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HUMANITY'S CROSS ROADS

HOW THE CHALLENGE OF MATERIALISTIC IDEOLOGY CAN BE MADE

By M. A. ST. CLAIR STOBART

NERO fiddled whilst Rome, which was in his charge, was burning. To-day, the Churches are fiddling with unessentials whilst the spiritual world which is in their charge, is being attacked by incendiary bombs.

Spiritual values: love, mercy, justice, brotherhood, sympathy, compassion—these are being flouted by the new Ideology, in which brute force, violence, hatred, malice, vindictiveness, cruelty, are the approved characteristics. Hitler (according to his whilom confidant, Dr. Rauschnigg) says:

"We do well to speculate on human vices rather than on human virtues. The French Revolution may have appealed to virtue; we shall do better to do the opposite. I am carrying on power politics, with the aid, if I choose, of naked ruthless force. And what earthly difference can there be between using every means of treachery and misrepresentation, and ordering my armies to march? I am restoring to Force its original dignity—that of the source of all greatness and the creatrix of order.

"I recognise no moral law in politics. Politics is a game in which every sort of trick is permissible. I shall certainly not make it a matter of principle to act immorally in the conventional sense. I am ready to stick at nothing. That is all"

We see here the Ideology which threatens to engulf the world. And the Churches, upon whom the world has relied for defence of spiritual values, seem powerless to combat this new régime of unadulterated force, terrorism, and atheism. And this is because the Churches' weapons are out of date. They are fighting with bows and arrows against armoured tanks and poison gases. At a moment when the whole fabric of spiritual values is tumbling about our ears, where we are faced with the grimmest realities of barbarism the world has ever seen, the Churches still prate of metaphysical doctrines which have no relation to real life; they still, in their service of public worship, are thanking God for having thousands of years ago brought some ancient Hebrew people safely through the Red Sea, whilst the world around them is itself engulfed in a Red Sea of blood and anguish.

These are reasons which would seem to justify those who contend that the world could get along comfortably without the Church. The Churches, it is said, belong to a past age, and their obliteration is part of a general scheme of Evolution, to give place to a new Ideology, a new world order.

I want however to suggest that, with all their shortcomings, the Churches are the recognised exponents and custodians of Christianism—the Ideology in direct conflict with Nazism, and that therefore upon the Churches rests to-day a heavy responsibility for the future of Mankind. My argument is as follows:

This doctrine of Evolution, with which people console themselves for all developments, shares the fate of most popularised doctrines—its rewards are claimed whilst its conditions are ignored. People assume that Evolution must be upwards, towards higher forms of life; they ignore the fact that Evolution can lead to a cul-de-sac. They also—and this is my immediate point—ignore the fact that Progress may lead not only forward, but backwards in the scale of life. Many organisms have evolved and survived in full vigour, with temporary benefit to themselves, by abandonment of higher structural forms and by retrogression to simpler types. The elimination, for

instance, of wings in the Kiwi bird of New Zealand (which to the aesthetic observer would appear as a structural degeneration) has, as Professor Weismann pointed out, proved of great advantage to the species in the past, enabling it, as a ground-bird, to adapt itself to conditions under which food was procurable along the lines of least resistance. But, owing to this special adaptation to environment, the species, having lost its wings, is now likely, as a result of the subsequent introduction of firearms, to undergo extinction. The Kiwi bird thus illustrates the double truth that Evolution is not necessarily from lower to higher forms of life, and that specialisation, or a too perfect adaptation to any one material environment, may be at the risk of ultimate extinction of the species. (Let Hitler with his specialised weapons of destruction take warning).

AN IMPORTANT FACT

But a still more important fact is generally ignored, and to this I would draw attention. In all evolutionary processes there must be a selective agency to fix the type. Now, in all the stages of development below that of the human-social, the transformation of organisms, both upwards and downwards, has been determined by the Force we vaguely term Nature acting upon Environment—a Force which the organisms were powerless to resist.

The transmutation, for instance, of the gigantic Dinosaurs of Jurassic times into the tiny hole-and-corner lizards of our rocks, has been due to climatic conditions of environment, ag inst which the type was helpless. Similarly, the loss of wings in the worker-ant illustrates the process of "reversed natural selection"—selection, that is, which, though operating usefully to the species as concerns the special environment of the moment, is not of a nature to be appropriately termed upward growth.

Even parasitism, involving the loss of limbs and every organ except the mouth and stomach, is, to the lice which flourish by sucking the blood of fishes, an

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evolvement of Nature's ordering, and is of undoubted advantage to the lice.

But whereas, in Biology, the environment transforms the organism, in Sociology, Man transforms the Environment. For from the moment that Consciousness was developed in Man, he has selected his own environment and has thus supplanted Nature, and has himself assumed responsibility for his evolution.

If, therefore, there is a God, and if Evolution is a part of this God's scheme for the denizens of Earth, God is at this moment leaving it to Man to decide the evolutionary future of the human race. And it is painfully clear that though Man himself seems to be ignorant of his responsibility, our human race is confronting a cross road of unexampled importance. For, should the Nazi Ideology prevail over Europe, and perhaps beyond, the type of human being which is now nurtured in Nazi territory will determine the future evolution of Mankind. The environment of a military, murderous, merciless, soulless character will mould its creatures to the Nazi pattern of a mechanised, crueltydealing robot, and will inhibit the possibility of survival of all spiritual values.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

It is not generally realised that the great law of Evolution, "survival of the fittest," does not necessarily entail the survival of the noblest, or of the highest types. It means, actually, survival of the fittest to survive in any given environment. And the fittest to survive in a Nazi environment would be those who subscribe most whole-heartedly to the Nazi code of brutality and who deny the validity of all those qualities which have been regarded by the Churches of all Faiths throughout the world as essential to Man's spiritual welfare and to his progress as Homo Sapiens.

