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Editorial

Because language is a tool for trying to externalise ideas which are essentially inner, one can get the impression that the spiritual Path is outside oneself, dependent upon following a certain kind of external life. The teachings of the Tao and the Middle Way aim to correct this. Is the comparable Christian wisdom hidden in the deceptively simple admonition "Love thy neighbour as thyself"? Paradoxically—which is the nature of Truth from our human point of view—this is the supremely difficult thing. Why do we find it almost impossible to love ourselves in this Christian sense, as being one with our neighbours? Seeing everyone as part of oneself, or as part of a larger unity in which we all partake, means accepting *in ourselves* what comes over to us as their faults. In this way one learns gradually also to forgive onself; to incorporate one's hidden side, both light and dark, and to become aware of a larger Self beyond either.

This is a difficult discipline to impose on oneself, but one which the accounts suggest we shall all have to accept at some stage. It can feel very like purgatory; and probably is. For we are told that in the discarnate world we shall be drawn together by affinity and thus experience as coming from our companions the attributes of our own nature.

This may seem a far cry from the paranormal. But apart from the fact that spiritual aspiration is a search for wholeness, what we think of as paranormal are normal incidents of the inner world; and as individuals develop greater awareness of their inner, and larger being, "paranormal" experiences become more normal.

It is beginning to be more generally realised that the ecology of a small planet includes the mental-emotional field. Every objective occurrence is an externalisation of an inner cause. To be aware of the inner impulse and its outer manifestation as a reciprocal movement is a raising of consciousness; it is how man partakes in creation. Such awareness is crucial in a period of change and crumbling forms.

B. M.

From a Personal Notebook

W. TUDOR POLE

RECENTLY, a small shabby exercise book, like a schoolboy's, with ruled lines, turned up among my papers: written on the inside cover, in "T. P.'s" inimitable hand, was the name W. Tudor Pole, an address in Bournemouth, the date March 1917.

He had the habit of handing me, or from time to time posting to me copies in typescript of certain of his booklets, articles, talks, etc., for safe keeping. This little manuscript volume, which records four supernormal experiences, must have come to me among them. The material printed below may be seeing the light for the first time—though this I cannot ascertain. Whether or not, it strikes me as much too valuable to be left unresurrected.

The note of authority, of forthright simplicity so characteristic of T. P., is as evident here as in his latter days; so is his deep practical compassion; also the constant stress he laid on the necessity of "the practice of the Presence of God." In those far-off days he was a young man serving in the British Army.

Accustomed nowadays to the vast proliferation of discoveries and experiments in the psychic field, people are apt to forget his uniqueness as a spiritual pioneer and adventurer. How many doors leading to the expansion of Western consciousness he was among the very first to open! To me for one, it comes as a surprise that in 1917 he had already set up his Rescue Station in the "intermediate regions"; and left his sleeping body every night to work in it. No wonder he was sometimes reticent; he was obliged to be careful not to expose his true identity. No wonder, too, that now and then he appeared lonely and despondent, despite his natural capacity for wit and mirth, and the devotion of those closest to him.

R. L.

THE EMIGRANT

WE have just been discussing the practicability of bridging the gulf supposed to exist between this world and the next. It is now generally recognised that the human mind can, under certain circumstances, glean information as to events taking place thousands of miles away and without the use of any external agency.

Whether some form of telepathy can explain all cases of this kind is somewhat doubtful. It is important to gather together as many experiences of this kind as possible, because if we can once prove that the human mind has the power to bridge oceans and continents, we are on the road to proving that the same mind can pierce through into the next state of consciousness as well.

I remember once being asked to put this power of mind to the test. A friend of mine was greatly concerned about a ward of his, a wild youth of 19 whom he had just packed off to Canada because England had become too hot for him. The boy was somewhat disfigured by a hare lip and for this reason was thrown into quarantine at Montreal among a rabble of steerage passengers, some of whom were suffering from smallpox. My friend and I were discussing the feasibility of telepathic intercourse and similar phenomena at the very time when the cable arrived announcing the young man's plight. The cable had been delayed for 48 hours en route and my friend asked me whether I would attempt to project my consciousness to Montreal to discover the actual facts of the situation. I promised to attempt the experiment during sleep that same night and to 'phone him the result next morning.

It is possible for the mind of man to travel long distances while the body lies sleeping. On this occasion I well remember falling quite naturally into deep slumber and immediately finding myself standing beside my own bed watching my body as it lay asleep. This in itself is a curious experience, but I do not think it is a very uncommon one. Then I remember discovering myself almost instantaneously "projected" to Montreal, walking up and down the streets hunting for the quarantine hospital. I remember nothing else, but when I awoke next morning facts had become known to me in some unaccountable manner. The boy with the hare lip was no longer in quarantine, he had left it the day before in company with another young Englishman. They had clubbed their spare cash together and by bribing the doctor had got clear of the quarantine hospital. They had then gone to the general post office and each written home describing how they had met each other and saying they had decided to go farming together in Sascatchewan. One other piece of information was impressed on my mind, viz., that the letters telling of these events would arrive in England on the following Tuesday.

I at once 'phoned to my friend who seemed very sceptical, but on the following Tuesday evening he came round with the

promised letter in his hand containing the exact information I have given above.

How had I become possessed of the facts? Had I indeed travelled to Canada in my sleep and picked up the threads of these two fellows' lives, or had some friendly spirit intelligence conveyed the information to me at the moment of waking? This sort of thing happens too frequently to belong to the realm of coincidence, and I prefer the hypothesis that my mind was actually able to cross two thousand miles of ocean and discover the events that were transpiring at the other end. One cannot dogmatise. There are many records extant of hypnotic experiments where the subject has been commanded by the operator to visit distant lands and describe what he "saw." I remember sitting at a table once with a friend, experimenting idly with a tumbler and the letters of the alphabet. Suddenly the tumbler raced round the alphabet spelling out a detailed description of a tragedy said to be taking place some thousands of miles away at that very hour. Months afterwards we were able to verify the facts and our tumbler had told the truth in every particular. A happening of this kind cannot be called coincidence. There is evidently some hidden Law of Nature and of the human mind that remains to be discovered, and through the agency of which these various experiences could be explained. An accumulation of mental phenomena of this kind makes it possible for one to believe to the point of certainty that the human mind *can* bridge gulfs by some interior machinery of its own, and that communication between souls leagues apart, in the body or out of it, is as feasible as, say, the sending of a marconigram from London to New York.

THE HEALING

THE wire came as I was getting into bed. Jack France, the twelve-year-old son of a great friend, was dying from the effects of a grave operation. The wire was to tell me that a crisis had arrived and that all hope had been given up. I went to sleep full of sadness and with the prayer on my lips that I might be of service. Immediately I found myself fifty miles away in the bedroom of the sick lad. The atmosphere, both physical and etheric, was dense and foetid and it seemed impossible for the boy to continue breathing. The mother sat on one side of the bed and the nurse on the other, and both were crying. Summoning all the power I possessed, I set about cleansing the etheric atmosphere about the boy; by prayer and by the use of a certain

luminous quality of mind; most useful on occasions like this. Then I willed the nurse to rise from her chair and open the window, so that the foul air might escape.

It was midnight by the clock on the mantlepiece, and the boy was evidently in extremis.

I simply stood before him, communing with his half released spirit. I remember repeating over and over again: "God is Spirit; you are part of God's spirit. You therefore cannot die."

Suddenly I saw a white light above the bed which gradually spread throughout the room. Evidently I had been impelled to cleanse the atmosphere so that this healing ray could draw near in response to intense faith and prayer. It was one a.m. The body on the bed seemed utterly lifeless, the spirit was hovering outside but still joined to the body by a luminous cord or link.

As the "light" grew in power, the spirit seemed to gain strength and in some subtle way *willed* itself back into the body. At 2 a.m. the boy turned over and fell into a sound sleep, and I awoke to find myself in my own bed and *happy*. I made careful note of the time.

Next morning, a second wire came: "Jack out of danger; has eaten a splendid breakfast." A letter followed: "So many thanks for your help. Jack grew rapidly worse until 2 a.m. this morning. At midnight we thought he had slipped away. There was no sign of life. We could do nothing, but strangely new hope came to me soon after and by 2 o'clock the crisis was past and Jack fell into a sound sleep."

On another occasion, when called upon for help under somewhat similar circumstances (the patient in this case did not know that my help had been sought), the dying patient suddenly sat up in bed and cried: "Why, there is W.T.P. come to help me get well!" In this instance, the healing took longer, but improvement commenced on the very night when I visited the patient in my sleep (and who happened to be hundreds of miles distant). An *apparition* of myself appeared, anyway, even if I were not actually present myself, and the apparition was apparently given the power to work wonders.

Such experiences as these open up the whole fascinating subject of metaphysical healing; healing which often takes place when healer and patient are many miles apart. Has the human mind the power not only to project itself across space, but also to affect conditions, both of mind and body, without any visible link proving necessary?

It is more reasonable to suppose that there is a spiritual harmonising force, always available for our use. The real interior

ego is a spirit, a child of the One God, and can therefore place itself in contact with spiritual power whenever needful. It seems to me to be a question of *reflection.* If we are able to cleanse our minds of all sense illusions, then the real spirit can take possession and control. The spirit is at one with all things spiritual, and can *reflect* the powers and qualities of Divine energy. This eternal energy is the greatest healing force in existence and we can set ourselves and others free from the discords of the flesh when once we have learned the truth.

Spiritual energy can operate anywhere, irrespective of space or time. Man can become a channel for such harmonising activities and "heal" himself or his neighbour by such means.

In the next sphere of existence, where life experiences are entirely mental "creation" is mental and changes its form and character in accordance with the thoughts of the creator. I am not referring to heavenly states, about which we can know nothing for certain, but to that intermediary human realm where we each create our own life and surroundings by our own mental action. Seeing that the conditions there are dependent for their reality upon our thoughts about them, is it not reasonable to suppose that the reality of life on earth also depends upon our interior thought activities? Nothing can be real outside ourselves, because we cognise nothing until it is "within us" In comparison with the Divine Life, all human conceptions of life must prove transient and illusory. Science is now telling us that the existence of matter is capable of no explanation, or rather that it can be explained away into something else, sometimes called "ether." And what is ether? Is ether also an illusion of the human mind? Certain it would seem that Life itself has no beginning and no end, is eternal, indestructible, and that in some wonderful way there is an element in each one of us identified with this one Central Life.

All else may prove illusion and may vanish as we progress in spiritual evolution. I say "we," but of course it is impossible to define what is included in that word. It is interesting to note that those who have sloughed off the mortal coil do not seem to be appreciably nearer the solution of this problem than we are ourselves. I have discussed it with a very intelligent man who has spent many years on the other side now and is quite free from earthly associations and beliefs. This is his point of view: "Life over here is very little less material than on earth. It is a continuation, an extension, of earth life on somewhat more psychic lines. I was sure that "I" existed when I lived on earth. I am still sure that I exist, but proof is beyond me.

"On earth, matter seemed solid reality; where I am now, 'thoughts' seem the only solid substance. Both seemings may prove illusory. When I pass out hence, I shall probably find I have been living among shadows both here and on earth, and I may pass into realms where 'shadows' still surround me, but of a more tenuous character.

These shadows are cast by Something. That Something must be Spirit or Life Itself.

