

TWO WORLDS

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A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FEATURING SPIRITUALISM AND THE SUPERNORMAL

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Good will is vital to ensure peace EDITORIAL

AT first sight there would seem to be no relationship between Christmas, Spiritualism and the supernatural, but there is.

We are aware that what is celebrated by orthodox religionists at Christmas has no historical basis. Scholarship and research reveal that the stories related in the New Testament about the birth of Jesus are derived from myths and legends, many of them pagan in origin.

The festival as it is celebrated in the western world has much more recent beginnings.

Nor can those who strive to tread a spiritual path be happy with the slaughter of thousands of innocent animals and the excesses of eating and drinking which, by the wildest stretch of the imagination, cannot be equated with religion.

On the brighter side of the picture there is the genuine spirit of good will which encourages enmities to be forgotten and to be replaced by the desire to forgive.

It is a simple but patent truth that peace will never rule on earth until its many peoples of varying nationalities, customs and beliefs are prepared to demonstrate good will to one another.

This is where Spiritualism plays its vital part. It proves that all individuals survive death as spiritual beings. The inescapable logic is that they live because they are spiritual beings. Every one is animated by the same spirit. Spirit, by its very nature, is not only superior to matter but is eternal.

Thus the spiritual link that binds all humanity provides a fundamental basis for

shaping a system of society in which this paramount factor is recognised.

The unifying link of the spirit transcends all physical differences of language, colour, race and nationality. The natural law has so ordained it that the human family are spiritual brethren.

All this is an essential part of the teaching by advanced beings in the larger life. Those who are mediumistically endowed are aware of it and are human channels for its dissemination.

It is at times like Christmas when we withdraw temporarily from the hustle and bustle, the stress and strain, which civilisation seems to impose, that we provide opportunities for loved ones who have preceded us into the spirit world to draw near and try to make their presence known.

It is then that the empty chair is filled, a fact which is proven to those gifted with clairvoyance or, failing that, with the perception of awareness. For a brief while the barriers between the two worlds are overcome. In the true Christmas spirit harmony and peace are prevalent.

How fortunate are we who have the knowledge that death is only a bend in the road of life. There is no real break, nor is there

(Continued overleaf)

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Editor, Maurice Barbanell, who does not necessarily agree with views expressed by contribu-

tors. They are given liberty to express ideas, however controversial, on subjects which are the province of this magazine. Truth, in our view, will be advanced and never hindered by the honest expression of different viewpoints.

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Yuletide fiction founded on psychic fact

'Good night no more, Sweetheart'

by WILLIAM PRICE

CHRISTMAS Eve began with disaster. Miss Austin gazed in dismay at the shattered disc at her feet. How could she have been so careless? Old pre-war records were extremely fragile. This particular one was her most treasured possession, her vital link with Roger and the golden years of long ago.

She gathered up the pieces, her eyes dim through a mist of tears. For a wild moment of optimism she pondered the possibility of glueing the fragments together; but she knew this was a forlorn hope. Suddenly, there was a shadow on the morning and the day seemed empty.

As a Spiritualist, Miss Austin knew Roger was alive, though in a different state of being. She had received many messages proving that he loved her still. But nothing could so strongly evoke a sense of his presence as did this old record, now a fragmented blur in her tearful vision.

The recording had been made as first prize in a competition Roger had won in the hall where they had danced together so often, to the sweet, romantic music of the 1930s. Roger had elected to sing "Good night, Sweetheart," a favourite with young couples, usually featured at the close of an evening's dancing. Miss Austin had known he was singing to her, and to her alone.

War came and Roger was among the first to answer the call. Within a year, he lay with his ship at the bottom of the Atlantic. Miss Austin had found the loss difficult to bear. But her Spiritualist upbringing had stood her in good stead, and she had Roger's record to sustain her. Ever since, at the end of each day, she had listened to Roger singing, "Good night,

(Continued from previous page)

anything to fear when we reach the end of earthly existence.

Fear is the result of ignorance or superstition. Knowledge provides us with a foundation on which we can build the real religion. This is to serve others, as we have been served, by offering to share with them the infinite riches of the spirit that are available for all ready to receive them.

This is the best Christmas gift we can offer.

"In submitting my piece of Christmas fiction," says the writer, "this annual effort, over the years, has been both a challenge and a labour of love. Silver threads, alas, are now more plentiful than gold, but I hope I may continue in this service for many more years."

Sweetheart," to her. She felt that so long as he sang "good night" to her, he would never say "goodbye."

Miss Austin was not a morbid person. Until a severe heart attack just after her 60th birthday, she had run the small family business with skill and enterprise. She enjoyed meeting people and had put much time and effort into the affairs of the local Spiritualist church.

Now, two years later, she had learned to live at an easier pace, finding solace in the inner life of the spirit, a secret kingdom of the self, where hope never dies and dreams are ever renewed. And Roger's record had made the dreams seem real.

Somehow, Miss Austin struggled through the day. The broken record was useless, but she could not bring herself to throw it away. It had been so long a part of her life that its destruction left her with a real sense of bereavement. She felt old and tired.

In her darkened sitting-room, lit only by the glow of the fire, Miss Austin sat motionless in her favourite armchair. She had not even closed the curtains. Beyond the window, white-capped roofs gleamed palely against a black sky.

Snow was falling in great, slow-descending flakes that looked unreal, like cottonwool snow. Gripped in a strange inertia, she was afraid to move in case she broke the continuity of Roger's presence.

She knew Roger was in the room, but without mediumistic powers she could not penetrate the tenuous veil which separated their two worlds. The evocative power of the old record had served remarkably well to bridge the gap, so narrow in psychic reality, so wide in common experience.

Miss Austin began to wonder if she could evoke a real sense of Roger's presence by the

power of memory alone. She cast her thoughts back to their first meeting so long ago, and all the enchanted days they had shared. Painstakingly, she reviewed the short, sweet years of her first and only love affair. And so, on a gentle tide of memories, Miss Austin drifted into sleep.

At first the sounds were barely audible; faint noises of individual musical instruments. Then the music came, soaring in a sweetness of strings and the muted sobbing of saxophones, as Miss Austin's dream began to the nostalgic strains of "Good night, Sweetheart."

She saw clearly the dear, familiar dance hall of old, where she had spent so many happy hours. She saw the boys and girls gliding around the floor in the full bloom of youth; the boys in neat suits, the girls in colourful frocks, faces flushed and eyes bright with the joy of living and loving.

Roger was singing now, his voice even clearer than on the record. She could see him on the dais with the band, exactly as she remembered on that memorable night of the recording. Miss Austin felt a thrill of pride in her memory, which could create this dream world with such accuracy and realism.

When Roger left the dais and came to her, he showed no lack of recognition despite the weight of years lying heavily on his old sweetheart. Miss Austin did not see anything odd in this, for the strangest things can happen in a dream.

They danced together for a while; then Roger led her from the floor. The band was still playing, "Good night, Sweetheart," the music sighing through the ballroom. Boys and girls were leaving together, bright eyes shining in dreamy ones.

Roger walked her into the extensive gardens adjoining the dance hall. She saw again the once familiar shrubs and pathways, the smooth glass of the ornamental pool, etched in precise detail under a moon which drenched the scene in a soft radiance. Acutely aware of herself in the dream, Miss Austin once again congratulated her memory.

Hand in hand, she and Roger sauntered through the gardens. Other couples were also promenading. She wondered what they made of Roger and herself. Perhaps they think I am his mother, she reflected, or even his grandmother.

Acting on impulse as they skirted the pool, she leaned over and peered into its crystal mirror. Her heart skipped a beat. A smiling young girl looked up at her, a vision of

loveliness in a shimmering pink dress. Her hair held the sheen of ripened corn, framing a gentle face lit by eyes bluer than a summer sky. From afar, Miss Austin heard the chimes of midnight, falling one by one into a suspended moment of time.

