

LIGHT

A JOURNAL OF SPIRITUALISM, PSYCHICAL, OCCULT
AND MYSTICAL RESEARCH

FOUNDED IN 1881

No. 3106. VOL. LX.

(Registered as

THURSDAY, JULY 25, 1940

a Newspaper)

PRICE THREEPENCE

ON OTHER PAGES.

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**Subscription Rates (in-
cluding postage)—12 months,
15s. 2d.; 6 months, 7s. 7d.;
or from Newsagents, 3d.
weekly.**

*Subscriptions should NOT be
sent to the Editor, but should
in all cases be addressed to the
Manager of Light, 16 Queens-
berry Place, South Kensington,
London, S.W.7. Cheques and
Postal Orders should be crossed
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PUBLICATIONS, LTD.*

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Place, South Kensington, London,
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3292-3). Telegrams: "Survival,
London."**

*Entered as Second Class Matter, March
12, 1929, at the Post Office, at Boston,
Mass., under the Act of March 9, 1879
(Sec. 327 P.L. and R.)*

A MOTHER'S FEAR FOR HER SLAIN SOLDIER-BOY FORGIVENESS—AND EXPIATION

By W. H. EVANS

IN a recent issue of *The Church of England Newspaper* appeared an article by "Mathetes" on "Love's Perfect Work." It dealt with the case of a mother who had lost a son in the war. He was, as many boys are, a "bit wild," but not wicked. But the mother felt great concern for him, and reading in an "occult book" that there is "no forgiveness of sins," and that expiation has to be made in the life beyond, her anxiety about the well-being of her son was great.

So worried was she about it that a friend took her to a Roman Catholic priest, who agreed with the Occultist that expiation would have to be made, though he advised the mother to pray for her boy.

There was no comfort for the mother in either statement, and I cordially agree with the writer of the article that God's love is far greater than man's, or his conception of it. But while that is comforting and helpful it does not entirely clear up the difficulty.

It seems to me to be a question of fact: Is there divine forgiveness? and if so, what is its function?

Now we cannot deny to God something that is a fact in human experience—that is, *man does forgive*. If man can forgive, surely God can, and I am certain he does. The mistake we fall into is in thinking that forgiveness carries with it the abrogation of consequences. It does not; what it does is to open the door to freedom, to a wider and fuller life.

Whatever we do is part of our experiences and life, and cannot be separated from us. If one man injures another and is forgiven, the memory of the injury inflicted is still part of the consciousness of the wrong-doer. Although the one who suffered the injury forgives and takes no action against the wrong-doer, his forgiveness does not wipe out the memory of the wrong done; and it is well it should not, for that is a valuable part of his experience, without which the full fruits of forgiveness could not mature.

Therefore, while God forgives, He does so in such a manner that, out of the wrongs we do, He brings strength and power.

This process is no easy one. It means pain, but it is a remedial and not a punitive pain. God does not punish; He heals. Too much emphasis has been put upon the punishing aspect of God. It is a misconception of the process of redemptive love. God is no sadist who takes delight in the sufferings of men. To Him, suffering is a cleansing and healing process. At the root of divine law is divine love, and they can never be separated.

If we keep this principle clearly in mind, we shall see that there is no need for any mother to suffer in the way this mother did on reading some occult



W. H. EVANS

book. It is a pity that writers on Occultism and Spiritualism should, in their revolt against certain theological doctrines, go to extremes which have results as bad as the doctrines to which they take exception. We need a clear and balanced outlook on these matters and must not allow our prejudices to outrun our reason and drive us to other extremes. No mother need feel great concern, if her son has been "a bit wild," that God will punish him. If the mother's love is of the strong redemptive type, it will give vision to see that out of the bitter experiences of wrong-doing there will ultimately come great good. The big sinner often makes the great saint. It is natural for parents to wish to save their children pain, but children grow up and develop their own points of view. They are individuals and as precious in the eyes of God as are their parents.

In his wisdom, God keeps open the door by which any who wander into "a far country" may return. Death does not close it, and if the wanderer enters into the Beyond stained—and who amongst us will not?—the path of return is still open. In that world are many ministering spirits who work to bring the weary sin-stained souls home to God. And one of the things to remember is that those who do return would not forego one pang of the suffering which the climb back to normal spiritual life might entail; for he knows the value of suffering. Only those who have passed through suffering and come out into the light know its value.

Let us look back to that tragic time when Jesus shouldered His Cross and walked to Calvary. Suffering! Yes it was, but why did He choose it? He could have escaped, have let it pass by. He could have slipped away from the Garden and hid Himself. But there was something greater than safety—there was victory to be won, and that could only come by suffering. If He chose it, there must be something great and good in suffering.

This fact of suffering has engaged the attention of all great thinkers and mystics. Echart thought that suffering had a value equal to love; and when we reflect upon the choice of Jesus, who is regarded as God's representative, surely it must have a value far greater than we know.

But there is another point to consider—the experiences of the "twice born." A study of the phenomena of "conversion" brings out an important fact. All who pass through the emotional crisis of "conversion" find in the resulting unity of their hitherto divided personality a sense of cleansing and of renewal. They are certain of the forgiveness of God. It is, for them, a birth unto a new life; and, for a time, at least, the converted one feels he is released from the sense of sin. Psychology may explain a great deal of this, and tell us much about the process, but the converted one is not concerned with mechanism, either mental or spiritual, but with the fruits of the experience. Putting on one side the pseudo-conversions, there are a great number that prove the value of the experience, and although psychologists may believe the converted are mistaken in thinking that their experience is due to an outside power, that is no proof that such a power is not operative.

If a Spirit can control a Medium—as we know he can—why should not a Spirit help in the rebirth of a soul into a fuller life?

The sense of outside help may not be such a mistake as the psychologist thinks. Knowing that we are in the midst of a spiritual universe whose ramifications are infinite, the impact of spiritual forces upon a receptive soul is certain, and in many cases of conversion, real.