Now, those qualities which have been sponsored by the Churches for 2,000 years are epitomised in the term Christianity, and Christianity, as distinguished from Churchianity, is the Ideology which in Europe, and over a large portion of the Globe, is in direct conflict with that of the Dictators who are ravaging the world. Christianity embodies all those qualities which appertain to the spiritual nature of Man, without which Man will degenerate to the lower forms of life from which he ascended—to the sub-human.

And this brings us face to face with a position which may well be a turning-point in the history of Mankind; for at the signpost with which we are to-day confronted the two arms point in opposite directions. One road leads to Nazidom which assumes Materialism as the governing principle; the other leads to Christian-ism which embodies those spiritual qualities for which all the religions in the world in their various forms have

What do we mean by Materialism? Materialism has stood. asserted that throughout the whole scheme of life there is no warrant to be found, outside Man, for human codes which coddle disease, impose burdensome restrictions on the freedom of sexual and physical activities, and which, generally speaking, displace Might and substitute Sympathy and Justice as determining factors in life. Nature, says Materialism, is red in tooth and claw; she tramples the feeble under foot, and punishes in-differently the virtuous and the wicked. For Nature, Might is the only criterion of Right, and intentional justice or Morality, as we understand the term, is unknown. "Of moral purpose," epitomises Huxley,
"I see no trace in Nature." Since then, says Materialism, the ethics of humanity are without prototype in the realm of Nature and we cannot acknowledge a super-nature, we are forced to declare their origin inscrutable, and to ignore (and even, as with the Nazis, disdain the value of) qualities of sentimental origin, which are prejudicial to Man's success as a physical being, struggling for Survival—or in many translation. Lebensraum. Survival—or in modern terminology, Lebensraum. The principles of the Materialist are thus, it is plain, the principles of Nazidom. Moral purpose and spiritual values are ruled out.

But the crux of the Materialist-Nazi argument lies in the assertion "We cannot acknowledge a Super-Nature." And the validity of the argument depends on whether there is, or there is not, justification for belief in a Super-Nature.

We hold that to-day the whole Materialist argument is shattered, since Psychic Science is proving that there is a Super-Nature and that the qualities essential for successful evolvment in that Super-Nature are those qualities of love, mercy, justice, sympathy, brotherhood, which have throughout Christendom, as in all world religions, been proclaimed as essential to the salvation of mankind—yes, essential to his salvation as a spiritual being and a denizen of a supernatural world.

Those qualities are admittedly, as Hitler affirms, often prejudicial to material success. We are experiencing that truth in our present conflict, where our humanitarian scruples concede many advantages to the enemy. Those principles, despised by the materialist Nazis as useless in the physical struggle for life, are the essentials of success in the spiritual struggle.

QUALITIES ESSENTIAL TO CONTINUED LIFE

The physical struggle ends at the grave, when physical success or failure is blotted out. The spiritual struggle continues after the grave, and success is generally in inverse ratio to the success encountered physically. In the long run, therefore, if we regard Evolution as a continuous factor in life, it must be the qualities which are essential to the *continued life* of Man which are of greater importance for his evolutionary welfare rather than those which have only contributed to a success which ends at the grave.

And to-day, Psychic Science is doing what the Churches have failed to do. Psychic Science provides proof that there is a Super-Nature, a spirit-world. And this necessitates a rehaul of the Materialist argument; for our knowledge of this Super-Nature shews us that Man is primarily a spirit-being, with a soul-body of which the physical body is only the counterpart.

We learn also that the laws of Nature which have governed the evolution of physical Man are not applicable to his spiritual evolution. The theory of Evolution did not take into account the existence of soul or spirit. It was concerned only with physical evolution, controlled by Nature, acting in accordance with her law of Adaptation to Environment. But if Evolution is a law of the whole Universe it is presumably operative in this Super-Nature—the world of spirit; and its laws must be sought in that world of spirit. And we now know that the progress of the soul, or spirit, follows lines not of "Nature red in tooth and claw," but lines indicated by the principles which Jesus and all great Leaders of all Faiths have, with instinctive genius, embodied in their Teaching—love, mercy, justice, sympathy, brother-hood, etc.

We know to-day, through Psychic Science, as St. Paul knew, that there is a natural or physical body, and that there is a spiritual body; and that there is constant conflict between the two. We are to-day witnessing this conflict in an intensified and generalised form. The result of this conflict will determine the fate of the world. If Nazidom is successful, and Hitler wins the war, he will have lost not only his own soul, but the soul of all the peoples of the world he has conquered: and man's progress as a spiritual being on this Earth will be retarded, perhaps for evermore.

The tide of physical evolution makes no advance upon the ancient landmarks of civilisation. Its ebb and flow is rhythmical, ever within the same strand limits, and if mankind is to be lifted, during his Earth sojourn, to a higher plane, some force other than that inherent in capricious waves of material evolution must be essayed.

In this case, the essentials of such evolution must be

inherent in Man to-day—awaiting the generative force which shall build up the evolving development. And if there is, as we believe, a Spirit-plane, and if Spirit is the dominant factor of that plane, might it not be, at this time of the rediscovery of the psychic faculties—which are the faculties of the soul, the faculties which put us in touch with the spirit-world—might it not be that along lines of evolvement of the psychic faculty, Man's salvation may be found?

The suggestion will be ridiculed by scientific convention-mongers of the day. But would not convention-mongers of our Simian ancestry, puffed with pride at their emergence from the reptile stage, have similarly scoffed at the notion that it would be along lines of development of *Mind*, a fantastical, invisible abstract—rather than by improvement, say, in those organs through which their own differentiation from the reptiles had been gained, that the evolvement of Homo, from Pithecanthropus, would be accomplished?