Breathlessly, she turned to Roger, the light of understanding dawning in her eyes.

His smile was warm and wise in response to the unspoken question trembling on her lips. He placed a comforting arm around her, a strong arm, solid and real.

"Happy Christmas," he said. "Good night no more, Sweetheart."

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OUR allegiance is not to a Creed, not to a Book, not to a Church, but to the Great Spirit of life and His eternal, natural laws."

Wisdom from the
world beyond

Celebrating the festival in the Beyond

"What is the significance of Christmas to those who dwell in the Beyond?" When this question was put to Silver Birch, guide of Hannen Swaffer's home circle, he replied:

IT is a practice among those of us who belong to certain groups to retire to the inner spheres at two festivals which long pre-date your Christian counterparts, Christmas and Easter.

These, as you know, have their origin in the celebrations in ancient times of the passage of the sun as it appeared to those who saw in its appearance, its lengthening and shortening, the symbols of divine activity.

When the sun attained its full glory it was regarded as the period of resurrection, when all nature sang its paean of praise and displayed its profound beauty for all to see. That which had been sown was reaped in its splendour of growth.

Correspondingly there was the winter

solstice when after the high noon of summer there came the drooping as nature prepared and husbanded itself, fertilising and making ready all growth which had to appear when the cycle had achieved completion.

So at Christmas you had the birth of the sun, the end of the long cycle when there arose the first sign that new life was being born into your earthly world.

Those times had a significance to us because it was then that we received the greatest communion from the Great Spirit. You do not yet understand very much the influence of the sun. At these times, we held for many days what you call seances. We received at those festivals much inspiration.

So, when it comes again to the time which all of us regarded as the most important in our lives, we gather together and celebrate with those who are our own. This started with the influence of the sun, but that was only a symbol. There is an influence from all life to other life, from all matter to other matter, and from all planets to other planets.

This time is chosen because all of us are associated with races whose religions were founded upon the laws of nature. To us, the festival of the birth of the sun was the greatest of all because it represented the beginning of a new era. It is the end of the cycle, and a new one begins.

Because these festivals were held in the world of matter, they are celebrated in the world of spirit. A spiritual meaning has now come out of them. Instead of celebrating the dawn of the new life, we now use it to withdraw from the world of matter to get new power of the spirit so that we can bring new light to your world.

Because those of us who are associated in this task belong to more ancient races than your western civilisation, we utilise these festivals as opportunities for withdrawing to the inner spheres where we belong. We take counsel, we share experiences, we learn how far we have succeeded or failed. New plans are discussed. We meet those who sent us on our mission.

Among them is the great figure of the Nazarene, who is still imbued with the task of

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MY two books of Silver Birch's teachings, which I have read and re-read, have been a source of comfort and enlightenment to me. When I went into hospital to undergo a major operation for cancer, I took one of these books with me.

It was reading a little each day that sustained me during that time of trial and gave me the will to get well again.—(Mrs) L. C., Brighton, Sussex (full name and address withheld).

teaching humanity the age-old truth enshrined in all that we seek to do, that love is the fulfilling of the law.

I wish that you could see and hear the Nazarene and feel that great love as he encourages us in our missions, as he expresses his knowledge of all that has been done and urges us to go forward with new strength, with new hope, with new vision and with new purpose. He is not the Nazarene of the Churches, exalted into a deified place, but a great spirit who strives still to serve through many instruments.

For a short time I am in the spheres where I lived for many years, to feel once again that vitalising power of the spirit, so invigorating in its strength, so beautiful in all its fullness, making you realise what life is when you are able to experience it in the higher realms of spirit. I speak with all humility and with no pride at all.

If all the beautiful paintings of the world, all the inspired visions and all the great artistry that you have ever heard of in your world of matter, and all the deepest and greatest beauties of nature were all combined into one whole object, it would be but a very pale reflection of life in the higher regions.

When the artist is filled with inspiration he realises that it cannot be expressed with his few pigments, and he longs for the colours that could be blended to produce that richness that has been given to his soul. But there is none, for spiritual truth and beauty exceed material clothing.

How can I describe spiritual exaltation in words? How can I describe the joy of meeting beings who radiate the great light of the Great Spirit, who are full of wisdom and understanding, mercy and tenderness, who know all before you convey it, who know your innermost thoughts, who see the workings of your mind, who know of your successes and failures?

The great message of love, which has

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I HAVE a great love for Silver Birch and my life has been guided by his teachings.—(Mrs) Muriel Young, Canal Street, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada.

characterised all religions, and which was epitomised in the teaching of the Nazarene, is still the one we proclaim in the name of the Great Spirit who is the lord of all life, the infinite Creator.

Thus, returned to our true spiritual state, we experience some of the lustre, joy, radiance, beauty, richness, nobility and grandeur which are our natural environment. We bathe in it, rejoice in it and capture the glories that were our normal expression. That is our celebration.

Then, counselled, enthused, refreshed, invigorated, recharged and revived, we return to your cold, grey, dank, clammy, dark world to continue the task of piercing its fogs and mists, striving to shine through with the light of truth which can guide and point the way for many weary travellers.

Some of the spirit of love is expressed in your world at this time. It takes the form of geniality and generosity, the desire to give. It is to be seen in the remembering of old friends, the cementing of old ties, the bringing together of those who have been parted and the resolution to forget old enmities.

Alas that it should be preceded by the great holocaust and bloodshed, when so many needless sacrifices are made of some of the Great Spirit's dumb creatures. What a pity that the birthday of the "Prince of Peace" is commemorated by such a dreadful slaughter; the blood of innocent creatures has to flow in order to commemorate peace. This is the crucifixion of your world, celebrating peace by making war on innocent creatures.

One day, love, compassion, mercy and responsibility will guide man who has dominion over the lesser creation which looks to him for help. When these qualities are expressed in human life, bloodshed, cruelty and needless horrible experiments which are wreaked on these innocent creatures will cease. The wolf will lie down with the lamb because there will be peace on earth.

Two Worlds

Rising costs compel us with regret to increase the cover price by a very modest 2p starting with our January 1978 issue.

A well-loved guide gives this message

'If only the Christmas spirit could be maintained'

by PEGGY MASON

I AM writing this on a perfect mid-October day. This afternoon I walked in the partly-cleared forest which is a stone's throw from where I live. Having wandered far through heather and golden bracken, through birch groves, tall pines, oaks and majestic conifers, following a network of secret paths made by horse riders, I sat on a stump in the warm sun. The silence of nature was broken only by the joyful song of birds, the flap of a wood-pigeon's wings. Not a leaf stirred.

Much further on, one comes unexpectedly to an enchanted, large lake hidden in the wooded, rolling farmscape. This lake has a quality of pure magic. A pair of swans glide silently on the still water, followed by their four grey cygnets. On the far shore several elegant deer wander peacefully through the grass.

Here, too, there is complete silence save for bird-song, and an occasional splash of a moorhen. And as the sun sets, casting a golden glow over the water and seemingly setting fire to the gold and russet trees, comes the thrilling sharpness of a cock pheasant's call as he prepares to roost.

I have named this lake Avalon. If one is seeking the elusive grail of joy through suffering, of love through pain, of the greater self through service, one can start here if one does not speak above a whisper. Here, too, one can immerse oneself in its clear water and swim, silent as an otter, and feel refreshed and purified in body and spirit.

One is indeed tempted, in such surroundings, to echo the words of the poet, "God's in His heaven, all's right with the world"—and almost believe it. Until one hears suddenly, in the background on one's consciousness, the wail of a baby with a bayonet in its stomach.

Until one remembers, with a pang of fear, that one day there may be no bird-song, that we should be at the mercy of uncontrolled insect life, unless Italy, for example (the greatest European offender) can be stopped from killing 200 million little migratory birds

every year, far exceeding France's ten million, which is horrible enough.

