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WHY PREDICTIONS FAIL

By BARON E. PALMSTIERNA, G.C.V.O.
(Ex-Swedish Minister at the Court of St. James; editor of *Horizons of Immortality*).

MANY people are depressed these days not only on account of the outbreak of war, but also because some predictions about an unbroken peace became faulty.

This state of mind is natural, though unnecessary, and one can easily grasp that doubts concerning the genuineness of messages disturb the confidence of those who never gave a thought to the real nature of predictions.

As a rule, predictions are accepted uncritically as visionary forecasts of *events which are bound to happen.* This popular conception has brought believers in communications with the Unseen World to the impasse in which they now find themselves.

Some clear thinking on their part ought, however, to have warned them that predictions in most cases are nothing of the kind they took for granted. If their assumption were correct, life would appear rigid and mechanical, the freedom of man negligible, and human progress on the whole would be independent of our own efforts.

But life is not submitted to such conditions and the history of mankind bears out that earthly affairs are, generally speaking, their doing. Man shoulders painfully the consequences and the responsibility of his intentions.

The mistake that brought so many people to the present dilemma is due to the thoughtless interpretation we ourselves give to messages received.

Predictions—except when touching the rare pre-determined items of individual life—are not forecasts of *inevitable* events. The fact that predicted occurrences can be and often ought to be *prevented* should have instructed us that events are not shaped mechanically or take place notwithstanding our own attitude and activity. Predictions are to a very great extent premonitions and warnings prompting us to counteract them.

The conclusion we arrive at is that genuine predictions in most cases cannot be taken as a product of visions that see *fixed* future events in our time-fettered existence. They are, on the other hand, visions of *potentialities*, glimpses of probable happenings drawn to materialisation on earth under special circumstances and wave-conditions. The prognostics often become correct, but they were nothing but *images* of shaping possibilities which were on the way towards us.

Remember, we draw the events to us and do not proceed towards them. We can, in our struggles, attract or dissolve the potential events through the force of individual waves. This activity of man has not yet been fully recognised, and so we accept predictions as pointing to realities whilst they represent approaching possibilities.

Another matter ought likewise to be clearly understood: communications with the living universe do occur, but a great deal of the arriving messages originate in discarnate minds which are no more cognisant of the nature and growth of events than we are ourselves.

It is even, sad to say, a fact that a great many people who trust in communications remain satisfied with keeping on connections of a low standard; but how can we expect reliable guidance from those who even wish to return to earth and find it an enviable place? Earthbound entities live in obscurity and dim the vistas of others, who dwell in touch with them.

No other way stands open to attract helpful and genuine instructions than

the one which points to a development of the soul to harmony with pure regions that know vastly better than ourselves the *modus operandi* of the spiritual universe. But the higher we reach, the less likely it becomes that predictions are regularly tendered, because the main purpose of messages from that realm consists of an encouragement to the free development of individual characters without foretellings of events that through their very *unexpectedness* assist the moral progress.

If we further keep in mind that *time* is absent in a world of reality, we might easily realise the great difficulties which face those in another existence who sincerely try to discern the date of events to come inside our frame of time-measurements.

Where past, present and future are inseparable but spiritually conjoined, instead of differentiated by time-measurements, it is hardly possible to give correct calculations of time-enshrouded events. The difference in modes of existence becomes nearly insurmountable, and messages often complain of it. With regard to fixtures in time, predictions are apt to become inaccurate for this reason, and so delusions become frequent.

We are, as a matter of fact, much too apt to think that our experiences in life on earth make us fit to judge and grasp the organism of a universe founded on an all-embracing wave-system. We are far from the elements of knowledge in this respect, and disappointments with regard to predictions are an effect of this presumption on our side.

We live in an open and elastic world where events are caused otherwise than we are inclined to think, and so we give wrong interpretations and erroneous labels to psychic phenomena.

Prediction is a narrow and misleading term for a psychic phenomenon that touches deeper problems than we ordinarily visualise. But because we commit mistakes we must not become discouraged. They help us to delve more profoundly into the problems, and so we progress.

FIRST PRINCIPLES

By W. H. EVANS

I CLOSED my article last week with the suggestion that if the failure of the major "No War" prophecy caused people to turn from allowing their lives to be directed by Guides, and looking higher to the Source of All Life for guidance, the failure will not be without its use.

Let us consider an old truth—at least old to Spiritualists. The concentration upon Guides is apt to degenerate into Guide worship. Now, who are Guides? They are people who once lived on earth; who are believed to have made progress in spirit-life and to have a wider range of vision and greater understanding than ourselves. That can be accepted; but as they are still human beings, they are, like us, liable to err.

The mistake made by many is to think that death confers omniscience upon those who pass through it. It is a survival of an old error and does much to colour the views of people on this matter. But while death does, in most cases, mean an expansion of consciousness, it does not confer omniscience.

If we remember this simple truth, it will help us to see things in proper perspective and not be perturbed because a mistake has been made.

Then, we must bear in mind that spirit-people have to transmit their thoughts through Mediums. They cannot talk with us direct—consequently, they work under difficulties of which we know practically nothing. How easy for a message to get distorted. For "inspiration is governed by the channel through which it flows," and to paraphrase St. Paul: "The Controls of the Mediums are subject to the Mediums." Seeing this is so, and knowing that the ardent wish of everyone, Mediums and non-Mediums, was—and, I hope, still is—for Peace, it is not difficult to understand how the Controls, when within the magnetic sphere of their Mediums, find it most difficult to get their messages through with the clarity and directness they would wish.

Hence, the strong wish of the Mediums for Peace would almost overwhelm, and certainly deeply colour, anything relating to Peace or War.

These psychological factors in communion are known, but not always sufficiently considered.

There is one good side to the prediction and the emphasis with which it was given—it kept many people going. The tragedy of it lies in the almost slavish acceptance of the message, due, no doubt, to our desire that war should not come.

Once again, we see the necessity for using our reason and judging every message with dispassionate coolness. We are here to develop our powers, and not to rely upon the Unseen to the extent that our initiative is destroyed and our judgment weakened. It is not good to be a "leaner"; we have to become "lifters," and for that we need strength and courage.