"Some day I may be allowed to cast shadows myself, i.e. to become part of that Something whose very being makes shadow lives possible. Some day the shadows may disappear as if they had never been. Then we shall all be united (or should I say, re-united?) with that Somethnig we call God. Certainly life must remain illusory until the Shadows are destroyed. Nevertheless, I must pass up through the clouds if I am ever to see and be warmed by the Sun. The journey is necessary, the race must be run by all men, there can be no turning back. Something lures us on and on and on. Let us call it God's love for His own life and then we can safely cease resistance and pass into the Heavenly States. . . ."

Now this is very much my point of view, and it is interesting to discover that one who has spent so long in the realm beyond death has reached the same conclusions concerning the problem of existence. We must not forget that in a realm where thoughts are things, we find what we seek, we discover what we *expect* to discover. If we believe in angels and harps, we shall find ourselves surrounded by these when, after passing through our purgatorial experiences, we emerge into the "Rest Sphere."

Truth remains steadfast and enduring; it is our conceptions of Truth that grow and grow as we advance in spiritual understanding. Therefore nothing matters, no problem can remain for ever insoluble, if we will only do the best we know, reflect the highest we can reach, continually practice realization of the Presence of Life Itself in our very midst. Then will surely come a wonderful cosmic awaking within, all illusions will flee from us and we shall find ourselves where:

> "they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth Light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."—Rev. XXII, 5.

THE BROTHERS

I WAS staying in one of the great houses of England. My hosts were in mourning for their soldier son, who had been killed in France six months before. An older brother had died under

somewhat tragic circumstances some years previously, but it had never fallen to my lot to meet either of these fellows in the flesh. The house party was assembling in the great hall and I was talking to my host at the foot of the staircase. Hearing my name called I looked up, to see my hostess coming down the stairs. My attention was at once arrested by the figures of two young men, arm in arm, who were coming down behind her. It was some time before I realized that the figures were not "alive" in the mortal sense (if one dares use such a phrase) but belonged to that order of phenomena mis-termed "apparitions."

Later in the evening I was shown photographs of my hostess's sons and was able to identify them with the figures on the stairs. They remained in their mother's vicinity throughout the evening and seemed as real and living as we were ourselves; indeed, more so. It may be of some interest to record a conversation between the elder brother and myself which took place that same evening:

W. T. P. Why have you and your brother turned up tonight?

A. S. L. (the elder of the two). We have long wished to talk to Mother, and come here constantly, but the atmosphere seems so dense and no one seems to see or hear us. Perhaps we were drawn here tonight because we sensed there was someone present who could communicate with us.

W. T. P. Have you any message for your people?

A. S. L. Yes, rather. Tell Mother she need not be sad about us; we are well and have plenty to do. Our one grief is caused by Mother's sorrow and suffering. (Then followed a long personal message of no special interest to outsiders.)

W. T. P. (later). Do you care to relate some of your experiences of your present life?

A. S. L. Rather! I have been over here now about five years, I suppose, but time is an elusive nothing that ceases to hold sway over me. I am able to remember events connected with earth life, but these memories are strangely interwoven with more recent memories. I was asleep for a long time after passing over, but am now very much awake and never felt so much alive before. I seem to be completer, in some strange way, than I was on earth. The loss of my body has proved an immense gain and I still live and move in a body which seems as real and solid as did the one I left behind me on earth. Don't imagine that life over here is profoundly different from earth life. It is fuller, more interesting, perhaps less "coarse," but otherwise strikes me as being a continuation of material existence. I am the same being as I

was before and I cannot detect radical changes in my consciousness or mental make-up.

W. T. P. What do you *do*?

A. S. L. Well, I was greatly interested in astronomy when on earth and spent much time in deep study along those lines. Until the War began I spent most of my time in continuing my astronomical studies and have made some awfully interesting discoveries. It is a fascinating subject and I study under a wonderful old master whose wisdom is profound.

W. T. P. And then the War came?

A. S. L. Well, it came to us long before it broke out on earth. Is that strange? I could give you astronomical reasons for this, but do not know if I should be allowed to tell you about that. When it came I was told that I was needed for some kind of salvage work. During my astronomical studies I was shown how to use certain healing stellar rays, something similar to what you term radium. These rays I have since used when helping fellows over from your side. These awful modern explosives do damage that not only destroys the human body, but also affects the mind in some subtle manner, and that is where my rays come in. Their careful application soothes, heals and produces sleep. Sleep is so awfully important for these poor fellows, and often so difficult to secure.

W. T. P. And your brother?

A. S. L. Well, I was told he was coming over and was allowed to descend to the lowest confines of this sphere in order to be with him from the first and help him through those chaotic avenues. What dreadful places they have become! He came over so peacefully, had been shot in the head I believe.

W. T. P. Don't either of you know for certain how he met his death?

A. S. L. He hasn't the least idea himself! All memory of what he did when fighting seems to have been wiped out. A blessed providence, but how few soldiers lose their memory in this way. Well, I put him to sleep in a quiet green forest, near a spring, and he was soon quite himself again. Since then we have worked together in the vicinty of "this side" of the battlefields. If I can, I will come and talk to you again. It's quite a relief to have had this chat. Goodnight.

I have never come across these fellows again, but I like to think of them living and working together in a perfectly natural manner and quietly doing good under often what must be most difficult circumstances.

Again, you may well ask: How do you know that the whole of the foregoing conversation was not purely imaginary? How can I know? Only by some interior sense of certainty which I am unable to communicate to anyone else. Proof is impossible, and scepticism leaves me cold, for what does it matter what other people think or say so long as one's *internal* conviction as to the reality of such an experience as this is sure and strong?

Many people have written to me about an article of mine called "The Passing of Major P." purporting to be an actual description of the passing over experience. Let me answer some of the questions that have been raised in that connection. The article originally appeared in the Quest and was reproduced in "The Great War. Some Deeper Issues" (G. Bell & Sons, London). The article was based on notes taken by me at the time of the actual transition of Major P. and immediately after his "death." The experiences it described were intensely personal, and I do not suggest that the "death" episode there described are those through which we all shall pass. By this I mean that just as life on earth differs in almost every detail for each of us (when you come to think it out), so the passing over experience must be an intensely personal and individualised experience also. No two people enter the wider world through the same doorway. For this reason, one can lay down no hard and fast laws concerning the methods of entering the next stage of existence.

I have referred to the curious magnetic thread that seems to link me to my body when I am working away from it during sleep. This is referred to as the "earth cord" in the Major P. article, which snaps at the moment of death. I remember once meeting a disembodied soul who said that while he was working outside his body this cord had snapped. When he tried to re-enter his body, he found it "obsessed" by another entity of a low type. He could not get back. He said he spent days and weeks watching for a chance to re-enter his material abode, but without success. His obsessed body gradually gave way under the strain, something in the brain snapped, and now "it" was in an asylum. This poor soul said he would remain earthbound until his "body" died, and that then he would be released and able to rise to a higher state of consciousness. Also, that our asylums were full of such cases which could only be successfully "cured" by trained exorcists with highly developed clairvoyant faculties. I mention this to show how important it evidently is not to attempt to function independently of the body, even during sleep, until one is fully trained.

Apparently this earth cord (or cords) has a very important

part to play during earth life, and certainly at the moment of physical dissolution. It is the soul's "tie" with earth life, the link between body and soul without which earth life would prove a mere animal existence, if that. Sometimes this "tie" or cord seems to be snapped at the moment of death (as on a lower plane the child is separated from its mother at birth), but sometimes the cord does not disintegrate until the physical body has actually begun to decay.

Doubtless it is possible to raise a man to life so long as this cord has not been snapped, even if by ordinary tests the body seems to be dead. For this and other reasons, it is very important that a man should not be buried or cremated until the physical body shows actual signs of decomposition. This is far more important than is generally recognised.

In describing after life conditions, so far as they can be described at all, one is compelled to use material terms and consequently these conditions would seem to be as material as those around us on earth. Conditions of life and consciousness "over there" as a matter of fact are as material or as spiritual as we make them by our own thoughts. The power of spirit is all-powerful and if we once learn how to identify our lives and ideals with the Spirit of Life Itself, then outward conditions sink into comparative unimportance. We can live the life of the spirit while we are still on earth, and the more of the spiritual we express while here, the more spiritual will prove the conditions into which we pass at "death." Nothing on earth or in heaven is so important as this practice of the Presence of God, in the midst of our consciousness, no matter in what realm that consciousness may be functioning. We can so reflect the Spirit of Life that our life from then onward becomes drawn into the Divine Current, our selves become transmuted, we are re-born, regenerated. This birth may take place while we are still on earth, or not until we reach some other sphere. It is the only true and real birth, ushering us straight away into the celestial realms of bliss.

The Pilgrim Way

THE ESOTERIC AND CHRISTIANITY TODAY
(Part of a talk given at the College of Psychic Studies)

REVD. DAVID HUTT

IN a conversation with Paul Beard following a talk by him on "Life after death: the scientific evidence," I was prompted to lament the failure of the Christian Church to use its vast hoarded

spiritual resources, or to claim its right to act as guide and mentor to the seeker for Truth. I make no claim to speak on these matters except from myself, my own observation and experience, nor do I claim any special knowledge or insight. From my quite early years, the sense of being a stranger in a foreign land abided, that it was necessary to find a way back to that home from which one had come. "Back" is an interesting word—it implies regression, a turning round and retracing footsteps. Now I see it as the pursuit of a way in and through life. It has its symbol in the path of pilgrimage. Until this strange uneasiness is explained, little or no sense can be made of inarticulate longing. It requires someone a little further along the way to give meaning and shape to it; one who, for a time at least, becomes a Master.

In a small community in the Chelmsford Diocese I met Fr. Christopher Tatham, now approaching his 90th birthday. This dedicated priest, friend of Dorothy Kerin, founder of the Guild of St. Lucien and seeker after Truth, set my feet upon the pilgrim way. In his study were books which made sense of the quest and explained the instructive search. But it was the quality of life in that small community which set up a response of recognition, for daily mass at 7 am. was a preparation, not merely for the day, but for life itself. For a time this was a homecoming.

Service abroad with the army led to a confrontation with the desert; vague idea of vocation to priesthood began to coalesce. I had a view of the Church as a great body of the Faithful, the instrument of one who was "The Way, the Truth and the Life." About the time I was making plans and arrangements to go to university and theological college, I began work with a Jungian analyst. Through him I learned about symbol and archetype, the tension between light and darkness. In addition, I had undertaken a discipline which involved an esoteric school necessitating frequent attendance and certain practice and meditation under direction. My association lasted eleven years. Among the questions which finally caused me to move on, I recognised that the Church should be asking much more of its members; should, in fact, be making the demands on time, talents and resources as did the school. The Christian Church was a way of self-realization. To follow the pilgrim way indicated to me that it was necessary at every step to abandon, not only what had gone before but also anticipation of and knowledge of, the future. In this sense, sacrifice was built into the journey. The pilgrim way was to be followed to the very end of the path, and if then there was a precipice, that was to be part of the sacrifice. Importantly for me came the realization one could not jump

sideways from one path to another, however tempting that might be.

