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ON OTHER PAGES.

CHURCH AND RESURRECTION STORY

By MRS. ST. CLAIR STOBART
—page 372.

Shakespeare's Ghosts

By B. ABDO COLLINS, C.I.E.
—page 368.

What Proved Survival Implies

By THE EDITOR—page 370.

The Cult of Moloch

By C. R. CAMMELL
—page 371.

Invisible Barriers in the Sky

STRANGE STORY FROM
CHINA—page 367.

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SURVIVAL AND MODERN THOUGHT

EXISTENCE OF THE SOUL AS AN INDEPENDENT ENTITY

By CHARLOTTE E. WOODS

STUDY of the doctrine of Survival in Ancient Religions leads us to consider the subject from the religious and philosophical standpoints of the modern Western world. We try to see just how far the intellectual thought of to-day is from accepting the principles, which to most of us are no longer beliefs, but are facts based on experience. To many, the survey will seem barren of positive results, and will but serve to indicate the futility of looking for illumination from minds that are dominated by logic. We shall find, nevertheless, that the greatest minds have always been our allies in things spiritual, and have laid assured intellectual foundations for the "things which cannot be shaken."

At this stage the subject falls into two parts:

- (1) Survival;
- (2) That which survives.

Or the destiny of the soul after death; and the soul itself, its existence as an independent entity.

These two aspects need to be studied together as well as apart, it being obvious that Survival is meaningless apart from something which survives. The nature of that something and its relation to the facts of consciousness are problems that arise from the growth of subjectivity and self-analysis which specially distinguishes the modern mind from the ancient, and gives the question of Survival many new and complex features.

The existence of the soul as separate from the external world, though conditioned by and conditioning it, was not part of the psychology of the Ancients. The Egyptians, though possessing a very complex representation of the parts and functions of the inner man, yet never broke his relations with the world. As with all primitive peoples, the soul and the world were one entity. Mummification was for the purpose of providing links with the temporarily broken physical life, without which the soul would not be completely itself. The ancient Greek consciousness, too, was so entirely at one with the external, its sense of material existence so full and harmonious, that self-analysis in a marked philosophical form did not arise, save with a few outstanding minds. Its survival conception of a ghostly, half-life in the under-world leads the dead Achilles to yearn for one day of full-blooded life on earth, in exchange for reigning a hundred years as King in Hades.

The rise of Christianity marked the great dividing line between the old



CHARLOTTE E. WOODS

world and the new. It was the re-birth of the old order in a young and virile form which preserved many of the features of its forbears, baptizing readily into Christ the realities of the soul and its immortal nature as taught in the Pagan faiths.

Two main Greek Schools held the intellectual field at this time. The Epicureans taught that the soul was a distinct entity, with its own body of invisible etheric matter, co-operating, in action, with the physical, yet incapable of existing without it. The Stoics believed that the spirit, or *pneuma*, was the real centre of human consciousness, but was material in essence and therefore unable to survive physical death. St. Paul adopted both these conceptions, the soul-body of the Epicureans, and the pneumatic or spirit-body of the Stoics, but endowed each with the power of survival. They constituted the "Tabernacle not made with hands" with which the Christian is to be "clothed over," both here and hereafter. Moreover, he strengthened and preserved the ancient truths for future ages by appealing to the most tremendous piece of evidence in human history, the conquest, by the Christ, of physical death.

"JESUS AND THE RESURRECTION"

It is not too much to say that the Resurrection constituted the focus and centre of the Christian message to the Gentile world. For the Jews it was used in support of the Messiahship of Jesus. When this was rejected by the Synagogues, "then turn we to the Gentiles," said the Apostle, with the message of the Resurrection as the great and major theme. The "Acts of the Apostles" is very definite as to this. "They preached Jesus and the Resurrection," and (we assume) all that the Resurrection implied of hope for man in a life beyond the grave. No new doctrine this, either to Jew or Gentile, but profoundly new as touching man's spiritual consciousness. For Resurrection was no mere survival of life in another body; it was a heightened, a spiritualised, a glorified life that was identified with ethical values of the highest order. St. Paul was careful not to pronounce as to the exact nature of the Christ's resurrection. He did not even say that the appearances were bodily. "Last of all He appeared to me also" is non-committal, as also is the carefully expressed statement of St. Peter that "He showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs."

Paul refers, at least once, to the Resurrection in the technical language of the mystery-schools. At the same time he shared the Pharisaic belief in a bodily Resurrection, first of the just, and finally of all men, and seems to imply that the interval between that and physical death was a sleep. He rests tremendous theological statements upon the Resurrection of Christ. To regard it as a mere appearance or forth-showing of the identical personality was to evade its profoundest meaning. The Christ, by death, had doffed the mortal condition and resumed the immortal, which for the time had been laid aside. By His Resurrection He demonstrated what He had hitherto concealed behind the veil of the flesh-nature, and *raised all who were spiritually linked with Him to the same immortal being*. This is the Pauline "secret," the mystery "now made manifest"—the very immortality of God Himself bestowed on those who are "raised with Christ." It is the old mystery doctrine carried to its highest power.

This gift of an immortal nature seems to be contingent upon preserving the link with its Giver. It is obviously conditional. But we must not confuse immortality with survival. The first is qualitative and may obtain anywhere, in any vehicle, and on any plane—in physical life or after. It is another word for divine, which is life in fulness and therefore incapable of its opposite, death. Survival, on the other hand, may or may not be qualitative.

The immortal necessarily survives, but the survivor is not necessarily the immortal in the sense in which the term is used in early Christian teaching. Man survives, because he is life, and life is deathless, but all life is not

necessarily divine as the Christian understood the term.

St. Paul divided man into body, soul and spirit; a triplicity with which later Catholic theology found a correspondence in the three states of the after-world—Hell, Purgatory and Heaven. Hell corresponded to matter completely divorced from spirit; Purgatory to soul in process of being loosed from the trammels of matter; Heaven to Spirit in fullness and supremacy.

