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THE FOUNDATION STONES OF PEACE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

MORE COMMENTS ON "HAS CHRISTIANITY FAILED?"

By BEN DAVIES

THE pages of LIGHT are becoming increasingly interesting and important. Recent issues, in particular, are on a high level. Articles and letters are replete with weighty passages for all who have the spiritual and material progress of mankind at heart.

In particular, the article of Mr. W. H. Evans in your issue of 14th November, 1940, was of fundamental importance and appeared at an opportune moment—touching, as it did, the weightiest topic of our time, *viz.*, "Has Christianity Failed?"

It is to be hoped that readers may bear its teaching in mind, comparing it with the teaching of Jesus Christ and comparing both with the behaviour of European nations (including Britain) during the period beginning with the Boer War down to the present time. They would soon find from records within reach of all that the present anarchic state of Europe is due to man's attempt to serve God and Mammon, as Mr. Evans maintains. This "jungle life" of ours is what we boast of as "Western civilisation." It is nothing to be proud of; on the contrary, it is a deplorable state, for it is, at the root, a purely financial greed—Mammon. The bulk of the peoples of Europe have no voice in the processes leading into war, but they must be held responsible for their own ignorance of those processes. A knowledge of those processes by the majority in every nation would put a prompt end to all wars and social disturbances. It would, in fact, be done at the polling booth!

If we are not careful and vastly more spiritually and politically alert than we have been hitherto, we may find ourselves plunged into that state in which the peoples in Germany, Italy, Spain, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and France now find themselves. It is a most serious time. That is why Mr. W. H. Evans' article is so important.

Christianity has not failed; it has not yet been tried, as Mr. Evans maintains. The proof is quite clear, for the basis of present Western Civilisation is not only non-Christian, but is definitely anti-Christian. The

basis can be expressed in a form parallel to the Christian Law of Good Life. So, for our Western Civilisation the basis of activity in industry, finance and commerce is:

Seek first Competition and Riches, and all these things will be divided unequally between you.

It is a sheer Pagan basis, and wholly condemned by Jesus Christ. It is the pre-Christian foundation of society.

Then we have the appalling spectacle of finding ourselves, rich and poor alike, standing on this sandy foundation praying to the Infinite Father: "Give us peace in our time, O Lord." But wars and social distress still grow in violence.

FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF THE GOOD LIFE

The most fundamental law of the Good Life was revealed long ago (no doubt from the Spirit-World). It is: "Love God with all thy heart . . . and thy neighbour as thyself." On this, said Jesus, "hang all the Law and the Prophets." This law is universal and, so far as man can see, eternal.

Out of that fundamental law our Lord revealed to us how to apply it in the *social* sense, thereby exposing for the first time the two foundation stones of society as he would have it. They are:

"Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

That is, added without anxiety, with security, as may be shewn by the context.

The Kingdom of God implies peace and co-operation between men. It cannot imply strife and competition. Righteousness implies *right relations* or righteousness between men. This law is at once the foundation, the structure and the ideal of the Good Life. It is also the guarantee of its security, its universality in a real Democracy. It is the "more abundant life" spoken of by Jesus.

The law is in form of a command to *seek*. And that is all-important, for the Kingdom of God cannot be established without diligent seeking, and that is man's own duty. The Kingdom of peace and co-operation must be sought in *conjunction with righteousness* or social right relations; for there can be no real peace and co-operation in the absence of righteousness, nor can righteousness prevail without co-operation. The law is truly the *universal law of construction*.

By appeal to science, this law can be shewn to be the only possible law of the Good Life. There is, in fact, no alternative. It is identical with that law which every scientist and engineer strictly obeys every time he has to devise a new method, or design a new construction. Thus, before he sits down to design say, an electric generator or motor, he first seeks the laws which he has to obey in the design, and there are some half-dozen laws to be obeyed in such a generator or motor. Having made sure of the laws, he then seeks the *right relations*

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between the parts of the construction which will produce the maximum efficiency, and if the highest has not been attained in the built structure, he seeks for the source of waste. That is the process in the scientific world; the result is an amazing and a never-failing success.

The law in its scientific form is therefore as follows :

Seek first the law of Nature and its efficiency, and all anxiety as to results vanish.

Efficiency implies *right relations* between parts of the structure designed, just as righteousness in the Christ command means right relations between men in a society. This, in the scientific sense, is precisely what Jesus Christ commands us to do in the spiritual and ethical sense. And until we do obey, there can be no health in society.