On the question of how Christianity relates to esoteric studies today, I would like to quote Maurice Nicoll on "the language of parable": ". . . All sacred writings contain an outer and an inner meaning. . . . The object . . . is to convey higher meaning and higher knowledge in terms of ordinary knowledge as a starting point. . . ."* This kind of subtle understanding rang loud bells in my own thinking. He was the great link between the archetypes which presented themselves during analysis (the pig, the spider, the bird, the walled garden, water, and others) and a vast reservoir of human knowledge which is stored in the individual and collective unconscious and expressed through symbol. Here was a common language which transcended not merely time and place but religion and culture. Specifically, the healing element in dreams and parables seemed of the greater signficance The pilgrimage was a quest for some goal within oneself to do with self-healing, self-knowledge: a conscious perception of one's higher identity.

Leaving aside problems encountered in any examination of Gnosticism and teachings judged heretical, and also ducking discussion of credal formulae, I wish to ask what the Christian Faith means in practice. Every professed Christian lives within a structure. Most of us are spared the difficult task of choosing the point at which we "slot in." Usually, each child is taught by parents, families, teachers the particular interpretation which these give to the Faith. This is the given-ness. Questioning and comparison may come later, but without the given-ness no child is equipped to begin the process of discovering for himself. With "structure" goes grave responsibility. Occasionally structure proves a stumbling block for the Christian. To many young people, to throw off structure and the impedimenta of 20th century living is tempting. But if *all* were to follow the ideal path, to abandon material possessions and, like St. Francis, go naked into the world, who would keep society going? The confrontation between structure and belief is clear. In the world today, it is by no means apparent what the authentic Christian response should be. It is a stage in the pilgrimage of the whole church where the old pattern will no longer do and the new is not yet available. We are in the dark; and that, according to the author of "The Cloud of Unknowing," is by no means the worst plight a seeker can find himself in. For some Christians, it is clear that there is no hard and fast rule by which life and, for example, the expression of human sexuality can be judged.

Where Christian tolerance and the desire to grow in knowledge is found, there also is compassion. To many this is a truer image of Christ and his teaching than the threatened prohibitions and moral totalitarianism of others. In this, structure and belief enter a new and, one hopes, creative phase.

Among the more deeply held convictions is that which insists belief to be an intensely personal matter. In an article dated October 31st, 1977, Clifford Langley, Religious Affairs Correspondent of *The Times*, noted a series of interviews among 100 young people between the ages of thirteen and twenty-four: "The familiar pattern . . . was the strong emphasis on religion being a private concern, little to do with either churches or dogmas." In their observations there is no place for structure. Personal religion is what it says it is. There is no room for community or the wider body of the universal church. For my part, I do not think it is possible to 'go it alone'; even hermits and recluses live in communion with and supported by the Body of Christ. For those on pilgrimage, two things are essential: one is to travel in company, or else risk robbery and death; another is to *choose* the company, to enable one to draw strength and encouragement from others when the going is hard. That is to do with quality of life, devotion and strength of character.

I have attempted a modest assessment of what I understand the esoteric to mean, its relationship to the Christian Church as it exists today, and in particular the limitations imposed by structure and the various interpretations of "belief." There is one further observation. There is today, despite many and conflicting views, a very real interest in religion, church and allied subjects. It is as if man *desired* there to be something beyond himself: something to which his limitations and finite nature might be related in order to make sense of himself and the world around him. Religion on its own can be treated like any other academic subject: in a purely extra-personal way the consequences of religious belief can be examined and then be laid aside. For a committed Christian, it is not enough to know the rules of the game and remain on the sideline as a passive onlooker. Either Christianity *works* and is *seen* to work, or it doesn't, and in that case may be relegated to the place of lost causes. To be involved must result in a deep personal questioning of structures and beliefs. Religion, and in particular Christianity, is a discipline which embraces all other disciplines. It represents the sum total of all human knowledge. It is wisdom, a way of life. In a highly complex and sophisticated society we have come a long way from our roots, both in the earth and in our collective

unconscious. To return to source is the purpose of pilgrimage. To find our way we need the hidden knowledge.

Christianity in its structural form cannot turn back. There is no point in its past to which it can refer or literally return. Whether it and the members of its Body know it, desire it, or not, the journey is downhill and gaining momentum. The outcome is another matter and to me the indications are that it will be creative, not disastrous.

No clear authority exists in the church at the present time, either in the field of doctrine or morality. The Papacy no longer issues bulls and pronouncements but makes general appeals to the faithful. There is no one voice. Every man is his own theologian, every man a spokesman. In the matter of sexual morality, to whom shall the seeker turn for counsel and advice? Are there *any* limits, and if so, where?

For our survival on the lowest level and for our sense of person-hood on the highest, we depend upon other human beings who share this brief period of incarnation. To come to a personal understanding of the person of Christ is to recognise in all our fellow beings some element of the Divine Christ is for the seeker what He is in the moment: Father, brother, child; companion, advocate, judge.

The example of personal sanctity is perhaps the greatest encouragement for those who set out on the pilgrim way. Individuals like Mother Teresa of Calcutta shine with a radiance that is not of this world. When we find a Master we should be grateful.

Here are some words written by a Benedictine monk who went to India and established a Christian ashram:

"This is the drama of paradise. Man was placed in the garden of this world and given to eat of all the trees, of the senses, the feelings, the appetities, the desires: all were open to him. But the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the conscience by which he knew what is right and wrong, was not left within his power. For these he is dependent on a higher power, and the moment he hears of it and seeks to make himself the master of his destiny, he loses his autonomy and becomes the slave of the powers of nature, the other gods who take the place of the One God. The self must either be dependent on God, the Universal Law, and acquire true freedom, or else it loses its freedom in subjection to nature, to the unconscious. This is the essential nature of the self; it is not a static entity, complete in itself. It is a power of self transcendence. It is the power to give oneself totally to another, to transcend one's self by surrendering to the

higher Self, to Atman, the Spirit within. When this is done, we live from the principle of Life within, from the universal Law of Reason, we are 'established in Brahman.' This is wisdom and joy and immortality. This is what man was created for—this is true obedience."

(Bede Griffiths, "Return to the Centre," Collins 1976, p. 15.)

* ("The New Man," Maurice Nicoll. (Stuart & Watkins.)

Moment of Truth

KEENAN BARLOW

IN 1972 I was in hospital for a major operation; instead, I had two operations in two days, when I lost life as I knew it. All pain disappeared, comfort seized me. Only my essence was felt. Time no longer mattered and space was filled with bliss. I was bathed in radiant light and immersed in the aura of the rainbow. All was fusion. Sounds were of a new order, *harmonious*, nameless (now, I call it music). Before my sense of awe turned into fear, my sister (who was killed in 1949 aged 20) appeared, a woman of 43; but her face had no lines of physical life and her smile was joyous. My awe became *delight*.

"Mary Elizabeth," I said, "I am so happy to be here!"

"I know," she answered, "but you can't stay. Your time has not come. You must go back to your five reasons."

With that, she brought my five children in turn, naming each one. I was overwhelmed. I had no choice. I was being wrenched away—I was angry—I was back . . . my fever dropped. I was alive, and with the will to live, in the knowledge of a renewed sense of life and a heightened understanding of what we call death.

Serial Consciousness

EDWIN BUTLER

MY limited understanding of a complicated process has made it as impossible to say that I believe in reincarnation as to say that I do not. I know now that what dawned upon me thirty years ago, with the thrill of an original disovery, was not "the truth," but rather the direction in which truth lies. Now that so many are seeking in roughly the same territory, I am frequently asked to expound. I am constrained to accept "many lifetimes,"

but to reject simple straight-line reincarnation; the easiest way to illustrate the dilemma is for me to take in my hand a peeled orange of, say, twelve segments. I take with my other hand one of the segments, place it upon a table, leave it for a few seconds and then return it whence it came. I repeat this with the other segments until all twelve have been to the table and are returned to hand. Question: "How many times has the orange been on the table?"

The relevance of the question and of the analogy to the reincarnation controversy can perhaps best be appreciated by quoting Sir Oliver Lodge. In 1897, in a lecture (to L.S.A., now C.P.S.) he said: "If time has any ultimate meaning, and if post-existence is ascertained, then a pre-existence must be granted also—not reincarnation in the ordinary commonplace use of the term, but a larger existence of which only a portion is manifested in space and time here and now." He went on to speak of "the larger and the smaller self" and opined: "Communication with the larger self and with other larger selves is not impossible."

To return to our illustration: as the "larger self" I am the orange, but as the "smaller self" I am a segment. Thus the question "Do I reincarnate?" has different "true" answers; or perhaps I should say, one true answer implying two different concepts, namely "No." For the whole orange never is on the table, and the segment does not come there twice. Yet it is equally true to say that "the orange" has contacted the table twelve times. So ask an ambiguous question and yet get a set of answers fraught with every possibility of complicated misunderstanding; yet nobody is in doubt as to the actual course of events. In the question "Do I reincarnate?" there is double jeopardy; not only is "I" ambiguous, but "reincarnate" also implies that something "comes into flesh *again*," and it is impossible to define what that "something" is, because it cannot be "I" in either of the two senses. Any carry-over from former "segments" which bears on the "present segment" operates from the "larger self" and from outside incarnation: influence from former lives, yes; reincarnation, no.

As a final look at the orange before abandoning it as too crude an analogy, try to imagine that what it sends to the table is not a full-grown segment but rather an embryo which on the table grows into a segment. Further, that when this segment rejoins the orange it, and all previous segments, make one living and growing orange with segments always distinct and separable but always mutually interacting and never entirely separated;

the analogy is then sufficiently refined to be the kind of working model most people could find useful. We shall need some labels. Not quite arbitrarily, for the terms are used by others. I call the whole orange, or larger self, "the Individuality." The "portion manifested in space and time here and now" I call, as it comes, "a Consciousness"; and, as it develops and becomes a full segment, "a Personality." The fact that Consciousnesses are projected in succession, together with Dunne's "Serial Universe" speculations led me in 1948 to label the whole scheme "Serial Consciousness" as preferable to "Reincarnation." Charles Beatty ("The Gate of Dreams," 1972) calls it "serial personality"; either label will do. I did not arrive at the theory through speculations about what others had written: it was forced upon me by a sequence of personal experiences.

Pre-war "orthodox" British Spiritualists and "orthodox" Church Christians were, with few exceptions, agreed that reincarnation was anathema. Conditioned in both areas, I dogmatically rejected reincarnation, whilst admitting that it seemed to offer some explanation of the all-too-obvious fact that men are not born equal nor with equal opportunities. (On the shortcomings of this explanation, see the fine "Reincarnation" chapters in John Hick's recent book "Death and Eternal Life.") In discussions at a theological college about reincarnation I maintained the validity of the Spiritualist case: that after death comes the opportunity of progress from one "sphere" to another, and opportunity for meeting again not only the people one has known on earth but also historical persons in whom one has become interested, conditional only upon mutual consent. This would not be possible if any of them had "gone to be somebody else's baby." A fellow-student, R. P., said little but, as I later found, knew much. He was under orders not to reveal that his father, C. P., was a non-professional medium; but, wishing to enlighten my ignorance, he asked his father to meet me, and from that time I shared regularly in the séance experiences of the family. One of the surprises was that it was not unusual for incarnate persons to communicate through the medium.

It appears that the band of spirit people could detach part of the mind of an incarnate person, which would then "come through" in the manner familiar to Spiritualists. Part only, for the person concerned when questioned would seldom be aware of what had transpired. The effect was that of direct access to the personal unconscious; people with problems were able to tell them, not at surface level disguised in the multifarious ways in which we hide from ourselves and others; and the evidence for

a real transaction was seen in the rapid changes in the persons concerned; their problems were obviously being solved. I must here anticipate, and assert as emphatically as the spirit people, that only for a consenting Individuality can a Personality be thus treated; there was no question of being able to manipulate others for one's own ends.

