, with all due respect, that this is a highly misleading criticism.

J. HETTINGER.

S.N.U. EX-PRESIDENT'S VIEW

Sir,—I have read Dr. Hettinger's book carefully and consider it to be a really valuable contribution to Psychic Science, deserving the attention of all serious students of mental phenomena.

After concluding his main experiments, Dr. Hettinger made others specially concerned with the *Time Factor*. The results are striking, clearly indicating the great influence of *Receivency* as a factor in psychometry. They are frankly stated and the fact that some suggest *Precognition* is pointed out.

If we accept Dr. Hettinger's conclusion that the matter in psychometric readings very largely originates in the conscious or subconscious mind of the subject, then obviously the reasoning powers of the subject may introduce an element of prediction.

The methods Dr. Hettinger has introduced are capable of being applied with suitable modifications to other branches of phenomena.

It should be emphasised that the book is a reprint of the author's thesis for the Ph.D. degree of the London University. Perhaps had he written it for the general reader his choice of words would have escaped Mr. Battersby's criticism; but the conclusions would have remained.

J. B. MCINDOE.

BAHA'I FAITH AND ITS FOUNDERS

CLAIMS are made that the Baha'i Faith is the World Religion for which Mystics in all Religions are waiting. "The Mission of the Founder of this Faith, they (his followers) conceive to be to proclaim that religious truth is not absolute but relative, that divine revelation is continuous and progressive, that the Founders of all past religions, though different in the non-essential aspects of their teachings, 'abide in the same tabernacle, soar in the same heaven, are seated upon the same throne, utter the same speech, and proclaim the same Faith.'"

This claim—made by Shoghi Effendi, "Guardian of the Baha'i Faith," in a postscript to a book by Lady Blomfield, entitled *The Chosen Highway* (Baha'i Publishing Trust, 46 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1, 7/6 cloth, 5/- paper)—is very similar to the view of world religions held by some well-known Spiritualists, and Spiritualists may therefore be expected to regard it with interest, more particularly as Survival is an essential part of Baha'i teaching.

"Know of a truth," wrote Baha'u'llah, Founder of the Faith, "that the Soul, after its separation from the body, will continue to progress until it attaineth the presence of God, in a state and condition which neither the revelation of ages and centuries, nor the changes and chances of the world can alter."

The Chosen Highway, by Lady Blomfield (who passed

to the higher life on the last day of 1939, before it could be published) does not seek to explain the Baha'i Faith, but rather—after the pattern of the *Acts of the Apostles*—to tell the story of its introduction some hundred years ago in Persia, and of the journeyings and persecution of its Prophets, with some of whom (and their families) she had personal acquaintance. A very interesting chapter is devoted to the visit to London of Abdu'l-Baha (son of the Founder) in 1911, and many of his sayings are quoted.

The book—which has been "approved by the Reviewing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of the British Isles"—contains portraits of Lady Blomfield (whose Baha'i name is given as Sitarh Khanum); Bahiyyih Khanum (daughter of Baha'u'llah) and Abdu'l-Baha. G.H.L.

BISHOP THINKS PROOF OF SURVIVAL IS NOT NEEDED

Dr. David, Bishop of Liverpool, warns bereaved people, in his *Diocesan Leaflet*, against recourse to Spiritualism for evidence of the Survival of their loved ones. He does not deny the possibility of communication, but says: "My main reason is that a Christian ought to be content with what the Gospel teaches us about 'them that have fallen asleep' and their relationship with us. We need no proof that they are alive."

AUGUST 1, 1940

Light

All communications for the EDITOR should be addressed: "The Editor of Light, 16 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7." 'Phone Kensington 3292-3.

EDITOR - - - GEORGE H. LETHAM

DOES GOD CARE?

THESE are days which try the faith of many people. We all hoped, a year ago, that we should not be called upon to go through another war, but war has come.

Once more people question the existence of God and ask: Why does He allow such things to happen? It is natural for people to ask, for we have been reared in a belief that God did, in past days, intervene in the affairs of men and give directions for their guidance.

It is very difficult to put such ideas aside, and when people holding these ideas see that God does not intervene, doubt of his existence invades their minds and they become like vessels adrift on the sea without compass or rudder.

