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The Soul Comes Back. By Joseph H. Coffin, Professor of Philosophy in Whittier College. Macmillan Co.

The title of this book awoke in us great expectation. Professor William James had written: "The soul is as dead as the dodo. Souls have worn out both themselves and their welcome. As Psychologists, we do not need to be metaphysical at all." And, further, Professor John B. Dewey invented Behaviorism, which attributes all mental and spiritual phenomena to the activity of corporeal atoms. Accordingly, when we read, "The Soul Comes Back," we anticipated a great treat.

After reading the book, we can only express our profound disappointment, for the author lands himself with both feet in the very behaviorism which he professes to repudiate. In the early chapters he presents the world-view of the mechanist, idealist, fundamentalist, evolutionist, and modernist or hyper-evolutionist, which represents his own position. All this is very interesting, except that fundamentalism is represented very weakly and inadequately. He seeks to put together the findings of many kinds of scientists: the physicist, mathematician, biologist, psychologist, sociologists, ethicist, and theologian. After leading us through a heterogenous conglomeration of facts and fancies, often vague and sometimes unintelligible, his Q.E.D. is rather hazy. At times he seems to be a hyper-evolutionist of the mechanistic type, but occasionally falls back on emergent evolution and concedes a new start for the development.

As a psychologist, he denies that the soul is an immaterial entity or essence, which he sarcastically stigmatizes as "a ready-made filler-in." He identifies the soul with life or self-conscious personality; but what it is that has life or self-conscious is left a blank.

He is very fond of the term "psychosomatic," but when he empties the *psyche* of all substantial reality, what is left but the *soma* and its functions? Here he lands in behaviorism. So far as we can understand the author, soul is nothing but function. But function is only a mode or kind of activity. There can be no function without something that functions, no experience without an experient, no self-consciousness without an entity that is conscious. When one denies a metaphysical entity, there is nothing left to psychology but behaviorism.

Let us give the author credit for recognizing the value and reality of intellect, emotion and volition, though he renames them "interpretation," "appreciation," and "organization." We like the old terms better.

The denial of the substantial reality of the soul argues badly for immortality, though the author thinks that death may be a new start in the universal evolution, and that there may still be immortality.

He thinks that the discovery of the earth's revolution has exploded the old localization of heaven and hell. If this be true, we are wondering what becomes of his somatic part of personality since the metaphysical part has no existence.

To Professor Coffin the soul is an "achievement." If John Doe acquires a soul, his education will have to shape one for him." But surely there must be a soul before it can be educated. In all this the author confuses soul with personality in the sense of distinctiveness. A man may acquire a unique personality by education, but not a soul. Biochemistry may have a legitimate meaning, but when the word is used to teach that life is the product of chemical affinities, we draw the line. "Omne vivum ex vivo."

All these naturalistic writers, including Professor Coffin, are desperately afraid that we might conceive of God as a God of caprice. But even that is better than to so imprison God in his universe that he has no freedom and no initiative. Give us back a God of caprice rather than a dead god of sheer cosmic forces. "A living dog is better than a dead lion." If we have freedom and initiative, we cannot deny the same to a personal God.

The discussion of conversion and spiritual life is very unsatisfactory. The most senseless thing in the market is the scientist's discussion of religious topics. And it is not good form to slam the evangelist for his fervent appeals to men.

We fear that the title of the book is something of a misnomer. We do not believe that the soul has come back, for the reason that it never went away. We do not think that dualism has ever been refuted, and we still hold to a soul which is a spiritual and immaterial entity.

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