In due course R. P. went to India, from whence he regularly communicated to his mother and me through C. P.; much of what he told us was later confirmed by his letters. Telepathy between father and son? R. P. died in India, and continued for some years to communicate through C. P., who has now joined him on the "other side." R. P. continues to communicate (more than 30 years on) with me, through another medium, my wife who never met R. P. or C. P., and the same spirit people do the same work in the same way through her.

Sometimes the disturbance of a personality was not susceptible to simple counselling in direct manner; the cause, we were told, was an alien intruder. The intruders were dealt with much on the lines described by Carl Wickland in "Thirty Years Among the Dead," except that we used no electric machine and that the "patient" was not physically present. There was no sense of play-acting; it seemed natural to talk with "the patient" and with "the intruder" and achieve consent to separate. The proof of the pudding was in results observed: sudden and dramatic improvement in "the patient" who, throughout, was told nothing of the steps taken, except sometimes that we had prayed and "helped in doing some work behind the scenes."

This brief account was necessary to lead up to the case where I was told that what appeared to be just such an instance of an alien intruder was in fact nothing of the kind. "This one is an over-intrusive previous Consciousness." Now, if there is reincarnation, one can accept that a reincarnating person may bring over from a former life such strong memories that they dominate the present, at least for a time, and that some useful purpose may thus be served. There are instances where people seem to have brought through such memories; people who are assuredly not disturbed personalities. What we were presented with was nothing like that; there was no "far memory" and nothing we could observe in the patient to suggest such a diagnosis; but if the spirit people told us what they were bringing into the medium was not an "alien" to be persuaded or forced *out,* but a "previous" to be harmonised and integrated *in, then* I believed them; and it worked.

There have been a few instances, spread over thirty years,

where I have been involved in similar proceedings. In by far the majority of cases where there is claimed to be interference by discarnate entity(ies), I do not believe there is any such interference; but, where there is, then in the majority even of such cases, it is alien interference as described by Carl Wickland and is neither "demonic" nor "over-intrusive previous consciousness" but simply unhappy dead persons. Lest I sound too dogmatic, I am referring only to those cases brought to my notice. In the harmonising or integration of over-intrusive previous consciousness cases, there have been two in particular in which patients in mental hospitals have been suddenly and dramatically cured; in one of these the intermediary was a Methodist minister and neither the medium nor I have ever met the patient. In the other, the intermediary was a nurse and though I did not meet the patient until after the cure, I maintained contact for fifteen years and there was no sign of relapse or further trouble. My wife and I are concerned with working in collaboration with the spirit people for *their* purposes; we do *not* purport to deal with cases of mental disturbance and there must be very few with which we are competent to deal; we act in compliance with "upstairs" wishes rather than with "downstairs" requests.

The concept of "previous consciousness" was not readily assimilated, but I could not, and cannot, deny the reality of the effects of acting as though it were true. So, pragmatically, I swung from unbelief to belief in reincarnation. The next stage was to watch the interblending and the separating-out of Personalities all claimed to belong to one and the same "guide." Three or four, say, separate and distinct personalities communicating consecutively and with no break in transmission; at each interchange it was impossible to say that it was personality A or personality B; it was, in effect, AB. The guide claimed to be able to function in any one of "his" Personalities, or in any mixture of them, at will. Thus, having incarnated as A, and subsequently as B, C and D, "he" (being able to assume any of these vehicles or more than one of them at a time) was not "himself" any of them. Searching for a way of picturing for others what I had seen for myself, I arrived at the "orange" demonstration. I also began to realise that the "he" who was not A, not B, not C and D, but who manipulated and used all these Personalities and had developed them on earth, was not himself ever fully incarnate but was an X remaining outside; and that A, B, C and D all persist to this day; it is not true to say that A "became" B, or C or D. X is the Individuality and ABCD are the Personalities. All Personalities are functions of the

Individuality; the Individuality is the sum total of all Personalities and it functions at many different levels simultaneously; at any given level it may be functioning in any of the Personalities or any blend of them, provided that the given Personality shall have attained in its own personal progress the capability to function at that level. It is a misnomer to call this process Reincarnation, but the word is so established that no substitute is likely to take over. "Serial Consciousness" is, for me, a better label but, provided that some such process as I have described is understood, Reincaration will have to do. It will readily be seen that if we follow the progress of a Personality, its destiny will justify the viewpoint of "orthodox" Spiritualists and Christians, but that this is not the whole story. Reincarnationalists have on their side the truth of "many lifetimes" put forth by one Individuality.

Using Serial Consciousness as a working hypothesis I have, over many years, met nothing to disprove it and much to confirm it; it goes a long way towards reconciling opposing beliefs about Reincarnation. The after-death experience of personality A is very much in accordance with Spiritualist teaching; A goes on "from sphere to sphere" or "plane to plane" and is able, as A, to communicate through mediums. And in accordance with orthodox Christian teaching, A has one earth-life and only one, which stamps a permanent A-ness on A by which A is judged. This is by no means the whole truth about A, but those Christian and Spiritualist beliefs are well founded in what they affirm. Not, however, in what they deny, for to say that A does not reincarnate can be misleading. Reincarnationalists are right in claiming that there is a succession of interacting lifetimes and that A has three and not two kinds of conditioning. Heredity, yes; environment, yes; but also a third factor, the Individuality, which is beyond personality and behind personality and which in varying degrees functions in personality.

The working of karma in Serial Consciousness becomes a more flexible and less stultifying concept than in straightline Reincarnation theory. One's karma may entail the inevitability of certain situations but not a predictable response to those situations; nor is the whole karma incurred by previous personalities loaded upon the present personality, and one should not look, in the present personality, for a reflection or summary or condensed essence of previous lifetimes: it is not there. Nevertheless, in some altered states of consciousness there may be some perception, dim or clear, by the personality (or by persons observing the personality) of the essence of the

Individuality or of one or more previous personalities. The personality is not a vehicle of total experience, save in rare instances where a great person displays the "fulness" (pleroma) of whatever lies behind personality, the Individuality.

One most important warning is that one must not casually impute another's physical or mental handicap to karma incurred in a previous life; such handicap *may* be the voluntary acceptance by an advanced Individuality of limitation in personality as "burden-bearer," or sharer in the redemptive world-process; suffering in the personality is far from incompatible with great attainment in the Individuality.

Besides the complicated scheme of what "I" am, it must be borne in mind that Individualities are not isolated; they come in "spirit families," i.e. created in the same emanated wave or "heart-beat of God." They work together in groups, part incarnate and part discarnate, and theories of group reincarnation refer to them. When I speculated that a medium's guide might well be a "previous" of the same Individuality as the medium, I was told that a guide would certainly be of the same spirit family but was not normally of the same Individuality. I was also told that the proximal previous (A when B is incarnate, B when C is incarnate, etc.) has a special kind of responsibility for the present personality and is closely attendant at birth and at death as well as, at times, between those events; this one would think probable in any reincarnation theory. Unexpected was the added information that different previous personalities come forward and take the place of the proximal previous for different purposes and at different times throughout the lifetime of the present personality. The more in tune with the Individuality (Higher or Larger Self) the present personality becomes, the greater the ability to call upon the qualities earned by previous personalities, and call upon them at will. Such functioning of qualities does not normally entail memory in detail of events of past lives; the "far memory" faculty has, as yet, been cultivated by few. Flashes of memory may well occur and account for the many tantalising and elusive experiences which are on record to confirm "reincarnation."

Many fervent believers in reincarnation, and particularly those with least personal experience of "far memory," tend to exaggerate and inflate the importance of the present personality as owning or having been this or that historical personage, and are possessive (and obsessive) about former personalities they claim to "have." They would do well to reflect on our use of the verb; a mother "has" a baby, and that baby "has" a mother;

clearly the word is used with different implications. The Individuality is to be likened to the mother, and "has" personalities. The personality "has" an Individuality, but can lay no claim upon the previous experience of that Individuality and does not while on earth normally have any share in or claim to the other personalities which the Individuality also "has," other than a limited access to them, acquired by spiritual aspiration towards functioning in expanded states of consciousness, functioning beyond personality into Individuality.

That the human *mind* is capable of functioning beyond normal consciousness is indisputable, but the *brain* is suitable for only one functioning personality at a time, except for short periods and with certain kinds of people; it is seldom that previous personalities can recognisably manifest themselves. The exceptions are mainly: (a) those trained in a long and difficult process for "far memory"; (b) some occasional special incarnations to demonstrate to the rest of us that we need to consider the evidence they provide; and (c) pathological states where for a variety of reasons, one or more previous personalities may break through and disrupt the present personality.

Multitudinous questions doubtless still arise, and to many if not most of them I do not know the answers and can only speculate. As yet, speculations as to possible answers have always been as capable of being accommodated by the Serial Consciousness theory as by any other. It may well be that some intractable piece of evidence will necessitate drastic modification of the scheme, but meanwhile I confidently assert that my "One step" has been in the direction of "the truth about reincarnation."

The Return of Martha's Letter

GERTRUDE NAUGLER

PARANORMAL phenomena of a physical nature have often been represented as undesirable. Obviously, they sometimes are, but I cannot help thinking of how Jesus turned water into wine and multiplied loaves and fishes. Once, feeing a bit guilty about it, I prayed for a physical phenomenon to occur. As a result one of the most beautiful experiences of my life took place.

Martha, white-haired and smiling, was one of the most cheerful people you could imagine, yet her life might have been described as a series of tragedies set against a background of self-sacrifice. When I met her she was the sole survivor of a

large family, her last sibling, a sister, having recently drowned. No doubt the ability to commune with her loved ones on the "other side" gave her the courage to live normally and happily, despite all. Working in a San Francisco hospital as a practical nurse, Martha wrote religious poems, sitting in the dark as her patients slept. Most of these, she said, took about five minutes apiece to produce, as they were dictated by a spirit named Mary Anderson. On being shown the slanting scrawls, not yet divided into lines and stanzas, I was amazed to see that there had indeed been no searching for rhymes, no experimenting with phrases. The rhymes were there, and the scansion was usually perfect. They were simple poems expressing the sentiments one can find in any church hymnal, but there was appealing warmth and now and then a flash of originality.

I had already heard of a prophecy by Alda Scheierman, then a leading San Francisco psychic, that Martha's poems would be published and go all over the world and that eventually a book would come out. I was extremely sceptical about this. Yet, having been shown the verses, I heard myself saying "I think I might be able to get some of these published for you, Martha." No sooner were the words out than I regretted them. But from then on I would find myself doing things and later wondering why. To my surprise, some of the poems were very soon placed with a religious magazine, and the first to be published brought a fan letter from a man in India. Other acceptances followed, and nearly all the poems were especially featured when they appeared, sometimes with lavish full page illustrations.

My own part, as already indicated, often seemed to be directed from outside of myself. One time I laid most of the poems out on a bed. Then, not knowing why, I picked up two of them, quickly cut, typed, and mailed them. Afterwards I scolded myself for sending those simple traditional verses to a magazine that published only sophisticated modern poetry. But in due time a cheque arrived, and the poems, on publication, were each given very special treatment.