There is one thing such a struggle as the present does—it makes us re-think our ideas and cast a wider net into the sea of knowledge.

Science has not in its researches discovered the God described in the Bible, but it has given us a view of the universe which is much greater than any given in the Scriptures. The Bible is a collection of books giving the conceptions of many writers, some of whom were inspired and have given us a fine literature. These writers did not have the knowledge we possess, but their moral and spiritual insight was profound; and, had we followed their leading, we should have had a better world.

While it may be difficult for us to discover God with our intellect, and perhaps even by faith, yet the view of the universe presented by science is one that is more understandable in the light of a conception that regards the universe, not as the outcome of blind and fortuitous forces, but as the result of directive intelligence. The immanence of that intelligence is seen everywhere operative and every form of life has its degree of freedom. That is, within the confines of its natural limitations it is free. The higher we rise in the scale of development the wider and greater does that freedom become.

MAN IN THE MAKING

Sir Oliver Lodge wrote a book on *The Making of Man*, in which he showed that man is yet a very imperfect being. This view is different from that which regards man as having been made perfect and then fallen from grace by an act of disobedience. All the evidence goes to show that man is an evolving being: that the Neanderthal man, the Heidelberg man, the Piltdown man, and Pithecanthropus Erectus, were sub men, the forbears from whom has sprung modern man.

We need not, however, regard the far reach of our intelligence as in itself constituting an advance. It is true we have a wider knowledge and can do hundreds of things that even our grandparents could not do, and would have deemed impossible. Progress does not consist in making discoveries, but rather in the use we make of them. It is here we see the need of a governing moral and spiritual vision. And it is in the realm of morals and spirituality that man can best apprehend God. Just as directive intelligence is immanent in the universe, so are moral and spiritual laws. It is the infringement of these laws which results in such colossal suffering. These laws are not for our punishment, they exist for our liberation, but when we infringe them, and

no infringement is worse than denying their existence, they become our scourges to whip us back into The Way.

MORAL AND SPIRITUAL LAWS

It is clear that Men have denied the moral and spiritual laws of their being. Humanity has been given The Way. Great Teachers have proclaimed it, but ever they are voices "crying in the wilderness." Men are always ready to give lip service to them, and make gods of them, but accept their message they will not.

This is due mainly to the lowly development of mankind. It is not that men wish to be harsh and unkind; but being blind they cannot see. So they wrap up their heroes and weave theories about them and their mission, and, so doing, present a false view of God. When things are pleasant God is with them; when things go wrong God is made their scape-goat. Hence doubts and fears, and protestations at God allowing such things as wars to overtake mankind.

We must face the fact that man makes war, not God. The laws of the universe are such that if we live in accordance with them we have health, wholeness of being. That is really what God desires, but He will not force it upon us. If we choose the way of suffering we must pay the price, and not blame God for our misdoings.

If we look deeply we shall see that even in our suffering the care of God is manifest. For our sufferings are really remedial, designed to heal, to lead to fuller life. When the greater man emerges from the ruck and mire of the lesser self and demands to be heard, we shall know that God does care, that His voice is finding utterance through us. And we shall create the Eden of His desire and dwell in the light of His love.

W. H. EVANS.

GOD'S GREAT TEACHERS

A Message from "Imperator" through the Hand of the Rev. Wm. Stainton Moses.

YOU inquire from us what position we assign to Jesus the Christ. We are not careful to enter into curious comparisons between different teachers who, in different ages, have been sent from God. The time is not yet come for that; but this we know, that no spirit more pure, more godlike, more noble, more blessing and more blessed, ever descended to find a home on your earth. None more worthily earned by a life of self-sacrificing love the adoring reverence and devotion of mankind. None bestowed more blessings on humanity; none wrought a greater work for God. It is not necessary that we should enter into curious comparisons between God's great teachers. Rather would we give to all the meed of praise that is their due, and hold up the example of self-denial, self-sacrifice and love to the imitation of a generation which sadly needs such a pattern.