CATHOLIC THEOLOGY

After the Council of Nicea, the triplicity was abandoned for a duality; the natural man was body and soul, and became possessed of spirit only by birth into the spiritual order and by becoming sacramentally one with the Giver of the Spirit. The natural man was potentially spiritual inasmuch as he was capable of receiving it, but it was not his by right of birth into the human family. Herein Catholic teaching parts company with other religions in which the Divine Spirit is the fundamental heritage of every man; it conflicts too, with the sublime statement in the 4th Gospel, that the Logos is "the Light that lighteth every man coming into the world."

Catholic theology, based upon Aristotelian psychology, held the field until the 17th century, when Descartes established a principle new to the Western world. For the first time in the history of European thought the psychical was treated in a manner positive and constructive. Classical and mediaeval thinkers had attempted no exact definition, the soul being thought of as mere absence of the corporeal rather than in any positive sense. Descartes' new method consisted in a ruthless abstraction from previously accepted beliefs and a deliberate probing to the bed-rock of experience. In his famous phrase, "Cogito, ergo sum," "I think, therefore I am," he established what henceforth became the fundamental principle of the moderns—the abandonment of the assured and ready-given in favour of what can be established by thought and experience alone. The bed-rock of experience gave us matter or extended substance, and mind or inextended substance. Mind, the latter, was an individual self, a singular ego—a new principle,

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unknown to antiquity. He thus made Survival a clear possibility for thought; it rested no longer on Church dogma alone, but on the high probabilities of reason. Nevertheless, he also stressed the purely mechanical nature of bodily processes and thus laid the foundations of modern materialism.

Descartes' definition of mind as unextended substance, and matter as extended substance indicated an absence of ground for their interaction. How can two such mutually exclusive principles come together? Three great thinkers, among others, debated this question, with all its implications, in the 18th century. Spinoza put forward what is known as the identity theory, viz., that body and soul are phenomenal appearances of one underlying reality, God, Who is their common element and root of identity; He is also the ground of immortality since nothing that emanates from Him can perish essentially, though its form may be destroyed at death.

Leibnitz was the second great 18th century thinker who contributed to this problem. He was the head of those who attempted an Idealist answer. The world consists entirely of a plurality of souls or monads of innumerable grades of being, which rise from bare life in the mineral, through formative life in the vegetable, sensation and memory in the animal, up to reason and reflection in the human monads. Each monad, of whatever grade, mirrors the entire universe, and in the degree of perfection with which the whole is mirrored consists the distinction between the various grades. God sleeps in the stone, awakes in the vegetable, dreams in the animal, becomes self-conscious in man, and supremely self-conscious in Himself, the Perfect Monad. There is nothing in the universe but Himself, and His manifestations in monadic life. It follows, therefore, that each monad possesses a degree of survival-value proportionate to its degree of awake-ness, though immortality can be postulated only of God, the Supreme Monad.

Kant is our last great name in this epoch. Among his other contributions he taught that while the soul is subject to the mechanical laws of the physical world, it yet belongs to a higher sphere of reality, of which its moral sense and instinctive recognition of spiritual values are the guarantee. Man is twofold; he has a phenomenal aspect that is mortal; he has also a pure, thinking, transcendental ego belonging to a region that is immortal. His survival is thus assured, for the

immortal ego which is his true being cannot perish with physical death.

Materialism was on the up-grade through the first three-quarters of the 19th century. Three great generalisations had appeared, with the effect of weakening, and in many cases of destroying, belief in the spiritual nature of man. There were the Darwinian hypothesis; Lord Kelvin's theory of the Vortex Atom; and the statement of the law of the Conservation of Energy, enunciated simultaneously in Germany and England in 1847. The application of the law to psychology established a number of well-attested doctrines which supported the conclusion that mental activities could be explained in terms of mechanism. The main facts on which this conclusion is based are:

1. The location of brain areas.
2. The reflex type of all nervous processes.
3. The laws of association and habit.
4. Unconscious cerebration.
5. The dependence of thought on brain-function.
6. The law of psycho-neural parallelism which shows that change in consciousness is invariably accompanied by change in nervous tissue.

The foregoing are the stages by which psychology has developed, in the last and present centuries into a science of primary importance. Normal psychology confines itself to investigating the natural consciousness working in the physical body. It has no interest in questions of the after-life, concerning which it is mostly agnostic. Its three theories of the mind or self in man are:

(1) *Epiphenomenalism*, or the theory that mind is the product of brain activity.

(2) *Parallelism*, that psychical and physical processes have no causal connection. Their relation is simply one of simultaneous activity.

(3) *Interactionism*, or the theory of common experience, that body and soul are each of an independent order, yet capable of mutual influence and interaction. The last theory is the only one that finds room for survival of physical death, but it is not the theory most in vogue at the present time.

I hope in the next article to carry the subject into the 20th century, after a brief glance at some important thinkers of the late 19th, and then to look at certain allied movements which aim at establishing the fact that man is spirit and essentially immortal.

(Next week: *Theories of the Victorian Age and After*).

INVISIBLE BARRIERS—STRANGE STORY FROM CHINA

THE *New Church Herald* (Swedenborgian) of 8th June, 1940, contained the following contribution from Mr. Hector Waylen, of Oxford, under the heading "Japanese Bombers Stopped by Angels":

In times gone by, the New-Church movement has, in its literature, been cautious, and too cautious, of recording or considering occurrences of what would be called a "supernatural" character, outside the Bible—or Swedenborg. There are two sides to that question, into the merits of which I do not propose to enter on the present occasion. I will merely remark that if there be forms of deception innumerable, the powers of good are also at work, and in our time as well as in days of old.

The following story, taken from *The United Church Record*, should, I think, cheer us in these times of trial:

"Dr. Charles Kimber, a missionary in China, states that he received two letters by the same mail, one from a Japanese and the other from a Chinese. The Japanese told of a young Japanese airman who had received orders to lead ten planes in an attack upon a defenceless Chinese city. With this object in view he led the way towards the city, but as he approached it he saw in front of him a multitude of angels with drawn swords, blocking the way. Believing them to be mere cloud formations, he flew ahead, but found himself unable

to pass them. The barrier proved so strong that he turned about and his squadron followed him. It was further related in Dr. Kimber's letter that this man was executed for not carrying out orders.