The point is that those who experience this change are certain of divine forgiveness. It is, to them, the central fact of the experience. It is also the starting point of a new life. The results of their sinfulness are no longer apparent, they sink beneath the threshold of consciousness, and they feel free.

Now, may not some experience analogous to this

happen to one liberated from the body? Why not? We cannot set bounds to what is possible beyond death; and some mother's wandering son may come to a knowledge of divine love through some crisis that opens the door to a larger life.

Love runs through the universe and the experiences of one plane of life have their correspondences on other planes of life. The unity of the universe is complete and is expressed in infinite diversity. And the love of God is absolute upon all planes of life.

BURMESE VIEW OF DEATH

WHILE reading a most delightful book, *Canoe to Mandalay*, by Raven Hart, I was struck (writes Mrs. M. L. Cadell, of Edinburgh) by the following passage:

"In Burmah, deaths and funerals are not events of gloom: I think nothing is more startlingly lovely than the Buddhist idea of a death-bed, not with a priest exhorting the dying man to remember his sins, but with his friends around him reminding him of his good deeds: 'That bridge you repaired, how useful it has been!' and 'Do you remember when you were a little boy, you pulled your baby brother out of the river?' and 'That monk last year who wanted to go and see his old mother—do you remember his face when you promised him the fare?'

"Thus is the dying man's mind rendered serene and joyous as a preparation for his passing, as death is evidently looked upon as a promotion and release.

"At a funeral, also, some such reminder is made in the description of the procession and cremation of a Burmese Abbot. The coffin was gay with glass gems and mirrors, gifts were distributed from laden lorries, girls sang and bands played, and a good time was enjoyed by all. Thus deaths and funerals are not sorrowful, but truly an opening of the gates into the Higher Life."

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REV. F. C. SPURRS' TESTIMONY

How His Drowned Boy Returned and Spoke to Him

REV. F. C. Spurr, a former President of the National Council of Free Churches and a well-known Minister of the Baptist Church, related a personal experience of survival after death to 1,000 people at the Brighton Dome on Wednesday evening, July 17th.

His subject was "The Future Life," and, after arguing on rational grounds in favour of survival, he turned to psychic evidence in support of the belief, and suggested that even if 90 per cent. was suspicious there was a residuum which could not be challenged.

"Last Sunday," he said, "was the anniversary of the drowning of my youngest child, eight years of age. He left home on 14th July, 1923, with his mother for a few weeks' holiday. I was left behind in Birmingham, and was to join them on the Monday. At 10.30 that Saturday night came a telephone message that he had been drowned. "That afternoon, at 4.45, I happened to be watching a picture, for I was a member of the Cinema Council. I grew very restless and turned round, to find myself pulled by my boy at the very moment he lay dead in a town 110 miles away in Lincolnshire.

"Some time later I had a call from a Mr. Frederick Barrett, a Birmingham business man, who told me he possessed psychic powers. He said a little lad had been to his office three times that week and said: 'Mr. Barrett, I can't make Daddy and Mummy understand. Will you go and tell them I am all right?'

"We offered him tea (Mr. Spurr continued), and suddenly his eyes closed and this happened: in five minutes my boy was in that room. He spoke in the voice that was familiar, and I said to him, 'Tell me what you wore when you went to bed at night,' and he said 'A red gown, Daddy.' I said, 'What was the name of the dog at Grand-dad's?' and he replied 'Carlo.' 'What was it?' I asked, and he said 'A sheep dog.' And for very nearly 15 minutes he told his mother—who is in this audience to-night—about his life. We saw a lot of him for three or four years. It was a great thing that.

"I know hundreds of my own personal friends who will tell you stories like that. You can't turn all that down with an ignorant gesture. It fits in with the stories of the Bible, and if God permits it and it happens, then in the name of reason you have to face it."

The Vicar of Brighton (Rev. Canon G. H. Warde) presided. (From *Sussex Daily News*, 18th July).

Mr. Spurr has described his experience at length in his widely-circulated book, *The Heart of a Father*.

A PADRE'S REVISED CREED

MRS. Olive Gillespie states that the following was received in writing through herself and Mrs. Eleanor Taylor from her husband, the late Rev. Edward Gillespie. "His views," she says, "have naturally changed considerably since he was a Padre of the Church of England on earth."

I believe in God the Father eternal.

And in His unique image in the Highest Hierarchy sent to earth to give the knowledge of the psychic power and to manifest it on earth.

I believe in the Spirit of God manifest in all life in all degrees and in the indestructibility of all life whether on earth or in worlds to come.

I believe in eternal justice and in the everlasting love of the Creator.

I believe in the power to regenerate the bodily appearance and in the reality of other worlds—the "many mansions" spoken of by Christ.

I believe in the truth of spirit teaching from more evolved minds, and in soul development after earthly death, and not in souls made perfect through death.

I believe that we prepare for the life to come by that which we live to-day.

And I believe in everlasting life and progress for every creature in which has been breathed the breath of life.

WAVES OF SPIRITUAL POWER

A Suggestion For Spiritualists

MRS. C. M. Beach's contribution to *LIGHT* of 18th July must have made a deep impression on many of your readers, not only from the point of view of its prophetic interest, but more especially for its postscript on the attitude to be adopted to Fear.

This latter prompts me to offer a suggestion that those of us who are too old, or physically incapacitated to take a more active part in the defensive measures against the powers of evil now threatening mankind, should combine in a daily attack against the enemy, drawing upon that mental equipment with which we humans are endowed, and only a fraction of which we are in the habit of using.

It is of little use praying to God to throw in the weight of His power on our side or to accuse Him of forsaking us whenever our enemy is successful. That is like blaming the telegraph boy for bringing us news of death, when to our next door neighbour he carries a message of good fortune. If our motives are good, we shall in the end defeat the powers of evil, but only if we apply those forces, both mental and physical, given to us by God, which by their very nature and absolute freedom in their use will give us the victory we are striving to gain. God is guiding us through our common-sense and free-will, not through uncanny and mysterious miracles about which we read in certain books of the Old Testament.