Let us now, for the sake of simplicity, conciseness and parallelism, paraphrase the wording of the Christian Law of Society without in any way modifying its deep significance in the essentially-practical sense. For it is quite clear from the context that it was security of, and non-anxiety concerning the material well-being of society the Master had in mind when He used the words, "and all these things shall be added unto you." These actual words which He used have a much deeper meaning than security and freedom from anxiety, when considered from the scientific point of view. The "things added unto you" become *gifts* when we realise the Kingdom of God through righteous social action. I remember Sir Oliver Lodge saying on one occasion "that all man can do is appropriately to move masses of matter from one place to another," which meant that any resulting benefit was the work of nature—a gift. The law is, in fact, an all-embracing law. But we would go too far afield if we followed this train of thought now. The paraphrasing is as follows :

- (1) The Christian Law of Society : *Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all security is yours.*
- (2) The Scientific Law of Society : *Seek first the law of Nature and its right relations, and all security is yours.*
- (3) Western World's Law of Society : *Seek first competition and riches, and all anxiety is yours.*

Laws (1) and (2) are in every respect identical in so far as material well-being is concerned. But Law (3) is in all senses antagonistic to both. One cannot say that Law (3) is on the statute books of the nations, but it is, nevertheless, the *actual operating law in all financial matters*, and is not illegal. But the social sin we are all responsible for in our national and international relations has its origin in Law (3), in our willingness to be governed by this Pagan Law which engenders quite naturally the riches and poverty we see, rather than adopting the Christian or Scientific Law of well-being which brings both peace and abounding wealth in a secure, stable society.

The term "riches" in the Third Law could be replaced by the term *usury*—usury in all its forms, usury of money, houses, land and commodities of all kinds; for men get rich through usury and not by work, as a rule. One finds no millionaires among those who actually maintain the primary well-being of society, such as the farmers, builders, miners and doctors; nor can they be found among those responsible for the progress of society, such as the scientists, researchers, engineers and teachers. Under the present usurious-competitive system a farmer producing raw material for food and clothing for the social well-being gets for his services less than £1 a day, whereas a man performing no useful service of any kind may receive £1,000 a day, and that quite automatically.

Obviously, such a state of things is, economically, meaningless. Such a system carried to its logical end, *viz.*, the complete control of citizens through monetary devices by one man, is to be seen now in Germany and Italy and in their conquered countries, with dire consequences to working citizens. Hitler and Mussolini were put in power by the monied section of the German and Italian nations—not by the people. Now these two

dictators have their friends among the monied section of nearly all nations. That is our danger here in Britain.

To put an end to social distress and international bloodshed we must establish one thing of primary importance. Without it there is no hope of attaining peace and security. The following may make matters clear :

There are four measures of intrinsic importance which have to be definitely standardised legally before a state of peace and righteousness can prevail in a society; and the same is true internationally. They are :

Measures of *length*, of *volume*, of *weight* and of *service*. There is a fifth—*viz.*, *time*, but that is standardised for us by Nature. There are, of course, many others derived from the primary indispensables named, and all are legalised.

It is sufficient here to deal very briefly with the four primary ones. Three of these primary ones have been standardised and legally established long ago, *viz.*, the *yard*, the *pint* and the *pound* weight. They are measures of *commodities*. These standards are the common property of all citizens, and there has never been any quarrel about them. In so far as these are concerned, righteousness between citizens reigns supreme.

But as to the fourth measure, *service*, there has not been any attempt even to standardise it, much less to legalise it. This measure is even more important now than the other three, inasmuch as its absence is the direct cause of all social unrest and war. The standard of service must be expressed in money and consequently must be fixed in terms of gold. The standardisation will be done by science, as were the other three.

When all four measures are legally standardised we shall see the following consequences: Riches and poverty will be no more, for a commonwealth of abundance will take their place. Salaries and prices will become steady. Industrial, commercial and money crises will cease. And finally, social strife and war will vanish for sheer lack of roots.

All shall then be at work in *mutual service* instead of mutual strife and destruction, in a state of Brotherhood, living the Good Life assured us by Science, and guaranteed us by our Lord Jesus Christ.

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“BLACK BEAR’S” INTELLIGENCE

FROM WHENCE WAS IT DERIVED ?

MY attention has been called to the mention of “Black Bear,” the Shetland pony, in an article appearing in your issue for December 5th, and I would like, for the benefit of your readers, to mention that two articles containing a full description of this pony’s powers have appeared in the *Journal* of the American S.P.R., and these should be read by all who are interested in this very important subject of animal intelligence. The first account was written by myself and will be found, I think, in the *Journal* for January, 1929: and of this I believe the L.S.A. library has preserved a copy.

I tried an exhaustive series of experiments with this pony, and they led me to the firm conviction that the intelligence manifesting itself was not the pony’s own mentality, but was quite clearly that of a personality either of the highest human grade or else greater than the human and one that might be termed angelic.