Martha had now gone back to her native Wisconsin. All in all, twelve of her poems were placed, two were reprinted, and one appeared in an anthology. I think it could be said that Alda Scheierman's prophecy was fulfilled in every respect, but in a very modest fashion. Perhaps I should have been able to help realize it more abundantly. But years of observing the public and private work of sensitives has convinced me that many a prediction is an exaggeration of what eventually happens. One psychic told me that "they" exaggerate in order to get our

attention. And I wonder if the unconscious of the psychic doesn't sometimes enlarge the message.

More than a year later, when home for an appointment in San Jose, I found a letter from Martha in the mail drop in the garage. Quickly slitting it open, I saw that it contained an important document, but I got into the car and foolishly put the letter on my lap without reading it. My thought was to read it after arriving in San Jose. Fifty miles of freeway driving, however, erased the idea from my mind, and I didn't remember the letter again until I was back in San Francisco. Not surprisingly, it was nowhere to be found, having obviously fallen from my lap to the gutter or sidewalk when I stepped from the car in San Jose. I felt I had to get that letter back, partly because of the work Martha had put into writing to me in the wee hours of the night when she was bone-tired, and partly because the enclosed document had put her to quite a bit of trouble and expense. I knew of no one in San Jose whom I could phone and ask to go and look for the letter, and I could not myself make the hundred mile return trip again for several days. By then it could easily be gone. And since it would have to be resealed and restamped, it wasn't likely that some kind stranger would mail it to me.

That evening I sat in meditation and asked God's help. Perhaps if I had enough faith someone *would* mail the letter to me. "Lord," I prayed, "if there is anything I can do to get it back, please show me in a dream what it is." Then I added, "And please bring it back even if you have to apport it from San Jose." That night I had a very clear dream that I opened my big red diary and found the letter inside. The next morning, after my husband had left, I went back to the bedroom and picked up the diary. I leafed through it. There was no letter.

Well, how could there have been? I went over to the bookcase, on which a blue vigil glass stood before the picture of a blue and silver Madonna. It was my custom to light a candle every morning and pray for those on my healing list. Gradually the blue candle glow began to radiate out into the room and its light filled my being as I thought of Christ's saying, *If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.* Suddenly the burden of the letter was gone, and I was so joyful I almost laughed aloud. "The problem is yours now, God," I said. "I don't have to worry about it any more."

There are those who would say that I had prayed the prayer of release, that God becomes free to work when you totally cast your burden on him and stop worrying about it. I have no

quarrel with that except that in this case the release did not seem to be an act of my will, but rather a grace bestowed upon me. Smiling, I went to the bed where, the covers thrown back, the diary lay, big and red against the taut white of the fitted undersheet. I sat down on the bed and put it on my lap, intending to write in it. Turning the pages with my right hand, I went to rest my left where the diary had lain. My little finger touched something, a piece of paper. How could that be? A moment before there had been nothing there. I looked down. It was Martha's letter, and the enclosure as well. The tears came to my eyes. How could I ever doubt God again?

Some will say this apport was the trick of a capricious, but friendly, elemental. I cannot, however, think it was just a trick, a psychic trifle. The feeling that came over me as I stood before the silver Virgin was that of religious enlightenment. It was the "born again" experience that we hear so much of. The ancient cosmic truth burst over me again, as I had felt it before, the *knowing* that the universe is ordered, that all things do work together for good, and that every human being, every creature, plant, molecule, whatever, is constantly watched over and cared for. And so we should all rest, comfortable, in God. That is not a trifle.

Book Reviews

Natural and Supernatural—A History of the Paranormal. By Brian Inglis. Hodder and Stoughton, 1977. 490 pp., £9.95.)

This important book sets the history of the paranormal in the framework of the evolution of man's thought. During the millenia before the Christian era, our present distinction between the natural and the supernatural seems to have been nothing like as clearcut as it became in the nineteenth century and is still. The Eleusian Mysteries and the gods of the Greeks show that in those times, while a distinction was recognised between what could be accounted for by natural causes and what was due to divine intervention, both kinds of experience were regarded as the natural order of things. Homer's gods intervene capriciously in men's affairs, making what is now regarded as "natural" and "supernatural" hopelessly intertwined. In the Old Testament a more precise distinction begins to appear. God makes known, either directly or through his prophets, whenever he interferes with the established order. But all such interferences were accepted as fitting into the then framework of thought.

Nineteenth century anthropologists found the same easy acceptance of natural and supernatural among primitive tribes. Many of their accounts refer to an influence which in several cultures went under the name *"mana."* The translation of this into European languages caused much controversy. But there was general agreement that it had three elements: a force, spirits capable of using that force, and certain humans able to influence spirits to use the force for specific ends.

The belief that information could be acquired other than by the five sense was found in all primitve communities. It was most commonly manifested in apparitions of the recently dead. This fitted well into cultures that accepted *"mana"* as unhesitatingly as we now accept the electromagnetic fields that work our contemporary magic box.

It is not possible in a brief review to do justice to the learning and skill with which Mr. Inglis traces changing modes of thought down the ages. He shows how close has been the interaction between religions and the paranormal, and how priesthoods gained and strengthened their hold on their flocks by arrogating to themselves the only allowable kind of guidance along the spiritual path. The scepticism so dominant today had its origin a brief three centuries or so ago, as rational discursive thought displaced myth, folklore, intuition and inspiration. The greater part of this book is taken up with accounts of the amazing lengths to which compulsive sceptics went (and still go) to deny or explain away all happenings and experiences that didn't fit into the emerging pattern of scientific materialism. Though much of this will be familiar to readers of *Light,* few will fail to find something new to them.

From the early years of the nineteenth century onwards, there grew up a determinaion to force whatever could not be brushed aside into the straight waistcoat of scientific dogma. This dogma became, and still is, as great an obstacle to the advancement of knowledge as religious dogmas were in their heyday. Here are a few of the many instances of this which Mr. Inglis records:

> William B. Carpenter, Professor of the Royal Institution, London, published in 1874 "Principles of Mental Physiology." The thesis of this book is that all paranormal phenomena are signs of an "epidemic delusion." Inglis comments: "The real reason" (for his scepticism) "was simple; even to examine it would imply doubts about the validity of one of the most powerful faiths ever to acquire a hold over man's mind: materialism." (Page 302.)

Hugo Muensterberg, Professor of Psychology at Harvard, in 1899 published in the Atlantic Monthly a hostile article ruling out telepathy on *a priori* grounds: ". . . the psychologist insists that every perception of occurrences outside one's own body and every influence beyond one's own organisation must be mediated by an uninterrupted chain of physical processes." (Page 375.)

Charles Richet, author of "Thirty Years of Psychical Research," 1922: "I know too well (from my own experience) how difficult it is *to believe what we have seen* when it does not accord with the general tenor of our thoughts. . . . A fortnight ago I witnessed such-and-such an astonishing fact, and I was convinced. Today I toss my head and begin to doubt. Six months hence I shall no longer believe it at all." (Page 348; page 394 refers.)

But this sceptical reaction to the paranormal did not go unchallenged. Camille Flammarion, a famous astronomer, from about 1866 onwards (p. 391) investgated the subject. In 1907 he published "Mysterious Psychic Forces," showing that he, at any rate, was responding to the wider vision disclosed by advances in the science of physics. He rejected crude materialism:

"Matter, force, life, thought, are all one. In reality there is only one principle in the universe and it is at once intelligence, force and matter, embracing all that is and all that can possibly be. . . . At the basis of all is force, dynamism, and universal mind, or spirit." (Page 440.)

Mr. Inglis quotes Sir George Thomson's 1955 comment that the quantity, quality and range of evidence for ESP, experimental and anecdotal, which had been collected by the middle twentieth century would certainly have won acceptance "if what is claimed were not such a fundamental upsetting of systems of thought." (Page 9.) And he quotes Professor Hans Eysenck's comment in 1957, that unless there were a "gigantic conspiracy involving some thirty University departments all over the world and several hundred highly respected scientists, the only conclusion the unbiassed observer can come to must be that there does exist a small number of people who can obtain knowledge existing either in other people's minds, or in the outer world, by means as yet unknown to science". (Page 10.)

In his Introduction, the author describes how his book came to be written: ". . . as if the culmination of a protracted wrestling-bout with two adversaries, the present day equivalents of Bunyan's seedy giants Pope and Pagan—Pope representing accumulated layers of superstition derived from fantasy, legend,

myth, folklore and religious dogma; Pagan representing the dogmas and evasions of materialistic science, refusing to credit what it cannot quantify." He had the good luck to spend his early years in the Irish countryside, where "the supernatural was still in force. . . . People might no longer really believe in leprechauns or banshees, but they would not have been greatly astonished to encounter them, and they certainly accepted that there were forces unknown to science apparently directed by 'powers' capable of benevolent or malevolent actions." (Page 7.) He seems to have resisted successfully being brainwashed into materialism during his schooling in England. This background has enabled him to write this history of the paranormal with as little bias as mortal can aspire to. He writes: "on an 'as if' assumption—the events being related *as if* they may have occurred. On this assumption, it has been possible to select evidence for inclusion on the same basis as any other history: the criterion being the quantity, and still more the quality, of the testimony." (Page 13.)

This book will reinforce the growing view that the centre of interest is shifting from collecting ever more evidence, to exposing (or maybe deriding!) the conceptual inability of the academic mind to come to terms with whatever doesn't accord with preconceptions. The inspiring drama of the evolution of thought sometimes crawls and sometimes speeds, and we seem to be living now in a time when it speeds. It is high time Academe woke up to this. We can no longer take for granted a body of shared opinions ("paradigms" according to Kuhn's use of the word) which gave birth centuries ago to the dominant materialistic metaphysic. That metaphysic has nurtured its own dissolution. What was at the outset the most hard-headed science of all, physics, has itself pioneered the outmoding of concepts which take the material universe as the only reality. The task before us today is to fashion a new metaphysic that will embrace both "natural" and "supernatural." A metaphysic that will restore to mankind a sense of earthly life's purpose and meaning. Brian Inglis' book will, I hope, help forward this endeavour.

K. S.

The Lion's Mouth. Kathleen Raine. (Hamish Hamilton, £4.95.)

This is a beautiful and tragic book; beautiful in the style and manner of its writing; tragic in its unrequited search for the meaning of suffering.

In her poetry, Dr. Raine expresses her intuitive knowledge of the reality underlying all experience in this world. It flows from the source in the ground of her being. It belongs to the

eternal, immortal dimension that she has recognised, honoured and valued all her life. As a poet, she has been privileged to apprehend and describe that dimension and to translate her vision of truth and beauty into words. "The Lion's Mouth," the last volume of her autobiography, is the temporal, mortal aspect of her life. It is the record of her suffering as a human being and as a woman. As such, it is a document related to our age and throws much light upon the causes and nature of our own suffering, both as individuals and as a civilisation. She expresses in her account of a tragic relationship, the agony of the human being enmeshed in the incomprehensible process of living; knowing through her intuitive vision that life has meaning and suffering value if only she could apprehend them, as in her poetry she so shiningly apprehends both the kingdom of Nature and our exile from it.