"In the letter from the Chinese, an account was given of the fright which the inhabitants of this city had experienced upon hearing that ten planes were coming to bombard it. A Chinese pastor had fallen upon his knees and prayed that God would somehow hinder the planes from coming. For several hours he struggled in prayer, until he saw the squadron approach. Then suddenly he saw the leader irresolutely swerve from his course, as if beaten back, and turning round, he flew away, followed by the other nine airmen."

This incident, with many others of the kind that might be quoted—and I have collected such for many years—reminds us of that recorded in II. Kings, vi., 17, when "Yahweh opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

I may add, both from cases collected, and from a personal testimony by an old friend, a Swiss pastor, that invisible barriers—at any rate forces thus affecting human consciousness as such—*can* be formed, effectually preventing persons, in the flesh, from passing on in the direction in which they had intended to go.

SHAKESPEARE'S GHOSTS

By B. ABDY COLLINS, C.I.E.

WE have thirty-three plays usually attributed to Shakespeare—or thirty-six if we include three others, of which *Henry VIII* is one, supposed to have been begun by him and finished by others. In four of these only does a ghost play a part.

In *Richard III* there is, as it were, a procession of apparitions of his victims; and in three other plays a single ghost only—of Hamlet's father, Julius Caesar and Banquo.

Can we gather from Shakespeare's presentment of these phantoms anything of his attitude towards the problem of death and a life to come or does he merely use them like the writer of ghost stories in a Christmas magazine to rouse feelings of awe in his audience?

The only ghost to play a real part, to speak more than a line or two and to contribute materially to the action of the play is Hamlet's father. Here we have the ghost of story which haunts a place, appears at midnight and disappears at cockcrow. It introduces itself as—

... thy father's spirit,
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires.

It haunts the battlements of Elsinore Castle, where it is seen and recognised by those on watch. It is clad in armour "in complete steel" and convinces Hamlet of its identity. Having given its message, obtained a promise of revenge and helped Hamlet to secure an oath of secrecy from the other witnesses, the ghost is laid. It disappears and Hamlet's last words to it are: "Rest, rest, perturbed spirit."

Had Hamlet been prompt in action, we should have seen no more of it. But owing to his dilatoriness, the ghost reappears during Hamlet's interview with his mother late at night.

HAMLET: Do you come your tardy son to chide?

GHOST: Do not forget: this visitation is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.

In other words, as Hamlet delays in avenging his father's murder, the ghost is again compelled to "walk." On this occasion it is not visible to the Queen, who thinks Hamlet mad when he addresses it.

The ghosts in the other plays are of a different type. They do not haunt a place. They are rather phantasms which appear to someone with whom they have a special link and such as would have found a separate place in the Census of Hallucinations conducted by the Society for Psychical Research. In *Richard III*, Richard and his rival, Richmond, are asleep in their tents on the field of Bosworth, one on either side of the stage, and the ghosts of the young princes (smothered in the Tower), Anne (Richard's wife), Clarence (drowned in a butt of malmsey) and many others appear on the stage and address each in turn, cursing Richard and wishing victory to Richmond. Richard wakes first and starts up:

Give me another horse: bind up my wounds.
Have mercy, Jesu!—Soft, I did but dream.
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!

Richmond sleeps peacefully till morning and is woken by the entry of his followers, who inquire how he has slept. He replies:

The sweetest sleep, and fairest-boding dreams
That ever entered in a drowsy head . . .
Methought their souls, whose bodies Richard
murdered,
Came to my tent and cried on victory.

This is a type of veridical dream familiar to the Spiritualist. The words "their souls, whose bodies Richard murdered" portray ideas, perhaps, rather in advance of the times and seem to indicate a belief in a real person whose consciousness persists after death and is able to speak to and influence those left behind.

Next, in *Julius Caesar*, we have a waking vision. Brutus in his tent at Sardis is sitting at night reading. The stage direction is: "Enter the Ghost of Caesar." He looks up and exclaims:

BRUTUS: How ill this taper burns! Ha! Who comes here?

I think it is the weakness of mine eyes
That shapes this monstrous apparition.
It comes upon me. Art thou any thing?
Art thou some god, some angel, or some
devil,
That makest my blood cold and my hair
to stare?

Speak to me, what thou art?

GHOST: Thy evil spirit, Brutus.

BRUTUS: Why comest thou?

GHOST: To tell thee thou shalt see me at Philippi.

BRUTUS: Well: then I shall see thee again?

GHOST: Aye, at Philippi.

BRUTUS: Why, I will see thee at Philippi then
(*exit Ghost*).

Now I have taken heart thou vanishest.

From this one might doubt whether the apparition had been recognised, but on the field of Philippi just before his death Brutus says:

The ghost of Caesar hath appeared to me
Two several times by night; at Sardis once
And this last night here in Philippi's fields:
I know my hour is come.

This is something more than a dream. An apparition appears to Brutus, is recognised and foretells his end.

Lastly, in *Macbeth*, the ghost of Banquo appears within a few hours of his murder and is seen by Macbeth, but by no one else of those present—not even, so far as we can judge, by Lady Macbeth. They are all seated at a banquet, Macbeth, already King of Scotland, after Duncan's murder. One of the assassins suborned to kill Banquo appears at the door and Macbeth rises and goes to talk with him. He learns of Banquo's death and expresses his satisfaction. Lady Macbeth calls on him to be seated and he replies in great good humour. The stage direction is: "The ghost of Banquo enters and sits in Macbeth's place":

MACBETH: Here had we now our country's honour
roof'd,
Were the graced person of our Banquo
present. . . .

ROSS: . . . Please't your Highness
To grace us with your royal company.

MACBETH: The table's full.

LENNOX: Here is a place reserved, sir.