To the mathematical and geometrical knowledge shown by the pony in answer to my questions, and from the pony’s own apprehension of my blackboard diagrams, I hardly was able to discover any limit. But occasionally, if there was any hesitation, this would seem to have been due to some defect in my own instruction. This was amusingly demonstrated on one well-remembered occasion when I arranged for the pony and his old master, Mr. Barrett, to be present at a conversazione of the American S.P.R. at Hyslop House; and at this my friend Mr. Goadby was invited to take the chair and to demonstrate Black Bear’s sagacity before an audience of over 200 members and friends.

Now, I had previously obtained from Black Bear one very remarkable result. I had drawn on the blackboard, out at the stable where he had been kept, a right-angled triangle, and I had marked the measure of its base with the number 4 and the perpendicular 3. I then asked Black Bear what would be the length of the third line joining the ends of these two; and quite correctly he at once picked out the number 5.

Mr. Goadby was with me at the time and he was greatly impressed with this result; and, as President of the meeting, he thought he would like to repeat it. So he drew on the blackboard provided by the Society a similar triangle, but quite inadvertently he placed the number 5 against the base line instead of 4, and then said: “Now Black Bear, what is the length of the third line?” Black Bear looked solemnly at the board and seemed to shake his head, then went to the rack on which the little tablets were hung containing the various numbers and letters of the alphabet, and, instead of selecting a number (which of course would have been impossible), he picked out letter by letter the words “Goadby Stuff,” which sent the audience into roars of laughter, and I am sure that their amusement was fully shared by my good friend, Mr. Arthur Goadby.

This story gives point to Mr. Goadby’s testimony to the pony’s wit.

Your readers will be interested to know of a further experiment I made. I had been anxious to discover what Black Bear might know of the nature and source of his intelligence, and I asked him: “Where do you get your knowledge?” Without hesitation, the pony went to the rack and picked out in succession three tablets marked “G.O.D.”

“Quite right, Black Bear,” I said, “but who actually brings it to you?” In reply, he picked out “Many angels.” I said: “Can you give me the name of one of these messengers?” His answer was “G.A.B.R.I.E.L.”

I do not propose to comment on this, but it certainly provides much food for thought, especially at a time like this when, behind those men and nations who are the chief actors in the great world-drama, there are arrayed so obviously powers and principalities vastly greater than anything we can attribute to mere human motive and effort.

FREDK. BLIGH BOND.

CROSS-CORRESPONDENCE

WOMAN JOURNALIST’S EXPERIENCE

I WAS particularly interested in the front page article in the December 12th number of LIGHT, of which the main theme is the psychic phenomenon known as “cross-correspondence.” Surely it is not *always* necessary to write “two or three volumes of auto-biography” to drive home the significance of this form of activity? Admittedly, a long chain of “coincidences” is more impressive than the citation of isolated incidents. But it *should* be possible to exercise the art of selection even in psychic journalism!

May I deferentially suggest the following as a clear and genuine example of “cross-correspondence”?

A.—I attend a local Spiritualist Church; subject of trance address: Churches—with special stress on the old Tree-Worship. I feel a spirit-touch upon my body. That evening, when I undress, I find the perfect imprint of a tree—trunk, branches, leaves—down my left side.

B.—The following morning my maid brings me a postal packet on my breakfast tray. The envelope is in handwriting startlingly resembling my “dead” mother’s. It contains a MSS. entitled “Soul of a Tree,” also a covering note from Actress Ruby Miller (“Little Bit of Fluff”) asking me if I can “place” it with a newspaper editor. The story “came through” on my mother’s birthday: Ruby Miller the Medium; James Barrie the communicator.

C.—Reasons why Ruby Miller and I (who had only just been introduced to each other by Author Evadne Price) should be the chosen “vessels”: (1) Ruby’s husband (the late Max Darewski) had written the music for Barrie’s “Rosy Rapture”; (2) My “dead” mother and I both had definite journalistic links with Barrie, particulars of which could be supplied by Mrs. Gertrude Percival of the Central Press Syndicate.

This dovetailing of “coincidences” presumably sufficed to convince the *Daily Sketch* of the genuineness of the communication, for the Editor published “The Soul of a Tree” in that newspaper. GLORIA STORM.

“THE DEBT IS PAID”

We knew not love upon the Earth,
To us the jewel was denied;
And so we lived dull lives and died,
With little done of little worth.

No inner light illumined the way
We chose to tread; our souls were dark
And comfortless, our deeds were stark
With naked selfishness away.

We smiled but when some foolish gains
Were won to bolster self-esteem;
To eat and sleep without a dream
We counted guerdon for our pains.

Now on the Other Side of Death
We view the past in mute dismay,
Each one of us a castaway—
Yet have we felt the healing breath

Of some vast Influence that comes
Upon the wind of black remorse,
Some Power, some vast uplifting Force
That draws us from our dismal homes.