"The "Lion's Mouth" is more than a record of a woman's suffering. It is the most profound and devastating indictment of our inherited patterns of Christian thought. It reflects the negative effects of our interpretation of Christianity on almost every page, although I believe this revelation is an unconscious one. It is interesting that Dr. Raine's poetry is largely free from the crippling sense of guilt, sin and self-condemnation that has cast a shadow over her life. As a woman, in the actual daily living of her life, she seems to have been held transfixed since childhood by a stern and pitiless judge within her soul. The book is permeated with the feeling of the futility of seeking, while in the mortal body, freedom from the destructive cycle of sin and guilt. There is no hint in her pages of compassion towards herself; only an awareness of being judged guilty and a sense of sinful responsibility for the whole tragedy of the relationship she chronicles. Her autobiography is steeped in the Christian and Neo-Platonist belief that the human being is destined to sin because of his mortality and the incarceration of the soul in the physical body. Guilt and sin are the inevitable effects of the Fall and this heavy burden must be borne until such time as Christ may redeem our sins.

Implicit in Dr. Raine's attitude to herself, which is based on our traditional interpretation of Christianity and revealed in page after page of her writing, is the conviction that the spirit is good and that matter and the flesh are evil. The belief that matter, the physical body and our life on earth are all intrinsically sinful and evil constitutes the dark shadow of Christianity which our civilisation has yet to confront and overcome. In this record of a woman's life, one can see its tragic and suffocating influence.

It has led, not only to the devalution of our life in the world, but to the devaluation of the earth as our temporal home; of the vital importance of our relationship to each other and to the animal, mineral and vegetable kingdoms; of the body as the physical expression and vehicle of the spirit; of instinct, feeling, the unconscious, nature; above all, to a rejection of Eros—the feminine aspect of God's dual nature.

Her poetry does not reflect this devaluation. In fact, it carries the projection of her own rejected feminine nature which has been despised and neglected to the point of self-destruction.

Her story is that of a woman who has rejected her own womanhood, her instinct and feeling, the very ground of her being, and who has then been pursued and crucified by its revengeful power. In this fateful rejection of the value of herself as woman, she resembles many other women in this age, who for one reason or another, are following the same path and with the same result. We may suspect the existence of some deep psychic wound that has caused this rejection of herself in her mortal, human, feminine aspect. In early childhood there is no evidence of this wound, as is borne out by the following sentence: "As a child at Bavington, I had experienced that happiness of finding in all about me the reflected radiance of what I then still was—myself." The poignancy of her description of childhood happiness is followed by its destruction by a father determined that his will should prevail over her feeling. "My father's moral disapproval, however justified, had at all times been at cross-purposes with the deepest springs in my own life." As a child, there is no way that one can protect oneself against the infliction of a psychic wound. In later life, unless one can become aware of the supreme necessity of healing it in order to restore the balance between the two aspects of one's nature, one may carry it until one's death unconscious of how it has destroyed one's happiness and one's life. One may not blame one's parents because their own capacity to wound and destroy is the result of psychic injuries received in their childhood.

When the devaluation of one's nature by one or both parents is combined with a Christian, Protestant upbringing, the effect is catastrophic. One can never escape from the feeling of guilt, sin and retribution. The relationship of the parents to each other and to the child we once were remains within us as an unconscious pattern of behaviour. The valuation of ourselves that we accepted as children, we continue to inflict on ourselves as adults, serving a pattern that is not true to our essential nature. Our marital choices, our power of destruction, our capacity to

create, are directed and affected by these inherited ancestral patterns that continue to control us long after we have left the parental home. Until we can become aware of how much we are bound and conditioned by them, the eternal consciousness that is our true nature suffers within us, unable to help us to redeem and recover it. Weighed down by a sense of guilt and sin, we seek it everywhere in the outer world, projecting it on to the beloved, our work, our children; on to animals and nature, but always blindly, unconsciously, and always without finding happiness.

The rejection of the feminine and all that it implies, leads inevitably to the unbalanced exaltation of the masculine principle, of Logos, the rational intellect. It, together with the outraged and revengeful instinct, rule our lives. It is the lack of balance, integration and relationship between the masculine and feminine aspects of our psyche that are, I believe, the cause of Dr. Raine's suffering and our own. Her rejection of her mortal, feminine self is clear from this passage: "To my own shabby exterior, my bodily appearance, my human personality, such as it is, that bearer of daimonic burdens, I had never throughout my life given much thought; knowing myself only as an invisible consciousness; surprised and even resentful when I have seen a photograph of myself, so little has the person who can be photographed seemed related to that invisible self."

The terrible denouement of the process of self-destruction comes at the moment of the death of the beloved animal—the death that is the symbolic re-enactment of the primal wounding of the instinctive nature. Its death, so agonisingly described and with such beauty of language, is indeed the death of instinct, feeling, joy, love, truth and beauty.

"He was more than an animal; a creature of paradise, a part of ourselves."

There follows inevitably the guilt, for the soul knows that it is responsible, but not of what mortal crime against itself.

"Neither then nor thereafter, neither from Gavin, from myself, nor from the divine world, could I accept forgiveness. Refusing forgiveness I refused love. I chose punishment because I could not bear to be forgiven. I had tried to win love by deserving it but I could not accept it on the only terms reality permits, as something which can be given but never deserved. I felt safer with punishment; for retribution belongs to the order of cause and effect, the law of Karma, which gives us our deserts."

How is it possible, until one realises that one *is* the divine world, for the process of healing to begin, and with it the

forgiveness that accompanies one's self-determination? All Dr. Raine's sins for which she so reproaches herself: her will to power over the man she loved and the death of the beloved animal; her difficulty in loving those nearest and dearest to her; her disregard of her appearance; even the surrender of her house —in itself the symbol of the lost Self—all derived from the devaluation of herself in childhood. She tells us how Alexis Léger, himself a great poet, told her "One must never go back." But never to go back means never to redeem one's lost self, never to discover the cause and cure of the heart's suffering. It means to remain endlessly bound to the karmic wheel of cause and effect and to the Christian wheel of guilt, sin and self-punishment. He also told her to put her head into the lion's mouth—most dangerous advice if one does not know the wound and strength and violence of the lion within one's soul. The lion, the archaic, barbaric animal instinct is our most hidden, unrecognised and precious treasure. It awaits first recognition and then transformation into the royal Christ Self which we look for in the transcendant, spiritual world while all the time it waits for us within our own nature.

Do we not all, like Dr. Raine, live with our head in the lion's mouth, unconscious of its immense power both to help and to destroy us? Do we not incur its wrath and invoke its destructive power by refusing to seek out the true cause of our suffering?

"My life seemed to me to have something of infinite value, infinite meaning. Everything was there, if only I could discover what."

Dr. Raine's life could be of infinite value to herself and to us all because it expresses our common predicament; our bondage to ancestral patterns of religion, philosophy and ignorance of our psychic nature. We perpetually re-enact the ancestral patterns until we become aware of the state of unconsciousness in which we live. The lost kingdom of the Gods is our neglected psyche. Could Dr. Raine, at the end of her life, go in search of that lost kingdom and there recover her feminine self—the least of her brethren—which has been so despised and rejected? Could she value herself as woman as well as poet? No fragment of her life would then be wasted; no aspect of her suffering without value.

A. B.

The Evidence for Life after Death. By Martin Ebon. (Signet Classics, N.Y., $1.50.)

It is a relief to have a wide ranging book dealing with the ultimate question of psychical studies, i.e., do we survive the death of the physical body? The author is well qualified, having

occupied significant offices in responsible psychical research, and the book lives up to its title in that practically all the evidence for survival is encompassed, usually in a more thorough fashion than might have been expected in a popular work with such a limited number of pages. Due note is taken of the fact that the early founders of the S.P.R. were primarily concerned with this question, albeit their approach was rigorous and objective. The usual point is made that the founders were concerned to find evidence to offset the damaging effect of Darwinism on religion and the belief in immortality it enshrined. Actually, Darwinism is not the menace to the idea of survival which it is usually thought to be, since Darwinism is concerned with the physical body. The same is true of the materialistic physics of the 1870's and of materialistic biology today. These are facts that the author and many others fail to appreciate.

The Cross Correspondence series tends to be underestimated by the author because it is couched in classcal lore; but the fact that few today are experts in Greek and Latin has nothing to do with the relevance or otherwise of the series in terms of evidence for human survival.

Dr. Kübler-Ross's numerous observations of the behaviour of the dying and what they appear to experience and to see are fully noted by the author, as are Dr. Moody's numerous instances of out-of-the-body experiences after clinical death. Taken together, these two important pieces of work provide a powerful case for survival. Granted that some apparent instances of out-of-the-body experiences are possibly subjective and explainable on medical or psychological grounds, there remains a large residue of experiences that cannot be so explained and require to be regarded as objective and genuine.

Although a glowing tribute by the author is rightly made to Dr. Crookall's work, he is shown as a collector of out-of-the-body experiences *par excellence.* This does not do justice to Dr. Crookall's meticulous use of scientific method, the method of the naturalist. There is not mere collection on a grand scale, but also classification, comparison, with highly important inferences drawn from the comparisons. Nor is any mention made of the same scientific method being applied by Dr. Crookall to countless alleged discarnate communications, resulting in a wealth of significant information about the nature of life after death. The tremendous contribution of this lonely and inadequately recompensed man will probably not be fully appreciated until it is recognised that the experimental method is by no means the only sound scientific method used by

established sciences; and also that the experimental method is far from proof against frequent error.

Useful reference is made to successful repeatable experiments seeking to examine claims of out-of-the-body experiences. That the successful experiments which apparently endorse the genuineness of such experiences are few in number is unimportant scientifically. The important thing is that they do occur. It is highly questionable if the experimental method is conducive to obtaining numerous successful results of this phenomenon from a large number of persons.

There is much in the book that hardly merits reference in a brief review. The author, however, does the reader a service in indicating the growing tendency of psychical researchers, particularly those who are seeking to make the subject a career, to achieve respectability in the eyes of those in the well-established sciences, to the point of deferring overmuch to the powerful body of materialists in the scientific establishment. It comes as a shock to find the author concluding that all we have to go on in the matter of evidence for life after death is faith and hope. The content of the book justifies a far more empirical and positive conclusion than this. When such a feeble conclusion is capped by the statement that we may not be meant to gain positive information and therefore should not seek it, one is left gasping. One would have thought that we were well past the days when it used to be said that if God intended us to fly he would have provided us with wings!

It may be that the author is mesmerised by the notion of proof. This notion of proof is a real bugbear for psychical studies. There is no such thing as proof in any discipline. If there were, we should not be so constantly changing what had hitherto been regarded as proved. The most we can attain is where we regard something as being established beyond reasonable doubt. That is enough and more than enough. Taking all the data, good, bad and indifferent, into account we do have adequate grounds for accepting life after death as a fact. G. S. W.

The Gurdjieff Work. By Kathleen Riordan Speeth. (Turnstone, £1.95.)

Very many books, from the anecdotal to the analytical, have been written about the life and work of George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff, the spiritual teacher who died in 1949. Now Kathleen Riordan Speeth has undertaken an exposition of his ideas designed for readers who know nothing of his work. Dr. Speeth has been familiar with Gurdjieff's work all her life: her parents were among his students and she herself met him when she was

a child. In attempting what she describes as a "Gurdjieff primer" she has set herself an impossible aim. Gurdjieff's psychological teaching is not theoretical but essentially to be practised, and however clearly the scheme is set out, the work to be done cannot be described in words or even in diagrams. She has, however, set about her task courageously, and we are given, with admirable clarity, the skeleton of a system. Her description of the "centres" of man, of the Law of Three and the Law of Seven, fundamental to Gurdjieff's teaching, are presented in such a way that personal experiment would be possible. Her presentation is, however, curiously limited, and marred by one or two errors that may be confusing for a new reader. In her brave effort to make this very difficult subject understandable, Dr. Speeth has over-simplified the system and one receives the impression that a series of automatic steps may be taken to reach "advancement" and "liberation"; that these desirable goals are merely a question of hard work. It is impossible to understand theoretically Gurdjieff's teaching on the function of centres, but the book gives us a painstaking analysis, necessarily limited, as a geographical map is limited in describing a stretch of landscape. One is left with the uneasy feeeling that "doing," in Gurdjieff's technical sense, can be a psychological manipulation. The author has also tried to convey something of Gurdjieff's "movements," or sacred dances, by the inclusion of photographs. The "movements" are an unrivalled teaching method, and when shown by experienced performers to a receptive audience, can convey ideas and cosmic laws not to be expressed in words, but they do not lend themselves to static photography and the positions are shown with painful inaccuracy.