In a little while, the shock of this disappointment will have passed and we shall see much more clearly. The convinced Spiritualists who have had their evidence and know the truth of human survival of bodily death will not be downcast; they will realise that the first principles are unaffected.

Life is continuous, and there is a power working in the world which we believe, in spite of appearances, will ultimately triumph.

We know there is spiritual companionship with our friends in the larger life, and also that we can commune with the highest and receive light therefrom. For we know, like St. Paul of old, that "whether there be prophecies they shall fail." It is true.

The greatest thing in the world is Love, and it is our duty as Spiritualists to see that Love does not become a war casualty, but that we keep in our hearts a spark of tenderness even for those "who despitefully use us and persecute us."

Love is the only power that can dissolve bitterness and hatred. Whatever happens, we must keep the light of Love in our souls, and think charitably of all. A hard doctrine, but true, as the Cross bears witness.

MRS. ST. CLAIR STOBART'S GRAND-DAUGHTERS SAVED FROM THE "ATHENIA"

TWO of Mrs. St. Clair Stobart's grand-daughters, Phyllis and Joan Stobart, were passengers on the "Athenia," which was sunk by a German U-boat a few hours after the declaration of war on Sunday, September 3rd. They escaped in one of the life-boats, were landed at Greenock by one of the rescue steamers and are now with Mrs. Stobart at her residence at Turner's Wood, Hampstead Garden Suburb.

Mrs. Stobart presided at the Spiritualist Community Service held in Wigmore Hall on the evening of Sunday, September 3rd, and, acting on a sudden urge, she asked the audience to sing the hymn, "For Those in Peril on the Sea." It would be about that very hour that the "Athenia" was torpedoed and her two grand-daughters—along with more than 1,000 others, some hundred of whom lost their lives—subjected to deadly peril. We are sure that all our Readers will join with us in congratulating Mrs. Stobart on their escape.

As related in her autobiography, *Miracles and Adventures*, Mrs. Stobart took an active part, as a non-combatant, in the World War of 1914-18. She is still active—this time in connection with home defence, as an Air Raid Warden and in other useful ways.

PROPHECIES, THE WAR, AND A CALL

By HORACE LEAF, F.R.G.S.

A LARGE number of Spiritualists have been disappointed because the prophecies that there would be no war have not proved true. It should be borne in mind, however, that not every Control said there would be no war. In one of my private developing circles, for example, one of the Controls insisted that there would be a terrible war, and frequently maintained that "fire would fall from the heavens and ships be swallowed up by the sea," or words to that effect.

I was struck by the reactions of the rest of the company. They not only disbelieved this, but showed definite antagonism towards the Control. They hated the thought of war so much that they refused to believe anyone who declared it to be inevitable. Occasionally, another Control would contradict the war prophet, and in the end the feeling against the particular Medium grew so strong that she wavered under it. This affected the Control, and I noticed a tendency in her last prophecy to appease the antagonistic element by modifying her warning.

This struck me as being very instructive and further illustrating how true it is that Spirit-Controls are influenced by the mental states of human beings. I do not think there was anything very telepathic about this effect in this instance. It could have been derived from the Medium's own mind. However, her worst predictions have, alas, come to pass.

There must, of course, be some explanation for the errors, although they have done no more than emphasise what we already knew—that Spirit-Controls do not know everything. But the fact remains that they often show a remarkable knowledge of the past, present and future. We ought, therefore, to take our stand on what we know.

TWO SOURCES OF SPIRIT-PROPHECIES

One fact has long been clear—namely, that there are two ways in which spirit-prophecies are derived. One is what may be termed "direct knowledge," when the Controls foresee events correctly without deducing them from present or past circumstances. The other is by deducing from existing data, and thus merely forming a judgment. This is, of course, the normal human method.

Looking back over a long acquaintance with Spiritualism and mediumship, I find far too many instances of correct foretelling, to refuse to believe that spirits often know the truth ahead. On the other hand, I know from a great deal of experience that they are not always correct. Then, there is the factor already mentioned—that Spirit-Controls are often greatly influenced by the preconceived ideas of their Mediums, and thus made to err. I fully believe the latter can account for most, if not all of the no-war prophecies that have gone wrong this time.

It appears pretty clear that this world is governed by two contradictory laws—Fate and Freewill. It is useless complaining that this is tantamount to saying Nature is paradoxical. Nature *is* paradoxical, as anyone can discover after five minutes thought. Why do people fall in love with their opposites? Why should the nicest people often prove most unpleasant? Why, for example, should poets, philosophers and a deeply musical nation indulge in the worst kind of warfare? And so on.

I have had the clearest proof that spirits undertake to influence men and women, in their desire to attain a given end. On the other hand, I have just as clear proof that they foresee the inevitable, although they would if they could, alter it.

One Control accurately foretold that Russia would desert the cause of the Allies during the last great war. No one of the two hundred persons who heard the prophecy was inclined to believe it. At that time, Russia was fighting very effectively and showed the strongest attachment for her Allies. Nevertheless, the prophecy came true. That same Control assured me and others that this time there would be hostilities, but no declaration of war. It seemed to me an utterly illogical statement, until I remembered that that is just the position in the case of the Japanese invasion of China. Later, Hitler took up the same position regarding Poland. This prophecy was at least 50 per cent. right.

BUT SPIRITUALISM DOES NOT STAND ON WAR PROPHECIES. The failure of so many show that these mighty planetary events are out of the bounds of the knowledge of the average communicating spirit—that is all. If they seem to speak definitely on such a subject, let us not forget that the whole psychological field of the Medium and sitters is set for it, and must act as an urge.

For my part, I thank more than one Control for his hope of peace. It soothed our troubled nerves, saved us from the "jitters," which must have followed on months of Controls assuring us that fire would drop from the heavens and ships sink in the sea. Such anticipation would have worsened the events.

There may be considerable truth in the assertion of more than one mistaken Control when they assure us—after declaration of war—that they had hoped for peace because they were striving for peace—that, from their "side of life," they tried to play upon the minds of those intent upon bringing about the holocaust, and inspire them with ideas and thus save the world from the present distress.

That, I think, is exactly what we should expect of well-meaning spirits. We ought to thank them for their endeavours and not blame them for their failures.