Had men devoted their energies to the imitation of the simplicity and sincerity, the loving toil and earnest purpose, the self-sacrifice and purity of thought and life which elevated and distinguished the Christ, they had wrangled less of His nature, and had wasted fewer words upon useless metaphysical sophistries. Those of your theologians who dwelt in the days of darkness, and who have left to you an accursed heritage in their idle and foolish speculations, would have turned their minds into a more useful channel, and have been a blessing instead of a curse to mankind. Men would not have derogated from the honour due to the great God alone, but would have accepted, as Jesus intended, the simple Gospel that He preached. But instead of this they have elaborated an anthropomorphic theology which has led them to wander further and further from the simplicity of His teaching; which has turned His name and creed into a battle-ground of sects; and has resulted in a parody on His teachings—a sight on which His pure spirit looks with sorrow and pity.—(Spirit Teachings.)

THE PSYCHIC THREAD

MAGIC AND RELIGION

WRITING last week of Mr. Channing-Pearce's book *The Terrible Crystal*, I indicated that I would revert to a chapter thereof which deals with Magic. There are, in fact, two such chapters, entitled "Guidance and Magic" and "Facilis Descensus Avernii," and as these digress more or less from the main theme of the book, they invite a particular notice.

When he speaks of Magic the author is clearly in some confusion, because, while realising that a relationship exists between Magic and Religion, he seems to identify the former almost exclusively with its lower manifestations, thus falling into a common error to which I have already referred (14th March and 11th July), and to draw a definite and hostile dividing-line between the fundamental natures of magical and religious aspiration. This second error arises from the first; for once Magic is realised in all its majesty it will be seen that Religion, worthy of the name, is in reality comprised in its bounds, or, one may even assert, **the two are more or less synonymous.** For Magic, of all cults from the highest to the lowest, signifies the *power to effect change*, and, if Religion does not signify or at least comprise the power of transmuting the lower to the higher Self, which is the Spiritual Alchemy, it is no more than a meaningless fabric of shallow and useless forms.

THE "DARK" POWER

Mr. Channing-Pearce refers repeatedly to Magic as a "dark power," but he does so in such a way as to suggest that he uses the adjective not in its usual metaphorical sense, as we say currently "Black Magic." "Magic" supposes a certain dark power in life, the aid of which, so primitive experience suggests, can be enlisted for the use of man in certain ways and in certain contingencies. This power is superhuman, and so far Magic marches with Religion." But the driving power of Magic is not actually darkness, but *light*. There is only one superhuman force—the One Thing, the Astral Light, the Universal Force, the Great Secret—and even the lower cults of Magic make use of it, though by a species of inversion. There is no power in actual darkness, which is nothing but the absence of light.

Metaphorically, the lowest type of Magic is truly a "dark" power—how dark, only those who are acquainted with the history of witchcraft will realise; but the higher Magic contacts the very fount of Light.

Like Eliphas Lévi, like the thirteenth-century prophet, Raymond Lully (see *Psychic Thread*, 11th July), Channing-Pearce sees in these "Latter Days" a strange impulse towards Magic (of the lower cult): "The needle is set hard towards reversion to magic, and the way on which the feet of those who mix magic with religion is set is made clear." To support his argument he calls in the late D. H. Lawrence and the Epicurean philosopher, John Cowper Powys; but the relationship of these writers with any kind of serious occult thought is not clearly apparent.

That "a reversion to magic" is in operation cannot, however, be doubted, nor, as Mr. Pearce justly observes, is it "solely a religious phenomenon. It would seem, in fact, to be a characteristic movement of the present time and the affinity with what has been called the magical conception of guidance bears to modern non-Christian speculation and life is noteworthy and demands our study." For "Magic (says Mr. Pearce, quoting Professor Malinowski) is akin to science." This is certain, and Professor Lynn Thondyke's monumental *History of Magic and Experimental Science* has long since monopolised the theme. But Magic is so far more than all this. It is essentially Christian in its higher cult, essentially mystic, profoundly philosophic, as well as "religious" and "scientific." Plotinus and Rumi are as much magicians as Goethe, Goethe as much as Paracelsus and Cornelius Agrippa. Hermes

Trismegistus is the prototype, but Christ is the supreme fulfilment of Magian wisdom.