Until one remembers that so-called intellectuals with one-sided minds, little understanding and no consciences imagine they can obtain 'freedom' from whatever they wish to be free from, by themselves inflicting tyranny. By blackmail, kidnapping, hijacking and murder they succeed in alienating even those who might have initially supported their aims.

When protest becomes psychopathic the powers of darkness have indeed taken over, creating a chain reaction. This is demonstrated by a simple, decent workman in our local pub who was so incensed by the latest murders perpetrated by terrorists that he considered a quick death too good for them. He thought they should die slowly, over a week. Thus does justifiable outrage turn into sadistic thoughts of revenge in the human heart, and levels of consciousness descend so that all eventually becomes engulfed in the lower astral.

Sitting by the lake, watching a delightful, busy squirrel a few yards away collecting nuts for its winter store, it seems unbelievable that during the years since I was setting out in life at the age of 20, crime in our beloved country has increased by a staggering 4,000 per cent. And even this astronomical figure pales to relative insignificance by comparison with the statistics in the United States.

But because this is almost Christmas time, let us turn our thoughts and attune them to those of the spirit guides and teachers who give so much of themselves, and make such sacrifices by penetrating our dark world to offer us guidance, teaching, help and love. It is good to know that these great souls gather together for a short while, at the time of this festival, to gain refreshment and inspiration in the higher spirit spheres, to obtain counsel and instruction from our friend and counsellor, the master of the universal White Brotherhood, the beloved Nazarene.

"You must understand," says Silver Birch,

"that you live in a world which is falling to pieces, and that you are witnessing the beginning of a new order—a time when the kingdom of heaven shall come on earth. It will be accompanied by much pain and suffering and tears, but in the end the Great White Spirit will return to your midst. Each one of you can help to bring the new world into being, for you are all parts of the Great White Spirit, and can help to do His work."*

And the spirit of Christmas helps us to do this, to recharge the batteries of light. I have transcribed part of a Christmas message given by Abu, the much-loved teacher of Norman Hunt's home circle over many years, though no transcription can convey the depth of love and tenderness which makes *listening* to his voice when controlling the remarkable trance instrument, W. F. Rickard, such a joy and so moving. So let us, for a few moments, enter that circle:

"The spirit of Christmas—yes, my children. Let us all keep it in mind. Like life, like philosophy, like religion, like science, it will have many aspects and many facets. To one, perhaps, Christmas will mean little more than a surcease from daily toil, a little rest, a little extra of eating and drinking, of merry-making and such things. It is well.

"To another, the thought may go to a birthday celebrated on this occasion. We will not inquire at all deeply into the validity of the celebration, for it will be in the name of one who certainly taught love, peace and joy. And so it is well that those who revere his name shall so do at this period, given always that they recall that for which he stood, that which he taught—and *still* teaches, through me and others: love, peace and joy, brotherhood, in a word.

"To some there will be another significance, mystical or material, it matters not, so that for a little while the good feeling within the heart of well-wishing towards one's fellows shall be enhanced. It would be well if the spirit of Christmas could be maintained upon the earth. It is our purpose to endeavour to see that that shall be done.

"And there is rejoicing, too, on the spirit planes, and again for manifold reasons, not least the increase of goodwill on earth. Alfred (the circle's doorkeeper) has told you of a glow which he claims to have seen. I cannot

say that I have yet observed any such, but I do know that great endeavours are being and have been put forth, for mighty events are brewing. They will make themselves known, and they are not tragic and sad ones.

"The world has most sadly got rather into a habit of looking on the gloomy side. Indeed there is much gloom to be observed. But there is a tendency to ignore the little silver lining, be it ever so thin and small, which shows to the eyes of those who will look that the sunlight is still there, as it has been and will ever be . . . There is more than hope for the world.

"It is that which Alfred has absorbed during his visits to some of the Halls of Learning available to him. He will go there, as no doubt you will go to a place of entertainment, from time to time. He has no keen interest in the earth or its affairs except in so far as you, his friends, and others, also his friends, are concerned.

"Since you are likely to be affected by earthly world happenings, he is therefore interested also. He would wish, as indeed would I, that your tenure on earth should be a happy one, as well as the life into which you will in due course enter.

"And so I am glad that he has seen a little of the Light. I know that Light is coming. It will not yet be a blazing, blinding glare which eventually shall result, but the thin sliver of a silver lining which foreshadows nonetheless the coming sunshine.

"This Christmas time will, I trust, help mankind at least to believe in the sun, if he cannot yet see it, for love, peace and joy are the natural lot of the *spirit* of man. They are not, unhappily, the natural lot of his physical body with its animal ancestry. Surely, with our and your efforts, man shall be brought to know of his spirit nature, and therefore to appreciate that it transcends the animal. The animal was but a stepping stone, and it must be shed in due course. But the spirit will go on and on. It is absolute. It is of the nature of God. Peace, joy and love are its birthright.

"There is a gentleness this evening, a subdued atmosphere of quiet. It is a little oasis in the turmoil of the world. I sense most strongly there is and has been turmoil around some of these my children. It is well that for a few moments they can withdraw their minds from earthly happenings while we meet together, to realise that fundamentally, beneath all this hurly-burly, turmoil and stress there is the eternal peace, which does not mean idleness, and the eternal joy. These

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things are the concomitants of love. And the love is eternal, for it is God.

"As far as the earth dwellers are concerned, of course there is a corner of the mind which insists that the tempest continues to blow, that once again the trials and tribulations must be faced, the burdens must be taken up. Some of the children are well nigh beaten down by the stress of earthly living. But that does not destroy or interfere with the fundamental, underlying peace.

"You have a beautiful saying, 'And underneath are the Everlasting Arms.' My Children, it is symbolical but how true! Beneath all the superficial surface, the turmoil and stress, is the peace of the Everlasting Arms. I would ask that for a few moments we sit silently and commune together in spirit, that we may savour, as fully as may be, this wondrous peace which enwraps us all when we permit it so to do.

"Against that peace, against that holiness—for it is indeed a drawing apart—the waves shall beat in vain, the tempest shall roar but be ignored, your worries and troubles of mundane living shall have no effect. In that peace is the still, small voice. Therein is God, who is love.

"We must again shoulder our crosses, to use a metaphor which will be familiar to you.

You will have your several crosses to bear. So will I, even I also, for I am but human and have not entered into a state of perfect blessedness. We shall all have things to do, matters to see to, people to meet, blows to withstand which we could very well do without.

"But we *know*, as surely as we know we live, that we are spirit, that we are at one with God. We know that this blessed peace is eternal and cannot be affected, for indeed there are the Everlasting Arms."

And so, with Abu, I wish all readers a happy and peaceful Christmastide. May we remember, too, that we have been told that a special outpouring of love is given to the animal spirit realms on the day following Christmas. May love be made manifest in our hearts and in our actions, so that the light we give out may widen the thin silver lining and enhance the glow of which Alfred spoke—like the golden glow I saw over the lake I call Avalon.

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It is caused by spiritual and emotional immaturity

Stress is your worst enemy

by M. H. TESTER

IT is becoming impossible to read your morning paper without finding out that there are invariably a number of strikes. They are like a disease on the industrial and commercial body of this country. I often feel that if the trade unions wanted to make a great contribution to Britain's recovery they could do so by guaranteeing one month per year completely strike-free.

If you tot up the number of working days lost through strikes it amounts to many millions. But however high this figure it pales into insignificance compared with the number of working days lost due to mental illness. This is now running at over forty million working days a year.

I discussed this matter with the chief psychiatrist of the biggest mental hospital in Sussex. I said that I thought most mental illness was caused by people trying to escape from their environment. He agreed.