Let us not forget that wrongly to prophesy peace is not equivalent to having caused the war. One would think, to listen to some people, that the spirits were responsible for Hitler's decision. The Christian who took this viewpoint, simply because he did not like Spiritualism, threw a boomerang. It might just as reasonably be asked why Jesus did not stop the war. To reply that the decision rested with humanity is not impressive, because we know that almost without exception humanity everywhere wanted peace.

Well, the war is on, and what are we Spiritualists going to do about it? Very soon, I predict, people will be seeking for the comfort which Spiritualism can give, and in many cases alone can give. Then we shall want the unselfish help of our spirit-friends to console and assure. The ability to do this made Spiritualism the most effective comforter during the world-war, and it can be so again.

Every Spiritualist should make it his aim to help in this way as far as possible. Stand by the facts which have made Spiritualism the great power for good that it is to-day, and make it stronger to-morrow. There will be a demand for clairvoyance and clairaudience and other psychic faculties and powers. Let those who have these God-given gifts do their utmost to strengthen them, for by means of them joy can be brought to saddened hearts, and love shown to continue beyond the grave.

ICELANDIC TOUR CANCELLED

Recently, in LIGHT, it was announced that Mr. Horace Leaf was about to sail for Iceland to deliver a series of lectures on Spiritualism and Psychic Science and to give demonstrations of his mediumistic gifts. Owing to the outbreak of war, Mr. Leaf has had to cancel this missionary tour from which so much had been expected. He is remaining in London and carrying on all the day activities of his Centre at 40 Baker Street, W.1.

WHEN I DIED

A VIVID OUT-OF-THE BODY EXPERIENCE

By Dr. ENID S. SMITH, New Hampshire, U.S.A.

IN 1934 it became necessary for me to undergo a major operation in a hospital in New York City. Little did I then realize that in connection with the operation I was to have one of the most important spiritual experiences of my life. The hospital proved a veritable gateway to heaven through which I was permitted, like Paul and John of old, together with many other ancient and modern mystics, to pass into the beatific realms beyond this physical world

In view of the materialistic outlook of many scientists, and the preconceived ideas of orthodox psychologists —who dismiss all such mystical experiences as mere delusions, complexes, or neuroses—it takes much urging before some of us who know both sides of the question will relate our own personal spiritual experiences. When we are convinced, however, that all that the Creator, our Heavenly Father, gives us is to be shared with such of his children as can understand and be helped, we joyously permit the scientists and psychologists to do their worst to us, and cast our bread upon the waters, in the faith that some one at least will take strength themselves, and will climb one rung higher toward spiritual understanding.

In the present instance, the anesthetic, because of an unanticipated idiosyncrasy on my part, quickly freed my soul from the physical body. Leaving my physical shell lying in the hospital in New York City I proceeded to take various journeys throughout the universe, guided by heavenly beings. The details of these journeys are largely buried in my subconsciousness, and I have to rely for the most part upon what those at my bedside told me immediately upon my return to consciousness, I described to them my experiences while in an unconscious state.

OUT OF MY PHYSICAL BODY

While out of my physical body on the various spiritual journeys undertaken at this time, a radiantly beautiful angel stood guard at the head and another at the feet of the physical body I had left in the hospital. I was delightfully free from all pain and limitation, at one with the universe. I seemed to understand the meaning of all things. I was no longer one small individual, but rather a part of all creation.

I tried hard to tell those who were anxious about me, because my breath, heart, pulse had stopped, that I was simply out of the body for a time—that this experience was perfectly safe and natural. I assured them that I would return to my body in due time. I went on to explain that I could leave my body without the process called death, that I had done so on numerous other occasions when in a semi-conscious state between normal sleeping and waking, and that I was surprised that those concerned about me could not understand the simplicity of these spiritual and mystic facts. I continued to declare that we all left our bodies in sleep every night in a way similar to my experience, though we are seldom conscious of the work, the travel, the education carried on during the night when we are absent from the body.

Then, so contrary to my own sense of consideration for the welfare of others, their sensibilities and discomfortures—and particularly for those in the present instance who were trying their best, as they thought, to save my life, I did not seem to care that they were frightened about me. My whole being seemed to be filled with the thought of the great pity that they were so ignorant of these spiritual facts. I did not hasten to return to my body. I tried to explain to them why I was in no hurry to return, that I was a spirit even though I had a body, and that I delighted in the abundant life free from the body.

Soon I found myself a long way from my body, being drawn as it seemed to realms of great Shekinah brilliancy, where all was dazzling light. I felt myself in wondering awe, coming nearer to a majesty of Love and Wisdom toward whom I bowed in lowly adoration. I was approaching what seemed to be the Beauty of Holiness, a realm of vibrant, dynamic, living light, which with increasing intensity surrounded me. It was well that my guardian angels did not permit me to permeate too far into this new consciousness, lest at my present state of development it would have totally overcome me. As it was I seemed to lose consciousness for a time, as the result of the intense, blinding light.

HEIGHTENED STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Some time later I came into the heightened intensity of beautifully vibrant colours, many times more varied and brilliant than the brightest of our colours under tropical skies. The exquisite loveliness of these colours is entirely beyond the imagination of mortals who have not had similar experiences to these I am relating. The light was still intense, but I could now bear it. As was the case in the more intense light, I still sensed I was in the presence of the Almighty All-Person we call God, and for the express purpose of being quickened, refilled, and better prepared for the work He had entrusted to me. In such a heightened state of consciousness, we know, psychologically speaking, that much may happen in a second of time, just as one may dream the entire experience of a lifetime between the opening and the closing of a door through which one is passing.

Before I returned to my physical body I visited two friends in Los Angeles, one of whom is the world-renowned artist who painted the famous Christ Head from a vision in which he understood that the Master Jesus came to his bedside on twenty-one consecutive occasions at two o'clock in the morning. This radiant being awoke the artist exactly at the same time every morning, posed for the picture, vanished in due time, and returned again and again until the picture was completed. Upon the occasion of which I write, the artist and his wife, neither of whom even knew that I was ill, or in the hospital undergoing an operation, telephoned my father, after my astral visit to them, and explained that they had contacted me, and wondered about the significance of my visit. They noted the time, and later ascertained from my father, as the result of a letter from me—in which no mention of my astral trip to Los Angeles was made—that exactly at the time I had awaked them in California I had been given up as dead in the hospital in New York City—allowing, of course, for the difference of time between the two sections of the country. The artist and his wife declared that I had awaked them, that I had made my presence known to them, and that, as they instinctively felt that I should not prolong my astral visit but should return to my body, they had worked to accomplish that end. When I seemed to be " good and ready," as those by my bedside told me I expressed it, I returned to my physical body.