And so, may it not be that this strange sixth sense, the psychic sense, has been implanted, not to enable us by table-turning, etc., as an end in itself, to obtain messages from our deceased friends, but to enable us to discover that as the permanent element within us is Spirit, and the psychic faculties (clairvoyance, clairaudience, and the like) are to the soul what the physical faculties of sight, hearing, etc., are to the physical body, that they are not redundant, but are there for a set purpose—namely, to cater for the welfare and evolution of the spirit-body, as the physical faculties cater for the welfare and evolution of the physical body.

In this case, their neglect is criminal, and their development should not be left to the haphazard handling of the multitude. Spiritualism should be recognised as a Science—with which the scientists should concern themselves as being of immense importance for the future of the Race, a science which might save Mankind from the slippery slopes of a Materialism such as that which is threatening the world to-day.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCHES

But—and it is here that the Churches' responsibility begins—the development of the psychic faculties may do more harm than good unless they are used for the furtherance of those spiritual qualities of which they are the handmaids. Those spiritual qualities (love, mercy, justice, etc.) are the *leit motif* of Christianity, and the Churches are the custodians of Christianity.

The heart of Christianity is pulseless when denuded of all those proofs that the spirit and the spirit-plane are on the direct line of advance from Pithecanthropus to Super-Man. And we suggest that, at this critical juncture, the Churches should take a larger view of their responsibilities. They should realise that Evolution did not end 2,000 years ago, and that as Psychic Science is the science of the seance-room, Spiritualism is the science of the soul. It is upon this science, the science of the soul, that the Churches could build the religion for the New Age that must follow the defeat of Hitlerism and Materialism—a Religion which could make use of the now dormant faculties of the soul, to shew that whilst Materialism leads to devolution, to the sub-human, Christianism, based on recognition of the faculties of the soul, is on the direct line of ascent, from the sub-human,

through the human, to the Divine.

The Social and National welfare of the people are centralised respectively in the State and in the Defence Forces. Responsibility is not left to individuals. The spiritual welfare of the people is, by general consent, centralised in the Churches; similarly, responsibility should not be left to individuals. Christianism cannot

be maintained apart from the Churches.

Therefore, Churches! To you has been entrusted care of the Lamp to light Mankind along the Everlasting Way, lest in the darkness men mistake the road. See to it then, before it is too late, that your Lamp is filled with oil that is inexhaustible.

THE ULTRA-PERCEPTIVE FACULTY

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

FULL weight must be allowed to Dr. Hettinger's intimation that "this work* has been undertaken after several years of preliminary merely observational investigation of so-called 'psychic powers' of professional 'Mediums.' "

He was not impressed by the "alleged physical phenomena," but the "so-called mental phenomena"

attracted him more and more.
"Alleged" seems to imply that his investigation was either limited or unfortunate; it could never be used by anyone with good experience in such matters: one might think the phenomena uninteresting, but one would know they happened.

However, he determined "to undertake a systematic experimental study of the mental phenomena along strictly scientific lines," and for such study one is always

grateful, however lean may be the results.

He harps-perhaps harps is too strong a word-on the dis-ability under which psychic phenomena labour in being unable to reproduce themselves at the bidding of the investigator; but he is surely wrong in claiming an immunity from such a defect for scientific research.

He must have forgotten the heartbreaking failures at reproduction which beset the beginnings of many great

scientific discoveries.

Why should the human element which abhors repetition be expected to repudiate itself in its psychic adventures? Why should a man who dreams the first four horses in the Derby be expected to provide a reliable tip every 1st of June? Psychic unreliability is one of the strongest points in its favour, because it fits so accordantly into the human orbit.

The author realised that even in the psychic province of psychometry, which he proposed to investigate, really scientific evidence was extremely hard to come by, and that he would have to be content with his successes averaging something better than could be attributed to

chance.

I think he increased the odds against himself by the materials he selected to be psychometrised—all personal possessions from which he hoped to obtain information as to the owners.

That, of course, can be done; but such articles, whatever one's care, are so apt to pick up alien impressions; which though, perhaps, correctly inter-

preted, cannot be identified.

Excellent results were once obtained with some score of specimens from a natural history museum. These, enclosed in exactly similar cartons, were, when shuffled so that the identity of none of them was known, presented to the psychometrist.

After a successful reading, a dozen duplicates of a single specimen, concealed as before, and without the subject's cognisance, were presented, and produced in

their turn an unvarying analysis.

Dr. Hettinger proposes "ultra-perceptive faculty" as an improvement on "extra-sensory perception," and the proposal should meet with general acceptance; because "extra-sensory" is itself an assumption, and psychic perception, though it transcends ordinary perception, is characterised by both sensorial and purely intellectual impressions.

In such a work as this, where conclusions depend on an elaborate analysis of successes and failures, the mathematics must be studied directly from its pages. These do seem to incline the author to a belief in ultraperceptive cognition, and he considers, in conclusion, the various hypotheses by which it may be explained.

The Spiritualistic hypothesis he dismisses because the existence of "discarnate spirits" is not a scientifically proved fact per se, and because even if their existence was admitted it would have to be proved that they provided the information.

Further, man being a spirit, need he be discarnate to

attain the wider field of cognition?

The Vibration hypothesis in psychometry he considers

* The Ultra-Perceptive Faculty, by J. Hettinger, Ph.D. London. Rider and Co. N.D. 12s. 6d.

for various reasons still unproved; and the Hypothesis of a Cosmic Mind he would discount for the same reason,

The Telepathic hypothesis offers, he thinks, a plausible explanation of certain cases where the items perceived were found to form part of the subject's psychological make-up at the time of the test.

The Clairvoyant hypothesis lands him at once in

difficulties.

He speaks of "so-called" clairvoyance, and until a researcher has got beyond the "so-called" stage he must inevitably find himself up against the need for alternative definitions. Dr. Hettinger tries to dodge it by speaking of "a mental rapport between the percipient and a subject," or, in psychometry, of "a connecting-link which enables the sensitive to establish a mental rapport with the subject and exercise the faculty of ultra-perceptive cognition."