Dr. Speeth, presumably in order to reassure the reader, draws attention to the likeness between Gurdjieff's ideas and those of Skinner and Assagioli, but she does not point out the essential difference between this and other psychological systems. Moreover no reason is given for this study. Spiritual development undertaken only for one's own satisfaction cannot progress beyond a certain point, and the idea of service, crucial to all Gurdjieff's teaching, is overlooked. His whole vast and comprehensive body of knowledge is narrowed down to yet another method for leading man to "liberation"—but liberation towards what?

The title of the book cannot be said to justify itself, as the author writes almost exclusively of the psychology and makes only the most cursory mention of the rest of Gurdjieff's teaching. Where are the great striding cosmology and the Law of Reciprocal

Maintenance, so illuminating and so necessary to the understanding of our situation today? Dr. Speeth has made the mistake of believing that man is important for himself, when in fact man's importance lies in the position in which he has been placed in the Universe. It is mans' task in this position that is important: it is his duty to become able to perform it. This view of man, with one foot, so to speak, in the world of the angels and one in the animal world, struggling with an almost unbearable burden of responsibility and deserving of compassion, is one theme of Gurdjieff's great work, "All and Everything," a book which rewards close and prolonged study. This inspired work, and Gurdjieff's other writings, are not discussed in this book.

Dr. Speeth fights bravely for her lost cause, but one danger remains in a presentation such as this: that it could lead the reader to suppose that he has now some grasp of all that Gurdjieff has to offer and has no need for further study. Thus a reader with a true spiritual hunger could be deprived of his essential food. E. B.

A Guide to the Perplexed. E. F. Schumacher. (Jonathan Cape, £3.95.)

Dr. Schumacher's last book published not long before his death is above all timely. It was his gift for saying the right thing at the right time and in a way comprehensible to those people most likely to act upon his teaching that made *Small is Beautiful* the outstanding book it is. In *A Guide to the Perplexed* he bears witness to his own faith, as a Catholic deeply influenced by Buddhism and the Perennial Philosophy in all its forms. We discern the Grey Eminence of Guénon, and there are passages, not very well digested, suggesting a Gurdjieffian influence. He has little new to tell those who habitually live by the spirit, and his style is heavy, his quotations often banal.

But . . . I have never yet read any book that constructs so stable a ladder for the first foothold of those multitudes "perplexed" by the incompatibility of spiritual teaching and experience with current materialist ideologies. With the help of Aquinas Dr. Schumacher seeks to rebuild "the vertical dimension" that has been destroyed by the quantitative view of "reality." He quotes a phrase which those who have heard him lecture will remember was often on his lips: "the slenderest knowledge that may be obtained of higher things is more desirable than the most certain knowledge obtained of lesser things." In application he defines four levels of being, which are, as we proceed from the quantifiable world of matter, to life, consciousness and self-

awareness, discontinuous degrees. That is to say the higher degrees cannot be reduced to the terms of the lower or measured in those terms. Life cannot be quantified, and self-awareness cannot be known in terms other than itself. There are in fact "three invisible dimensions" in us; and that which is most "real" to us as human beings—our human self-consciousness—is precisely the least material, the least verifiable in "scientific" terms. We are invisible beings living in the company of other invisible beings; for that part of us which is visible, materially measurable and verifiable tells us nothing about our own and one another's humanity. He thus reduces to an absurdity the notion that "counts as 'real' only inanimate matter and treats as 'unreal,' 'subjective' and therefore scientifically non-existent the invisible dimensions of life consciousness and self-awareness."

Taking these four levels of being in turn Dr. Schumacher applies to them Aquinas' idea of *adaequatio*: "the understanding of the knower must be *adequate* to the thing known." To know "life," quantification is not "adequate"; and so on up the four planes of being. He gives as a simple instance a book; a book can be measured and weighed but this method is not "adequate" as an account of the nature of a book. An illiterate person would notice on the pages amusing patterns of lines and even recognise certain recurring shapes; but only a literate reader would have "adequate" knowledge for the reception of the meaning of the printed words. We might add that plenty of people who read the words are still not "adequate" to the understanding of their meaning. I well remember reading mystical works when I was too ignorant to understand them and supposing that, for example, St. Teresa and other Christian mystical writers were the victims of a self-deception which a knowledge of the essentials of Freudian psychology would have dispelled: a typical contemporary example of the "inadequacy" of those who have ears and hear not and eyes that see not.

Dr. Schumacher's admirably simple plan makes sense, too, of the old notion of the Great Chain of Being, with Man situated between the natural and the angelic worlds and participating in both. Like the animals we have physical bodies; like the angels we also have an invisible existence, and to that our deepest and properly "human" experience belongs. Why then should there not be beings whose sole reality is on the invisible planes, just as minerals have reality solely upon the material? (or so we may suppose). Beyond us lie "angels and archangels and all the company of heaven."

I recommend this book not to those who know, but as an

admirable gift from those who know to those who do not. It makes a bridge. K. R.

Language of the Lines—The I-Ching Oracle. By Nigel Richmond. (Wildwood House, London. £2.95 paperback, £5.95 hardback.)

Nigel Richmond has a clear, analytical mind and has been able to undertake a remarkable piece of work. In his elucidation of the Chinese wisdom of the I-Ching, he has attempted to interpret the structure on which the mystical philosophy of the I-Ching is based and to give a scientific and logical explanation along the lines of Western thought and thus make comprehensible to the reader an Eastern way of thought. So far as I know, no one has attempted this before and his result gives the Western reader an approach which to the analytical mind can open a way into fields that otherwise might be obscure.

My own approach was rather different, as I learnt from an Eastern master in the years before any translation of the text of the I-Ching had been published, except for Mr. Legge's inadequate work (published in 1899 in the Sacred Books of the East Series) which was of very little help to the student. I studied under my teacher during the 1920's about the time Richard Wilhelm was working on his translation from Chinese into German. The hexagrams were translated for me and written on scraps of paper, which I memorised at odd moments during the day. Then I was, as it were, "thrown into the deep end" and told to swim. My master assured me that I had used it in a former life in a Temple; and therefore the memory was in my subconscious and I had only to awaken this by meditation and I would be led to interpret the sign on the required level. Only those who have experienced this teaching in the past will be drawn to it in this life sufficiently to be able to interpret it for others.

It was not until many years later, when sitting with Dr. Mona Rolfe, that she described to me the Chinese guide building up behind me and the psychic rods of power being prepared between us, through which he was passing the knowledge into my mind. This is very important for the student to understand, as it shows the necessity for giving time for the power to build before asking the question. Also, for waiting a little time before asking a second question, for the vibration to be broken and then rebuilt. It is also the reason why the questioner should always mentally thank the guide for the help given.

Because my approach to the I-Ching was of a different nature from that of Mr. Richmond, after reading Part 1 of his book I decided to consult my Chinese guide and ask him if he felt the book would be of value to the Western student. I then

remembered that Dr. Jung had also consulted the I-Ching, when he was asked to write a foreword to the translation by Cary Baynes from Wilhelm's work, as to whether the book would be of value.

To my ashonishment, the hexagram indicated by using the yarrow sticks was "The Ting—or Caldron." For this was the symbol that Dr. Jung received when asking his question over a quarter of a century ago; the only difference being that for Jung the sign changed from "The Caldron" to "Spring," while in this case the initial sign remained steady and at present unchanging. I turned to "the Caldron" hexagram, number 50, in Mr. Richmond's book and read under his heading, the "Pattern": "Steady unwavering preparation makes enlightenment possible"; and under his heading "Human": "He persists constantly in melding together his life's ingredients. This alchemy transforms his awareness."

I feel I should follow the Chinese guide in his opinion that the book is of considerable importance. B. S.

More Lives Than One? By Jeffrey Iverson. (Pan Books U.K., 75p.)

This book is an analysis of the famous Bloxham tapes. The latter are recordings by Arnall Bloxham of what upwards of four hundred subjects said under hypnosis on the theme of previous lives. They have been sifted and analysed with remarkable open-mindedness and absence of bias by Jeffrey Iverson, who has also been blessed by the angels at birth with the gift of clarity. The author deals chiefly with the lives of Jane Evans. To me, her most remarkable recollection is of the massacre of the Jews in York in 1190. I found her story all the more impressive because I had previously read Professor Barrie Dobson's account of the massacre. The contents of Jane Evans' story simply cannot be written off as coincidence, or by the use of such umbrella terms as cryptomnesia. As a doctor, I know well enough that the faculty tends to use such phrases as "highly suggestible," and now cryptomnesia, to dismiss what it cannot or will not understand. To me the story of the American nun was also impressive. Its flat, featureless realism rings very true. The recollections of the sailor who lost his leg in a battle at sea are extremely realistic and well worth reading but are, to me, less impressive than the Evans stories, simply because York and Bourges memories are easier to verify and to see against their historical background.

One has certain reservations about the technique used to obtain these tapes. One can never be sure that, in the flaccid,

highly suggestible state induced by hypnosis, the patient is not picking up selected items by telepathy from the hypnotist. If the latter is, say, a student of the cult of Mithras, the patient may, with the best will in the world, leave the hypnotist's presence believing that he himself had a previous life as an adherent of Mithras. Secondly, I wish Bloxham had let his patients tell their stories with less questioning on his part. In places, the latter directs the narrative. Perhaps, as a psychiatrist, I am biased in this. Bloxham is described on page 84 as "managing to coax out only a handful of historical facts." It is always better, where reincarnation is the issue, to let the facts come out without prompting. One small criticism; I doubt if Jews could have been forced to wear distinguishing badges as early as 1189. They were, after all, in a favoured position under the Norman kings, particularly Rufus and the early Plantagenets.

Somewhat against my will, as I am not in favour of regression by hypnosis to elicit facts about reincarnation, I am bound to say that this book impresses me. Its contents simply cannot be written off as coincidence, fantasy or what have you. The presentation is admirable. Mr. Iverson forces no issue and writes up his cases with clinical precision but with sincerity and warmth. He has done a first class job in condensing a mass of material into not only readable but elegant prose. I don't know if it will comfort him that I, a psychiatrist, am not prepared to bombard him with words like cryptomnesia. A. G.

Letters

While I am grateful to A. B. for one of the most thoughtful and sympathetic notices my book *The Lion's Mouth* has received, there are two points in her review which trouble me. First, while it is certainly true that I was influenced, and on the whole not for the good, by a puritan and Protestant upbringing, I am sorry that my life should be seen as an object-lesson against Christianity. I would probably have agreed with her thirty years ago, when (in the heyday of the fashion of Freud) I was willing enough to blame my father for much that I would now see as my own wilfulness and perversity. Children can only be held to be wholly innocent by those who do not consider that the soul has existed before and comes into the world with much knowedge which makes it not childish, but ageless. In retrospect I recognise that whatever mistakes my father made I was no less responsible.