Communicators in the Beyond are constantly reminding us that our co-operation is sorely needed; that if we only knew to what extent thought and attitude of mind influence the forces for good or evil, we would redouble our efforts in this direction, reinforcing the physical power of our fighting men with a concentrated barrage of steadfast thought and will to put ourselves on God's side—not God on our side; that we should focus our mental powers on the spiritual guidance of our leaders to do the right thing, on our troops to be brave and fearless. Without this spiritual power behind them, the machines of war devised by man for the sole purpose of destruction can achieve nothing but havoc and suffering. Sacrifices will be made in vain unless the will for the future adherence to the ideologies of God is behind all these things.

Whenever and wherever we Spiritualists meet in groups, let us, therefore, turn our concentrated thought in such directions for a few minutes, projecting all the mental energy at our command; thus sending out wave after wave of spiritual power to add strength and foresight to those who are responsible for the physical conduct of the fight against evil.

J. H. WEBSTER, Major.

41 Christchurch Mount, Epsom.

IS THIS EVIDENCE OF SURVIVAL?

The following appeared in the *Evening Standard* of 17th July:

"The German radio propaganda authorities go blundering on. Yesterday they broadcast in Spanish a statement that Cardinal Verviers has recently arrived in Paris, and has emphasised the extraordinary amiability of the German occupation troops, and the correct behaviour of the German garrison.

"But Cardinal Verviers, who was Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, died several weeks ago."

EDINBURGH PSYCHIC COLLEGE

The feeling of Edinburgh Psychic College Council being that it would be beneficial in these troublous times to have the holiday period of the College curtailed, it was agreed that the College should remain open till August 17th, instead of closing on the original date of July 12th.

The opening meeting of the autumn session will take place on Friday, 6th September.

THE PENTHOUSE OF THE GODS

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

THEOS BERNARD opens this very interesting volume* with a chapter headed *Ecstasy*, describing the ceremony of his initiation into the sacred mysteries of Tibet.

It might have been more politic to have led up to the great event through the months of his sojourn in that strange country, but it is certainly more challenging when thus thrown, as it were, into one's face.

Here is a cultured American, M.A., B.A., LL.B., a Barrister-at-Law, describing ecstatically, as the greatest experience of his life, his entry, as a Buddhist monk, into a new spiritual existence.

Such an event must be impressive. Aware that there are thousands in Tibet with a knowledge of man's psychic possibilities at which we have scarcely begun to guess, we look to Mr. Bernard to disclose some of the enlightenment with which he was favoured.

In this direction the initiation ceremonies are not helpful. The author's progress through his "devotional tour" sounds even depressing to anyone for whom the sacred *thangkas* and mystic syllables of the *mantras* have no meaning, though these filled the acolyte's "entire being like the buzzing wings of a bumble bee."

"With each succeeding step," he says, "the internal pressures of the body became more fierce, and I began to understand their power of destruction. It was only by sheer will-power that I was able to hold on, fully aware that here was the opportunity for which I had been so long preparing; this experience was a conscious dip into the eternal flow of life. The agony became terrifying, and had I given vent to the thoughts of fears which were beginning to beset me I should have burst forth screaming and not stopped running until I either went mad or touched the borderline of madness."

Such an experience, it is true, is not unlike that vouchsafed in many cases of religious conversion, or the orgasm occasionally produced by the psychoanalyst, and it is curious that the Tibetan's trace a definite influence on their ritual to the teaching of Catholic priests who were living in the Holy City in 1300 A.D.

This problem of ritual is an intriguing one; it is a problem with which every religion has been faced, and by which, inevitably, into a barren bleakness, its Spring rapture has been frozen.

Despite superficial discordance a curious basic likeness may often be found where it would be least expected. There is, the author points out, a tribe called the Hemis Indians in North America and a great Hemis monastery in Tibet. Both have their devil dances. In Tibet there is the *Garuda* bird, and the Indians' Thunder bird is its equivalent. The entire ritual of Hinduism has been developed from the *Tantras*, which provide the greatest encyclopaedia of ancient wisdom inscribed by the sages, though the original teachings have disappeared, and here, as in Buddhism, the path which led to the stars is lost in the mire of sanctified formality.

The religion of Tibet has suffered from the war of sects, each in turn imposing its beliefs by force, and trampling into ruins the temples of its predecessor.

Mr. Bernard had what one may well call an *inborn* predilection for the teachings of the *Kargyupa* sect, since he was recognised as the reincarnation of Padma Sambhava, the founder of the sect and of Lamaism in Tibet, who was reputed to be the greatest *Tantrik* of India in his time.

This recognition of his distinguished descent was undoubtedly responsible for his reception at the hands of the religious authorities and for the unlooked for privileges which were accorded him; and it also explained the force which had drawn him to Tibet and

his ready acceptance of its peculiar ritual. Perhaps it is going too far to suggest that it enabled him to survive the gargantuan outbursts of its hospitality, which he describes as wasting one half of one's lifetime in Tibet, and to "drink enough tea to see him through several reincarnations."

A brief acquaintance with the rancid mixture served unceasingly as tea in Tibet seemed to me as potent a deterrent for the intending traveller as any Government prohibition.

THE MESSAGE OF TIBET

Mr. Bernard's purpose in pursuing initiation was to obtain material for the spread of Tibetan doctrine in the Western World, and every assistance to further that aim was accorded him.

He left the country with a vast amount of propagandist material, including the *Kangyur* and *Tengyur* presented to him by his host.

His "loot" also included the sixty-four volume set of books containing all the *Tantrik* teachings, the lives of Pu-tön and Mar-pa, each in twenty volumes, describing the religious development and teachings of the *Kargyupa* sect, and twenty-five volumes wholly devoted to Tibetan medical science, besides numerous manuscripts, some of them in three and five volumes.

Hence it would be unfair to expect from the present compilation any clue to the doctrine he is to present to the American people.

Of one difficulty before him he is doubtless aware. Americans think of themselves as a practical people, and the Tibetan conception of the practical is measured not by years, but by eternities.

Hence Tibet! a land of resplendent luxury and of indescribable squalor and destitution. Of Lhasa, the sacred city, the author says "the streets resembled running streams of sewage and human filth."