And we have seen the dawning light
Of hope within our darkened minds
And we have felt the power that binds:
Our spirits yield to Greater Might.

A voice is heard: “Be sad no more!
The debt is paid. Rise up and pray!”
And, lo! the shadows flee away
And we are ready to Adore.

New Zealand.

H. E. GUNTER.

Light

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EDITOR - - - GEORGE H. LETHEM

AS WE SEE IT

FACTS AND BELIEFS

IT is a curious fact that some Spiritualists who rail against Christian Orthodoxy seem anxious to set up a rigid Orthodoxy in Spiritualism—the standard, usually, being their own particular beliefs. These zealots do much to repel Christians—and others—from Spiritualism and all it stands for. They claim the right to say who are Spiritualists and who are not. They declare dogmatically, some of them, that no Christian can be a Spiritualist and that no Spiritualist can be a Christian—ignoring the fact that many of the best-known and most influential Spiritualist writers and speakers have been, and are, Christians, ministers or laymen; also, that there are probably more Spiritualists (in the primary meaning of the term) in the Christian Churches in this country than in all the Spiritualist Churches and Societies.

Our view, often expressed, is that insistence on rigid Orthodoxy is undesirable either for Christians or Spiritualists; and that, in these days of expanding knowledge, there is as much need for freedom of thought and conscience among Spiritualists as among Christians.

There is, as a matter of common knowledge, wide diversity of *belief* amongst Spiritualists—ranging from a near approach, in certain particulars, to Roman Orthodoxy (including acceptance of such dogmas as the Virgin Birth and the Deity of Jesus) amongst certain "Christian Spiritualists," to Modernism, Unitarianism and even Theism at the other extreme.

Only on the *essentials* are all Spiritualists agreed—and these essentials are: Acceptance of Human Survival and Communication with those in the Beyond as *facts* demonstrated by evidence obtained and obtainable by scientific methods. Our view, often expressed, is that these facts provide standards by which each individual who accepts them may, and should, decide for himself or herself the religious, political and social *beliefs* on which they bear; but that, because of the diversity of human minds, it should not be expected that uniformity of beliefs, either religious or political, will be reached easily or soon. As the Poet, Robert Burns, has it, "*Facts* are chieftains that winna ding, an' downa be disputed," but *beliefs* are variable and subject to constant adjustment.

TRUE RATIONALISM

Amongst the Teachers on the Other Side from whom instruction has come in recent times, "Imperator" holds a deservedly high place, and it is sometimes argued that "all true Spiritualists" must accept the views, theological and social, proclaimed and explained by him through the hand of the Rev. W. Stainton Moses. But "Imperator" himself rejected any assertion of infallibility for himself or others. Thus, in *Spirit Teachings* (page 57) we read:

"No revelation is of plenary inspiration. None can demand credence on any other than rational grounds. Therefore, to say of a statement that it is not in accord with what was given through a human Medium at any stated time is no derogation necessarily from the truth of that statement. Both may in their kind be true, yet each of different application. *Set up no human standard of judgment other than that of right reason.* Weigh what is said. If it be commended by reason, receive it; if not, reject it."

Here is true Rationalism. Obviously, the rightness

of reason must be decided by each individual, and what seems right reason to one may appear wrong to another, and yet both be perfectly honest.

Stainton Moses was an Orthodox Anglican clergyman when he began to receive the "Imperator" messages, and many of the views in these messages—particularly those relating to the personality of Jesus—conflicted with his beliefs, so that he frequently questioned and even denied their validity. To this, "Imperator" did not object. On one occasion, he wrote (*Spirit Teachings*, page 69): "We have endeavoured, not to uproot from your mind the views which you have entertained, but to modify them;" and, as may be seen by reading *Spirit Teachings*, the process of modification went on steadily and was in the end very complete.

Were "Imperator" writing to-day, we feel sure "modification" is the process he would still recommend—not insistence on abandonment of old and cherished beliefs; and it would be well, we think, if Spiritualists kept his tolerant recommendation in mind when dealing with Christian inquirers or with other Spiritualists who adhere to Orthodox Christian beliefs.

Let Spiritualists patiently present the proofs of Survival and recommend the study of Communications such as those contained in *Spirit Teachings*, confident that, when the proofs are accepted and the Communications studied, all the modifications of belief necessary for each individual will be quietly and satisfactorily effected.

LIFE IS SPIRITUAL

THERE can be no doubt that what is most needed in the world to-day is a fuller appreciation of the fact that Life is spiritual and that the material world to which you now belong will pass—or rather that you will pass from it and then see Life in its true perspective.

The trials which are even now besetting the citizens of the world are entirely of their own making. How then is this? It is because they have been given their choice between good and evil, and the great proportion of one nation in particular has chosen evil.