I feel the more strongly that I must answer A. B.'s criticism

of Christianity because, as a member of the editorial board of *Light,* I would not wish such a view to be attributed to the editors of *Light* or to the College. A. B. sees me as unforgiving towards myself because of an early-implanted sense of sin; but is not Christianity unique among the great religious traditions in offering forgiveness of sin? Others might with equal justice see the flaw in me as an inability (through pride perhaps) to accept that forgiveness. It is, for example, the teaching of the Church that if Judas is condemned it is not for the betrayal of Jesus but because he chose remorse and despair rather than the forgiveness offered even for that betrayal: only those who reject forgiveness are unforgiven. Truth to say I find the concept of "forgiveness" incomprehensible; and if I too prefer to place myself within the law of Karma it is because this is, for me, so much the easier way.

The second point concerns the notion of sin itself, and our responsibility for our wrongdoings. It is a current view within our permissive society that by refusing to consider anything as "sinful" the problem of evil is thereby solved. On a popular and political level we find that delinquents and criminals are absolved from responsibility by the invocation of social, economic and political causes: they are blameless because mere passive products of social "conditions." At a more sophisticated level the several schools of psychology enable their followers to shift the burden of personal responsibility on to parents and other influences in early life. In either case the result is the same—we ourselves are not to blame, but Society or, in general, *others;* and of course those others can in their turn be exonerated. But is all this in accordance with what we know to be true of ourselves? Does not every moment of life offer a choice that, in old-fashioned Christian terms, involves our "free will"? We know it does; nor is the "umpire conscience" wholly absent from any member of the human race. Not all is sin that the super-ego calls so; but we ourselves know very well when we are cruel or weak or regardless of others, much as we may prefer to find excuses for ourselves that sound plausible in terms of some current ideology or other.

I wrote my Autobiography as an examination of conscience to which the realization of harm done to others and failure in myself had brought me. I had hoped that it would be understood in this sense, as a "confession" within the tradition of this kind of writing. But it seems that our society, so tolerant of vice of every kind, simply cannot tolerate any suggestion that we may be sinners; that we all stand before a Judge within, to whom not Society, not our parents, but we ourselves are answerable. In

some final instance it may be that God is responsible since He created us knowing that we would sin; but if God is within us (A. B. also recognises this) we are not left without the guidance and strength every moment of life requires if we are to act rightly in the light of that divine presence.

Perhaps A. B. is right in seeing me as too stern a judge of myself, though I doubt this; often we beat our breasts about something in order to distract our own or other peope's attention from something far more serious. It is only little by little that we come to see how far even our best-intended actions fall short, and to understand that for what the Church calls "sins of omission"—failing to do our best in small and great things—we also bear a great responsibility. Far from condemning ourselves too severely do we not fail continually to face the truth about ourselves? I may be worse than most other women, less bad than some others; but the confrontation is alike for us all. I would rather admit myself a sinner before God than draw the insurance benefits of the Permissive Society.

That society owes a great debt to its scapegoats; at least, we can reassure ourselves, we are less bad than Myra Hindley or than Ian Brady. Sentimentally we are prepared to "forgive" the former (thereby making it easier to be lenient towards ourselves) but I find a greater fitness in Ian Brady's recognition that, humanly speaking, what these two did is unforgiveable and karmic consequences inevitable. In every culture there are the Medeas, the Cains, the Judases; which brings me back to the forgiveness offered by that principle of the incarnate divinity (incarnate in everyone) the West calls Jesus; which, like the power of the Original Vow offered by the Buddha (as understood by the Shin, or "pure land" sect) is said to be boundless. That is a mystery hard to understand; but by no means a title to judge our own wrongdoings with lenience. KATHLEEN RAINE.

DUALISM

The subject of Barbara Bunce's second question at the end of *Light* (Autumn 1977) (about Cathar entities' apparent lack of progress in seven hundred years) is perhaps touched on in K. R.'s Editorial at the start of the same issue: "the human spirit is not in time"; also: "Blake . . . wished to teach us 'To . . . hold . . . Eternity in an hour . . .'."

". . . to reincarnate as a group" (Bunce). Perhaps we do come in clusters. Dr. Guirdham's is not the only example known; and this may be one more validation of the picture of the vine of

which we "are the branches."

In considering Dualism, Barbara Bunce finds Douglas Fawcett's philosophy of Imaginism helpful. Again in K. R.'s Editorial we read". . . for Blake, the outer world, 'tho' it appears without,' is 'within, in your imagination'." Also, "The concept of a material universe outside mind or thought belongs to the temporal, empirical ego" that Blake calls 'Satan, the Selfhood,' the opposite principle from 'Jesus, the Imagination.' 'Imagination is the Divine Body in Every Man.'*

" 'This world of Imagination is the world of Eternity; it is the divine bosom into which we shall all go after the death of the Vegetated body . . . whereas the world of Generation or Vegetation is Finite and Temporal. . . . All things are comprehended in their Eternal Forms in the divine body of the Saviour, the True Vine of Eternity, The Human Imagination, who appear'd to me. . . .' "

It is hard to stop replaying the duet of Blake and K. R.

The key role of Creative Imagination shows also in Sufi metaphysic. (For further reading see Henry Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi* (Princton, 1969), and his slim, but dense, essay *Mundus Imaginalis* or *The Imaginary and the Imaginal* (Golgonooza Press, 3 Cambridge Drive, Ipswich, Suffolk, 75p; $1.75.)

G. CREMONA.

* Quoted in and from *Blake's Christ-Consciousness* by Kathleen Raine in *Studies in Comparative Religion*, vol. 10, no. 4.

I was interested in Barbara Bunce's letter and agree with much that she has to say. While there is plainly a place for a sensible acceptance of the doctrine of rebirth, it can all too easily become a spiritual blind alley. May it not be that Dr. Guirdham and his friends are mistaken in thinking they are required to foster a crusade for Dualism and that they may instead be here to learn to transcend its limited viewpoint? There can be no doubt that the most profound spiritual experience of both East and West has always been of a unitive knowledge which transcends the opposites. . . . Perhaps the Buddha's refusal ever to mention the term God arose from his determination never to encourage any form of dualistic thinking.

Christianity has always lacked a metaphysic and as a consequence has never been able to free itself from dualism in one form or another. Nevertheless the Old Testament speaks of Satan as one of the sons of God, and Jacob, when he had wrestled

all night at the ford with the adversary, cried out: "Lo, the Lord was in this place and I knew it not. . . ."

Jung regarded good and evil purely as human categories: "We must not overlook the fact that opposites attain a moral accent only within the sphere of human endeavour and action. We are unable to define good and evil in terms which could be considered universally valid, or, in other words, we do not know what good and evil are in themselves. . . . They originate from a need of human consciousness and . . . lose their validity beyond the human sphere. This is to say that a hypostasis of good and evil as metaphysical concepts is inadmissible because it would deprive these terms of meaning."

MORWENNA DONNELLY.

Books Recieved

Truth Has No Label. Brother John. (Psychic Press, £3.25.)

This expansion of the articles contributed by Brother John to Psychic News over many years expounds the basic popular concepts of the Spiritualist religion, and is full of good sense and sound feeling, without attempting to probe all the deeper aspects of teaching from discarnate sources.

The Book of Rings. Ingeborg Baroness Trützschler von Falkenstein. Kenneth John Westward. (Regency Press, £2.40.)

A series of brief and positive messages, advising how to overcome destructive mental forces of various kinds. There is little specific analysis and the tone is one of uplift.

Hauntings. Peter Underwood. (Dent, £5.95.)

Another collection of best-attested cases of haunting by "Britain's foremost ghost-hunter." A wide variety of phantoms, poltergeists and other supposedly supernatural phenomena are here investigated, including such celebrated cases as the ghosts of Glamis, the mystery of Amherst, to name but two. Peter Underwood's approach is strictly objective, and his verdict, after exhaustive research, is apt to be at best *Non Proven.* In particular, his counter-romantic solution to everybody's favourite, i.e. the Misses Moberley and Jourdain's Versailles *Adventure* seems alas! almost, if not quite, convincing.

Borley Rectory remains exempt, however: an unanswerable mystery—in his opinion.

Parishioners Still

THE REVD. RONALD ADKINS

AS a parish priest I was accustomed to receiving, from time to time, telephone messages informing me that a parishioner had died. Usually these messages did not surprise me; I already knew that the person was very ill and that death was expected. What did surprise me was that three of my parishioners informed me themselves of their deaths. These three were all personal friends.

The first time that this happened was when I was Rector of a small Cotswold parish. One of my parishioners, a young man in his early thirties, had been struck down by cancer. I felt very sorry for him and used to sit for hours at the side of his bed, holding his hand when the pain was particularly bad. A real comradeship grew up between us and he became a great friend. I used to visit him every day and, when my summer holiday became due, felt that I ought to put it off so that I could maintain these daily visits. He, however, told me not to do this: "You deserve your holiday," he said; and then he added with a smile, "If anything happens, I'll let you know."

Four days after my holiday started, I was in the guest house lounge in London when, looking up, I saw my sick parishioner smiling down at me: but he did not look sick now. He was radiant.

I was so taken aback that I had half risen to my feet when I suddenly realised that what I was seeing must be his spirit. His lips seemed to move and I am sure I heard him say, "I'm all right now, Sir," and then he was no longer there.

There were other people in the lounge, but none of them seemed to have noticed anything.

Half an hour later the telephone rang and I was told that my friend had died less than an hour before. He had said he would let me know, and he kept his word.

I left this Cotswold parish to become Rector of a parish in Devon. One of my Churchwardens was a real old Devon character. I became very fond of him and he often came round to the Rectory in the evenings and told me stories of Devon life. I was very grieved when he, too, was stricken with cancer. He was a bachelor and so, in order that he should be looked after properly, he was taken to hospital.

One night I went to bed at about eleven o'clock. I was

terribly tired and yet I could not sleep; something—or someone—seemed to be holding me back; and then, about midnight, I saw my churchwarden. He did not say anything, but he gave a characteristic wave of his hand before vanishing.

Five minutes later—hospitals are very quick—the telephone rang to tell me the news of his death. To me it was not news, for I already knew it.

At one time I used to be regularly visited by a parishioner who was always "sixpence short" (sixpence had some value in those days). He could neither read nor write but he was always very good at going to the village shop for me if I needed anything. I would take him out in the car with me and, from time to time, he would look at a non-existent watch (it would have made no difference if there had been one, for he could not tell the time), and then solemnly say: "Rector, I see the time's getting on."

He was not married, and he lived with another unmarried brother who, I think found him rather a bother. He was not young, he was in his sixties and, to my dismay, he seemed to be steadily weakening. I got him in the car and took him to the doctor, who diagnosed cancer and arranged for him to go straight into hospital. There he was, I think, more comfortable than he had ever been, but I knew that his time on this earth was very short.

Not long after his admission I was sitting in my study when, looking up, I saw him standing there. He was smiling at me and I am sure he was murmuring, "I'm all right now, I'm not sixpence short." Then he just disappeared and I sat by the telephone waiting for it to ring; a few minutes later it did and I was told what I already knew—my friend and parishioner had gone over to the Other Side.

It seemed that these three still looked upon themselves as my parishioners.

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