But can it be said that the use of a French word carries us a fraction further into the understanding of the problem. Rapport certainly! but how and by what is it achieved? One is conscious, in all these investigations, of a disinclination to face the implications of clairvoyance, and, therefore, to describe it as "so-called," or "alleged," in order to be rid of its unaccountable achievements as the messenger of mind.

There is no need to link it with spiritualistic manifestations, save in so far as it does imply a not-entirely physical attribute. The best beginning might be made with what is known as travelling clairvoyance, though

it is really the clairvoyant who travels.

Eileen Garrett, from a room in New York, described what was taking place in a room, unknown to her, hundreds of miles away, in Newfoundland, and even reported the contents of a book its occupant was reading.

The only clairvoyance in the business was probably in the transmission of news between the two parts of herself. That, surely, is a more interesting and enlightening problem than those on which so many psychic enquirers spend their time.

In this case, as in scores of others, it is impossible to attribute the results to fraud, chance, or inaccurate reporting; and until we have made up our mind about such happenings we shall find ourselves, like the author,

forced to use definitions which define nothing at all. An instance of where one is landed is supplied by Dr. Hettinger when he has to deal with the ultra-

perceptive cognition of future events.

"From a scientific point of view," he tells us, "this research provides no proof of the existence of an ultra-precognitive faculty, which would enable a person to cognise future events otherwise than by reasoning.

He admits that, if some of the items given by his sensitives had been followed up and been confirmed by the testimony of future events, they might, statistically significant, " have enabled us to accept the probability of ultra-perceptive cognition with respect to future events.'

This is, indeed, to tie the horse behind the cart which

has nothing in the shafts to move it.

It is quite a number of years since Charles Richet, that hardened sceptic, wrote at the close of a convincing chapter: " A definite inference arises from these facts, whether they be important or trivial; an inference that no criticism of details can invalidate. It is that premonition is a demonstrated fact . . . It would be inexcusably rash to affirm, as I have boldly done, that there are premonitions, if abundant and formal proof had not been advanced."

It is wasted effort to spend years on clairvoyant guessing, if we are, as does the author, to shelve the key to the whole business, because it implies conditions which we either dislike or do not understand.

It is late in the day to talk of "the probability of 'ultra-perceptive precognition' of future events, when the fact of it has been accepted by scientists for a quarter of a century.

The power is one, whether applied to the past, the present, or the future, and as such we must accept it

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

GUIDES AND REINCARNATION

SIR,—I am very interested in Mr. W. Harrison's letter on "the Reincarnation question," published in LIGHT on June 20th; and, as my name is mentioned, I hope you will allow me to add a brief comment.

When, nearly a quarter of a century ago, I first commenced psychical investigation, I had all the prejudices of a Victorian upbringing against the doctrine of Reincarnation. This prejudice was gradually and very gently dispelled by the Guides in the course of the

scripts which I received from them.
Since then, many "Karmic" memories have come to light, the accuracy of which has been amply proved by the evidence of those with whom I have lived and worked in long past centuries.

Experience, however, has fully convinced me that only a portion of the modern Western world is psychically

prepared to receive this doctrine as a fact.

In Greek Mythology, the reincarnating Soul was constrained to pass through the Waters of Lethe, Forgetfulness. This allegorical picture exemplifies a precept of divine mercy, for the uninitiated ego could not bear the memories of greatness without pride, nor the memories of depravity without humiliation.

The epitome of this Karmic past, which all must face sooner or later in the course of terrestrial life, is the Dragon on the Threshold, an occult apparition for which the human Soul must be prepared and armed, as a soldier for the battle, lest it succumb to the reactions

of such a revelation.

For this reason, not all Teachers who inspire us from the Other Side are qualified or permitted to impart this knowledge. The greater and more fully prepared the incarnate mind of the Medium, the greater and more knowledgeable the Guide who is detailed to hand down

the transcendental teaching.

Many on this earth are teachers who are not fully qualified in the highest University degrees, and it is a natural impulse on the part of a discarnate Soul to return and impart its knowledge to those it has left behind; but this impulse is not necessarily a guarantee that the instructing Soul, so lately passed over, has learned, in his short celestial sojourn, the Wisdom of the Ages. An explanation of this, and other misunderstandings, given to me by my Guides, is embodied in my book, *The Future of Mr. Purdew*.

I feel personally that a new and greater understanding of this great doctrine—which was universal until about the sixth century A.D., when it was declared a heresy by the Church Fathers—is essential at the present moment when human life is in the melting-pot, and only a true conception of the universal nature of existence and a certain knowledge of the joy which is the reward of sacrifice can give mankind endurance, peace of mind,

and faith in God.

MARJORIE LIVINGSTON.

Sir,—The letter from W. Harrison on "The Reincarnation Question" (LIGHT, June 20th) quotes The Harmony of the Spheres as one source of a satisfactory explanation of the reines matrices there and I. explanation of the reincarnation theory-and I agree with him. But Arcazaiel's very complete and satisfying explanation does not support the reincarnation theory as usually propounded and understood; on the contrary, as demonstrated in the following passages (Ps. 130;

131):
"I say again that the law of reincarnation does not one plane of existence. The life of the ego should be progressive, journeying from cycle to cycle through the Cosmic Realms . . . Therefore, if a man shall pass into the astral spheres with the idea dominant within his mind that he shall return to earth and reincarnate therein, he has created a powerful driving force that must and does affect him in his new environment. He may

yet be dissuaded from his purpose by Elders from the Eternal City, but even these may not impinge upon his divinely-given faculty of freewill. If he is determined to return, there is nought that shall hinder him.

Now this idea prevails among certain communities of earth peoples, and is altogether absent among others. For this reason you will find Teachers from our side of the veil who will tell you in all truth that they know

nought of reincarnation.