The repercussions are bound to be felt by all, for God has so arranged the world that brothers and sisters are ye, bound together, and the good or evil of even one may be felt by all, *but* only on this one earth-plane. After this, each man for himself is seen in his true light and then no flaunting of national flags or wearing of uniforms can hide his murky soul.

Now, if this be understood by all, shall *one man* knowing that his naked soul shall pass many years still in life, willingly perjure himself for the brief space of existence on this small earth-plane?

What man shall throw away his life knowing life is eternal? What man shall have the right or desire to throw away the lives of others, knowing that later he shall be called to account for each single hair and shall work out his own salvation and theirs also?

How lacking in vital teaching are the Universities and great Colleges of the world. They teach medicine, physics, mechanics, and the great sciences to bring brief flashes of success to individuals for a few years. Their doctrines are, in the main, of great value to mankind; but why should time only be given to these, when, with endless life stretching out before him, man has time to study for the life beyond—the life where these sciences are no longer required save for those who wish to work thereon in preference to the far more all-embracing spiritual work? For a short time they may continue, but eventually all must come to the stage where these things of the mind are put aside for the greater Spiritual truths.

(Given by "Script-Writer" through the hand of Mrs. Vera Dutton).

BORLEY HAUNTINGS: AN EXPLANATORY THEORY

By REV. R. W. MAITLAND, Vicar of Darsham

NO doubt, like many other readers of LIGHT, at Christmas time, I read that enthralling book, *The Most Haunted House in England*. Mr. Harry Price is to be congratulated on producing a book at once so suitable for Christmas reading, and so remote from the war.

My reason, however, for writing is this: the author asks us, his readers, to take the evidence which he gives and to form their judgment upon it. Doubtless, many theories have already been put forward. May I, in a few words as possible, put forward my own? And if I seem somewhat dogmatic, it is only because the role of juror compels me.

Firstly, then, speaking as one interested in antiquarian pursuits, it seems to me that both Monk and Nun, as realities in earth-life, must go; also the Monastery—and, one may add, the underground passages. How often has one heard of them all before, in oft-told tales of hauntings.

There was no Monastery at Borley. In spite of the fact that it was the property of Christ Church, Canterbury, from about 1360 onwards, it may be doubted if Borley ever saw a Monk save one of the officials of the Priory, who would come periodically to collect the rents from the Bailiff.

Borley was only one of nearly a hundred manors held by that wealthy Priory. It would be difficult to find in these parts a parish where land was not held by some Religious Order, but few of them contained a Religious House; and, if there was one, its history is known to us to-day.

THE THEORY EXPLAINED

How, then, can we account for the many appearances of the Nun and the coach—and indeed of all the other phenomena which fills the book?

My theory is this: the house was built and immediately lived in—this is an important point—by a man who undoubtedly was a psychic. Very likely, his family, a large one; inherited his powers—some certainly did; and so, to use Mr. Price's words, the house became saturated with their emanations: though this psychic power, as I understand it, contained no "persisting remnants of egos" or any intelligence of itself. It remained for those living in the house to use that power as their minds or subconscious minds desired.

In other words, given the proper conditions, we can make our own ghosts. I have proved that for myself much nearer home than Borley. And so it was then with regard to the Nun and phantom coach and galloping horses and ghostly sounds and all the rest of it.

If such things are associated with haunted houses, as they are, then the imaginative mind (conscious or subconscious) of the percipient can create them anywhere, provided, as I have said, there is sufficient psychic power to work upon.

So again with the "unusual incident," as Mr. Price calls it, of the strange insect. Certainly, it was unexpected by the conscious mind of the artist—but then, "a forbidding silence seems to envelop everything with apprehension," and she is startled by the swish of an approaching wasp; and there, out of a mist, comes a monstrous insect. "Impossible," some would say; but no more impossible, really, than the strange forms which the mind of man can conceive and the hand of man can draw. She is positive she saw it; and assuredly she did see it, just as others saw the Nun and the phantom coach.

All these strange phenomena are veridical in the sense in which Myers uses the word—*i.e.*, there is an external origin of an internal vision. Something outside themselves causes the percipients to see such things.

At this point some people, no doubt, will say: "But

what about the flying bottles and the apported coat and the gold ring?" I see no reason why that same psychic power which had been accumulating in the house for so many years may not have produced all this when acted upon by a Sensitive such as Mrs. Foyster certainly was—an unconscious one, no doubt, but a very potent one for all that. After all, those of us who have seen a demonstration of telekenesis have seen the same thing.

Up to now, we have done without "spirits"—that is to say, disembodied spirits. I use the word "disembodied" advisedly, for I maintain that we are spirits here and now and that our psychic power is evidence of it. There is no reason to deny, however, that those on the Other Side have played a part in the strange happenings of Borley Rectory.