ANOTHER EXPERIENCE

The account given a fortnight ago of an experience which, in my view, established very clearly the survival after death of a remarkably original personality (W. G. Blaikie Murdoch's) having attracted the attention of an authority on psychic questions, I feel it would not be out of place to narrate another experience, of a different kind, yet tending equally to prove individual survival, and moreover, survival after a period of three centuries. The phenomenon was symbolic in character and, as such, suggests a chain of associations with that class of symbolic dreams which, above all other phenomena of sleep, are indubitably prophetic.

My experience occurred in the Psychic College in Edinburgh at the time of the Munich crisis in 1938. I had a lecture at the College, booked some months in advance, and travelled North on that historic night when the peace of Europe hung in the balance, only learning of the agreement on my arrival at an early hour in the Scottish capital. After lecturing, I was lodged at the College and sat up late talking to the Medium who had given a demonstration of clairvoyance and who was also staying at the College. I had not met this lady previously. While conversing with me she made some psychometric experiments and finally slipped easily into a clairvoyant state, though there was nothing like a deep trance.

THE SIGN OF THE PEACOCK

At that time I was engrossed in my book *The Great Duke of Buckingham* * which embodies many years of a quite extraordinary interest in, and sympathy with, my subject. My companion, after stating that I was absorbed in a literary work (a fact with which she might easily have been acquainted, for many people knew of it), suddenly remarked that she saw the image of a bird above my head. "I can see it clearly now (she said): it is a peacock." Presently she added: "There is an animal too. It looks like a lion. But it is the peacock which is *helping you with your work*." Now, this observation possessed for me an astonishing significance; for the peacock is the crest of the Manners family and the lion that of the house of Villiers, and the subject of my biography, George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham, was married to Katherine Manners, daughter and heiress of Francis, Sixth Earl of Rutland. The two crests, lion and peacock, are found together on carved and painted memorials of the Duke. The Duchess was only twenty-five years of age at the time of the assassination of Buckingham by Felton in 1628. She adored him, as her letters to her "Dear Heart" prove abundantly. Indeed, there are no warmer, lovelier letters preserved from that romantic age than hers: "I cannot express the infinite affection which I bear you; but, for God's sake, believe me, that there was never woman loved a man as I do you."

It is certain, then, that such a woman (despite her second marriage) cherished till death, and far beyond, the remembrance of the beautiful and brilliant being (for such was Buckingham) who had been her first love and her first lord. And what can be more likely than that her spirit should be drawn by those mysterious influences that operate between discarnate and incarnate intelligencies to a historian earnestly intent on exposing the many falsehoods with which the malice of his political enemies had deliberately defamed the Duke's memory?

C. R. CAMMELL.

*For the remarkable story of the ghost of the Duke's father appearing to forewarn him of his danger, see the review by H. F. Prevost Battersby in *LIGHT*, 27th April, 1939.

The Ark of the Covenant**3—NEW LIGHT ON OLD MYSTERIES**

By Captain Q. CRAUFURD

IN my two previous articles on "The Ark of the Covenant," I have considered the Ark in its purely physical aspect of an electrical condenser capable of transmitting and receiving wireless messages over a range of, say, fifty miles. In the science of those days, our modern theories did not exist. The Ark evidently possessed other uses, as for instance the firing of the mine placed by the Hebrew spies in the walls of Jericho.

Nobody in these days actually believes that God throws down the walls of an enemy city at the commands of the priests. If they did, the present war between Good and Evil forces would be vastly simplified, at any rate in theory. Explosions of naptha fumes (naptha means "holy water") were certainly known—witness the disastrous effects of Korah, Dathan and Abiram swinging their censers in the Tabernacle (*Numbers xvi*).

I take it that the column of smoke by day and the glare of flames by night was this naptha-flare which marked the camp of the Israelites. This would be the holy water used for the daily sacrifice. Obviously, some kind of portable fuel was necessary in this desert, and the caravan had to carry naptha, which is the local petroleum.

It seems clear that explosion was used to throw down the banks of the Jordan above the river and dam the waters temporarily for a crossing—that in itself hints strongly at the mystery of Jericho.

However, space forbids more of this aspect of the Ark. What we now want to examine is the psychic aspect of the Ark.