MACBETH: Where?

LENNOX: Here, my good lord. What is't that
moves your highness?

MACBETH: Which of you have done this?

LORDS: What, my good Lord?

MACBETH: Thou can'st not say I did it: never
shake thy gory locks at me.

ROSS: Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not
well.

LADY M.: Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often
thus,
And hath been from his youth.

And so the scene proceeds until the ghost leaves and Macbeth, rated by his wife, recovers his composure and takes his seat. Scarcely has the banquet begun when the ghost re-enters and Macbeth again addresses it, to the consternation of all. Soon the ghost departs not to return.

MACBETH: Why, so being gone,

I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

But he continues to talk of the ghost, and Lady Macbeth, afraid of the consequences, breaks up the feast.

It will be noticed that in this case the ghost does not speak. It is, in fact, an obvious hallucination (though,

(Continued in next column)

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

REMEDIAL PUNISHMENT

SIR,—There have been several articles and letters in *LIGHT* lately on the subject of "Punishment," but I have not seen any reference to the Greek word *Kolasis*, which gives the teaching of the New Testament and throws light on the whole subject.

The Greeks had two words, *timoria* (vindictive punishment) and *kolasis* (remedial punishment), and it is this latter word which alone is used in the Gospels. This is the more remarkable, because Josephus tells us that the Pharisees believed that future punishment was *timoria*, so that the writers of the Gospels make it quite clear that Christ taught that they were mistaken. Whatever word Christ used in Aramaic, the New Testament writers were evidently quite sure that it corresponded to the Greek *kolasis* (remedial punishment).

Every father who really loves his child and desires his improvement, will meet out to him *kolasis*, but no father worthy of the name will inflict *timoria*, much less our Father in Heaven.

The same thought is brought out in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where it is taught that "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" (xii., 6). Here the tender word *paideuo* is used, which comes from *pais*, a child, and

(Continued from previous column)

as the Psychical Researcher would say, quite probably veridical), that is caused by delayed telepathy. The Spiritualist might think otherwise.

It is interesting to compare these four cases, all differing from each other in some points. The ideas are familiar to us, and we are forced to the conclusion that Shakespeare, who "held a mirror up to nature," was merely using the current beliefs of his time with his usual dramatic skill. The ghost of Hamlet's father seems to have been an integral part of the story on which Shakespeare drew for his plot. In fact, we may conclude that, in Elizabethan times, there were many examples of apparitions, ghosts, phantasms, hallucinations or whatever you like to call them, such as later led to the foundation of the Society of Psychical Research and the gradual growth of a scientific treatment of supernatural phenomena. Other records confirm this belief—for example, Lord Clarendon's account of the appearance of the father of the Duke of Buckingham warning him of his danger, given in the Duke's life by Mr. C. R. Cannell, recently reviewed in *LIGHT*.

But what of Shakespeare's own views on these matters? There is little we can glean from his ghosts that I have not noted, but here and there in his plays there are some indications. In *Richard III*, Buckingham, led to his execution, exclaims:

Hastings, and Edward's children, Rivers, Grey,
Holy King Henry, and thy fair son Edward,
Vaughan and all that have miscarried
By underhand corrupted foul injustice,
If that your moody discontented souls
Do through the clouds behold this present hour,
Even for revenge mock my destruction!

This, though it took place on All Saints' Day, is contrary to the idea of a sleep till the day of judgment fostered by the all-powerful Church.

Again, the last words of Richard II, struck down by his murderers, are:

Mount, mount, my soul! Thy seat is up on high;

While my gross flesh sinks downward, here to die.

Throughout his plays, Shakespeare, true to his times, expresses an unwavering faith in a future life and seems to take it for granted that those who pass over retain an interest in life on earth. But there is something more than the conventional ideas which it would be heretical and dangerous to contradict publicly. His lines show a fervour and feeling which betoken a real belief and that not so inconsistent with those beliefs of the readers of *LIGHT* as one might have expected.

means to correct and instruct as we do children, and the writer adds that it is "for our profit that we may be partakers of his holiness."

It seems to me that the mother spoken of in the July 25th issue and every other mother should only be too grateful to know that, whether in this life or the next, the Heavenly Father has only one great purpose in "punishment" and that is our profit, and she should be grateful and thankful that He in His boundless and endless love and mercy will carry on and complete the education of her soldier boy.

(Rev.) W. S. PAKENHAM WALSH.

THE WALLS OF JERICO

Sir,—I would like to acknowledge Sir Charles Marston's work on the Bible which is known to me.

I think that the earthquake which destroyed Jericho was subsequent to Joshua's assault upon the city. We do know, in these days, that God does not fight our battles for us in the way some of us would wish, and that earthquakes and so on cannot really be called up by our priests. God does not do things like that.

I think the true story of Jericho lies beneath the account presented to us by Jewish scribes, and I doubt if it is wise to believe that God stages dramatic incidents of that sort. At one time earthquakes were considered to show God's anger and He was considered to be vindictive. Do we not now know better?

Q. CRAUFURD.

JACK WEBBER'S MEDIUMSHIP

Sir,—In the admirable review by H. F. Prevost Battersby of my book, *The Mediumship of Jack Webber*, in your issue of August 15th, there is one observation that may convey an incorrect inference. The statement refers to a "long period of unconsciousness from which the Medium occasionally suffered at the close of a sitting."

It should be made clear that such periods of unconsciousness were very rare and only followed an interference or mishap. They were not part of the customary procedure with the Medium. Actually, I only recall two serious occasions—one when the Medium was levitated bound to his chair and, following a wrong instruction from the Guide, white light was put on; and the second was when four trumpets had been in simultaneous levitation; and one came to rest on a sitter's hands, the sitter moved his hand and the trumpet fell (it was still connected by a rod to the Medium). The only other recent serious case occurred at Wolverhampton, as reported in the book.