Filth was everywhere. "I have," the author confesses, "never ceased being astonished at the necessity of having to pass such filth in order to arrive at such beautiful living quarters and altar rooms."

On one hand was the golden glory of shrines and monastic sanctuaries, and on the other an abyss of diseased and impoverished humanity. "A familiar sight is that of dying dogs bracing themselves with outstretched legs before the door of a *dak* bungalow;" but "fifty or more courses" are served at the meals of the well-to-do, and a list given of some fifteen of these is indigestible reading.

There may be similar contrasts to be found in his own country, but the author must have realised that such a background will not be helpful in presenting to his fellow countrymen the claims of a new religion.

Before a golden image of the Lord Buddha, he remarks: "The people still die of starvation, that yet another gem may adorn this material representation of the Lord of Life . . . No one has ever begun to describe the untold riches which had been amassed by this church during the centuries of its domination . . . In Tibet the easiest avenue that leads to the greatest power is that of religion."

That has been true of churches that dominated the Western World, but the author must unearth from the sixty-four volumes of *Tantrik* teaching a message which does not lead to the *Penthouse of the Gods*.

He seems to realise that, for he describes one scene—"the faithful hosts of humility camping beneath this magnificent fortress of uncertainty"—as a crime against nature; and asks: "What is it that has made these people collect the writings of the ancients and worship them as sacred truth in spite of almost complete ignorance of their meanings?" Well, it is for him to tell us.

A distinguished Lama was "profoundly shocked" by the description given to him by the author of "our

(Continued at foot of next page)

**Land of a Thousand Buddhas*, by Theos Bernard, M.A., B.A., LL.B. London. Rider and Co., 1940. 18/-.

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

CHURCH REPORT—THE BISHOPS' PROBLEM

SIR,—Why should there be all this pother about the decision of the Archbishop not to make public a private report of his own committee on Spiritualist phenomena? If he had sent the report to the press for the benefit of the general public it would have been necessary, as Miss Phillimore points out (LIGHT, July 11th) to include an explanatory pamphlet for the help of the uninformed. Had this been at all favourable, it would have placed the Bishops of the Church of England in a false position as active protagonists of Spiritualism. If it had been in the least degree unfavourable, it would certainly have led to misunderstandings and bad feeling. It would have been almost impossible to avoid saying things many Spiritualists would resent; and this would have led to acrimonious discussion in the public press on delicate and highly contentious subjects. Then, farewell confraternity!

The Bishops acknowledge that the report contains "valuable information;" but they believe it would prove of more practical guidance to Church people if they published a carefully-prepared statement of positive teaching on the subject of "Eternal Life." Well, why not wait and see what they do publish? Anyhow, it is their responsibility, and it is a grave one.

The problem before the Bishops was more difficult than many people think. They had to consider all the consequences of publishing this report *with* or *without* comment. It would be strange if they had learnt nothing from the publication of the report on *Doctrine in the Church of England*. There are "unhappy divisions" enough already within the Church itself; and many hard things have been said about them. Are there no unhappy divisions among Spiritualists? Why should leaders of the Church go out of their way to help Spiritualism when so many Spiritualists appear to be ashamed of the name?

There is Spiritualism and Spiritualism. If the whole movement were of the kind to be met with at the L.S.A., that report would have been published. There would have been no legitimate excuse for withholding it. I have myself advised people who would never go to a

(Continued from previous column)

matter-of-fact Western ways." One can well believe it. "He thought religion was the most important thing in life, and that the sole justification for existence was spiritual development." He added that it did not make so much difference what religion a person had, so long as its power may guide him to the necessary growth and understanding.

Reincarnation is, of course, the bed-rock of such a conception. One life only matters so far as it aids the next. The service of oneself is the service of humanity. What the mind accomplishes is of little consequence; what matters is for the inner self to acquire an access of power. So, through the endless chain of rebirths the soul goes on, storing its consciousness with the right ideas, to achieve its final escape from the Wheel of Life.

Hence no shame is felt by those who live in jewelled splendours, no pity for Lazarus, full of sores at their gate. This spell of years fills too brief a space in our eternal destiny for its changeful setting to be worth a thought.

Since Theos Bernard has acquired the eighteen volumes in which, as the Guru Rimpoche, he set out the teaching of the *Tantras*, one can but wish him God-speed in his predestined mission to enlighten the world; for, very surely, the message of that great *Tantrik* must have purposed a far more spiritual consummation than the Tibet of to-day, which has mislaid somewhere, amid its thousand Buddhas, the inspiration of Gautama.

Church or consult a parson to pay a visit to No. 16 Queensberry Place; but God forbid that any influence of mine should send any grief-stricken and bewildered soul to some of the gatherings it has been my misfortune to attend. God forbid it, I say! The Bishops are trying to do their duty as they see it, and should not be charged with a crime. The most difficult thing in the world is to blame justly; and the greatest need of the world is the unity of all spiritual and moral forces.

CHRISTOPHER STANLEY.

P.S.—I should like to send every Bishop a copy of the beautiful little sermon by Mr. W. H. Evans in the July 18th issue of LIGHT. That Psalm might comfort them; and the sermon might teach some of them something!

"THE ULTRA-PERCEPTIVE FACULTY"

Sir,—I am sorry to have upset Dr. Hettinger, but my objection was to anyone, writing as an expert on the subject, who could still talk of "*alleged* physical phenomena," and tell us that: "From a scientific point of view this research provides no proof of the existence of an ultra-precognitive faculty which would enable a person to recognise future events otherwise than by reasoning."

It is as a Researcher and not as a Spiritualist that I take exception to both statements.

H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY.