VERY SIGNIFICANT

It is very significant that Mr. Price took part in a seance on his first visit there, and that Mr. Harry Bull purported to come through; and significant also that he had declared in his lifetime that he would be justified in making himself known after death by physical means, if he so wished.

One word more. On laying down the book, one is conscious of a feeling that it adds unnecessarily to the terrors of death. One can imagine the comments which some people would make upon reading it—"weird, uncanny, gruesome"; and it is for this purpose that I have put forward the theory that many of the terrors which surround it are of man's own making, the mysterious workings of his own mind under the stimulus of some external power.

The house was an ideal one for that purpose. It was brand new when Mr. Henry Bull moved into it, filling it with his psychic power and that of a rapidly growing family, who remained in possession for between sixty and seventy years, and so produced "The most haunted house in England."

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE INFINITE

DEFINITION—The Infinite: a term which cannot be amplified; there can be nothing outside or separate from the Infinite.

SEPARATENESS—If there be any separations it must be separateness within the Infinite. Such separation is not absolute separation: it is separateness only of localised form or localised function, or of the part in respect to the whole.

All Finites are within the Infinite.

The Infinite is infinite in an infinite number of ways.

The Infinite is conveniently called God.

God is infinite, and infinite in an infinite number of ways.

Infinite Power, Infinite Knowledge, Infinite Bliss are all in God.

Infinite Time, Infinite Space are in God.

Here are five infinities in God, infinities respecting which man has some idea. Besides these five there are and must be Infinity—and concerning these man has little or no knowledge.

How wonderful then is God! How small is man! Yet man is not separate from God. Wherefore, let him seek to realise his one-ness.

In contemplating the Infinity, man becomes wise: in contemplating the Finite he becomes learned—as the Infinite is greater than the Finite, so is Wisdom greater than Knowledge.

A wise man needs little learning—he can do so much with such small means.

A learned man—without Wisdom—with mighty labours accomplishes the unnecessary.

The play of Infinite Wisdom upon Infinite Incongruity produces Infinite Humour: let us all be Merry in God.

(Note.—An extract from *The Way of the Spirit*, by "Robert Balda," printed for private circulation).

SURVIVAL AND POLITICS

THE Economic Ideal, which is only another term for the physical conception of society and human action, is now dominant, and wealth is the standard of success and social recognition. This standard has been accepted even by the religious institutions of the age; and we have so far departed from the spiritual conception of life as to neglect all features of it except intellectual culture, which is valued more for its efficiency in the economic and social world than for the development of the Soul.

Such are the triumphs of physical science and the ideals fostered by it. Its utility is demonstrated by its success in supplying the comforts which seem to us both a pleasure in themselves and a protection against the cruelties of Nature. The older religious ideals, which despised these comforts as "carnal" and turned the imagination towards another world, "the Elysian Fields where joy forever reigns," as contrasted with this life of pain and suffering, have lost the basis on which they rested. We have found physical and economic salvation in the conquest of Nature, instead of despising its power and living in penury and contemplative asceticism.

Physics has determined and dominated all the ideals of our life, and must affect our ethics in proportion as it has supplanted the spiritual conceptions of another philosophy. How far this influence will extend depends upon the degree to which it takes possession of the lower strata of society.

The rejuvenation of the social order and of civilisation fell to Christianity after the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. The one central tenet of Christianity is its association of the Immortality of the Soul with the Brotherhood of Man. It did not begin in a system of philosophy or theology. A reasoned Theism was no part of its primary impulse, however closely it might be related to such a system. The divine supervision of the world was not its fundamental belief, though it might be accepted as a corollary of the primary doctrine. The belief in a Future Life was its initial doctrine and received its credentials from an appeal to real or alleged facts.

The view that Immortality can be accepted as the corollary to a Theistic interpretation of Nature was a later conception, arising when Christianity was so far removed from its origin that its miracles and traditions were objects of suspicion. This first inspiration was received from the direct observation of facts or alleged facts, which directly challenged the prevailing Materialism. The Epicureans had denied the possibility of Survival after death, and their philosophy dominated Rome in the declining days and the most important political sect in Palestine, the Sadducees. Judaism was no longer under the direction of its older religious conceptions, which had indeed never made belief in the Immortality of the Soul a social influence. Such a belief could not become important to social institutions until it was used to enforce certain ethical maxims . . .

When the attempt to put into practice the Brotherhood of Man by its early Communistic system had failed, Christianity concentrated its interest on the realisation of its Kingdom of God in a life beyond the grave; and, with an ascetic view of life and a pessimistic view of Nature it set about reorganising ethical and religious institutions around the idea of personal salvation. The radical character of its Theistic conception, which made no concessions to Materialism, and the enthusiasm for a future life resulted in fifteen centuries of uninterrupted triumph for the Christian view of life and social relations.