May I express my thanks to Mr. Prevost Battersby for his review, as well as to the many friends who have sent me appreciations. As the Memorial Fund for the benefit of Jack Webber's widow and children is aided from the sale of copies obtained from myself, it would be appreciated if orders for the book could be sent to me direct. (12/6, post 6d.). HARRY EDWARDS.
11 Chilbebert Road, London, S.W.17.

Edinburgh Psychic College closed for a short vacation on Friday, 16th August. It reopens on September 6th (Friday) with Mr. J. W. Herries and Mrs. Helen Hughes on the platform. Though war conditions involve considerable difficulties in carrying on the work of the College, it is felt that they also produce a greater need for the facilities which the College provides, and we are informed every effort will be made to continue the normal activities throughout the winter.

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EDITOR - - - GEORGE H. LETHEM

AS WE SEE IT

"MERE" SURVIVAL

BECAUSE, probably, of the steadily-mounting roll of casualties due to the intensification of the "Battle of Britain," and the often pathetic demand of mourners to know what has happened to their sons or husbands or lovers, there seems to be less tendency in these days for critics of Spiritualism to belittle the importance of the evidence of human Survival. Still, the criticism is heard; and mourners who might be comforted by assurances that their loved ones have survived the destruction of their physical bodies are reminded of the Archbishop of York's warning against "a doctrine of mere Survival."

WHAT MR. ROBERT BLATCHFORD SAYS

It is of interest to recall that this objection did not originate with the Archbishop. It has been used for a long time by those anxious to discourage inquiry. Re-reading Mr. Robert Blatchford's book, *More Things in Heaven and Earth* (published in 1925), we came across a passage in which he deals with a statement by Canon Symes, of Barrow-in-Furness, that "Spiritualism only treats of the life after death . . . it has nothing to tell us except that persons who have passed over can possibly get into touch with us." Mr. Blatchford's comment was:

"ONLY that! Spiritualism can only tell us that our beloved who have left us are alive and that we shall meet them again. It only tells us that love is stronger than death . . . You may hear words of love and words of hope from the wife or child or friend you loved so dearly and whom you have so bitterly mourned. That, the Canon seems to think, is such a trivial matter as to be hardly worth bothering about. But one who has loved a sweet woman for fifty years and lost her, one whose brilliant son was killed on the Somme, one whose loyal, affectionate and helpful daughter was cut down like a flower, will not look upon assurance of Survival and the hope of reunion with the cool detachment which Canon Symes affects or feels."

CLEARER VIEWS OF LIFE

It is not true that Spiritualism stops short at providing proof of Survival, although that is its primary purpose: it opens the way to clearer views of the purpose not only of the life to come, but of this life. But even if it went no further, it would, as Mr. Blatchford shows, be of great importance as a means of answering the questions and meeting the emotional needs of bereaved people—and particularly of people, suddenly involved in the grim tragedies of war, who may have lost touch with the Churches and their teaching.

Preachers—and particularly preachers who broadcast—usually speak as if all their listeners and those in whom they are interested were Church members or adherents, to be numbered amongst "the faithful," but they should know that there are "others," many others, outside the fold, but still God's children, who need proof of Survival as a basis on which to build the Faith which they are exhorted to exercise.

GEORGE VALE OWEN'S WORDS

In this respect, the words of the late Rev. George Vale Owen—that great Messenger of God who was brought to the front by the demand for knowledge after the war of 1914-18—may aptly be quoted from another somewhat forgotten book, *Facts and the Future Life*. Having received a letter from a widow who had lost a beloved child, he wrote:

"It is no use pointing to the New Testament in such

cases . . . and telling the people that Faith is sufficient . . . I know some say that if it is not sufficient it ought to be. Well, all I can say is that they may be right; but, if they are right, then Jesus was wrong, for He came back to the Disciples after His death for the very purpose of proving that the fact of intercourse with the dead had been established."

This passage should be of particular interest to the Bishop of Liverpool (Dr. David), who—as recorded in recent issues of *LIGHT*—tells his people that they "ought to be content with what the Gospel teaches about 'them that have fallen asleep' and their relationship with us;" although he makes it clear (as noted in *LIGHT* last week) that he himself does not accept the teaching that the departed are "asleep," but that, on the contrary, he believes they are awake, aware of what is happening to those they have left behind, and active in God's work: which is exactly what Spiritualists know to be true, because of the testimony of friends who have "returned" to tell of their experiences.

The Disciples were men who had had the advantage of living with Jesus and hearing His teaching at first-hand; and if they needed direct proof of Survival, the Bishop should not be surprised if people in these days—less favoured by far than the Disciples—should also need proof, and refuse to be satisfied without it.

WHERE IS THE PROOF?

An address broadcast on Sunday evening by the Rev. Dr. R. Davies (Congregationalist) drew attention to what is likely to happen because of the decline of belief in a spiritual world. "Without Christianity," he said, "civilisation must perish; without belief in a spiritual world, Christianity cannot survive." No doubt he is correct. But how is belief in a spiritual world to be fostered in these materialistic days without convincing proof that it really exists? And where is such proof to be found save in the psychic evidence offered by Spiritualists?

MR. HARRY PRICE'S LITERARY ACTIVITY

Although, because of war conditions, Mr. Harry Price has had to curtail his work as Hon. Secretary of the University of London Council for Psychical Research, readers will be glad to know that he has continued his literary activity. His book on the Poltergeist phenomena at Borley Rectory has been in the hands of his publishers for some months, and we understand it is likely to be on sale early in September.

It was in regard to this book that Mr. Price said there would be difficulty in explaining some of the incidents by any hypothesis other than the "spiritistic." This remark, we think, gives point to the comment recently made by Mr. Hereward Carrington (his American opposite number) that: "It is evident to anyone who has followed Mr. Price's work during the past twenty years that he is veering more and more towards the spiritistic hypothesis as a result of his own investigations."

We hope the "veering" process is being continued; and that it will have been completed by the time Mr. Price completes the autobiography which is to be his next literary work and for the publication of which, we understand, preliminary arrangements have been completed.