These are conversant with the divine Law that man shall progress onward through the spheres and that one life amid earth conditions should suffice him for the necessary experience. They know, indeed, that many there are who come to earth and incarnate that so they may assist mankind for whom their soul has sorrow, but this aspect is a departure from the main theory, as is also the fact that to some also return is a necessity

without which they may not progress."

These quotations indicate clearly why some spirit controls inform us they have no knowledge of reincarnation; also why there is no necessity for them to have such knowledge. The exceptions mentioned by Arcazaiel strengthen the general principle of spiritual progress and are the "exceptions that prove the rule;" the mistake of so many is in building an orthodoxy

around the exceptions. Enfield.

W. L. AUSTIN.

A number of letters are held over, including one by Mr. Hector Waylen on "Tolstoi's Prediction."

KEEP THIS WORK GOING

AN appeal for financial help in these difficult days, when pockets are shallower and needs multiplied in every direction, must be accompanied by an admission of the various calls upon our resources. The first call upon money we possess which can be spared after we have met legitimate family and household demands, is from our country for the successful prosecution of the war. That call cannot be disregarded except at our peril. Next come friends in need and individual cases of distress within our personal knowledge for which we naturally feel some responsibility as circumstance has led them across our path.

The wider demands come from charitable institutions, churches and all fraternities engaged in any way upon work of public benefit. Among the latter are found Spiritualist organisations, and so, on the instructions of the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance, an appeal is being made to members and friends for financial assistance to maintain the work of the Alliance fully in

all departments.

The majority of members has been very loyal to the Alliance in maintaining subscriptions, although so many are away from London and unable to benefit from their membership.

We have to keep ourselves prepared for the great increase of work which will inevitably fall to us in the future, and for being called upon to meet a variety of needs as an outcome of our general work. Those recently thrown into trouble by the war are already beginning to come to us. The Alliance is most anxious to maintain its preparedness to cope with any demand that may arise. Will all true Spiritualists recollect the comfort Spiritualism can give to the bereaved, and to those troubled by the tragic state of the world in the search for a philosophy of life.

Funds are needed, in addition to membership fees which do not cover the cost of the whole of the work of the Alliance. The Council asks that this need may be remembered. Please give generously now, so that this work may be enlarged and expanded. All donations

will be thankfully received.

MERCY PHILLIMORE, Secretary.

Light

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

EDITOR

GEORGE H. LETHEM

LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me (Psalm 23).

ALTHOUGH death is often thought of as a great evil, it is, when understood, life's greatest blessing; it opens the door to a wider and more generous life. The Spiritualist, who knows a little of the life beyond, does realise that, and is therefore unperturbed at its coming. It is not Death but Life we need to consider in these days. Death will come to all of us in time, but until then our question is not of dying, but of living.

Jesus said: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." To make the supreme sacrifice of giving up one's life for another is, indeed, a great thing, and in these days it is done with a quiet resolution that wins the approval of all.

But may not living for one's friend show a love equal to that of dying for him? It depends upon circumstances. If death be the only way a friend can be served, then death it must be. But it is sometimes harder to live than to die, and we must bear that in mind. In these days we need to look at life from every angle, to be prepared for all contingencies. To keep the heart calm and the soul uplifted—that is, keep the mind to the fundamental realities and not be perturbed by the froth and spume on the surface of life. There is much of that in these days. The river of life runs deep and in its depths there is the calm flow of even living.

One of the things we need to guard against is the sin of evil imaginings, not to let our minds dwell upon the possible destruction of life or property, whether it be our own or that of our friends. There is a state of mind that takes a ghoulish glee in gloating over what may be, and in retailing the direful possibilities of the present hour. Such folks seems to take a grim satisfaction in their misery and in trying to impart that misery to others. These "Job's comforters" are not helpful folks, and they should subject their minds to a severe discipline. We all have our burdens to bear and we do not wish to have our strength sapped and our minds unnecessarily upset by evil tidings. "Under all circumstances," said the Seer of Poughkeepsie, "keep an even mind." And that is one of the hardest yet bravest things we can do.

GIANT DESPAIR

In his immortal allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Bunyan reveals a deep understanding of the struggles and difficulties of the average man. He shows the temptations that have to be overcome, the doubts to be resolved, resolution to be kept at white-heat, and memory of the promises to be kept fresh and green. It was forgetfulness of these that lead Christian and Hopeful into Bypath Meadow and so to the Castle of Giant Despair. And what a villain Despair is! How he can grip the heart and shake the soul and daunt the spirit if we get into his clutches. And to-day some are in danger of that. But we must not forget the promises, or our resolution and power, with the help of God, to overcome our present difficulties. Giant Despair cannot stand up to the resolutely strong and firmly hopeful; he speedily falls into a fit of trembling and is palsied by the light of faith. We must remember that, and,

like Christian and Hopeful, we shall come out into the open and see the "Delectable Mountains." How glorious a sight that is!

Then there are the Chatterers we meet on the way. The Talkatives, the Ignoramuses, the Heady-minded, and the Facing-both-ways. How they love to distort the truth, and try to make our hearts sink into gloom.

Here a quiet common sense will be our great help. We shall quickly see through the veils of deceit and be able to keep a steady gaze upon the Celestial City. Like Christian and Hopeful, we shall know our strength is in the Lord, and like them know that by patient and persevering effort we shall arrive at our journey's end. Like them we must keep awake when passing through the enchanted ground to the Land of Beaulah, close to the Heavenly City. Then we shall be able to review our journey: see the traps which nearly ensnared our feet, the dashed hopes that cast us down, the difficulties we overcame, the loving companionship of friends that gave comfort and support. We shall be rich in experience and ripe for further glories and greater adventures.

So with hearts beating with high courage, with minds filled with light, we go forward, knowing that in God's good time all will be well.