If people are under intolerable pressures it is easy enough to find temporary relief. They can take drugs like tranquillisers. If these do not work they can go on to hard drugs like heroin. Or if these are not too readily to hand there is always the legally available drug of alcohol. They can seek escape in some form of behaviour like sex, over-eating, or the mindless violence of the football fans.

If all these well-tried escape mechanisms fail, then there is only one way out. That is through mental changes. These can vary a great deal, and I am certainly no authority.

But we have all seen cases of deep depression, an almost catatonic withdrawal, schizophrenia and other forms of mania.

The basic cause of the need to withdraw from one's environment, either by the use of drugs, behaviour or mental illness, is that the stress has become intolerable.

Now stress generally is an internal matter. Of course, there are external stresses. Loud noise is one. A polluted environment is another. Lack of oxygen, or deprivation of any of the life support systems, causes stress. So does an inadequate diet or lack of liquid intake. But these are the exceptions. Most stress comes from within. It is your reaction to what happens, not the event itself.

If you were a child, had sixpence as spending money for the week, dropped the coin and watched it roll down a drain where it was irretrievable, you would probably bawl your head off. This is stress in its simple form. Children get rid of it by an emotional outburst. Today if you dropped sixpence and lost it, you would not react at all. In terms of sixpence you have matured emotionally.

Yet in other directions perhaps you have not. How much money would you have to lose before you had an emotional outburst? Would you react to the loss of a pound, a fiver, ten pounds or fifty? Or would you have to lose a few hundred before you let it upset you?

Somewhere along the line is a built-in emotional table. In terms of money you may be able to fix it within a pound or so. In terms



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of other losses you are probably less accurate.

How do you react if you get a parking ticket? If you have a puncture? If staff do not turn up on time and you have to do somebody else's work? How do you react to your wife's demand for more housekeeping money, for a new coat, or some other request you cannot meet?

How would you react to finding your wife in bed with another man, to coming face to face with a burglar in your house, to knowing the house was on fire and you had not got an extinguisher and the telephone was out of order? Imagine any sort of crisis, big or small, and then decide honestly how you would react.

Somewhere there is a limit. The threshold may be low, as in the case of the woman who throws a tantrum because she sees her dress being worn by another woman. Or it may be high, as in the case of the man who meets a burglar in his house and starts a conversation with him at an even level.

The man who "blows his top" because his car breaks down, or the woman who has hysterics or deep depression because her soufflé has gone flat, are both demonstrating how immature they are. Because that is what we are talking about, emotional maturity.

Emotional maturity requires that you take a balanced view of events. You do not bawl because you have lost sixpence. You do not over-react emotionally to the problems that today brings.

You do need a high emotional reaction at times. If you are crossing a road and see a bus bearing down on you, then you do need a high emotional response. The adrenalin is rushed into your bloodstream. Your heart starts pumping blood into your muscles. A whole chain reaction in your metabolism gets you going fast. You leap out of the path of the bus with an energy you did not know you could muster. This is right. This is justified.

You do not need this traumatic reaction, though, every day. It is and must be an isolated event. Your daily emotional levels should remain on an even keel, and much lower.

I owe a great debt to Spiritualism. But there is one thing it has taught me that transcends all others. It is that we survive death.

You may feel that, as I am writing about stress and mental illness, this statement is out of context. Not so.

As I now know I survive death I realise I am indeed immortal. I know that this life is just part of my spiritual education. When my body

is worn out and discarded I will survive. I will go on. I will develop further. This life, and the trials and tribulations it brings, are but an overture to a greater life.

This knowledge allows me to put today's problems into the right perspective. I do my best. I try to live a good life and be of service to my fellows. When people behave badly, either socially or commercially, I feel sorry for them. It shows their lack of maturity. But I am the master of my soul. I am in command of my emotions. Every day I try to work hard, to do what I have to do, but throughout to maintain a high level of serenity and happiness.

In a hundred years' time today's stresses will seem trivial. In a thousand years I will be far away from this life, living on a higher plane, and enjoying myself tremendously.

Stress, worry, drugs, alcohol, escape, withdrawal, depression, mental illness . . . not for me. I'm immortal!



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Questions for materialists—9

God's point of view

by PROF IAN PARROTT

THERE was a discussion on the attempt by the then Bishop of Woolwich to change the words and even the ideas we use in our thinking about God. Many people seem to fear that there are several simple souls in our "advanced" civilisation who think of God's heaven as "pie in the sky," this being unworthy of a 20th-century intellectual, who knows that heaven is merely . . . or does he know? This is the point.

One would like to think of the old-fashioned conflict between so-called science and so-called religion as being over, but this is far from being the case. A large number of intelligent people worship—yes, there is no need to shirk the word—evolution. Incapable, apparently, of seeing beyond the details of creation, they build new idols in the name of some sort of scientific thinking.

Unable to reason like St Thomas Aquinas (whom they have dismissed as a sort of

The writer is a composer whose published output includes books and articles on musical topics. He has finished a manuscript on Rosemary Brown's musical mediumship. Since 1950 he has been Professor of Music at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. He was educated at Harrow, the Royal College of Music and New College, Oxford.

antediluvian idiot because he was not born in the same century as Bertrand Russell, and whom they have not read), they cannot appreciate that evolutionary change is contingent on space and time, and must also be contingent on the persistence of what Bergson called the 'elan vital.'

Yet these people go further still with such absurd questions as, "Why postulate the existence of a God?" Not content with taking heaven out of the sky, they like to think of the universe as having no maker, because, in their own words, it is said to be in a "steady state" or some such. You might as well say when you see a Ford car on the street that you see no need to postulate the existence of a Mr Ford or a Ford works.

Yet if the universe is thought (only one of several hypotheses) to be in a state of permanent existence, with neither beginning nor end, this does not rule out a creator. It simply puts the creator in another dimension, beyond time.

If, by the way, you "take time for granted," be careful to realise what a beautifully

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Greetings to all my friends

May peace flow in 1978



NAN MACKENZIE

religious phrase you have been using all these years without knowing it, "for granted." Who, one might ask, is the Granter? Is He not the "creator and preserver of mankind"?

If we look on the Creator as both outside as well as inside (in another dimension) the nearest analogy that I know which throws light on the problem is that given by Dorothy Sayers of the author "outside" the events and characters of a book (or play).

He is "outside" in a time sense. He can contemplate the end of the book and yet switch his mind in a flash to the beginning. In that he influences the behaviour of his creations he is also "inside" the book. All his inventions are dependent on him and yet they have some sort of will of their own.

Dorothy Sayers has much more to say in her comparison of divine creation with artistic creation and becomes particularly interesting on the subject of the author entering into the book—the Creator deciding to make Himself known to a certain group of people in a certain place at a certain moment of time.

Now why my title, "God's Point of View"? It seems that we fill much of our leisure with idle thoughts on *man's* point of view. "If God is good, why does He allow suffering? If He is omnipotent, whence comes evil?" etc.

The atheists of our age have become a good deal more vocal than that and are quite content to have the world for nothing without either inventor or preserver. But we will have to let them go their happy way on the ends of their shoelaces, while we concentrate now on the problem from *God's point of view*.

If you were God and you chose Palestine under the Roman Empire for your appearance in an understandable form, surely you would give your observers signs of divinity understandable to them. And if you chose to appear in the 20th century, you would choose

different language, not that the miracle would be one ounce the greater. Naturally the know-alls of the space age laugh at the expressions used for the time of Jesus.

Here is a possible conversion table of their sort:

"Warned in a dream." Pass that on to the Society for Psychical Research.

"Moth and Rust do corrupt." Insecticide, anti-oxidisation, and xenon tetrafluoride, etc.

"Unclean spirits." Freud has worked that out (has he?).

"Restored sight." An operation for retinal detachment would be more efficient.