After all, Psychical Research has always drawn its impetus and energy from Spiritualism, and by far the larger number of the great Psychical Researchers both at home and abroad have been led, "as the result of their own investigation," to accept the "spiritistic hypothesis," towards which Mr. Carrington says Mr. Price is "veering." Mr. Price has said many hard things—some of them not deserved—about Spiritualists and Spiritualism; but we do not remember that he has ever questioned the fact of Survival or the possibility of communication, and we would not be at all surprised if, in his autobiography, he places himself definitely alongside the Great Psychical Researchers who give full acceptance to both.

THE PSYCHIC THREAD

"THE TERRIBLE CRYSTAL"

MR. Channing-Pearce has challenged my critique of his essay, or rather series of essays, entitled *The Terrible Crystal: Studies in Kierkegaard and Modern Christianity* (LIGHT, 25th July). That book is a work of power—profound, eloquent, illuminating. It treats of deep and difficult matter, yet its central idea is "crystal" clear; therefore its author's counter-critique was not wisely conceived. If his book did not mean what I have said it means, it would mean nothing. To what does he object? To my calling his philosophy, and Kierkegaard's, "The Philosophy of Despair."

"Welcome catastrophe . . . welcome tension and travail . . . welcome sacrifice . . . Only he who can conceive God can know despair. Then entertain misery and despair, for these are His angels!" Is not this, then, "The Philosophy of Despair"? Is not Kierkegaard, with "his inherited sense of guilt . . . of original sin," a very apostle of catastrophe? "Upon this dread all his religion rests . . . This sense of dread was inborn" (I quote Mr. Pearce). I insist that the Danish theologian, as he appears in Mr. Pearce's analysis, "was a living omen of future catastrophe" (I quote myself). Mr. Pearce says that I "roundly assert that Kierkegaard was the apostle of Masochism—of self-torture." I do (presuming always that Mr. Pearce has portrayed his life and mind accurately).

CHALLENGE AND WARNING

Mr. Pearce asserts that "between self-motification and a masochistic self-torture there is a deep difference—the difference between beatification and pathological degeneration, between heaven and hell." I maintain that the difference is purely one of degree, and that Kierkegaard (as he is here represented) easily passed that nebulous frontier where self-sacrifice slides into self-torture. That he attained thereby to "joy and gentleness" does not alter the facts of his life or the atmosphere of his writings. In my article I duly noted that, with Kierkegaard, from dread, despair and sense of sin "the peace of God emerges," and I added that "doubtless he sought Christ along the path best adapted to his own dolorous ego." I challenged him, not as a pilgrim, but as a preacher.

And I will maintain my challenge. Though Kierkegaard himself skirted, without falling, the perilous and treacherous precipices that hang over the abyss which Mr. Channing-Pearce calls the "pathological hell of masochism," yet will many of his disciples, over-zealous and under-equipped, lose their footing and descend into the pit. There will be gnashing of teeth, and scorpions and scourges, the howling dervish and the grazing monk, all the maniacs that masochism breeds or that ever worshipped Moloch. Maybe, a word of warning will ward off a mass of misery, and economise an incarnation!

THE CULT OF MOLOCH

Whence comes the cult of self-immolation? Its roots lie deep in this queer old earth of ours; the red dawn of it is dim in remote regions of antiquity. What time the first savage herdsman gazed in terror on the storm, harkened to the thunder's voice, marked the devastating track of the lightning; when the first wild fisher folk recoiled horror-struck from the awful aspect of the devouring sea: at that dread hour the Unseen, Incomprehensible, was sensed fearfully as a Being of appalling malevolence, a Tyrant of tyrants, only to be placated by gifts, and by gifts suited to his ferocious character, sanguinary repasts to gorge his remorseless appetite. Hence the sacrifice of blood. The fruit-offering of Cain was not so acceptable as the firstlings of Abel's flock (*Genesis*, iv., 3-16). So sacrifices multiplied till Moloch in all his hideous potentiality was fairly enthroned. Only the fattest calves, only the whitest

lambs, only the loveliest children, to feast the brazen Beast!

Fanaticism has its seasons, its epidemics, like plague and small-pox. The whips of the Flagellants crack in an infectious ecstasy; Shakers and Quakers and "Holy Rollers" shake and quake and roll in unison; Dervishes dance and howl and slash in concert; Fakirs lie on beds of nails and monks in pits of crawling reptiles—a frantic company of a hundred faiths, all fostered by the one prime error: a little seed, but the tree grows vastly and its boughs are like the tentacles of a gigantic octopus.

MEDIAEVAL MOLOCHISM

Thus, out of a prehistoric-confusion of Good and Evil, of Gods and Devils, sprang the Cult of Moloch, and to this day almost everyone is in some degree infected by the heritage of this old devil-worship—for such it was. Mediaeval Christianity was saturated with it. The idea of "original sin" mingled itself with the old fiend-cult, and a curious medley of sombre superstitions was generated. That colossal aspiration of the Spirit which built the Cathedrals and Abbeys with their sky-seeking towers, their pageantry of symbolic sculpture and their glory of painted glass, could not withstand the subtle promptings of this age-old mental malady. The splendour of God's house was darkened within; it became a receptacle for tombs, a glorified charnel-house, full of representations of the gloomiest and most repulsive scenes. All the torments of the martyr-saints were depicted with affectionate detail, while altars and sacristies were loaded with spurious reliques—skulls and femurs, bowls of blood and instruments of death. Physical death became itself the cult of cults, and *Life*, the Divine spark, the eternal, was despised, and desecrated. Celibacy, with its legion of devils, bred a host of secret sins, and the perversion born of repression lit the human torches of the unholy Inquisition.

WINE OF THE SOUL

Nor was Protestantism free of this fanaticism. And if the manifestation was less frantic it was almost as destructive. Hecatombs of paintings and sculptures, masterpieces of art, were sacrificed to iconoclastic ideocy. The drama was damned, theatres closed, dancing prohibited: whining tones, sour faces, gloom-cast sabbaths, funereal garments, were the signatures of the peculiar masochism of the Puritans. In England, with the demise of Cromwell, men were hurled into a crazy reaction round the throne of their Merry Monarch. The "respectability" of the Victorians was a mild, money-garnished revival of the old Puritan spirit, which has actually survived intact in parts of Scotland. Furthermore, the kill-joy policy has assumed formidable proportions in contemporary Europe. The men who have betrayed and ruined France are its latest exponents.