Moses seems to have claimed direct contact with the Unseen, and modern research shows that this is a perfectly reasonable supposition. He may have been a natural Medium, or he may have derived his mediumistic powers from the aura created by the Ark. In order to find out whether experimental research can give support to such a theory, I have myself carried out certain experiments.

I have nothing very sensational to disclose; but, so far as I have gone along this line, I find a vast field open to research. The right use of a suitable form of condenser gives very strange results.

The use of a condenser is, as its name implies, for the purpose of concentrating and localising force that may be available; and, for the moment, let us assume that what is called "power" is actually some form of electric force. The word "force," according to the dictionary, means "active power."

Now, the active power in our bodies, through which we derive our earthly consciousness, is nervous energy—which, if not actually electricity, is so close to it, in its behaviour, that we may treat the two forces as identical, to start with. In that case, the use of a condenser in some form is likely to prove an advantage. Unfortunately, the word "magnetism" rather than "electricity" seems to have found favour with those on the Other Side. I say, unfortunately, because we do not know nearly as much about magnetism as we do about electricity.

For instance, when electricity is in motion, its twin brother, magnetism, becomes obvious; but when electricity is static, magnetism disappears.

In ancient mythology, Electra was the twin sister of Orestes, who possibly represented the ancient view of magnetism. At least I find something in my researches to support this view; it may be that the Ancients recognised magnetism with thought-forms quite different to our own.

We visualise magnetism as a "flux of lines." Very difficult this for those who have not technical education. But the nature of it is that modern science has no very

clear idea of what magnetism is when it is not circulating round an electric current.

When a condenser is in use, magnetism hides itself altogether—hides, and, I think, actually within the dielectric, which in the case of the Ark is wood.

I think the raps produced by spirits are actually a manipulation of this magnetism; but I do not know, and as yet I cannot take the word of the spirits as that would land us on the border. If it is a correct hypothesis, experimental research will eventually expose its truth.

My experience is that by the use of a condenser, which is kept charged from a small battery, it is possible to converse with spirits by means of a telephone. The difficulties begin when you find that such communicators are not necessarily of a desirable type. I was led into a series of experiments which were merely designed to make fun of me. I got rather tired of it. Other experimenters may have better luck; but, in order to exclude the merely curious, I give no details of the circuit used—the intelligent experimenter will soon find the right circuit by using common-sense.

However, certain communicators of a higher order, with whom I first made contact, introduced me to planchette and to a Medium who, so to speak, lived on my door-step, the very last person I would have dared to approach with psychic matters. This constituted a turning-point; for now I could, when my friend was available, obtain in writing (the writing of a particular Communicator who took an interest in my researches) various hints as to the direction they should take.

Opportunities were not frequent. There followed many years of patient work; but eventually I obtained enough material to write a book upon the Ark of the Covenant and attempt to publish it. However, a clergyman got hold of the original MSS. and without any compunction burnt it with all its illustrations.

"A FUNNY COINCIDENCE"

A reader who lives "Somewhere in Southern England," sends the following:

"Here is an experience. On Saturday night (July 20th) we had one of our usual raids, starting around midnight, and my wife and I repaired to the cellar. About a quarter to two, she described a man whom she had never seen before, 'all efficient and business-like,' who said to her: 'All clear at 3.18.'

"At a quarter past two, our local Warden 'phoned us the 'all clear'; but my wife, who answered the phone, said: 'They will be back and it won't be clear till 3.18.' As she spoke, the guns started again. Precisely at 3.18 the 'all clear' sirens sounded.

"The local warden, who knows nothing of this subject, remarked: 'Quite a funny coincidence!'"

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WHEN WILL THE WAR END?

More Peace Predictions

TO the third edition of his book, *Foretold By The Stars* (Two Worlds Coy., 2/6)—described correctly as "the book that foretold the war"—Mr. C. E. Mitchell adds some interesting chapters and a postscript, dated May 20th, 1940, which concludes as follows:

"I adhere to my original forecast, made during the first week of the outbreak of war that a cessation of hostilities is due for September, 1940; but not peace, only a truce in chaos for the time being.