The traditions of government, combined with other influences, made it impossible or inconvenient to carry out the Communism implied in the notion of Human Brotherhood, and the mediaeval period had to be content with charity as the embodiment of its social feeling; and even this was regarded as a means of personal salvation rather than as an expression of altruistic

(Continued at foot of next column)

A CALL TO INVENTORS

I WAS interested in the letter "Call to Inventors" in LIGHT of December 26th, 1940. The same idea had often crossed my mind. In Mr. E. A. S. Hayward's recently published book, *Psychic Experiences Throughout the World*, the same idea appears as given by Sir W. Crookes through Mrs. Grace Cooke. The extract is as follows:

Mr. Hayward's sitting with Mrs. Grace Cooke, July, 1932 (Mr. Glen Hamilton present) in London.

"Beside W. T. Stead, Sir William Crookes came, telling of his endeavour, together with a group of scientists in the spirit-world, to produce an apparatus which, when operated on earth and joined up with an etheric apparatus, would obviate the necessity of a Medium, so that the voices of spirit-communicators would be received as by radio. He then detailed the necessary materials, the coils to be made, the lengths and gauges of the wires to transmit the electric current which was to be obtained from the feet of the sitters. Details were given of the amplifiers which would have to be fitted to increase this slight current a hundred-fold."

At another sitting in Winnipeg, Crookes spoke again.

"The question is of lowering the vibrations of what we have prepared in etheric form to that of an objective counterpart that you can see. When that is achieved, you will then have the same effect as in your television, except that we use an even shorter wave-length, with a higher frequency to your wave-length on earth, since a long wave-length is not possible. The cosmic rays are closer to what we call the etheric rays. You see, our stratosphere is interpenetrating your material plane, and we have to break down the resistance of the earth-vibrations in order that we may introduce our work of an etheric nature."

EVA BARRETT.

* * * *

CAPTAIN CRAUFURD'S EXPERIMENTS

Sir,—In LIGHT of December 26th, 1940, your correspondent, Mrs. Littlehales, asks if Captain Craufurd's experiments on an apparatus for wireless communication from the other side be continued. Following instructions from Captain Craufurd, such experiments are being carried on by a member of this Institute who is a wireless expert.

MARY DUNDAS,
I.I.P.I., Walton Street,
London, S.W.3. Chairman of Council.

(Continued from previous column)

feeling. But two ideas remained dominant in the minds of men: the Immortality of the Soul and the attainment of that Immortality by human service. These ideas implied the subordination of the State to the welfare of the subject, even though government continued to use its power for arbitrary and selfish ends . . .

The first great assault on Christian theology was the doctrine of the indestructibility of matter . . . and the main philosophic fortress of Christianity was captured . . . All the phenomena which the older view had regarded as proving the existence of a Soul came to be regarded as mere incidents in the casual development of material bodies. Materialism became triumphant and the human mind, liberated from the speculative and political shackles of the mediaeval period, began to enjoy its freedom in gradually breaking away from all the restraints that had developed and sustained the social, political, and religious conscience for so many centuries.

We are still living in the period of rapid decline of the ethical impulse, and nothing but the possibility of reinstating a spiritual view of Nature and Life can restrain the progress of that retrograde movement.

(From the book, *Contact With the Other World*, by James H. Hyslop, Ph.D., LL.D., formerly Professor of Logic and Ethics in Columbia University, U.S.A., published in 1919 by the Century Co., New York).

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

SIR,—The President of the Society for Psychical Research in his address to the Society, as reported in the *Proceedings* for August, 1924, said: "That most of us who have studied these particular phenomena at first-hand believe that in many cases they are due to the agency of the dead is clear enough from the papers contributed to the *Proceedings*." Continuing, he added the significant statement: "That the day is coming when communication between the dead and the living will have become—and rightly become—part of the accepted belief of mankind."

That pronouncement was looked upon, and accepted by the outside world, as an *official* pronouncement by the Society's leader, and as an honest authoritative finding. This was sixteen years ago. Since then, a sinister change appears to have come over the Society. It was not for naught that I put the question to the present Secretary, contained in your issue of November 14th last; for it has brought, as I intended that it should, a statement in cold print from him as to the present policy of the Society. From this statement, contained in your issue for December 12th, 1940, it appears that the Society now cannot, and will not, give any official or corporate decision or judgment concerning Survival, or any other psychic subject or phenomenon investigated by it.

This being the case, it is manifest that, from now on, the Society for Psychical Research can neither claim to be, nor can be regarded as, an authority or court of appeal on matters psychic. A Society which thus, on its own confession, is not in a position to form an opinion, and which refuses to give a judgment or decision, can neither constitute an authority, nor a court of appeal, and will now rightly cease to be regarded as such.