TWO-FOLD EVOLUTION

Sir,—There is one point in Mrs. St. Clair Stobart's most interesting article in LIGHT of July 4th, which does not, it seems to me, quite chime in with the Law of Evolution. She writes—"The theory of Evolution did not take into account the existence of soul or spirit." The Force of Evolution must proceed simultaneously throughout the physical and spiritual. The interaction of body, soul and spirit would preclude any departure, or separate evolvement, and so "constant conflict" there may well be, for the soul and spirit can evolve in evil, as in good. Therefore it seems to me that the distinction between *psychic* and *spiritual* should be more clearly recognised, and that the "fruits of the Spirit," as enumerated by St. Paul, are to be acquired through the heart, rather than through the "psychic faculty."

M. C. MERRETT.

FRIENDSHIP FORMED ON OTHER SIDE

Sir,—I was very interested in reading in LIGHT of July 11th, an article by Miss Mercy Phillimore entitled "Friendship promoted from the Other Side." My own experience is of friendships being formed on the Other Side between persons who had never met when on this earth. My husband (who passed over many years ago and with whom I am in contact) tells me that he has met two great friends of mine whom he never knew when here, and who have both passed on more recently. In fact, he says he met them on their passing, as told them who he was and was able to help them, as one knew very little about the life on which he had entered, and the other was very resentful at being so suddenly thrust out of his body.

They have told me this themselves, and although none of them knew each other on this earth, the three appear to be the greatest friends, and when I contact my husband they often send me messages, and sometimes come themselves to speak to me. The link between them is their love for me, which does not divide but brings them together in companionship.

I think this shows what a close watch is often kept on us from the other world by those who love us, and whom we love, and how beautiful such friendships can be.

BERTHA F. MACINTOSH.

Light

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EDITOR

GEORGE H. LETHEM

AS WE SEE IT

NOT PUNISHMENT, BUT HELP

IN these sad days of war, there are probably many bereaved mothers who (like the one whose plaint is referred to by a writer in *The Church of England Newspaper* and also by Mr. W. H. Evans in this issue of LIGHT) are filled with fear and apprehension regarding the condition in the After-Life of their boys who have fallen in battle. They believe in human Survival; but in Church or Chapel they have been taught to picture Survival as involving a complete break with the earth-life and as leading directly into Heaven or into Outer Darkness (Hell or Purgatory), but chiefly into Outer Darkness, and so they fear that their "wild" boys (and most boys are "wild") will fall into the hands of an angry God and be made to suffer fiery torments because of their wildness.

The Mother in question had read in an "Occult" book that the effects of sin cannot be blotted out by forgiveness and that "a man must pay the uttermost farthing for his offences against the moral law" in the After-life; and a Roman Catholic priest had assured her that this was also the teaching of his Church. But, though full of fear and misgiving, the mother could not believe that her boy could possibly deserve "punishment," even of an expiatory character, in the fires of Hell or Purgatory.

"My boy," she said, "was a good boy, always kind and affectionate to me. He was a little wild, but he never scoffed at religion or made light of holy things. Could God be so cruel as to inflict more suffering upon him after what he has already gone through for England and given his life in her cause?"

Had this Mother—tormented by "religious" misrepresentations of God and of conditions in the After-Life—consulted anyone conversant with Spiritualist teaching instead of merely looking at an "Occult" book, she would have been assured that her fears were groundless; that God is not cruel, that He does not inflict added suffering on boys who give their lives for their country (or on any others), that her boy would not be sent to a fiery Hell or even a fiery Purgatory—but that, on the contrary, he would be met on his entrance to the Life Beyond and helped and comforted by the loving messengers of God (his own relatives probably), and that any handicap his faults, or "wildness," might impose on him there would be no more than it would have been had his life been continued here. She would, in short, have been assured that her boy would be unchanged, except for the loss of his physical body, and that, functioning in his spiritual body (of which his physical body was an imperfect duplicate) he would begin on the Other Side with the same mental and moral equipment and outlook he had here; that he would have found, not a new life in which strange penalties are inflicted for aberrations and faults in the life on earth, but a continuation of his own personal life in conditions different from but closely related to the life here to which she had introduced him.

It is true that reliable teaching from the Other Side confirms the teaching of the New Testament that "Whatsoever a man Soweth, that shall he also reap,"

that wrongs done here must be righted and blemishes of character remedied, here or hereafter; but that does not mean that in all—or even in most—cases correction or expiation involves suffering of the kind associated with Hell or Purgatory as described by Priest or Parson and which are, in fact, fictions created by the sick minds of ancient Ecclesiastics. If a boy at school wastes his time in "wild" pranks instead of learning his lessons, he will usually have to pay the penalty for his slackness by beginning his adult life with a deficient educational equipment which may sadly hinder his progress; and, similarly, people who waste their time in the school of earthly-life must begin the next phase of life with a self-imposed handicap—but that does not mean that they will necessarily be miserable or be punished by an angry God.

Only those who have been really wicked—cruel, selfish, unjust men and women—are described by the witnesses from the Other Side as being subjected to conditions of acute suffering—and even these conditions are self-imposed and tend to be remedial.

We once heard Sir Arthur Conan Doyle declare that what the ordinary decent-living man or woman was entitled to in the Beyond after facing the trials and hardships of this life was not punishment but reward, in the shape of loving help and encouragement, and that the stream of messages from the Other Side proved that this was what in fact they got. If that be so in regard to men and women who have lived ordinary lives and died ordinary deaths, how much more must it apply to boys who have sacrificed their lives for their country. Not punishment but ample opportunity for improvement and progress is surely their lot.

GOD'S TRUTH AND MAN'S GLOSS

A message from "Imperator" through the hand of Rev. W. Stainton Moses.

FRIEND, you must discriminate between God's truth and man's glosses. We do not dishonour the Lord Jesus—before whose exalted majesty we bow—by refusing to acquiesce in a fiction which He would disown, and which man has forced upon His name. No, assuredly: but they who from a strict adherence to the literal text of Scripture—a text which they have not understood, and the spirit of which they have never grasped—have dishonoured the Great Father of Him, and of all alike, and have impiously, albeit ignorantly, derogated from the honour due to the Supreme alone.

Not we, but they dishonour God! Not we, but they, though they have the prescription of long usage, though their words be coloured by extracts from writings which they have decided to be Divine: and though in those writings there be found words which pronounce a curse on any who may disagree with what is stated there. We do not regard such curses save with pity.