When at length after my operation (a major abdominal), I was tucked into a comfortable bed in a ward and my consciousness returned, so to speak, I was told by the patients of the ward that I had been preaching a very excellent sermon to them, as well as describing my travels into the universe. Of the sermon and the alleged description I was entirely unconscious, and had to gain from my listeners the content of what I had said. When I fully regained consciousness in my physical body I experienced a great sense of relief, freedom, uplift, radiance, heavenly peace beyond

(Continued in next column)

TEACHINGS FROM BEYOND

IT has frequently been stated that, simultaneously, with the present drive of evil forces in the world, there has for some considerable time been a corresponding drive of counteracting forces; that a fresh wave of spirituality has been sweeping over the nations, and that men's eyes are turning away to a great extent from the pursuit of pleasure and seeking instead for the knowledge of God.

Possibly it is a sign of this that we hear of so many people who tell us that, " after due preparation," they have been chosen to act in some form or other as the Medium, or mouthpiece, for some teacher from the Other World who is anxious in these times of dire stress to get through to the troubled world some message of either encouragement or warning. And whatever may be our opinion of the " name " attached to the sender of such messages, the subject matter of the message is often worthy of consideration.

One such set of teachings, by Hester Platt, is entitled *The Voice of Isaiah* (Feltons, Ltd., Worthing). As might be expected under that name, these communications, received during a series of sittings from 1938-1939, chiefly take the form of warnings, the communicator adjuring the peoples of all nations to forsake their insensate quest for material pleasures and possessions and to turn their hearts to the God of their Fathers.

During some of the sittings, the author was vouchsafed a number of visions, which she describes, and of which an interpretation was later on given.

The September issue of the *Power House Publications*, on the other hand, though likewise given out as received from the mouth of Masters of high degree, takes more of the nature of direct spiritual teachings. Much of it deals with the subject of prayer. One section reads :

" Those who pray that peace on earth may be maintained have called to Divine Power. As we see it, the power rising from the desire to live at peace according to the Divine Will is like a sheet of light over the earth. That sheet of light *can* come down between the nations that are at variance, spreading out amongst them and bringing peace; this *is* possible, and by your prayer you on earth can help to bring it into manifestation." M.A.B.

(Continued from previous column)

expression. In the presence of the Infinite One, the All-Person of the universe, I seemed to have been refilled, recharged as a battery that had run down.

A corollary to my space-free experience has always remained unexplained to me. The result of the intense light I had experienced in my astral body seemed to have been reflected to my physical body with the result that for five days I was practically blind. I mentioned the fact to the doctor and to the nurses, who told me there was nothing about the operation that would in any way affect my sight. During these five days I knew practically nothing that went on about me. I lived in the visions and extra-sensory experiences that were dissociated from the physical. The living light of other realms enfolded me. I did not feel any pain during these days.

As time advanced, however, I became more conscious of my physical surroundings, and after five days my sight returned, and also the pain that usually accompanies operations. Though often exhausted, limp, and seemingly done for, I was in a unique way consciously in touch with the inexhaustible resources of spiritual healing and recovery. As my day so was my strength.

Strong and well again I am about my Father's business; but ever will linger with me the fond memories in the ward of the hospital which was to me a veritable gateway to heaven, where I experienced one of the most important events of my life.

HOLY OFFICE AND SPIRITUALISM

THE *Catholic Herald* has an interesting feature in which answers are given to questions sent in by readers. Most of these answers seem to be good and sensible—as, for example, the statement that " a good end does not justify a bad means;" but the writer gets astray when dealing with an enquiry about Spiritualism.

Spiritualism, the inquirer is told, " was condemned by a decree of the Holy Office, March 30th, 1938," and the writer adds : " The reasons for the condemnation are the claim of Spiritism to be the sole incontestable proof of immortality, and the dangers, mental and moral, which spiritistic practices involve."

If these reasons are correctly stated, then the " decree of the Holy Office " ought to be revoked immediately—for Spiritualism does *not* claim to be " the sole incontestable proof of immortality," and " the dangers, mental and moral, which spiritistic practices involve " have been shown over and over again to be as nearly non-existent as may be, and very much less (according to statistics) than the mental and moral dangers incurred by those in the Roman Catholic priesthood.

Spiritualism offers evidence of *Survival*—not of Immortality, which may be inferred but can never be proved; and, whilst it rightly insists that the evidence it offers is " incontestable," it does not rule out or undervalue other evidence offered by philosophic thinkers and psychologists, or even by theologians.

We are sure the *Catholic Herald* writer wishes to be both accurate and fair—but in these references to Spiritualism (or Spiritism as he prefers to call it) he is not accurate and he is not fair, so that even if the end in view be good (namely, to keep the Faithful in the narrow path mapped out by the Holy Office), the means he uses are not good, and, to quote his own words again, " a good end does not justify a bad means."

A CONVINCING MESSAGE

THE following account of an incident which happened to a friend of mine may be of interest to many readers of LIGHT inasmuch as it possesses features which I think are somewhat rare.

At the time, this friend—who by the way is not a Spiritualist—was thinking of making a great change in her life on account of existing unsatisfactory circumstances. Before taking any steps in the matter she consulted a hand-and-crystal reader who had become clairvoyant. I will describe what happened in my friend's own words :

" Taking hold of my hand, the clairvoyant said : ' Before we start I can feel a message coming through to you.' She then described exactly to type my father and mother, and said that my father had passed over a short time before my mother and that he had waited for her till she arrived shortly after. The clairvoyant also said that they were greatly attached to one another and did not wish for a long separation."

Everything the clairvoyant had said, my friend told me, was absolutely true. The message her parents sent to her was that she would make the greatest mistake of her life if she did what she contemplated doing, that her life affairs were in higher hands and would be solved for her at a not far-distant date.