CHARLES L. TWEEDALE.

Weston Vicarage, Yorks.

SEALED LETTER TESTS

Sir,—It may interest readers of *LIGHT* if I recall an open meeting of the S.P.R. which was held not long after the opening of F. W. H. Myers' sealed envelope. At that meeting a member of the Council, Mr. Piddington, related a curious experience. He told us that he had prepared a sealed envelope stating that he intended to convey, after his death, through Mediums, the number 7 in various ways—such as Seven Lamps of Architecture, etc., etc. His purpose had been frustrated because 7 different Mediums (I cannot remember all their names, but Mrs. Piper was one), had sent him bits of script containing portions of his carefully arranged test.

This episode was sufficiently unusual to prompt speculation as to its cause. I think many must have been disposed to think, as I did, that the S.P.R. on the Other Side intended by this method to shew that sealed envelopes are not a conclusive test, and that the apparent failure of Mr. Myers was of no importance. Those who were unconvinced by the mass of cumulative evidence already published would not have been convinced by Myers' success if he had been able to achieve it.

HELEN ALEX: DALLAS.

PREVISION AND FREE-WILL

Sir,—In Mr. Harrison's article on "Prediction" (*LIGHT*, December 19th, 1940) his final conclusion was: "My personal opinion is that the faculty of true prediction is one which is entirely beyond human understanding and that it will remain so."

With the first half of this sentence I am in entire agreement; but, not being a prophet, I would not like to hazard an opinion on the second.

I think it would be well if all writers and thinkers on the subject made a clear distinction between "Prophets" and Seers." "Whether there be prophecies they shall fail!" But, as has been proved many

times in the records of the Psychical Research Society, there are tried Seers who *see* future scenes with "photographic vision" (a phrase I used in a former letter quoted by Mr. Harrison).

But where I disagree with him is in the assumption that this proved capacity does not harmonise with free-will. Why must we assume an *outside* agency such as Fate, Destiny, etc.? Why should not the incomprehensible Seer be dependent for his vision on a series of voluntary actions culminating in that future moment and inherent in the vision?

In this assumption, Mr. Harrison's conviction would be illogical that "by an act of free-will on the part of one or more of the subjects involved the plan would be upset" (*i.e.*, the vision incorrect). For had that free-will been exercised differently, the resulting vision would be different. Only as the performers acted, so only can the Seer *see* into the resulting vision. TEMPE RYDER. Oxford.

EVIDENCE OF THE EXISTENCE OF FREE-WILL

Sir,—In *LIGHT* of December 19th, Mr. Harrison quotes a passage written by Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny, in which she says: "Nor has there yet been any convincing argument put forward to reconcile prophecy with the exercise of free-will."

Personally, I cannot see why a vision of the future should in any way affect free-will. When a clairvoyant sees the future he is merely seeing *the results of the working of our free-will*. It is just the same as when a clairvoyant sees events in the past. He is seeing the results of the working of man's free-will.

There have been many cases of spirits and clairvoyants warning a person that something dreadful will happen to him, unless he takes steps to avert the evil. The spirits and clairvoyants usually have a *vision* of this dreadful happening, yet, when the person heeds the warning, the evil is averted—in spite of the *vision*. Surely, this alone is proof that man can mould the future by his free-will!

But those who imagine we have no free-will seem to have left God out of the question.

In the first place, it is evident that, when God made His plans, He planned for all eternity. Therefore, in all probability, He can see the whole of the future. Because *He* can see the future, surely that does not prevent Him from allowing us to exercise free-will. Then, why should we be deprived of free-will because some *human beings* can see the future?

Men do many evil and foolish deeds. If they have no free-will, it must be the Creator who compels them to do these evil and foolish deeds; or, what amounts to the same, He has planned that some other factor will compel us to do these deeds.

Now, even those who doubt the goodness of God must admit that He has understanding; but to force man to behave in this way would be idiotic, as well as wicked. The very fact that man does do evil and foolish deeds seems to me proof that he has free-will. Otherwise, his Creator is a knave or a fool. There is reason in giving man free-will, even if, at first, he uses it badly. But if man is merely a machine, it is absurd to turn out bad machines!

How the Seer can see the future is a mystery that we cannot yet solve. But it is also a mystery how the Seer can see the past.

In this world, some people get worse, some get better, some go up or down, while no two persons are alike. In short, everything points to the conclusion that man does possess free-will. Therefore, there must be some way of "reconciling prophecy with the exercise of free-will." Though, personally, I cannot see that the two are incompatible.

D. M. C. GRANVILLE.

Grindelford, Derbyshire.

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