THE SUPREME ALLEGORY

Life is the supreme allegory, full of wonderful significance. We may enter into its spirit, for at its best life is happiness, is harmony, order, proportion, beauty, which is the final end here, but the beginning of greater splendours beyond. All around us life is full of suggestions, of fine symbols, of hopes realised, of battles won. For life never loses; it has the secret of eternal success. It goes down into the grave only to rise again in triumph.

It is an ever expanding power and glory. And that is ours, for we are life! Eternal, immortal. It is as gay as heaven, as joyous as the trill of a lark. Yea, and can be, if we will it, as dark as the grave. But it cannot be kept there. Its surging energies break forth into ever renewed effort. Thank God for it.

We can in these dark and grim days keep alight the lamp of the spirit. Whatever tasks are ours, whatever trials we may be called upon to undergo, or suffering to endure, let us ever remember there is a power that saves, that those tasks, trials, and sufferings will cleanse and make whole. We must keep our trust in God, and our faith in one another. Whatever changes there may be, this trust and faith will abide. The eternal principles of righteousness will lead to peace. Let us lay hold on them, live in honour and honesty, in love and fellowship, giving unto each support and help. It may be dark, but the dawn is at hand, possibly much nearer than we dream.

So we will keep our hearts uplifted, steady, calm and beating with the certainty that our hopes will be realised God be praised.

W. H. EVANS.

LADY CONAN DOYLE

Lady Conan Doyle, widow of Sir Arthur Conan Doyl passed to the higher life (in a London clinic) of Thursday, last week, after a long illness. Lady Cona Doyle took a great interest in Sir Arthur's work of Spiritualism, and accompanied him on his mission-took in America, Australia and South Africa; and since the Arthur's transition in 1930 she has let it be known the she has had frequent communications from him, which his identity and continued care for her were establed beyond doubt. In many ways she has sought assist the work with which her famous husband's na will always be associated.

Lady Conan Doyle was a daughter of the Mr. J. B. Leckie, of Monkstown, Crowborough, Sus and married Sir Arthur in 1907, his second wife.

THE PSYCHIC THREAD

THE SCIENCE OF THE OTHERWHERE

IF I were asked to define Spiritualism I could find no better definition of what I understand it to mean than The Science of the Otherwhere. There is overwhelming evidence that from the remotest periods of man's history the human mind has been intensely conscious of "a world beyond the world." Wherever a trace of Homo Sapiens remains, that relique is invested with reminiscences of occult lore, of magic, of religion—in short, of Spiritualism.

The human race might seem in its terrestrial cradle, at the breast of Mother Earth, to have imbibed the very essence of the Mysterious. So it would seem, but the truth is rather that man retained in the childhood of his race a vivid remembrance of his parental existence. It is of the nature of materialism to gather like moss about the Spirit throughout life. As with the individual child, so with the childhood of the human race. Like the individual child, the human race child came "trailing clouds of glory" from a higher, more spiritual state.

Those child-men of remotest antiquity were more intensely aware of all that we call psychic than were their descendants of historic times, and far more so than is the moribund human society of the present age. The senses of our first forefathers were keenly alive to spiritual presences—the nature-spirits, the elementary spirits, were clearly sensed by them; the rivers and forests, the seas and winds, were to their senses visibly, audibly, peopled with Beings, akin to, perhaps, but differing vastly from the human. In the same way, contact between the living and the dead was never abandoned. Physical death was not only believed to be, but was known to be in no sense a personal extinction. The living joined hands with the dead across a mysterious gulf, the bridging of which was a prime concern and duty of the priesthood; and the priesthood was the custodian of all wisdom, of all authority, of all power.

HAUNTERS OF THE SILENCES

But even to-day some people there are whose senses are still alive to those presences that haunt the wilder, more remote regions of every country. Moreover, most people are dimly aware of them. There is a certain type of landscape that has at all times been associated with the mysterious, the ghostly. People who have no particular psychic gifts describe these places as "eerie." Conversation dies away in such places; the air has a peculiar quality, the atmosphere is essentially different and unusual. Now, there can be but one reason for such peculiarity of atmosphere, universally sensed, one explanation, and one only, of the awesome feelings that strike us suddenly in a certain mountain-gorge, in a certain forest-glade, in a certain garden-close where "garden flowers grow wild." The explanation is simple: Such places are haunted. Anyone, save those who are utterly insensible to things of the spirit, can feel unseen presences close to them there. We know that we are being watched, and, as Seton Gordon so justly puts it, "sometimes watched resentfully," by those invisible watchers.

Those who have never visited such places, or whose material envelopes are too dense for any spiritual impression to penetrate, will be forced to admit that no other explanation can plausibly be advanced for the age-old association, in the minds of all kinds and conditions of mankind, of certain types of landscape with the "ghostly," with the "spiritual." To us, and our numbers are legion, who have wandered often by day and night in such regions, and who, without advancing any claim to special clairvoyance or clairaudience, are nevertheless alive to whatever presences from the "Otherwhere" may approach us more closely—to us, I say, such argument, though it proves our experience, is in no sense required. For

these experiences are as real as (nay, in a sense more real than) any of the thousand-and-one impressions of purely material things that trace their ephemeral characters upon the sand of the physical brain.

AN IMPORTANT INVESTIGATION

The truth is that the Nature Spirits have withdrawn from the noisier walks of man: Hamadryad has sought wilder woodlands, the Naiads remoter streams. The hideous march of densest mechanised materialism has driven out those elfin spirits, which are attuned to, and are inseparably a part of the wild, the lovely, the untamed aspects of nature—as God made it in the image of that higher nature whence all came and whither all will return.