The reference to " higher powers " indicated that the message was of a spiritual character. It would, therefore, justify the assumption that it fulfilled St. John's test as being " of God." The clairvoyant then had recourse to the crystal, and told my friend what and what not to do. The advice she gave was on the very subject on which my friend had gone to consult her; but it was not until the crystal-reading was completely finished that she revealed to the clairvoyant what the subject was. So convinced was my friend that the message had come from her parents that her way of thinking about the matter which had been troubling her was completely changed.

ARTHUR NELSON, Major (Retd.).

Light

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EDITOR - - GEORGE H. LETHEM

AS WE SEE IT

THE HOPEFUL SIDE

SPIRITUALISTS are still asking, sorrowfully, how the failure of the Peace promises, so plentifully given from the Other Side, is to be explained. In this issue of LIGHT, several answers will be found which Readers may find helpful, if not entirely satisfactory.

Of special interest is the article by Mr. Wallis Mansford, on this page, for it suggests that the promises have not all been belied, and that, although War has not been averted, its extent has been limited and its threat to this country and to France modified in a manner little short of miraculous. A month ago it seemed certain that, if War came, Italy, Japan and perhaps Spain would be in arms against us—but they remain neutral, and so, to a very large degree, modify the extent and the scope of the terrible conflict. Perhaps here is to be found at least a partial answer to the prayers for Peace and a partial fulfilment of the promises of Peace which were taken too literally, because of the general longing for Peace, but which, as Baron E. Palmstierna wisely suggests, should have been regarded as provisional—as indicating what *might* be and not what *must* be.

ABSENCE OF HATE

MR. MANSFORD bids Spiritualists "be of good cheer, for the spiritual powers are veritably at work in the world to-day." We would like to believe that this is true; and there is at least one thing that holds out a suggestion that it may be true—namely, that writers and speakers alike dwell on the fact that although Britain and France are at war with Germany, there are few signs of hatred between the peoples of the warring nations. This absence of hatred, if it can be maintained, may well mitigate the horrors of the War whilst it continues, and help in the establishment of a satisfactory Peace when it is ended.

FACING WAR CONDITIONS

BECAUSE of war conditions, LIGHT consists to-day of twelve pages instead of the usual sixteen; and, unless restrictions become severe, we hope to be able to avoid any further reduction. By economies in advertising space, and other means, the loss of space for reading matter will be minimised as far as possible, and all the regular features will be continued—with the exception (for the present) of the page of comments under the heading of "Looking Round the World." In the place usually occupied by this feature, there appears to-day (and will continue to appear) a selection of the letters sent to us by Readers. In this issue, all the letters published relate to the "Prophecies that Failed," and a very large number on the same subject have had to be held over. Readers who write on this or any other topic will help the Editor greatly if they will condense their letters as much as possible.

One of the technical difficulties with which our reduced staff is faced is in regard to the large number of changes of address sent in by Subscribers who find it necessary or desirable to remove to some new place of abode. These changes are dealt with as promptly as possible; but should there be what appears to be delay (or perhaps duplication) we hope Subscribers will make considerate allowance.

BE OF GOOD CHEER

By WALLIS MANSFORD, Author of *Bridging Two Worlds*

I READ your leading article in last week's LIGHT dealing with the above subject with great interest, and share your regret that the promising messages, "that there would be no great war," or "that there would be no war for England," have not materialised, but, because of that, we must not for one moment think that the spiritual powers have been idle—on the contrary, I believe it can be shewn that, throughout the long drawn-out crisis, they have already accomplished much.

There is little doubt it was they who gave Mr. Chamberlain the courage to face Hitler in Germany last September, and his journey was the means of averting war at the critical time when Britain was quite unprepared to face such an emergency.

Again, a month or so ago, there was every reason to believe that, in the event of war, France was open to attack by Germany on her frontier between the Duchy of Luxemburg and Switzerland, by Italy between Switzerland and the Mediterranean coast line, and by Spain on her southern frontier; and further, that troops coming to our aid from Australia and New Zealand would have to run the gauntlet of being torpedoed by Japanese war vessels, and that America had decided by Congress vote not to supply us or our allies with arms and ammunition for the prosecution of the war if it came to hostilities.

THE ACTUAL POSITION

Contrast this with the actual position at the present time. General Franco has declared Spain's unequivocal neutrality; Italy has stated that she will give no military assistance to Germany; and Japan announces that she is withholding her support to Germany. Thus the much vaunted unity of the Axis, within a week, crumpled up like a pack of cards in a way that is little short of miraculous; and, moreover, there is every reason to believe that the Americans, roused at the very outbreak of war by the sinking of the "Athenia" by a German torpedo, will now be willing to provide us and our allies with arms and ammunition, and may eventually enter the war with us against the common enemy of the Democracies.

I firmly believe that we owe these startling reversals of policy by the countries concerned largely to the beneficent influence of the spiritual powers working for the good of humanity.

Regarding their former hopeful promises of peace, my own Guides and Helpers have repeatedly warned me that sometimes the earthly power can momentarily be too strong for them to contend with; and it is not surprising that an abnormal personality like that of Hitler, with the evil forces that he has created behind him, is likely to prove a baffling subject to deal with, but there is little doubt that the spiritual powers will now bring their whole influence to bear upon his inevitable downfall.

Was it merely a coincidence that British aeroplanes, heavily loaded with tons of propaganda leaflets, were on five occasions able to drop millions of their "truth spreading missives" over large tracts of German territory without meeting with the effective interference or resistance of a single enemy aeroplane? Without the help of the unseen powers, I believe such an achievement would have been a sheer impossibility.

Let those who believe in the spiritual powers working for the good of humanity take heart. These paper pellets, falling on the heads of the under-fed, suppressed and over-ridden German nation, are likely seriously to undermine the morale of her citizens, and will be the more deadly because Germans will find they have been deceived by their rulers, and will then understand

(Continued at foot of next column)

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

(The views and statements of correspondents are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor, who occasionally prints, in the interests of free discussion, letters with which he does not agree.)

A WHOLESOME CORRECTIVE

Sir,—I would like to send a word of appreciation with reference to Mr. W. H. Evans' article in last week's number of LIGHT. I regret most sincerely that the so oft repeated prophecy of "no war" should have been disproved, but there is another aspect. It should, I think, be a wholesome corrective to that side of Spiritualism so often inclined to fortune-telling and prophecy.