Shall we go on? Why not instead be honest and get down to human nature. Do we need to convert mote and beam into "the other person's blinkers" and our own rosy rose-tinted spectacles? Surely we must admit

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that the weaknesses of human behaviour are still there, as weak as ever. We are just making excuses when we say we don't believe this or that happened nearly 2,000 years ago. If we accept the teaching of Jesus, we shall have to do a good deal of self-critical thinking today.

It isn't even scientific to consider ourselves self-sufficient. Humility is needed and it leads to worship, or at least to gratitude. Let us not excuse our complacency and laziness by having the effrontery to suggest that the Creator does not need the flattery of our worship—this being the fashionable foible at present. Whether God needs it or not, *we* need to worship. It is the least we can do with our little lives for the "unscientific" miracle of existence.

There may still be a home for little Victorian children above the bright blue sky. The ignorant writer did not know, poor dear, that the sky is always bright and blue when you fly in a super-jet above the clouds. Now, since we are so self-conscious about man's space probes, we need to go back to the thinking person of the Middle Ages who says in effect:

"And when you reason to the *end* of space and the *end* of time. And when you come to the last link in the chain of cause and effect, then you call that God, the First Unmoved Mover. St Thomas was sanguine enough actually to finish with, "All men call that God." If we don't *all* reason like that today, have we gained anything in wisdom?

We need desperately to learn how to love usefully. Our bodies are made to work and our minds are made for joy, for "it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves"—the last part of this is incontrovertibly true even to an out-and-out secularist.

If God chose to make Himself known to the world today, how would it be done? Not from our point of view but from His?

My main intention in writing these "Questions" has been to attempt to build bridges.

On the one hand we seem to have materialists concerned primarily with the here and now. Often they are thinking of their fellow-beings and are trying to obtain a larger slice of the "cake" for them. What this "cake" consists of is considered of no importance.

On the other hand there are the theologians as well as the astrophysicists, etc, whose minds are far away on the other side of God's bounty, the "cake." Some idealists indeed think well beyond the confines of the physical

universe.

In any case, there seems to be a large gap between the two groups which I feel ought to be bridged.

I have, I suppose, been leading up to this sort of thinking, since, as a musician, I have been struck by the enormous crevasse that exists in most listeners' minds between the music of the classical masters, Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, with the Romantics, and that of the 20th century "serious" writers, Schoenberg, Bartok, Stravinsky and their followers.

It was because I felt that there was a connection that needed pointing out that I wrote one of my earliest books, "Pathways to Modern Music" (Arthur Unwin, 1947). It may be no coincidence that I derive much personal pleasure from those composers who are on the threshold of modernism, following Wagner. These composers, who straddle the 19th and 20th centuries, giving pleasure to millions, include Puccini and Elgar as well as the more strikingly adventurous Debussy and Stravinsky.

We must reconcile the two worlds. An idealist-orientated composer is thinking perhaps too much of pure music, his head in the clouds. But a materialist-orientated composer will tell you of his pen and the nib, and of his success in negotiating better royalties and performing rights. Similarly the idealist music-lover will enjoy dreamy, rhythmless music.

But the more down-to-earth will prefer the busy, brittle music not only of the Soviet Union, in particular Shostakovich, but also of the older emotionless clockwork routine of the "baroque"—the music of the 17th and 18th centuries which so often starts, prattles on and finishes without apparently probing or stirring.

And so I felt the need to show that, though we may live on the earthy side, yet we must accept the world of the mystics and the visionaries who have the boldness and the frankness to reject the more glib assertions of blinkered materialism.

Is not the reality of "beyond" truer than that which is available only to our limiting five senses? The great William Blake, painter and poet who died 150 years ago, felt that his works were dictated from "beyond." He said he was "commanded." He also wrote:

"I know that our deceased friends are more really with us than when they were apparent to our mortal parts."

(Concluded)

'Where there is a will'—5

Fear is futile

by MAURICE BARBANELL

ONE who is familiar with the higher truths has put on record the experience that changed his outlook. He writes: "For 40 years I was afflicted with some of the most horrible diseases known to mankind. How I suffered with them! Worse than cancer, worse than polio, worse than angina, the diseases which came upon me made my life a hell on earth.

"The first disease was a severe case of pessimism. If there was the slightest tinge of darkness in connection with anything, I managed, no matter how difficult it was, to find that darkness.

"Another disease was false desires. How I yearned to have possessions which would not have been good for me! How I longed to do things which would have brought me (and often did) pangs of regret! I charged down the road after a fleeing and fleeting happiness. I

The words you read here are taken from "Where There is a Will," a book I wrote many years ago. Ever since I have been asked many times to reprint it, but declined. Instead it is being serialised in Two Worlds because, reading it again, it struck me that the contents can still help many people who yearn for fuller living.

always came to the end of the road to find that I had been shadow-chasing again.

"Envy was a curious sort of ulcer that gnawed at my insides till I could hardly stand the pain. I was always hoping someone would die and leave me some wonderful inheritance. The companion disease, of course, is selfishness. These two nearly always make their appearance together. They enjoy each other's company, but you will not find them enjoyable guests."

Finally he went to a doctor, who made an X-ray examination of the stomach. This showed he had an ulcer. The doctor said he would have to ease up and stop worrying.

"That night I got thinking," says the writer. "I decided: 'This doctor doesn't know all about me. He thinks I worry, and really I don't, but I do have a lot of other diseases. They are just too many to try and cure. I think I will die instead.'

"So I got out paper and pencil. 'If I am going to die,' I told myself, 'I am going to make a will.' I made a list of all my possessions, not my house and my car and my money. Those are just things that I am using. The things I had and owned are the things I put down. Here are some of them, envy, jealousy, pessimism, false desires, worry, fear, greed, selfishness.

"I 'died' the minute I signed that will. And no sooner did I 'die' than I received a wonderful inheritance from myself. I received cheerfulness, love, courage, generosity, justice, tolerance, ability, mental and spiritual prosperity and I think some material prosperity, too. I received such a large inheritance that I cannot list it all.

"I went back to that doctor about six weeks later. He took another X-ray. I sat with him in



RAY and JOAN BRANCH

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his office when the nurse brought it in for him to see. He held it up to the light and a puzzled look came on his face. He took the card with my name on it from his file and tore it up. He did not have to tell me the ulcer was gone. Yes, I died ten years ago, and how glad I am to be alive today."

Fear and pessimism are both negative and destructive. They make the atmosphere around you listless, apathetic, heavy and dull. They block the channels by which help can come to you. You live in an aura of gloom. You attract forces which by their very nature can only increase your despondency. Your mind, because it is wavering, ceases to be receptive to constructive ideas.

"No man has failed unless he has lost the will to try again," was the motto of Teddy O'Neill, who pioneered a new form of education in Britain. The brave man is the one who conquers fear and then performs a heroic deed, not the individual who feels no fear at all.

Fear and worry are always your worst enemies. What a tonic President Roosevelt gave to his listening millions when he broadcast the simple but stirring declaration, "We have nothing to fear but fear." He knew that fear was corrosive and that worry warped the judgment.

Fear is futile. The individual who fears what the morrow will bring is helping to bring tomorrow's difficulties to him. When you worry you do not improve yourself or your lot. All you do is to make it impossible to think clearly and constructively.

When your mind is filled with black despair, you have defeated yourself before you begin to fight. You can be concerned without worrying or indulging in fearful anxiety that makes your mind a hopeless blank.

There is no difficulty so strong that it is beyond your powers to overcome it, no load so heavy that your shoulders cannot bear it. Consider the grievous handicaps that others have conquered.

Beethoven was stone deaf, Milton was blind, Pasteur was paralysed and Helen Keller suffered from blindness and deafness. Yet she was able to assert, "I thank God for my handicaps, for through them I have found myself, my work and my God." Why, then, should you be chained by fear?

Some people argue that they were born with a certain temperament and they cannot change it. If they believe they cannot, they certainly will not. If they believe they can, they will.