Is this Christianity? If it were, wise men and women would all be Pagans. But the Son of Man whose first miracle turned water into wine—and the best wine, and on the joyous occasion of a marriage feast—has been ill represented by cults of misery and mania. God's earth grows flowers as well as weeds. Man is made in God's image and he is fashioned for pleasure as well as pain. Joy is the prerogative of angels, despair of devils. The Rose is still the Rose, be she crimson or gold or the white Rose of Paradise.

And is not Wine the eternal symbol of the Spirit—of the Soul, unfettered by any heritage of fiend-born fear? Fortitude consists in meeting valiantly whatever perils and sorrows God in his wisdom sends us. But assuredly as Dawn follows Darkness and Spring succeeds Winter, so are evil times the heralds of happy days, and death itself is but the gateway of Eternal Life.

C. R. CAMMELL.

CHURCH AND RESURRECTION STORY

By MRS. ST. CLAIR STOBART

IN last week's issue of *LIGHT*, I drew attention to an article in the *Modern Churchman's Magazine* by the Editor, the Rev. H. D. A. Major, Principal of the Theological College at Ripon Hall, near Oxford. In this article, which deals with the Resurrection of Jesus, Dr. Major boldly proclaims his belief that the evidence for the Resurrection having been on the *physical* plane is less weighty than the evidence for its having been on the *psychical* plane; and that, on this finding, the Resurrection of Jesus was no more and no less miraculous than well-attested cases preserved in the records of Psychical Research.

A fine outspoken declaration. And it will now be interesting to watch the reaction to this pronouncement on the main body of the Anglican Church.

If we may judge by the *Report on Church Doctrine in the Anglican Church* drawn up by Commissioners appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Dr. Major's interpretation of the story of the Resurrection should come as a helpful solution to one of the main difficulties with which the Commission was confronted.

This Commission sat for 15 years. Its findings were therefore deliberate; but these findings make painful reading, being obviously the result of a conscientious endeavour to reconcile Traditionalism with the gropings of those who, no longer able to uphold the ancient tradition, were either ignorant of, or afraid of, the only explanation which could present the Christian story in a light compatible with reason.

This is especially the case in the Commissioners' treatment of the Resurrection. The Resurrection, indeed, is the chief of the Churches' difficulties to-day. The Commissioners recognise this, when, after affirming that "*To Christians, the Resurrection of Jesus is the central fact in human history*," they proceed to find apologies for believing in this central fact—as fact. They say that:

"When a fact is so closely linked with such momentous issues in heaven and earth, it is not surprising that opinions should differ when the question is raised, how much in the record of it is derived from the sheer occurrence of the fact itself, and how much is due to the primitive interpretation of the fact in the minds which first perceived its transcendent significance and expressed it in forms inevitably belonging to their own manner of thought and speech. And even if the full and undisputed records of eye-witnesses could be studied there would still be room for difference of judgment (a) as to how much was seen with the bodily eye, and how much with spiritual vision; (b) how much was objectively given and how much was the contribution of subjective interpretation; (c) how much of what is admitted to be subjective interpretation may nevertheless be considered true."

Some day, the chapters of the Report devoted to the subjects of the Resurrection and the Future Life, will be literary curiosities; but meanwhile they shew the timeliness of the lead Dr. Major has given the Church. The Commissioners argue that if Science and Religion are in conflict—so much the worse for Science. They do not realise that recognition by students of Psychic Science of the obverse statement is so much the worse for Religion. But the acknowledgment by the Principal of the College "to provide a training on modern lines for those seeking Holy Orders in any Diocese of the Anglican Community" of the psychic science explanation of the religious episode which is "the central fact in human history" is the consummation of a marriage between Science and Religion for which the "Confraternity" have persistently been calling the banns.

The Commissioners' treatment of the doctrine of the Resurrection of the *physical body* is again an interesting example of an attempt to compromise between Traditionalism and Agnosticism and its result is unintelligible jargon. We are told that "the fact of the disintegration of the bodies of departed Christians

inevitably presents difficulties," but we are pointed to the difference between what was appropriate and even inevitable in the case of "the divine and sinless Redeemer and what is possible in the case of sinners, though redeemed."

Notwithstanding all these difficulties it is stated that "*the doctrine of the Resurrection of the body stands for an important group of truths*," and it seems to us extraordinary that a body of supposedly learned men should approach their subject—a future life—without having made themselves acquainted with the most elementary knowledge obtainable from scientists on that subject.

The "important group of truths" for which *physical* resurrection (of all men, as well as Christ) stands are:

(a) "It excludes the notion that the future life is impoverished and ghostly; on the contrary, that life when renewed in the physical body after death is full as, and fuller, than the life here. We expect to be not unclothed, but clothed upon (2 Cor., verse 4). This, of course, supposes release from the antiquated idea of "disembodied existence" the only form of after-life, other than physical, which the Churches have hitherto considered.

(b) "It excludes the notion that our treatment and use of our bodies is spiritually irrelevant . . . If the doctrine (of physical Resurrection) were abandoned this truth might be jeopardised." And so, after 15 years of deliberation, this group of learned ecclesiastics produce arguments for a belief which makes their well wishers turn with relief to other more liberal sections of the Church and realise more than ever how vital for the continued life of the Church is the admittance of new light in dark places.

(c) "It safeguards the conviction that we shall have the means of recognising each other in the future life. The incredibly ingenuous apologetic shews utter ignorance of the existence of the *soul* of Man, and of the fact, that has been proved over and over again, by psychic scientists, that the physical body is the duplicate of the soul-body which is the permanent body, in which the physical form is only temporarily housed.