For my own part, I have never been able to believe that the Controls were anything but secondary personalities, or whatever one may care to call that unknown part of ourselves. Is it not possible that this almost universal desire to be spared war has seeped through to the subconscious minds of most people and, in the case of Mediums, reappeared in the guise of prophecy? The ability, undoubtedly possessed by some, to see at times the future correctly, has been proved conclusively, but I agree with Mr. Evans, that Spiritualism does not rest on that basis. ELSA L. WILLIAMS.

WAR FORECASTS

Sir,—I would like to have mentioned in LIGHT that the clairvoyant Medium, Mrs. Helen Spiers, was not the only well-known Medium to have prophesied this war correctly. I am privileged to be a pupil among a large number who attend Miss Jacqueline's classes and I can vouch that we have been persistently told by her Control for many months past that war and great tribulation would befall us all, and we have been instructed individually so that we might be prepared for the great work before us.

Not only has this prophecy come true, but as long ago as April we were told emphatically that this state of warfare would prevail after a period of "five moons," which has brought us up to September of this year. This is only one of many proofs we have gained from Miss Jacqueline's Control, who has been truly remarkable in getting through continually details of undeniable proof.

Every member of Miss Jacqueline's classes will bear me out in this statement. (Miss) MONA PARKER.

Sir,—May I point out that, to my knowledge, for the last four years the Controls of Mrs. Ray Richmond, of "The Beacon," Upper Richmond Road, have continuously affirmed war ahead, and emphasised the necessity of demanding gas-masks and air raid shelters of the authorities. OLIVE MEAD.

(Similar statements have been sent to us regarding several other Mediums.)

CONSOLING THE GUIDES

Sir,—My mediumship is in a very early stage of development, but I did get through, on the few days following the declaration of War, some very clear, definite thoughts! That the balance between War and Peace was *so, so tiny*, Peace was so, so near, that Mussolini worked to the last moment with all his strength for Peace. But the prayers sent up by the English were not enough at this moment to let the forces for Peace prevail over those for War. I had a vision, heart-breaking to see, of the Guides (both the great well-known ones and the unknown ones) in the deepest agony and distress. They were naturally unwilling to tell the reason of their failure—our lack of prayer and mental force. No Guide is coming forward to say: "It is your fault, you failed us," after their promise. They are suffering deeply and in silence.

I may be wrong, but I think there are times when we must comfort and console our Guides as they comfort and console us. This is one of them, I feel Many other readers probably got the same message through as this. I should be interested to hear if this is so. EVA BARRETT.

BIBLE EXAMPLES OF PROPHETIC FAILURES

Sir,—As regards the non-fulfilment of the present War prophecies, we have some examples of that in the Bible. Jonah was very angry because the Lord did not keep His word. I am always amused at the clever bargaining of Abraham in getting the number of righteous men to save the city reduced step by step from 50 to 5. Both Jonah and Abraham would have been justified in saying certain things would occur which did not mature. They would say that they had it direct from—to them—the Lord, or their communicator in the spirit-world.

But immediately war was declared, with its non-fulfilment of prophecies, I thought of I. Cor. xiii: "Charity never faileth; but whether [where] there be prophecies, *they shall fail* . . . For we know in part and we prophesy in part . . . But when that which is perfect is come . . ." Perfection is as our "Father in Heaven is perfect." I think no one claims that any spirit who is in a celestial sphere—at any rate—below the third is perfect, and we are told that we do not get communications *direct* from those in the higher spheres.

A Spiritualist—that is, one who has had proof of survival and communication from the spirit-world, or because he accepts the evidence of those who have had that experience—cannot possibly become a non-Spiritualist because of some imperfect correspondence. It is a contradiction in terms.

Richmond. J. W. TURNER.

"PURGE OUR MOVEMENT"

Sir,—Now the blow has fallen and the prophecies proved null and void, is not this the time thoroughly to purge our movement? A purge is needed terribly. We have got into the habit of relying far too much on our "Guides," splendid friends though they be, but after all, they can see only a little further than we can.

We are not united enough. Some of us deny the Divinity of Christ, which is rather absurd considering we *all* have a spark of Divinity in us, and so on.

There are far too many "one-man churches," or shall I say, separate little "cliques," which is more to the point. Of course, these churches have to be maintained, but one or two centralised churches would be far better.

Then we speak of the "Brotherhood of Man" glibly, but do not carry it out at all. We often sneer at the "Parsons" who do not see eye to eye with us. Surely the Brotherhood of Man means a real warm feeling to all men.

Also, we are in great danger of "commercialising" our movement. Large fees are often demanded for sittings, often quite beyond an ordinary person's means. True, the L.S.A. give free sittings to some poor people, but people have to show they cannot afford anything, and it is unpleasant for them.

The highest Guides are definitely those who refuse to let their Mediums accept payment. It is all very well to say Mediums must be paid. Well and good, but small fees ought to be enough for God's messages, surely?

Earls Court, London. (Mrs.) E. WILLIAMS.

[NOTE.—A large number of letters have been unavoidably held over.—EDITOR.]

(Continued from previous column)

why listening-in to foreign stations was made a crime by their own government, punishable by death.

We Spiritualists can be of good cheer, for the spiritual powers are veritably at work in the world of to-day, and we may feel confident that if we, too, put our shoulders to the wheel—for it is a law of the spiritual world that they help them most who in turn help themselves—then in the end they will ensure for the sake of humanity that right will prevail!

MR. H. F. SALTMARSH EXPLAINS

AS Major Howgrave-Graham has paid me the compliment of devoting no less than three articles to the criticism of my little book on *Foreknowledge*, I feel that it would be churlish to refrain from making any reply, the more so as he has been kind enough to sweeten his strictures with some very flattering remarks.

I will not attempt any exhaustive answer, but would like briefly to touch upon three points.

(1) When I suggest an alternative possible hypothesis it does not mean that I accept it as proved, or even highly plausible. One cannot base certainty on experience, and, if the data at our disposal be evidential, the most that we can do is to assess relative probabilities. In arranging possible alternatives in order of acceptability one must take into account two factors—*viz.*, weight of evidence and antecedent improbability. The acceptability of any hypothesis varies directly with the first and indirectly with the second. For example, I should require much stronger evidence to make me believe that a cow jumped over the moon than that she jumped over a fence.