We do not labour to upset belief when it is a harmless error, but we can lend no countenance to views that dishonour God, and retard a soul's progress. The attributing to a man of Divine honour, to the exclusion in very many cases of personal honour and love for the Great Father, is a mischievous error which derogates from the duty of man to his God. The holding of a narrow, cold, dogmatic creed, in all its rigid, lifeless literalism, cramps the soul, dwarfs its spirituality, clogs its progress, and stunts its growth. "The letter," says your Scripture, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

Hence we denounce such views of God as are contained in the fable of a material hell; and we proclaim to you purer and more rational ideas than are contained in the orthodox notions of atonement and vicarious sacrifice. We proclaim to you a spiritualised religion.—(*Spirit Teachings*.)

THE PSYCHIC THREAD

"THE TERRIBLE CRYSTAL"

TO deal effectively with a theological essay so intricate, far reaching, and sur-charged with analysis, as this by Mr. Channing-Pearce (1) is quite impossible in an article of the present, or even of much greater length. For, though the book is not long (it contains no more than 250 pages), yet each of its nine chapters is of itself an essay, an essay self-contained, however adapted to the general trend of the writer's argument. Each chapter, then, invites an article of special criticism—an article which might well be expanded to a volume of much greater length than the entire book of which its subject is but a part, because each of these chapters sets on foot a train of enquiry, the ramifications of which are almost infinite in range and variety. This being true, I can no more than extract from this *Terrible Crystal* its essential idea, and attempt to clarify its intention and expose the singular limitation of its philosophy. To the chapter on 'Magic' I propose to revert later.

Mr. Channing-Pearce and I have followed widely different paths in our pursuit of truth. In this quest our ways must of necessity meet at many points, though it be but to part again. That somewhere ultimately we must attain the same goal is certain; for there can be, and is, but one truth, whither the steps of all honest seekers tend, be their destined approaches and modes of wayfaring never so divers and even contrary.

KIERKEGAARD

Kierkegaard (1813-1855) is assumed by Mr. Channing-Pearce to be "the *fons et origo* of the type of religious thought which is here mainly discussed," and the first chapter is devoted to the Danish theologian. He was a living omen of future catastrophe. He seems to have moved and had his being in self-induced misfortune. Crisis, catastrophe, sacrifice, were the air he breathed. For him the foundation of Christianity was "dread." "Upon this dread all his religion rests . . ." "This sense of dread was inborn and (says his biographer) is evidently connected with his inherited sense of guilt, an inheritance, which, for him, exemplified the concept of original sin." From this "dread," this "despair," this "sense of sin," the peace of God emerges. Compare this with the image of Alchemy—the mortification, the *Crow*, whence rises the Golden Tree of the Philosophers. There is profound reality in the concept of inevitable reaction, from darkness to dawn, from death to rebirth. But to quest misery for the sake of such reaction is to forestall destiny, to challenge the determination of God by rejecting *nature*, which is God's unerring instrument of evolution. Kierkegaard was in fact the apostle of Masochism—of self-torture. It is for no man to judge him as a seeker for his individual truth. Doubtless he sought Christ along the path best adapted to his own dolorous ego, but we may, and will, challenge him as a preacher. For this Christianity of his will lure some to the fiery maw of Moloch, to whom his devotees offered their fairest children, many to the perilous borderland beyond which dwell flagellants and grazing-monks and knife-slashing dervishes. Yet the influence of Kierkegaard has been (it would seem) enormous. Karl Barth and Emil Brunner figure here as his disciples, while the counter-modernistic movement is said to derive from him its nutriment.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DESPAIR

In his *Epilogue*, written last December, "on the verge of the most mortal struggle in our history, of no mere conflict of opposing powers or groups of powers, but of an onslaught of chaos itself against our civilisation," the author rises to an awful and majestic stature. Here is a terrific yet magnificent eloquence. The contending forces lose all political significance—"so fluid and undefined are these concepts that their

strife is like a conflict of clouds . . . we confront not so much any determined conflict as chaos itself, as though that co-ordination of the contraries of our being which we call civilisation were collapsing and some such titanic and primordial conflict of elements, long quiescent and subdued, had been suddenly unleashed." In this supreme consummation of disaster, he finds a fearful consolation. To the school of theology to which he has bound himself, "Christianity is essentially catastrophic . . . In catastrophe such spirits may find themselves more at home than in civilisation." To this school "The climate of Christian reality, as of Christ, is a climate of catastrophe. Our own lives are themselves termed with the catastrophes of birth and death. Mortal being is an antiphony of strophe and antistrophe; catastrophe, the rhythm of eternity, strikes athwart that mortal with an immortal music. In catastrophe Christ is close and eternity contains time. Then welcome catastrophe!"

Channing-Pearce has realised, as I have realised, that the birth-pangs of a New Age are upon us, and he, too, glimpses afar the Dawn. But for him the travail is for its very agony a matter of terrible joy. "Welcome tension and travail, and when the pains of that 'new birth' come upon you, rejoice! . . . Christ was sacrificed; Christ lives. Then welcome sacrifice! . . . God loves the lost. Is it then so great a woe to be lost in life? Misery is near to mystery; in mystery God conceals himself. Only he who can conceive God can know despair. Then entertain misery and despair, for these are His angels!"

THE ETERNAL ROSE

Of this philosophy of Despair I will have none. With these angels of Darkness I will hold no parley. Not in the terrors and tortures of the travail that is upon us, but in the glorious foreknowledge of the Divine Child that is to be born, will I rejoice. I know full well that:

"The loveliest vase is fired with fiercest heat,
To bind each hue;
The keenest blade is ever sternest beat,
To forge it true.

Thus lofty souls by pain are purified
The weaker souls to save:—
The Saviour of the World was crucified
To burst the grave." (2)

But it was in Christ's Victory over death that the glory resides, and the triumph of that victory was the abolition of human sacrifice through the Divine. The world is not one thing and heaven another. The Hermetic principle, "As above, so below," is the beginning of Wisdom. Man—"human" man—is an image of the Divine, the world is an image of the Beyond, each ascending sphere an image of that above.