It was of these Elementary Beings that I wrote last week with intent to classify them after the manner of some great occult masters, whose opinions regarding them I cited. That a serious study of these Beings should be undertaken, and would give the most farreaching results I am convinced. The Editor of Light replies in a Note that "Study has been given to this problem." The conclusions which apparently were reached demonstrate that this study was ineffectual. The type of communication which I suggest may be attributed to non-human spirits is often received where there is no fault of mediumship: nor will the theory of human frivolity be accepted by many who have experienced the kind of phenomena to which I allude. I suspect that the matter has been investigated from the wrong point of approach.

THE MARCH OF DESTINY

Gigantic, irresistible forces of Destiny are on the march; this no thinking person will be any longer disposed to doubt. We cannot by any art foresee the shape of the coming events. All we can foretell with certainty is that the supreme crisis advances hourly upon us. The birth pangs increase in agony and violence: the New Age is about to be born. Its infant form and features are inscrutable in that near future that seems as far distant as—indeed, far more distant than, the remotest antiquity.

Empires rise and fall and rise again, as the sun sets and rises, as the moon wanes and waxes, as tides ebb and flow. There is no vanity more vain than the pride of conquest, the pomp of worldly power. Writing of the ruins of Nineveh, Ragozin expresses an eternal ever-recurring verity: "That a few defaced, dismantled, moss-grown or sand-choked fragments of these mighty buildings would one day be the only trace, the sole memorial of a rule and of nations that would then have passed away for ever, even into nothingness and oblivion, scarcely was anticipated by the haughty conquerors who filled those halls with their despotic presence, and entered those consecrated gates in the pomp of triumph to render thanks for bloody victories and warlike exploits which elated their souls in pride till they felt themselves half divine."* Now the winged-bulls, symbols of those "demi-gods," are but objects of ignorant wonder in a far land. May it be long ere they are re-discovered by a strange people as reliques "Of London, not of Nineveh."†

Kingdoms perish, conquerors pass with their victims into the places of inevitable retribution and inexorable Justice. Only the *Spirit* survives. There, where its *light* has fallen, some fragment of *genius*, of the *divine*, remains. In arts, in letters, abides man's only terrestrial semblance of immortality, and if these abide ten thousand years, yet is that but a moment snatched from eternity. But the *Spirit* that created them abides for ever.

C. R. CAMMELL

*Z. A. Ragozin: Chaldea (The Story of the Nations). †See D. G. Rosetti's poem The Burden of Nineveh. The Psycho-Dynamics of "Knocks" and "Raps"

13—SOME INTERIM CONCLUSIONS

By ALAN HOWGRAVE-GRAHAM

HAVE now put before fellow-students of psychic phenomena all the evidence that I have been able to accumulate concerning the nature of these sounds called "Knocks," "Raps," or "Taps," the conditions attaching to their production, and the dynamics which govern them.

As to the validity of this evidence, I must leave the reader to form his own opinion, only assuring him that the various dialogues occurred exactly as recorded.

Personally, I draw, with due caution, the following interim conclusions from this evidence:

That the sounds are caused by no sort or kind of blow.

That they are explosive in character—consisting in the sudden instantaneous release of a variable and varying accumulated quantum of some force probably not known to daily physical Science in this precise form.

That probably this force is somehow akin to electricity, but whether or not this is so, that when in action it generates or evokes or releases some form of energy more definitely akin to electricity. (Note, however, that the insistence, in especially the last communications, that I have myself been supplying the "physical" force, implies that the operator may have to supply some different force, not of the same nature. This does not seem unlikely, but personally I have my doubts about the use of the word "physical." "Psycho-physical" one might pass, for the very excellent reason that one has no idea what one means by it (!).

That the release of this accumulation of force or forces is due to an initiatory thought-impulse whose exact nature and "mechanism" is probably not understood even by those who employ it. It should be noted that this was the one point to which I never once succeeded from any of the communicators in getting a quite definite answer.

That the production of the phenomenon has little or nothing to do with the individual atomic composition or the molecular structure of the substance in which it is occurring, even though the *audible sound effect* caused, in the form of atmospheric vibrations, may be, and as a rule is, characterised by the nature of the material chosen, such as wood, brick, or glass.

That some other person or persons must assist the operator by being the available source or sources of some form of energy with which he can not dispense.

That unless such person have the special faculty called "physical mediumship," he must, to supply that power: (a) Be in some special affinity or permanent or temporary harmony or attunement with the operator; and (b) preferably be in as little active, in as negative, as inert a mental condition as possible.

That the physical and mental condition of such person exerts considerable influence upon the possibility of incidence of the phenomena and also upon its character as to frequency and loudness of the sounds.

That the initiation of the phenomenon takes place primarily in the etheric counterpart of its material venue, and by some process, possibly analagous to a sort of inductive process, the percussion reproduces itself as actual physical vibrations in the actual material substance or thing.

That atmospheric conditions affect the production of the sounds, that darkness or soft light is preferable to strong light, and that the hours of daytime are less favourable than those of evening or of night time, at any rate in this country.

That the employment of some one particular article or spot for production of the phenomenon, whatever the motive of selection, is effected by a thought-concentration by the operator upon such *locale*. Two different motives were, in fact, mentioned, but one might be

discounted, as being in answer to a "leading question" of mine.

POSSIBLE HYPOTHESES
I suggest, as possible hypotheses only:

That the operator sees the etheric counterpart, not the physical or material original, and by that means is enabled to select, and to concentrate his thought-energy upon the spot in which he has decided to produce his

That he then collects in, or assembles at, or focuses upon this one spot the forces he will require, until he has built up a kind of saturation-charge, a state of things which might be faintly analogous to the ball-lightning with which we ourselves are familiar;

That he then carefully watches for the moment of one's entrance into that exact mental or psychic condition which is most favourable to his demonstration. "How does he distinguish that moment?" As far as I can make out, putting this and that together of things said to me at various times, what he sees is what he always calls my "aura," and therein such changes of psychic condition produced by my thought are reflected. It is the one point upon which it did not occur to me to seek information, but I am practically certain that this is the answer which I should have received;

The various types of readers will make what they like of it.