The antecedent improbability of supernormal precognition is very high.

(2) I should like to make clear my view of the nature and purpose of an hypothesis, *e.g.*, my suggestion of an extended specious present. I do not suggest for a moment that it, or any other hypothesis, is *true*; at the best it is a way of looking at the facts. I regard any hypothesis as being simply a piece of string more or less adapted for tying facts into bundles for convenience of handling. However, any hypothesis which necessitates the invention "*ad hoc*" of entities or conditions for which there is no independent evidence is at a disadvantage compared with one which can get along without doing so. To this extent my specious present idea, which requires nothing not already otherwise established, scores over Mr. Dunne, who has to invent an infinity of times and observers.

MAKING HIS STANDPOINT CLEAR

(3) Major Howgrave-Graham has somehow acquired the conviction that I deny Survival. It was never my intention to convey this impression. I am, I hope, too consistently agnostic either to deny or to affirm it.

May I try to make my personal standpoint clear, even though my opinions are not of any particular value? I think that there is a considerable weight of evidence and argument both for and against Survival *of some sort*, and that the preponderance is somewhat on the side of "for," though I do not regard it as being great enough to be compulsive. This is, however, a matter for each individual to decide; apodeictic proof, or even what Humpty-Dumpty called "knock-down argument," does not appear, to me at least, to be available.

As regards the sort of survival, however, I think that some progress is possible, though mainly in elimination. The "me" which I now recognise as myself and which others know as me is a composite entity, comprising at least two factors—*viz.*, a physical organism and a psychical entity. Many authorities deny the independent existence of the latter; for these the question of Survival is already answered negatively. Other authorities deny the existence of the former, but as they have to allow the existence of an ideal construct which is so good an imitation of the real thing "as makes no odds," it seems that we can safely neglect this complication.

My own tentative conclusion on this matter is acceptance of the two-factor theory. I may, of course, be wrong, and there is nothing which I should like better than to be *proved* so, unless it may be being *proved* right. Either way I should learn something definite.

I cannot now enter fully into the arguments and evidence in support of my position, to do so would require a volume and far greater competence than I possess. I will merely cite a few of the items—for instance, the effect of cerebral lesions on the manifested personality, and the facts of restitution of function in such cases: the part played by the endocrine glands, the effects of drugs, illness, fatigue, excitement, etc.; the part played by education and environment; the phenomena of subliminal consciousness, of telepathy and E.S.P. generally. Further, I find that there are several different "me's" which manifest themselves from time to time according as my psychological background varies.

Now, the only personalities of which I have any knowledge are embodied or psycho-physical personalities. I have no experience of a psychical entity in its pure state. It is, therefore, an unwarranted assumption that such an entity is similar in structure and characteristics to any personality as actually known by experience. Never having come across one, I cannot say what a pure psychical entity is like. The characteristics of pure sodium and pure chlorine are very unlike those of common salt and, if this be so with a simple chemical compound, how much more likely is it that it holds good for such complex entities as the psychical factor and the physical organism?

"IF" THERE BE SURVIVAL

We know that the physical organism is destroyed at death; if there be Survival of any sort, it seems that it must be the psychical factor which persists, and my position is that we cannot say that this factor in its pure uncombined state is a mind or personality, or resembles a mind or personality; we do not even know that it is a consciousness as we use that word. All that we can say is that it is something which in combination with a physical organism gives rise to a mind or consciousness.

I would point out a further unwarranted assumption —*viz.*, that the familiar conditions of time, space, number, causation, and all the other categories or forms which govern our experience in this life, must necessarily hold sway in a disembodied state of existence. To assert this is an illegitimate extrapolation.

This implies that the "me" which I now recognise as myself will not survive death, but that a larger or truer me may do so.

I am aware that this conception of Survival is extremely distasteful to most people, but I cannot really see why it should be so. If the psychical factor be the true me, it will surely be a relief to be divorced from a troublesome physical organism and to be free from the unsatisfactory and rather ridiculous person which I now recognise as me. An actor who has to play an unsympathetic and farcical part, attired in an uncomfortable costume, may well be glad when the play is over.

Finally, Major Howgrave-Graham accuses me of scepticism. I accept the soft impeachment—in fact, I confess that I am far more sceptical than he suspects. It may be that some of my colleagues in the S.P.R. rival or outstrip me in scepticism of the supernormal, but I add to this a very wide and deep scepticism of the normal. It always amuses me to contemplate the child-like and rather touching confidence in the normal which is exhibited by the average scientific man. However contemptuously he may reject any phenomenon which will not fit in with his accepted system, let one come along clad in the garments of orthodoxy, he will welcome it with open arms; as a little child puts his hand in that of his nurse, so will the scientist let the apparently normal lead him whithersoever it will.

THE LIVING TRUTH (Second Series)

6—TRANSFIGURATION (continued)

By ROLLIN C. OGBURN

There was the darkly outlined form of death which Jesus faced unafraid. But falling over him like a shroud was a deeper shade—a form of such dire and ominous portent that his soul recoiled with dread and despair.

It was the *shadow of failure*—the shadow of his *untimely* end and the defeat of his life purpose. He saw the organised hosts of evil arresting the movement which he had come to inaugurate, with irreparable loss to the world. He saw his mission on earth set back to zero. (*Mark*, 9, 12).

Not that his mission would fail altogether, for Christianity remains the supreme power on earth for good. But the greater part of its force would be annulled by the malicious stupidity of men, setting back twenty centuries or more the dawn of the heavenly day on earth. He saw the light quenched; wrong stalking over the world. He saw his own people reject him in scorn and thereby seal their own dreadful doom, and what he actually saw for them (clairvoyantly) caused him to weep over Jerusalem.

This, we are told, was the subject of the conversation there in the cloud on the mount. It was just one of many such visits, the one which the three disciples were permitted to attend—just a natural, quiet, intimate meeting of three great souls. There was the harmony and union of spirit of the trio and the solace, comfort and sustenance of the two worshipful Masters Moses and Elias, to their beloved young friend.

But let us not forget the glory. *With God there is no failure.* Surely, surely—*That is glory.* Men and demons may thwart and postpone but never defeat. The trio were undismayed, in very truth they were joyous. The disciples observed a happy, triumphant attitude in the actions of their hosts. There was bliss even in the midst of sorrow, for God was there.