The catastrophic philosophy of Kierkegaard, Barth and Brunner, would reject the lovely boon of Humanism without which Roman Christianity slipped into an abyss of sombre superstition. Their way may be the one way for such as them, but it is not the way for hoping, yearning, loving Humanity. These self-tormented souls ignore the "Grand Secret," know not that "the problem proposed by High Initiation was the union of the Rose and the Cross." And the Rose is with us amid the thunders of war: Rose of Sharon, of Persia and Provence, red Rose of the eternal Romaunt of love and life, white mystic *Rose of Paradise*.

C. R. CAMMELL.

- (1) *The Terrible Crystal: Studies in Kierkegaard and Modern Christianity*, by M. Channing-Pearce, London. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. 1940. 7/6.
- (2) C. R. Cammell: *Ode to His Majesty the King* (Edinburgh: *The Scotsman, The Moray Press*), 1935.

The Ark of the Covenant

PSYCHIC INVESTIGATOR'S DISCOVERIES

By Captain Q. CRAUFURD

I HAVE been asked to take the Ark of the Covenant a step further than my former article (LIGHT, May 30th) showing how "The Law" may have been broadcast from the Zin Temple on Sinai.

Of course, I do not claim to know anything of the science of the Zin Temple, other than what is revealed in the Scriptures. We know this: Moses was summoned to the Zin Temple for a course of training in the construction and working of the Ark, which lasted about six weeks. He came back with a copy of the Ten Commandments on tablets and with plans for the Tabernacle and its furniture, including the Ark.

While he was in the Zin Temple being instructed into the Mysteries of Jehovah, the mountain appears to have been surrounded with a fence, or "guard wire," as we should say. This was heavily charged with high tension electricity and it was dangerous to man and beast; anything which touched it was instantly killed. So say the records. Clergymen believe that God charged this fence with magic power to destroy man or beast who dared to trespass; but, if matters were as they are described, it seems obvious that the fence was electrically charged by the ingenuity of the Zin monks.

Great electrical disturbance took place over the crest of the mountain during the term of Moses' initiation. This was said to be a manifestation of Jehovah. Let us accept that statement at its face value: Jehovah, the Spirit of the Thunderstorm. Why not?

Around us, penetrating everywhere, is Electricity, sometimes said to be man's servant; men have sometimes believed that Providence is man's servant. Clergymen believe that they can persuade Providence to act as they wish—send rain for the harvest, or win battles for them; at least I have been told this. I believe that real prayer can accomplish much, but I rather doubt the value of official persuasion. History does not seem to bear such theory out. The Jews certainly prayed Jehovah to deliver them from Roman power; one wonders what would have happened if they had really appealed to God.

I submit that God is too universal to be turned into a tribal deity. This brings us back to the symbolic God of Moses. He is symbolised by the Electrical Power known to us, apparently so symbolised in the Zin Monastery.

What produced those thunderstorms over Mount Sinai? Did the priests of Zin know how to control electrical conditions in the vicinity of their Temple?

Well, we can only guess at possibilities. One thing is pretty certain—something of electricity as a power used for communication was known in those early days, and the name "Electra" was given it by the Greeks, who described Electra (the shining one) as "the messenger of the gods," in other words, "the Divine messenger." So might we poetically describe the force we use in broadcasting.

Now, if a condenser, somewhat similar to the Ark, is charged with electricity at high potential, it can be discharged in two ways. Remember, the discharge points were in the form of cherubim with their wings almost touching above the "mercy seat." This gap we would now call a "spark gap;" and if the gap was adjusted the spark produced at discharge would create electrical waves capable of being detected at a considerable distance.

In the form in which I built my version of the Ark, the wing-tips, or discharge points, could be controlled by the human voice and a torrent of sparks caused capable of transmitting the voice; but at longer ranges musical notes could be sent, or the morse code. I imagine that the peculiar candlestick used with the Ark, having seven branches, produced a musical octave which gave the alphabetical code; but these are details I have no space here to go into.

For reception, a precisely similar Ark, or condenser, was necessary; but in this case the wing-tips were so adjusted as to give what is known as the silent discharge. This is the blue glow, or "brush discharge," and was visible in the dark tent of the Holy of Holies as a "glory" over the "mercy seat."

The "mercy seat," I take it, was well named, since it was a safety device immediately beneath the spark-gap which prevented the terrific spark of an over-charge from taking place when the wing-tips were well separated. The charge then went harmlessly to the "mercy seat" as a brush.

A SYMBOL OF GOD

All this may sound very frivolous as I describe it, for I am using names which symbolised the power and mercy of the Creator. Forces from the air were being condensed and stored which were highly dangerous to the uninitiated—they were a symbol of God.

One has only to read of the fatal accidents which followed Franklin's discovery of how to collect electricity from the clouds by means of a kite to realise the danger of atmospheric electricity.

With the Ark of the Covenant, use was made of the column of heated smoke from the sacrifice as an aerial. I actually used the hot gases from the funnel of a battleship during my experiments, and of course my signals were between two ships instead of two places in a desert. We knew nothing about valves then, but the modern valve is merely a compact form of spark-gap in a vacuum, the first valve actually had a visible glow in them, like the "glory" described in the Bible. This glow naturally reproduces the sound, which is reinforced by the Ark itself, and may be seen quivering in unison with the sound produced.

I speak from experience when I say that it is awe-inspiring. I remember my feelings when, sitting in the darkened wireless office, I used to see this pale cloud of light flickering and talking in its own small voice as reception was taking place. It was uncanny, and at that time so full of wonder.

Now, we use the same force for our jazz tunes; but thirty years ago one felt that this new method of communication would be sacred to urgent messages for help and so on.

In the darkened tent of the Tabernacle with the miniature Aurora Borealis before him, speaking direct from the Zin Temple, Moses is near to God and he writes. But how much of his real book has come down to us? We do not know. The Pentateuch attributed to Moses is certainly not his real work! but the key to it may be repeated in our laboratories, for this glow discharge is exceedingly sensitive to electric waves.