Others blame their parents, or their environment.

Every child has in addition to all the usual physical factors contributed by forebears his own X, the divine spark, the "unknown quantity," which is his own contribution to his evolution. His parents supply his body and his early environment, but they do not provide the X, the most vital asset.

History is full of examples of men and women, born of humble parents, in obscure surroundings, who have achieved greatness. Genius has been reared in circumstances that seemed completely alien to its flowering. Abraham Lincoln, who had less than 12 months' schooling, suffered unemployment, was in disgrace when he joined the army, and failed again and again, became the greatest President of the United States.

Moaning, groaning, bewailing and complaining will not enhance your position or your prospects. The man who is always looking for trouble will find it. Difficulties

TED ROWE

Spiritualist healer, NFSH member, wishes all patients and friends, at home and abroad, the compliments of the season. May the peace and love of your Father God be upon each and every one of you throughout 1978.

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must be regarded as challenges which can and will be met, leaving you the stronger for having encountered them. You must make stepping stones of adversity, perplexity and frustration.

I saw in a newspaper a letter from a woman who wrote: "My husband has lost the use of his hands and has been given up as incurable by medical science. Can any reader suggest some ways or means whereby a man can earn a living, to make him feel he is still of some use in the world?"

One reply came from a man who said: "I too have lost the use of my hands, also my arms, legs and body. I can move only my head, neck and shoulders. I consider myself far from being helpless and useless. I pass my days reading, sketching and writing with pen or pencil in my mouth, and singing. Eventually, I hope to utilise at least one of these accomplishments to earn my living."

There was a light-hearted postscript, "I bet this is the first letter that has come to you 'by word of mouth.' "

A journalist who called reported that the man's writing was clearer and much better formed than her own. His drawings of landscapes and copies of portraits had to be seen to be believed, she added. Though for ten years he had been stricken with polio, he refused to give in or complain. Every Wednesday evening, smartly dressed and strapped in his wheel chair, he went to singing lessons, preparing for the day when he could professionally use his voice.

An even more astonishing demonstration of the determination to defeat disability is the case of Miss Anine Tellefsen, a Norwegian woman who recently celebrated her 70th birthday.

When she was 15, she contracted tuberculosis so severely that in three years she had to undergo four operations, the last being for the amputation of her two arms. Four years later, she was confronted with the terrible verdict that both her legs would also have to be amputated. Thus, while still in her 20s, she faced life without legs and arms.

Miss Tellefsen made up her mind that, so far as was possible, she would not be a burden on anyone else. She decided she had to earn her own living. After contemplating the very restricted means of employment available to her, she concluded she must learn to sew with her mouth.

At the hospital she had already learned to write with her mouth. Now she began the arduous task of producing embroidery and fine lace, with all the sewing done by her mouth. Her first results were sold at a bazaar and realised sufficient money to support her for some years.

It is difficult enough to thread the tiny eye of a needle even with both hands, but after years of practice Miss Tellefsen has succeeded in accomplishing this task with ability and agility. First, the needle is placed vertically on a cushion on a table. Then she takes a pair of scissors in her mouth and, with these, she grips the thread, aiming so accurately that she is able to slip it through the eye.

When doing embroidery, she puts the needle on the line of the pattern. She gives the needle a push with her shoulder, and pulls it out again with her mouth. To keep her shoulders in position for the task, she has them strapped.

On her 70th birthday she received a gold medal from King George VI, who, in granting her an audience, wanted a detailed account of how she managed to do her beautiful work. He congratulated her on the unique good humour which never fails her.

She insists that life has been good, although she has been without arms and legs for 50 years. Her work has been a great help in her extreme disability and has prevented her from being depressed and miserable. The feeling that she can earn her own living has been of great importance. All her work is sold by means of raffles in her town and they now fetch a high price.

Miss Tellefsen is able to walk by means of artificial legs attached to her stumps. She lives in Langesund, her native town, where she has a little flat with a housekeeper who helps her to dress and gives her meals.

This cripple is a devout woman, and has

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sung for several years in a church choir. She has now been chosen as a representative on a committee for the disabled, so that she can help to improve the legislation for those unable to earn their own living because they are maimed.

A newspaper reporter who interviewed her described her as an ideal woman, happy in her outlook and forthright in her utterances.

You must remember that there are many causes for the body's weakening. It is well known that the quality of its tissues is lowered by too poor or too rich a diet, by excessive alcohol and also by prosperity and leisure.

While civilised people degenerate in tropical climates, they thrive in temperate or cold countries. Man needs a way of life involving constant struggle, mental and muscular effort, physical, mental and moral discipline and some privations.

These conditions inure the body to fatigue and to troubles. They protect it against disease, especially nervous diseases. They irresistibly drive man to conquer the world in which he lives.

Dr Alexis Carrell has observed: "Man attains his highest development when he is exposed to the rigours of the seasons, when he sometimes goes without sleep, sometimes sleeps for long hours, when his meals are sometimes abundant and sometimes scanty, when he conquers food and shelter at the price of strenuous efforts. He has also to train his muscles, to tire himself and rest, to fight, suffer and be happy. His will needs alternately to strain and to relax.

"He is made for such an existence, just as the stomach is made for digesting food. When his adaptive processes work most intensely, he develops his virility to the fullest extent. Hardships make for nervous resistance and health."

The truth is that problems are good for us. They are the means by which character is developed. Without them, the human race would become spineless. Gold emerges only after the dirty yellow ore had been crushed, refined and purified. Your real self often does not emerge until trouble has touched your soul.

Suffering and pain cease to be mysteries when they lead you to the deepest and highest aspects of your own being, making you aware of innate qualities whose existence you had never before realised. Thousands have found God, and found themselves, when life seemed to be in the shadows. It is part of the divine compensation that through the greatest

suffering you attain the greatest knowledge.

Life is comparative. You enjoy sunshine only because you have dwelt in the shadows. You cannot appreciate wealth unless you have tasted poverty. Good health is not valued until you have experienced illness. It is because we have endured the horrors of war that we can enjoy the benefits of peace.

For some years, I corresponded with a friend in Jamaica who decided to pay his first visit to London. He was as brown as a berry, tanned by the sun, when he arrived in a chill November fog. How he revelled in that fog! Whereas I expected him to be disappointed he found it exhilarating. He explained that having sunshine day after day, for months on end, was a palling experience. The fog was a wonderful relief.

You get a different perspective of life when you are in an aeroplane. As you fly over cities and countries, your mind seems to detach itself from the trivialities, worries and meannesses of life on the ground. A sense of loftiness fills you. You enjoy a greater freedom.

There are no hedges, barriers or frontiers to separate you from the other individuals. Your mind, too, has been given wings. The land over which you travel may be in shadow because of clouds which obscure the sun. But you are flying above those clouds and the sun is friendly and warm.

You watch the slowly moving clouds and see a rift. You know, though the people below you do not, that through the rift the rays of the sun will shine. They cannot see the light which you know will soon bring illumination to them. Because of your new horizon, you have a realisation and foresight which they do not possess.

Knowledge of life's greater realities will bring a similar change in your perspective. And fear will never find a resting place in your mind.

(To be continued)

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Evidence and logic supply the answer

What exactly survives death?

by W. H. MACKINTOSH

WHAT is supposed to survive death and, whatever it is, how can its survival be proved? To describe the entity that survives as the "spirit," "soul" or "self" is to use terms lacking in exact meaning. Such concepts have become vague because in different periods and cultures they have been interpreted in varying ways.

It is reasonable to accept the proposition that there is in man an animating and organising principle which constitutes the very core of his being and belongs to a superphysical order of reality. How this

principle is related to the form in which it is embodied has so far not been adequately explained in scientific terms.

An explanation may be outside the field of positive science, but this does not warrant the total rejection of what has been called the soul theory. The complexity of mental phenomena implies the activity of an immaterial entity distinct from the physical body.