That he then, by some special final thought-impact of a dynamic character, "touches off" his accumulated power-charge, and thus causes the explosive release which produces in the substance itself the sound we hear.

As foretold in the séance with Frau von Strahl, I now have to revert to the one kind of knock-phenomenon here recorded which at first sight seems to conflict with the very precise information obtained and with the conclusions and hypotheses just detailed. I refer to Mr. Treu's "blows" upon the floor with his black-thorn stick and their apparent production of startlingly loud knocks. Had just "any one" reported the incidents, there might be a temptation to discredit them, and so dexterously to avoid the issue, but my knowledge both of Mr. Purchas as an investigator, and of Mrs. Purchas as an individual, puts such an idea quite out of the question. I need hardly say that Mrs. Purchas was a Medium for love, not for payment.

In this case, at least one Medium, and possibly one other or more mediumistic persons (whether they knew it or not) were present. I may say that I personally do not believe, and even in the absence of all I have put before my readers, would not believe that Councillor Treu really did what he did in the manner in which he appeared, and even claimed, to do it; as I

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WESTBOURNE HOUSE WESTBOURNE GROVE, LONDON, W.2 earlier pointed out, it involves too many too greatly improbable ideas. But I was not myself there, and it is and must be a matter of personal opinion in any case. My own tentative theory would be one of these two, neither of which looks quite good under a microscope.

That as part of his playful intention, or, more likely still in order to signify his presence graphically and convincingly to people to whom this would be of much more moment than details of what he was doing, or even from both motives put together, Mr. Treu may have pretended to use his stick to make a noise which he was knowingly producing otherwise.

Or else that he really thought that he was doing it

with his blackthorn, when, in fact, he was doing it by

thought-action.

And I suggest that in either case, mark you, in either case, he possibly saw the etheric counterpart of the floor, that he had, for evidential purposes, to carry conviction, shown himself complete with his blackthorn and that he used the point of the latter as a sort of focus-point of his own thought for, as it were, "touching off" the explosive release as previously suggested, whether or not he knew that he was thus

The sharp student might well say here that the idea in either supposition is in conflict with the somewhat difficult and lengthy preparatory technique that has been previously suggested through Mediums as necessary. The answer to that is, however, that in my case no Medium was present, while in the case of Mr. Treu at least one such was; it is clearly evident from all accounts that in the presence of most Mediums there is an abundance of "power," and that the operation can be instantaneously and extensively performed at will.

I do not for a moment expect the critical student to adopt either of these explanations; I have no doubt no end of holes could be picked in them; they are only put forward because I feel sure—that is, I feel as nearly sure as one can venture to feel in such an abstruse and recondite field of investigation, that whatever Mr. Treu did or did not do, he did not produce his sounds by literally striking blows. There I have to leave a rather puzzling point, in the hope that some other student, Mr. Purchas himself, perhaps, may be able to put forward some other solution at any rate more credible than that of blows.
(Next week: "Living Pages of God's Book.")

EXTERIORATION PHENOMENA
g on "Exterioration Phenomena" Speaking on Edinburgh Psychic College, Mr. J. B. M'Indoe referred specially to the experiments of Dr. Paul Joire relating

to exteriorisation of sensibility.

It had been found, he said, that with subjects in a hypnotic state sensibility to ordinary causes of pain was apparently transferred to a sensitive layer a few centimetres from the surface of the body. If this layer was pinched or pricked the subject felt pain. Further experiments suggested that once the sensibility had been exteriorised, it could become concentrated or condensed and localised on some material object, in physical contact with the subject, or at some distance from him. While this condition remained, the subject would feel clearly and definitely whatever impressed this object. So sensibility had been transferred to a glass of water, and also to a small putty figure, Joire thus reproducing a process that used to be credited to old-time witches. (From *The Scotsman*, 22nd June).

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CONSOLATION

BROTHER JIM and I were the two youngest boys in a large Victorian family. We were about the same age and did everything together. For instance, we went to the same schools and no one could be greater We both went to India, but he as an friends than we. officer in the R.F.A. and I as a servant of the King-Emperor, as a civil engineer. Our paths were separate after that, and in 1914 the Great War broke out. Jim was killed with the 2nd Life Guards; at first he was reported missing and two months after he was reported dead by the War Office.

I was in India then and this came as a great shock to me. At the time I thought I would never get over it and that life would be quite different for me. I retired to a place where I could not be seen and did a thing which I could not remember ever having done

before-wept.

In course of time I retired from India, and then heard by chance that there were two worlds-our world and the spiritual world, and that it was possible to get in touch with people who had died. I never got over my parting from Jim; and so, with the idea of getting in touch with him I went to a well-known Medium. at once came through and gave me a message telling how he was killed; but perhaps the most wonderful experience I ever had was hearing the well-known voice of Brother Jim talking to me a few feet away in the dark under the mediumship of the late Mrs. Perriman, who had the power of the direct voice. This was, of course, a great experience for me and I then understood that Brother Jim was always very near to me. He told me once that I must never weep for him because it hurt very much; and, besides, it was quite unnecessary because he was happier now than ever before and the spirit-world was far superior to the old world, where money was thought to be so important.

W. Hogarth Todd.

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Mrs. Helen Spiers, Clairvoyance.

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Tuesday, July 9th, 2.30 p.m. Group, Mrs. Lilian Austin Wednesday, July 10th, 2.30 p.m. Group, Mrs. Elleen Blaschke Wednesday, July 10th, 6.30 p.m. Group, Miss Eveline Canon Thursday, July 11th, 6.30 p.m. Group, Miss Lily Thomas Wednesday, July 10th, 2.45 p.m. Lecture, Mr. H. ERNEST HUNT

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