"I cannot see Hitler retaining his position later than August this year. He will not be at the peace conference when this takes place later.

"Great events are pending in July, August and September, and I have never seen a more devastating and evil array of aspects in the heavens than those which will form up in the early days of September.

"Let me add a note to those who lack faith in their cause, and are down in the mouth at the recent reverses. Whatever success Hitler has had or will have, the end will be a fall for him eventually just at the time when he appears to have all in his power. If Astrology teaches me anything, it tells that a man with Saturn in Leo in the tenth in square to Mars in the seventh, both in weak signs, is the surest sign of ultimate defeat, but he will touch the top before he goes out.

"Hitler cannot win this war, no matter how long it continues and any Astrologer who knows his science will confirm this forecast."

Mr. Mitchell's confidence that the active phase of the war will end soon is shared by Mrs. Helen Spiers, a clairvoyant Medium who predicted the war for many months before it came. Basing her expectation on visions and direct clairaudient messages, she has repeatedly predicted that fighting will come to an end during this month (August) or next month (September).

Dr. F. H. Wood, of Blackpool, has also put it on record that forecasts received recently through the Medium "Rosemary" (who predicted the war and many of the events that have followed) point to an early collapse of the Nazi power.

So far as the ordinary observer can see, there is little prospect of these predictions being fulfilled. We put them on record now so that their accuracy may be tested by the course of events.

A DESTRUCTIVE POLTERGEIST

THE *Western Evening Herald*, of Plymouth, has recently drawn attention to poltergeist phenomena that have come to light at Devonport. Summarising the story for LIGHT, Mr. John Butler says:

Mrs. C., the woman in whose presence these things occur, has two children—a girl aged four years and a boy aged three months. She is married to a sailor and lives in furnished rooms. Her latest landlady, a Mrs. B., had given her notice to go because there had been some things which she couldn't quite explain. Anyway, the date of leaving was Saturday, the 20th July.

Mr. B. went to draw the blackout curtains on the landing on that morning, and reached for the pole, which was standing in a corner on the landing. As he did so, the pole jumped aside and went tumbling down the stairs. On the landing up above this one, Mrs. B. had a tin trunk in which she kept some hats, and the trunk was covered by a piece of brown paper kept in place by a board. Suddenly, Mrs. B. saw the board come falling down the stairs, followed shortly after by the trunk. There was no one upstairs, Mrs. C. was standing at a doorway halfway between the two landings.

The next thing that happened was that the wardrobe in Mrs. B's bedroom fell face downwards across the bed, though no one was in the room. She set the wardrobe up and went downstairs. When she came up

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again the wash-jug and basin were smashed into tiny pieces. She went into the next room and again the wardrobe fell down.

Thinking it might be due to electricity (though there is none in the house) or else to the air raids, she went and questioned a neighbour, Mrs. L. This neighbour, thinking Mrs. B. was perhaps overstrained, brought her back to the house and was standing in the hall comforting her when an oil lamp left its bracket and was flung up the stairs. The chimney of the lamp was unbroken.

Terrified, Mrs. L. rushed out and called a policeman. Whilst he was trying to pacify the woman a bucket of water kept on the landing in case of fire suddenly leapt six feet and emptied all the water down stairs.

The policeman therefore fetched a city engineer. Whilst he was in the house the wardrobe fell again. He put it up, saw that it was standing fair and square and said that it wouldn't fall again. As soon as he had gone out of the room however, leaving it empty, the wardrobe fell again and was smashed all down one panel.

Then the policeman and the engineer went into the next room, which was Mrs. C's bed-sitting room, and where the family were. Mrs. B. went down to her husband. In the presence of these men a flat-iron jumped from the stove in the corner of the room and hit Mrs. C. on the head, hurting her but not breaking the skin. Also a hair brush left the mantel-piece and danced upon the opposite wall.

Eventually, as Mrs. C. was leaving the house, crockery in the kitchen left its place and dashed itself upon the floor at some distance away.

Mrs. C. informed a reporter that she had had similar troublesome experiences previously—usually in April, near the birthday of her mother, or in July, near the anniversary of her mother's death. Usually, after these occurrences, she had received bad news of some kind.

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