Nothing exists in isolation. It is always related to something else within which it is contained and which gives meaning to its existence. Every whole is part of a greater whole. Incarnate existence must, therefore, be part of a greater reality which is superphysical in nature. This implies that discarnate existence is much more than a mere residue of earthly circumstances.

As I have said, the soul or animating principle in man belongs to this greater superphysical reality. Not only man, but every sentient creature has a soul which animates, unifies and sustains the form in which it is embodied. In this respect it would be absurd to draw a sharp dividing line between man and the other animals.

Indeed, we may go even further and say that seemingly inanimate things also have a soul. In them life and consciousness are dormant. To say this is to claim much more than positive science would be willing to grant, but it is not incompatible with an evolutionary view of life.

Let us examine more closely the nature of this surviving entity. To be worthy to survive it must not only possess life and



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consciousness, but have them to a degree which makes survival a higher state than incarnate existence or, at least, one in which it is possible to avoid mental stagnation.

Admittedly many spirit communications seem to indicate that the surviving entity is encapsulated in a dim memory of its past life on earth. A retrospective view is perhaps inevitable in the early stage of posthumous existence, but this is derived from what is really an illusion. There can be no value in an afterlife which does not reach upwards to a level of consciousness surpassing anything known to mere earthlings.

The individual human being can be described as a psychophysical unit. What, therefore, is the surviving entity? To define it as a person minus his body is correct if we simply mean that the physical body has been discarded. But it is incorrect if we are implying that the after-life is a mode of existence without any body at all. Consciousness requires a vehicle of some sort for its expression.

The soul has more than one body. At death the physical body is shed, but other and more subtle bodies are retained. As I have said elsewhere, "Incarnate man is a spirit enfolded in a whole series of bodies, each more subtle than the other as we approach nearer to the spiritual nucleus, and each designed for use in relation to a particular plane of existence."

These superphysical vestures of the soul need not be fully described here. The point to be stressed is that life and consciousness in the next world require to be embodied as much as they do in this world. The only difference is that the embodiment is of a finer quality.

We now come nearer to a more precise definition of the surviving entity. It possesses consciousness, intelligence, memory and, above all, a sense of identity. It is embodied because it requires to be related by some means to its environment. Presumably its range of perception must include objects and events external to itself.

What constitutes proof of personal survival of death? We should identify a departed friend in any communication purporting to come from him by recognising any trait or quality which made him unique as an individual. Yet what really matters in the long run is not so much the establishment of identity as the impact of a communication which is profoundly significant in the circumstances.

The communicator should display a degree of knowledge beyond the medium's capacity

and an insight into the inquirer's character and problems which no incarnate person could possibly acquire. To achieve this the communicator need not, of course, be a departed friend.

A dialogue between the incarnate and the discarnate should be meaningful and a source of inspiration. It should illuminate the mind as well as console the heart. It should remove any doubt as regards not only the existence of another world but the possibility of spiritual progress in an after-life.

In putting forward reasons for believing that the soul survives bodily death, we should take into account not only the ample evidence in the form of psychic phenomena which supports such a belief. We must also consider the process of evolution and the nature of life as revealed by the discoveries of science which, when fully understood, logically require belief in the survival of the soul.

If man perishes at death, what permanent value can be ascribed to the ideas which are characteristic of him as a rational being? The brevity of his span of life on earth hardly seems to warrant the development of such ideas. If they are to be brought to fruition, it must surely be in some superphysical mode of existence.

To live, suffer and die for no other end than living, suffering and dying is both pointless and unjust. Unless we survive the dissolution of our bodies our very existence is an act of gross injustice which could be perpetrated only in an intrinsically evil universe. But reason rejects the notion that the universe is intrinsically evil. Consequently we must survive death.

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Problems involved in fate v. freewill

Are human wrecks predestined?

by R. R. STANLEY

IT happens so often, when disaster strikes through a major disturbance of the elements, or earthquake, or a baby is born so badly malformed as to be a life-long, helpless "vegetable," or distress comes through any other of the so-called "natural causes," that some people piously say, "It is an act of God," or "It is God's will!" or "God knows best!"

All of this seems to indicate that many people still think of "God," or their god, as a person, an individual in a body or form somewhat similar to their own, probably wearing a flowing white beard! In certain circumstances even insurance companies evade paying possible compensation liability

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by placing the blame on the Deity!

These and parallel expressions roll glibly off the tongue of such people probably without any thought or feeling being given to the possibility of presumptuousness on their part. To put it simply, they have given the matter no real thought at all.

Business corporations are made up of individual human beings. As a business there is little or no place in the organisation itself for a god, metaphysics or anything that comes under the general heading of occultism, unless it happens to be a business propagating and selling any religion or any one particular form of any one religion.

Some of these latter, if their business premises were destroyed by fire, might believe that "it had to be" because it was "God's will," but that would not prevent their claiming compensation on an insurance policy.

Whatever concept these individuals have of creation in general and/or of the Creator of all existence probably is as diverse as human fingerprints. An insurance company's executives might even declare themselves as being atheists. But they will include an "act of God" clause in an insurance policy.

This train of thought was set rolling when I was recently viewing a TV news broadcast here in USA. During a work strike (said to be illegal) by employees at various Government institutions, prisons, hospitals for the physically helpless malformed and mentally retarded, etc, the National Guard was called in to protect and run the various institutions.

The TV clip showed National Guard personnel trying with indifferent success to put food into the mouth of helpless, born malformed "vegetable" cases. It was a pitiful sight!

Every day, somewhere in the world, human women give birth to a body that will never be able to function as a normal human being. Even during the period of gestation, and certainly at the time of birth, the attending doctor would know that by "a freak of nature," a hopelessly malformed body had come into the world. He and other medical people would be well aware of the

hopelessness of such a case and what it would involve in the future.

All this gives rise to the thought: how many of those people who glibly and in parrot-fashion utter those fatuous remarks about it being God's will have visited institutions caring for these entities and seen their complete lack of any self-help; entities often without apparent mental awareness of the situation? As little children these cases are a heart rending, pitiable sight; as young, middle age or older adults they conjure up a multitude of obvious questions.

How many of those people who so readily give their God credit for all this suffering (the cause and purpose, if any, must remain unknown to the observer) have visited any of those hospitals specialising in the care of the human wrecks gathered from the battlefields of the wars of this enlightened 20th century—the human debris, so soon forgotten and seldom mentioned in the news media?

Here they would find (if allowed by the hospital authorities) human wreckage, pieces of once fine, vital human beings. They would see more than one such remnant with no face, no recognisable features, still "living" because the heart and lungs somehow continue to function, or machines keep them working; fed by tubes, the "life" flickers on. Some have been burned by acid or flames as to be hardly recognisable as human. Others would be entirely without arms and legs, just a still-living trunk to which it is almost or completely impossible to fit artificial limbs.

Still others have had large portions of their body blasted away and are kept "alive" by machines which somehow take over the more mechanical functions of the human system. But the victims are still unable even to help the normal functioning of their wrecked bodies—what is left of them!

Where does all this fit into the scheme of human understanding? Does one accept it as the working of "the law of causation" or retribution, the "will of the Creator," an "act of God," "Lessons to be learned, experiences to be gained for future use"? We have heard or read all these and many more piously-given suggestions!

In other institutions are similar cases, not there as a result of having taken part in elaborately-organised murder called war, but by sheer "accident" or the result of some "natural phenomenon," storm, earthquake or whatever.

I am well aware of the theory that nothing happens "by accident," but is "one's karma

working out"! While it is amazing to observe how easy it is to "snuff out" a human life, it is equally so to see how the spark of life will continue to remain with a wrecked human form that is hardly recognisable as such.

