

THE OCCULT SIDE OF THE WAR

PART I

AN OPERATION FOR SPIRITUAL CATARACT

It would be news indeed to the great majority of people, if we were to tell them that the great war, which is being fought so strenuously in Europe with shot and shell, involving a great destruction of human bodies and of buildings which have stood for centuries, witnesses of civilization, is being waged with more than equal fierceness in the Invisible World, and that the participants upon the hidden side of life have even more at stake than those things which are considered in this world, namely, territorial acquisition, financial indemnity, etc. Such is, nevertheless, the case. The war started in the unseen world before it crystallized into physical action. And it must cease there, before a permanent peace can be negotiated. And one who sees and knows is also aware that this great spiritual influence which has caused the war was instigated by the group spirits of the various countries, who have waxed fat upon the intense patriotism, shown everywhere among the people in Europe.

Each group spirit fights through its people, and for its people, as we have shown in lecture No. 13 of the Christianity Series, which lecture is entitled, "Angels as Factors of Evolution"; and though the masses may scoff and sneer, the facts remain nevertheless.

Instances and evidence of this invisible leadership in the present war come to us through the "Occult Review" and the "Literary Digest", in connection with the Allies' retreat from Mons. It was confidently affirmed that several officers had then witnessed a curious phenomenon, in the form of a *strange cloud*, which interposed between the Germans and the British. This statement was confirmed by a correspondent in "Light" of May 8th, who stated that "in the rearguard action, there was one especially critical moment, when the German cavalry was rapidly advancing and greatly outnumbered our forces. Suddenly we saw a sort of luminous cloud or fog, which interposed itself between the Germans and our men. In this cloud *there seemed to be bright objects moving*. The moment it appeared, the German onslaught seemed to receive a check. The horses could be seen rearing and plunging, and they ceased to advance". This angelic intervention, in the narrator's opinion, saved the whole force from annihilation.

The foregoing story appears to be the same as that narrated by Dr. R. F. Horton in a recent sermon at Broughton Church, Manchester. He describes the occurrence as related to him by so many witnesses that, if anything can be established by corroborative evidence, it must be true. "A section of the line," said Dr. Horton, "was in imminent peril, and it seemed as if it must be borne down and cut off. Our man saw a company of Angels interposed between them and the German cavalry, and the horses of the Germans stamped. Evidently the animal beheld what our men beheld. The Germans soldiers endeavoured to bring the horses back to the line, but they fled. It was the salvation of our men."

Another account, emanating from other witnesses of the occurrence, is quoted from a letter as follows:

"Last Sunday I met Miss Marrable, daughter of the well-known Canon Marrable,

and she told me she knew the officers, both of whom had themselves seen the Angels, who saved our left wing from the Germans when they came right upon them during our retreat from Mons.

“They expected annihilation, as they were almost helpless, when, to their amazement, the Germans stood like dazed men, never so much as touched their guns or stirred, till we had turned and escaped by some crossroads.

“One of Miss Marrable's friends, who was not a religious man, told her he saw a troop of Angels between us and the enemy, and has been a changed man ever since. The other man she met in London last week, and she asked him if he had heard of the wonderful story of the Angels. He said he had seen them himself. While he and his company were retreating, they heard the German cavalry tearing after them. They ran for a place where they thought a stand might be made with some hopes of safety, but before they could reach it the German cavalry were upon them; so they turned around and faced the enemy, expecting instant death; when, to their wonder, they saw between them and the enemy a whole troop of Angels. And the horses of the Germans turned around, terrified out of their senses, and stampeded. The men tugged at their bridles, while the poor horses tore away in the direction from our men. He swore he saw the Angels, whom the German horses saw plainly enough, if not the German soldiers, and this gave our men time to reach the little fort, or whatever the shelter was, and save themselves.”

A further contribution to these Mons records was supplied by Mr. Lancaster, a Weymouth clergyman, in his sermon on May 30th. The rector read a letter in the pulpit from a soldier from the front, who was in the retreat from Mons, and who said in the letter that his regiment was pursued by a large number of German cavalry from which they took refuge in a large quarry, where the Germans found them and were on the point of shooting them. At that moment, stated the writer of that letter, the whole of the top edge of the quarry was lined by Angels, who were seen by all the soldiers and by the Germans as well. The Germans suddenly stopped, turned around and galloped away at top speed. The narrator adds that this is vouched for not only by the Tommies, but also by the officers of the regiment.

We see here, says the correspondent of the "Occult Review", certain variants of what is apparently the same story; but in one case the apparition appears merely as a strange cloud, in the second it appears as a cloud with bright objects moving within it, and in the third, fourth and fifth it appears definitely as a company of Angels. It seems not improbable that the same apparition would have presented itself with these variations according to the psychic temperament and development of the beholder.

It is an occult fact, a fact patent to one who is endowed with spiritual sight, that a group spirit rules over its people in the form of a cloud. In him, or in it, they actually live and move and have their being. Its thoughts and ideas permeate them with what is called “the national spirit”, and it is quite conceivable that under the strain and stress of battle, one or another of the group spirits, seeing its people in dire distress, should stretch forth a helping band and interpose itself between them and their enemies.