So, using the column of smoke, the "pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night," as an aerial, Moses communicated with the Zin Temple on top of the distant mount, watching the glow near the "mercy seat," which seemed alive and speaking, reinforced by the resonance of the Ark on which it stood.

I say all these things can be repeated by the experimenter, though his work must be merely a labour of love. Commercially, these experiments are of no importance, for the Golden Calf is well served by the modern loudspeaker and detector valve.

Gone is the beautiful symbology of the spirit of the thunderstorm glowing over the "mercy seat" under the form of Aurora and speaking in a still small voice.

Nevertheless, clergymen of the right type have seized the opportunity which the Golden Calf allows, and the invalid and the bed-ridden may have the Church service of their own creed brought right into the bedroom, and may be brought, according to their faith, into the Presence of the Divine.

This is the real Covenant—namely, that God is always present and that by an adaptation of the Hebrew Ark, the sacred scriptures may be caused to live again. It is a great thought and I believe it to be a true one.

NUMBER OF THE BEAST

By HECTOR WAYLEN

IN a recent issue of the *London Weekly Review* some ingenious person undertakes to show that the name of Hitler contains "the number of the Beast" of Rev. xiii., 18. He assigns numbers to the letters of the English alphabet, making A stand for 100, B for 101, C for 102, and so on. Then adding the numbers which stand for the letters in the name of the "Leader," we find the mysterious number 666.

Curious, but not convincing to anyone who has studied what is called "gematria," i.e., the numerical values of words usually based upon the Hebrew alphabet. Applied also to other alphabets, though here certain difficulties arise into which I do not propose to enter. Sufficient for present purposes to say that before the Arabic numerals were invented, numbers were represented in the ancient languages by letters of the alphabet.

The "Beast" in question would be better described as a "Wild Beast," and our translators should not have used the same word for the symbolic animal here described (*therion*), and the "living creature" (*zoon*) of Rev. iv., 6. It was a lamb-like creature, but spake as a dragon. Its number is said to be that of "a man," the Greek word used being *anthropos*, which meant a human being, like the Latin *homo*, and not necessarily a great man.

As the writer of the above article correctly remarks, quite a number of applications of the three sixes have been made to persons specially unpopular, whether from political or theological prejudices. Thus it was pointed out long ago that the word "Lateinos" was equivalent to 666, and Protestant students of prophecy have been glad to show that the fatal number could be applied to the Papacy. Neron Kaiser—Greek for "Nero the Emperor"—also corresponds to the same number, an identification which, on the other hand, satisfies Modernists who try to show that the symbolism of the Apocalypse deals merely with contemporary persons and events. My own belief is that any secret in numerology must be explained either by the pure symbolism of numbers or in the language used in the script as originally given.

Now, there are good reasons for believing that the message of the Apocalypse was given to "John" in Aramaic, and turned thence into Greek. Hebrew and Aramaic are written with the same alphabet of 22 letters. In Biblical gematria, names are taken as spelled, whether in Hebrew or Greek. "Adam," e.g., is written "ADM," and equals $1 + 4 + 40$, and these numbers, for symbolical purposes, may be taken as either 9 or 144. In Hebrew, vowels are not written, but suppose we take the name of Jesus, in the Greek, then it equals 888, all letters being used.

"Hitler," if written in Hebrew, would be "HTLR," and in numbers $5 + 400 + 30 + 200$, which would make 635. In Latin numerals, it would be 650. For the method adopted by the writer in the *Weekly Review* I fail to see any authorisation. To assign values to our alphabet of 26 letters, in their existing order, is purely arbitrary.

The solution of the whole question lies in the symbolism of 666. Six is the number of the cube, and the cube is the symbol of Divine Justice. We speak of a "square" deal, for the square is the same in every direction, on its own plane. In the cube, we act "on the square" from every possible aspect. The Holy of Holies, in the Jewish Tabernacle, was twenty cubits each way, thus cubical; and cubical was the Holy City, the New Jerusalem "descending from the Heavens, in the Apocalypse.

As to the number "three," it is the first of what are called the "perfect" numbers. At school we learned from Euclid that "two straight lines cannot enclose a space." But three can. Thus to the idea of form we add that of extension. In the facade of a Greek Temple

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we have the triangle resting upon the pillars: a symbol of God, as revealed to the human mind. He is the "Father," the All, and the Absolute. And He is the "Son," as Truth incarnate: extended to human comprehension. He is also the "Holy Breath," sustaining His whole creation, and inflowing into the Inmost in man. In the Bible, this number is used throughout to indicate completion. The Jordan was crossed, and Christ was raised on the third day. A trine of sixes thus signifies the fullest possible form of what is signified by six. Solomon's treasure was 666 talents of gold.

All symbols may be reversed: even the most holy. Seven is a number of what is holy, and ten of synthetic unity, and of whatever is done with Divine completeness. But in Rev. xii., 3, we read of a "red dragon" having seven heads and ten horns." So with 666: in its higher signification it is the perfection of Divine Justice, but in its reversed sense, just the opposite.

The symbolism of the Apocalypse deals with spiritual principles, and failure to understand this has been the cause of innumerable misapplications to persons and events in history. Nero, the Papacy, Napoleon, Hitler: insofar as any of these embody a Principle, you may to that extent identify them with the symbol, but not wholly, as individuals, even as Hitler could do nothing without the support of all who in any way conform to his will. The three sixes form "the number of a man," of a principle in human nature, and of the selfhood in unregenerate human nature, when the symbol is used in the reversed sense. It may manifest itself in Imperialism, whether the State Imperialism of Babylon and Pagan Rome, of the Ecclesiastical Imperialism of the Middle Ages, or the Commercial Imperialism of the present day. All are, in essence, opposed to the Kingdom of God. But evil destroys itself. The "Wild-Beast" was "taken." The reign of true Humanity of "the Son of Man," has yet to come, the New Era, wherein shall dwell righteousness.

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