Are we to assume that, in every case, it was the pre-ordained destiny of each of these sufferers (God's will?) that they should have those particular life-experiences "for their spiritual and intellectual development" (as some people will try to assure us), "for the good of their soul"?

Incidentally, was it also the pre-ordained destiny of those clergy, of the same religion but of the various countries warring against each other, that they, in the name of their, the same, God, bless the launching of battleships and deadly submarines, and pray to that God asking for the destruction of the enemy and for the safe return of all those who sailed on those ships?

In discussing this or related subjects I have come across the remark: "Remember, after all, time is an illusion. When this tiresome earth life of suffering is over, the entity will see it as but a fleeting moment . . ." etc, as if this was the complete answer. I have also come across the somewhat callous comments: "Humans get what they ask for. They have a limited amount of free will. Look at what a mess they have made of even that little freedom!"

How little most of us understand these matters is emphasised by the utterances of many clergymen when officiating at a funeral service, or during their well-meant but futile efforts to console the close relatives and friends of the deceased.

It has been stated by some of the great ones (the spiritually advanced) that no human being can create or destroy life. It is possible only to destroy the outer form, but the life (the eternal spirit) remains. To believe otherwise is to be presumptuous, even sacrilegious, they say.

It also has been stated by some of these great ones that always there are vast numbers of human entities awaiting rebirth and further experience on earth, eagerly seeking suitable bodies. These, we are told, receive guidance and help in choosing the race, nation, area and family most likely to provide the best environment and general conditions to further advance the overall growth of each individual ego.

Thus, when an embryo is aborted or accidentally destroyed, the life of the budding infant is not destroyed, but its development has been interrupted, the earth experience

delayed. I have heard it argued that if human wrecks (such as already described) or terribly malformed infants were allowed to die, their advancement would be helped rather than hindered.

Take your choice. It is up to each of us seriously to think about these things and to respond *according to one's conscience*. This is best achieved alone and in the silence, certainly not in the heat of a noisy, emotional discussion. The one eternal truth is always there. Eventually each and every human will find and know it.

Did Joan of Arc escape the stake?

THE first instalment of Gordon Charley's article, "What happens after you die" (July issue) contained some very interesting theories.

However, he makes a positive statement which he might have qualified with "French history books state." He wrote: "Joan of Arc was psychic. Like Moses, she followed the inspired directions she received. *She was burned at the stake* (my italics). Later on, *when people began to understand these things* (my italics) she was made a saint."

I do not know whether or not Joan was burned at the stake, was psychic, or saintly, or deserved canonising. Like so many modern people, she apparently was "concerned" and spoke out and worked for a cause. That was good! However, the following copy of a news cutting from the Wisconsin, USA "Milwaukee Journal," December 3, 1967, might be of interest to both Gordon Charley and your readers.

PRESIDENT Charles de Gaulle leans heavily on the legend of Joan of Arc. He has let it be known that he is descended from the Arc family—which gave him reflected glory. But now there is a move afoot in France to demolish the whole Joan of Arc story.

French history books say that Joan was burned at the stake by the English at Rouen in 1431. The Church of Rome accepted this version of the facts and canonised her in 1920.

Now some critics and historians are saying that the whole tale is nonsense.

Documents that have been in the hands of the Armoises family for centuries have come to light. These establish pretty conclusively

that the Maid of Orleans escaped burning, was released from jail after years of imprisonment, and went to live near Metz where she married Robert des Armoises.

They also suggest that Joan was far from being a humble peasant but born of royal blood, one of the select brood known as the "*enfants de France*."

Genealogists are fairly sure that her mother was Queen Isabeau of France and that her father was probably the king's brother, Louis d'Orleans.

Last in line of the Armoises is Comte Pierre de Sermoises, who lives in a cosy flat just off the Champs Elysees, surrounded by documents of his 20 or so ancestors.

"No official historian wants to put the matter straight," he said in an interview. "My family has known about the marriage of Joan throughout its whole history. But until recently the members could say nothing for political reasons. Maybe I, too, have to be careful what I say, or I will end up in the Bastille."

He is helping historian Maurice David-Damac prepare a detailed book on the subject.

R. R. STANLEY

2000 AD

by Jean Mathers

*WHERE did you lose your way, brother man?
You polluted the rivers, the air and
The sea. You hid the land from the sun.
You ravaged the face of fertile earth
Till her power to sustain was gone.*

*Where did you lose your way, brother man?
You killed the innocent, took no heed
Of man's degradation through drugs and lust,
His greed for power. Did you expect
God to be affronted forever?*

*See the desolation, brother man,
Consider the earth, devoid and stark.
No men, no trees, no birds, no flowers.
No children. Devastation. For where
Depravity prevailed, evil reigned.*

*Here's where you lost your way, brother man.
You wept no tears for one another.
You hated. You forgot that love and
Kindness are the only weapons to unite
Mankind and dwell in peace with God.*

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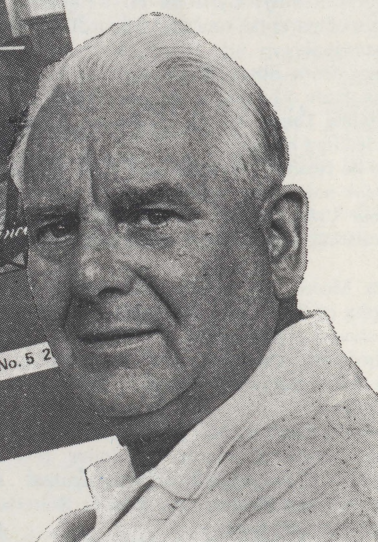
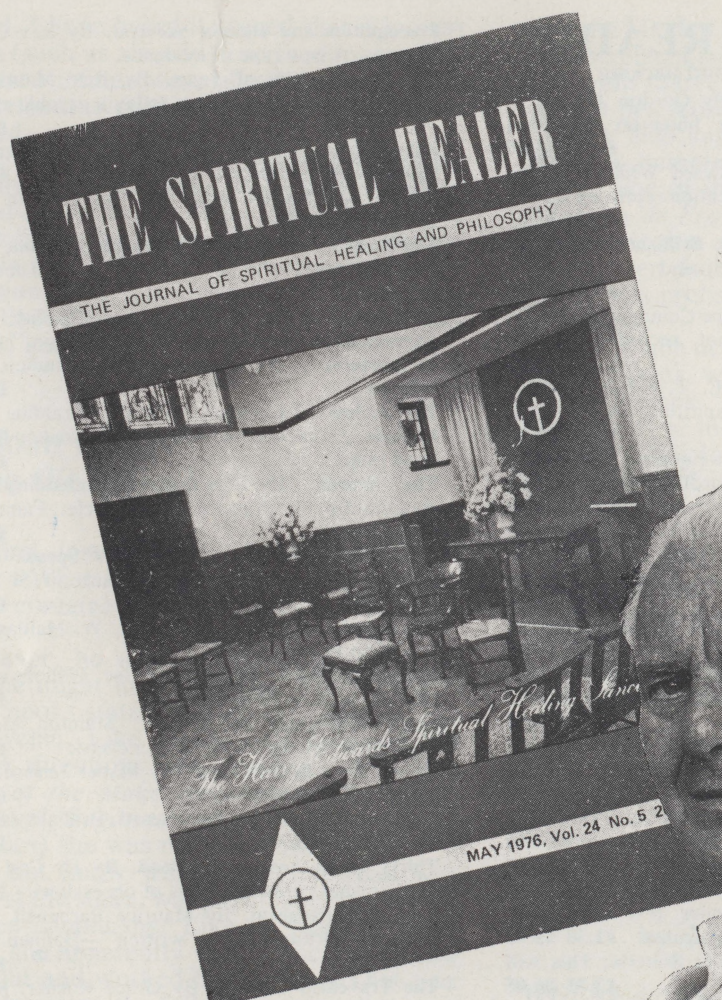
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