If we go back to the Bible, we find a similar occurrence at the time when the Israelites were taken out of Egypt. They were then pursued by the armies of Pharaoh, and El Shaddai, the Lord of Hosts, who guided them in the form of a pillar of cloud, interposed

himself between the Israelites and the Egyptians until such time as the water of the Sea had subsided and they were ready to cross. Then the pillar of cloud went again before them and led them through the water. Their enemies who followed were engulfed.

Under ordinary circumstances, people may not be able to perceive these higher vibrations and sense the beings, who are always about us, invisible, yet nevertheless much more alive than we are, potent also as factors for good or evil. But when a time of great stress comes, when a company of men find themselves in a very tight corner, as it were, face to face with death, when the nervous tension has been raised to a sufficiently high pitch, they begin to sense the super-physical world and the beings, who are with them. This has been the rule in all ages. Sir Walter Scott, in his "Witchcraft and Demonology", tells certain instances of a similar nature; but though the super-physical manifestation, in each instance quoted, was witnessed by a large number of people, Sir Walter Scott seeks to discredit their testimony and pooh-pooh the occurrence as superstition, a method that has been followed by a number of English newspapers with regard to the occurrences at Mons.

He says that "even on the field of death, and amid the mortal tug of combat itself, strong belief has wrought the same wonder, which we have hitherto mentioned as occurring in solitude and amid darkness; and those who were themselves on the verge of the world of spirits or employed in dispatching others to the gloomy regions, conceived they beheld the apparitions of the beings, whom their national mythology associated with such scenes. In such moments of undecided battle, amid the violence, hurry and confusion of ideas incident to the situation, the ancient Greeks supposed they saw their deities Castor and Pollux, fighting in the van for their encouragement; the Scandinavian beheld the Valkyries, the Choosers of the slain; and the Catholics were no less easily led to recognize the war like Saint George, or Saint James, in the very front of the strife, showing them the way to conquest. Such apparitions being generally visible to a multitude, have in all times been supported by the greatest strength of testimony."

The first instance quoted by Sir Walter Scott is from the "Historia Verdadera" of Don Bernal Diaz Del Castillo, one of the companions of the celebrated Cortez in his Mexican conquest. After having given an account of a great victory over extreme odds, he mentions the report inserted in the contemporary Chronicle of Gomara, that Saint Iago had appeared on a white horse in the van of the combat and led on his beloved Spaniards to victory.

It is very curious to observe the Castilian cavalier's internal conviction that the rumour arose out of a mistake, the cause of which he explains from his own observation, while at the same time, he does not venture to disown the miracle. The honest Conquistador owns that he himself did not see this Angelic visitation; nay, that he beheld a cavalier, named Francisco de Moria, mounted on a chestnut horse and fighting strenuously in the very place where Saint James was supposed to have appeared. But instead of drawing the inference that his whole company were hallucinated, the devout Conquistador exclaims: "Sinner that I am, what am I that I should have beheld the blessed Apostle!"

The other instance of what Sir Walter Scott calls "the infectious character of superstition" follows.

"In the year 1686, in the months of June and July, says the honest chronicler, many yet alive can witness that about the Crossford Boat, two miles beneath Lanark, especially at

the Mains, on the water of Clyde, many people gathered together for several afternoons, where there were showers of bonnets, hats, guns and swords, which covered the trees and the ground; companies of men in arms marching in order upon the waterside; companies meeting companies, going all through other, and then all falling to the ground and disappearing; other companies immediately appeared marching the same way. I went there three afternoons together, and, as I observed, there were two-thirds of the people that were together saw, and a third that saw not; and though I could see nothing, there was such a fright and trembling on those that did see, that was discernible to all those that saw not. There was a gentleman standing next to me, who spoke as too many gentlemen and others speak, who said: "A pack of damned witches and warlocks that have the second sight! The devil ha't do I see;" and immediately there was a discernible change in his countenance. With as much fear and trembling as any woman I saw there, he called out: "All you that do not see, say nothing; for I persuade you it is matter of fact and discernible to all that are not stone-blind." And those who did see told what works (i. e. locks) the guns had, and their length and wideness, and what handless the swords had, whether small or three-barr'd, or Highland Guard, and the closing knots of the bonnets, black or blue; and those who did see them there, whenever they were abroad, saw a bonnet and a sword drop in the way."

In the second book of Samuel, chapter 22, verses 7 to 18, we read:

- “7. In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.
8. Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth.
9. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; coals were kindled by it.
10. He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet.
11. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind.
12. And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.
13. Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled.
14. The Lord thundered from heaven and the most High uttered his voice.
15. And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them.
16. And the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.
17. He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters;
18. He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me.”

In the above David gives a description of the Lord of Hosts going forth to the fray to aid his followers. And in the tenth chapter of Daniel we are told how these Archangels actually help one nation against another in order to bring victory or defeat wherever it may be necessary for punishment or for reward.

Daniel tells us that "His body also was like a beryl, and his face as the appearance of

lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves". (This is another case where one saw, but others *felt* the presence.)

The Archangel said to Daniel: "The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me, one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me: and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

"Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I have come unto thee? And now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will shew thee that which is noted in the Scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me but Michael, *your* prince [i. e., race spirit].

"Also I, in the first year of Darius, the Mede, even I stood to confirm and strengthen him."

From the foregoing it is clear, that in all ages, when people were in great stress, their spiritual vision has been opened for the time being, and in our next article on this subject we shall show how war is actually an operation for spiritual cataract, a means of permanently opening the spiritual vision of mankind. (Continued in the Dec 2015 *Rays*)