(d) This paragraph is so obscurely worded as to allow of interpretation "according to taste." And the Commissioners take refuge in the suggestion that "in the light of what has been said, the notion of a period of disembodied existence presents difficulties, and it may be that some of the questions raised cannot be answered under the conditions of earthly life. We cannot expect a coherent scheme, but must be content to employ partially irreconcilable symbolisms, and to remain otherwise agnostic."

Agnosticism would certainly be preferable to the Traditionalism here exhibited.

With regard to the "Ascension" of Jesus, the ingenuity of the Commission in providing apologetics had apparently run dry. They admit that "the Commission has not felt called upon to discuss in detail the narrative of the Ascension, or the allusions to it in the New Testament." They say "whatever may have been the nature of the event underlying those narratives, and whatever its relation to the Resurrection, its physical features are to be interpreted symbolically, since they are closely related to the conception of heaven as a place locally fixed beyond the sky."

For the enquiring Christian, therefore, it would seem in this *Report on Church Doctrine of the Anglican Church*, that the alternative explanations for the events of the Resurrection, the central fact in human history, and the post-crucifixion appearances lies between the materialistic Miracle of the Traditionalist, Symbolism, or Agnosticism. And the world is choosing Agnosticism.

Those of us, therefore, who feel that, for the maintenance of the principles of Christianity, a Christian Church is essential, but that the Church must be a Church reformed in accordance with modern knowledge, will be deeply grateful to Dr. Major for the indication he has given of the lines along which the New Reformation might proceed.

ANOTHER ANCIENT WAR PROPHECY: RUSSIA AND GERMANY

IN a recent issue, the *Chicago Daily News* stated that Mr. Manly P. Hall, director of the Philosophical Research Society of Los Angeles, had unearthed a prophecy made in the 11th century which he believes contains a note of optimism for England in the war against Germany, and a prediction (similar to those referred to in LIGHT last week) that Russia will fight against Germany.

The prophecy, said Mr. Hall, was circulated throughout England and the continent of Europe at the time it was made, but its origin is unknown. It reads as follows:

"There shall come a time when a George, the son of George, shall come to the throne of England. And then, at that time, an eagle shall drink the blood of princes from a headless cross. And at that time death shall fall from the sky and an army of sleeping horsemen from beneath the earth shall come forth and drive the enemy from the land."

Although no mystic (says the *Chicago Daily News*), Hall believes in prophecy and prides himself on the accuracy of many of his own prognostications regarding world events. In 1924 he went on record as viewing 1940 with alarm and anticipated the bloodless conquest of three nations.

Mr. Hall points out that, by coincidence, the Hohenzollern spread eagle is the symbol of Nazi Germany. Also, by coincidence, he said, the swastika is a headless cross. However, he has no interpretation to explain the "sleeping horsemen from beneath the earth."

Hall's conception of Adolf Hitler is that he is a despot working against time and incapable of ultimate success.

From the standpoint of political science, Hall said German "kultur" is being spread too thin over the face of Europe and that it will shortly crack and degenerate.

"America will not become seriously involved in European conflict before 1942," Mr. Hall predicted. "Prior to that time there may be some static, ideological conflict, but nothing serious."

Mr. Hall does not venture to predict what will take place after 1942. Based on psychic information, he predicts Russia will become involved in the European war against Germany as Hitler attempts an anti-Slavic entente.

THE ENEMY WITHIN

Fellow soldiers, I have given you your marching orders, I now call upon you to fight. First of all fight the enemy within your midst—all those doubts and fears, hates and prejudices that lie, hidden deep perhaps, but nevertheless lie within the hearts of us all. Now is the time to root them out and cast them aside, for they are doing the work of the enemy. Give no thought to self, but concentrate your thoughts wholly on the mighty army of which you and I are members. You have a saying, "A chain is as strong as its weakest link." Do not allow yourselves to be weak links in the mighty chain that God is forging to bind the powers of evil. The Master has called you to follow Him, just as He did those fishermen He saw mending their nets upon the lake side. They were but ordinary men, but He knew that they could do the work to which He called them. It is the same with you, my friends. You may think you can do little, but the Master has chosen you and you cannot presume to think you know better than He. Be of good courage and keep your thoughts fixed on the victory of good over evil. But when you pray, pray not only that the powers of evil may be overcome, but that they may be turned to the service of God and that the forces that are now working such evil in the world may work with us for the welfare of mankind. Remember, with God nothing is impossible. (From Bro. Boniface, through Marjorie Smith).

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REINCARNATION

On the question of Reincarnation Mr. C. V. Longland draws our attention to a statement attributed to Abduhl Latif in the book *Health*, edited by the late R. H. Saunders. Part of the statement is as follows (page 148):

"In all the philosophies of the world, there is only one philosophy that Abduhl Latif knows which contains this Gospel of Reincarnation, and that is the Hindu. Out of Hindu philosophy, your Western mind has got knowledge of Reincarnation which is a mixture of one and gleaning of another, and there is nothing pure; but if you take the old Sumurun civilisation, which is one of the oldest in existence . . . you will find that although there is great worship of ancestors, at the same time in their philosophy, there is nothing that touches on Reincarnation, but of our difficulties in the life to come. If you turn to the Maya civilisation, to the Persian or the Armenian civilisations, you will find nothing in connection with it there. There is nothing in the Babylonian or the Hebraic that touches upon anything of Reincarnation. Therefore, we owe that doctrine to the superegoism of man's own mind, inasmuch as he can conceive of nothing that will not permit his personality to exist, and in a mind that can see no further than that space by which it is bounded, but in the whole conception of our growth, which after all is growth from an unconscious perfection to a conscious and known perfection, there can be no reason why we should come back to the earth."

In place of the Annual General meeting of the S.N.U. originally fixed for Saturday and Sunday, 6th and 7th July at Reading, a general meeting for the transaction of formal business will be held in the Brixton Spiritualists National Church, Stockwell Road, London, S.W.9, on Saturday, 31st August, at 2.30 p.m.

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