And here is a living promise. In the presence of loved ones, gone into life, there is ecstasy waiting for us, and in God's Presence there is no defeat.

In the transfiguration there is a picture of the failure and redemption of mankind. We are moved to look again.

V. The mystery of sin and salvation. Here is yet another view. It is too awful for words. How can we say it? With what colours shall we paint the picture? Peter, many years later, found it well nigh impossible to express it in words. (2 *Peter*, 1, 16-18). Where shall we find the pigments for those dreadful black depths of shadow and the blinding highlights of glory which are in that scene? Men have made a phrase to express the far opposite extremes of emotion. They say the darkest hour is just before dawn. In the transfiguration there is portrayed black despair and ineffable glory—death-like darkness and then the sunrise upon the snow.

Something is there which no Fundamentalist will ever behold—the conflict in the sensitive soul of Jesus, in the darkness of the night, between wrong and right; unfathomable depression in conflict with faith. One grows cold and numb at the sight. The heart is breaking at the horror of that dreadful thing which is disclosed. It was in that hour before the transfiguration that the disciples slept, for flesh and blood cannot endure it. That hour of agony and stupor is the symbol of inevitable annihilation, the final effect of wrong, except for the intervention of Deity. This is the picture which registers upon human mentality. But this view is beyond the powers of mentality. It is a picture for the soul; Jesus, the great Sensitive, feeling the shame, terror and pain of his brothers of all time in the grip of evil.

Let us not dwell over-much in the morbid shadow. Sunrise is at hand. Now comes a grand reversal of falsity, with the approach of the New Day, erasing the night, cancelling mortal weakness, washing away sin and driving out despair—the sunrise of the Great White Spirit of God in man's soul on our Mount of Transfiguration.

About this vision and encircling its participants is the rainbow of living truth, and out of it radiate the cosmic, life-giving currents of the light of love. It has the key to the mystery of night and death and life again. And we are constrained to look at it yet once more.

VI. The Symbol of Triumph. There is a triumph of men on earth which is the glory of God. What shall we say of suffering and shame and injustice? How does God allow those fearful things to come, which do come into human life—things which kill the body and crush the soul?

Could any picture be made without shadows? Is night without a purpose? Has morning ever failed to arrive? No matter what may come, the power of Infinite Light and Love is waiting there already. With that Presence: loss is gain; darkness is light; agony is ecstasy; death is life.

For the Spirit of that Presence is at work in human consciousness. It is the intervening God entering into the spirit that is man—man crushed and cast down, beaten and broken, yet rising in an invisible strength to defy all evil and realise the eternal fact that defeat, with God in us, is victory.

Could we toil, with Jesus, up the trails of our Mount Hermons, to the margin of eternal snow, where the crimson snow flower lifts its lovely face out of the white mantel into the warm sunshine and greets its Maker; from that vantage point we would gaze upon far flung spirit vistas never seen before—views of such sublimity as to change our very nature and reconstruct our whole life. For this we pray.

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THE RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

By Rev. OWEN R. WASHBURN, of Vermont, U.S.A.

THOSE who emphasise the statement that psychic phenomena presented by Spiritualists have no religious significance are overlooking a large body of facts. If the actions when inanimate bodies are moved were always meaningless their contentions would be logical, but when tables tip during séances they often do it as intelligently as tongues tip when men talk. In all communications there are unescapable religious conclusions, directly or indirectly presented.

The negative implications of the simplest, most commonplace assertions from the psychic side of life, whatever their origin, are always, on their faces, testimony in favour of a new concept, as against an old concept of heaven, hell, the state of the good, the state of the wicked and as to the efficient methods of salvation.

If John, who has been dead for some time, tells his wife, Jane, that he is alive and loves her, that fact is positive testimony that John, now a spirit, is not waiting for a general resurrection day: a final judgment; the miraculous restoration of the body to the individual.

From all séances and from all interviews between spirits and earth-people there come testimonies denying the theories of orthodox theologians: reports from non-Christian China of spirits speaking through Roman Catholic Mediums are in substantial agreement in taking a negative attitude as to orthodoxy.

On the positive side, the testimony of spirits, even of those who are of a far more advanced degree of culture, is fairly uniform. They declare their belief in a system of theology and morals more uniform than that held by the Christian world. Certain great foundation principles are proclaimed by almost all spirits who communicate. They do not always assert these facts at every séance or through every Medium at every interview with earth-people, but these general assertions are often made.

The common assertions of ordinary people in the spirit-world, communicating through Mediums, to the common people, include a declaration of a belief in one God, whose purpose is benevolent, in Christ as a great teacher of spiritual truths, in the degree of the development of character in each individual as the determining factor in his place of residence, happiness and powers when in the spirit-world.

The spirit-testimonies are uniform in the teaching that all spirits may, if they will, develop their powers and aims after reaching the spirit-realms, and that as each develops he may enter a happier and more constructive state of life.

When the Church has accepted the teachings and evidences of which the New Testament bears record then opposition to Spiritualism will be swallowed up in commonsense interpretations and practices of Christianity as Jesus manifested it.

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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17th.
11 a.m. Mr. David Bedbrook, Clairvoyance
6.0 p.m. Mr. Murray Nash, Address

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20th, at 7 p.m.
Mrs. Helen Spiers, Clairvoyance

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PLEASE NOTE ALTERATIONS

WIGMORE HALL, 36 Wigmore Street, W.1.

Sunday Services

September 17th. 11 a.m.—Mr. HAROLD CARPENTER
Clairvoyant: Mr. Armand Wilson
5.30 p.m. Rev. MAURICE ELLIOTT
Clairvoyante: Mrs. Stella Hughes

Wednesday Meetings, 12.30 p.m.

With Organ Recital, Address, Questions answered and Clairvoyance.
Wednesday, September 20th. Rev. LEWIS JEFFERSON
Clairvoyance: Mrs. Dolores Smith

DAILY ACTIVITIES

At Headquarters, 24 Gloucester Place, Portman Square, W.1.

Friday, September 15th, 5.30 p.m. Psychometry, Mr. Roy Morgan (20 sitters).
Tuesday, September 19th, 2.30 p.m. Group, Mrs. Maude Bateman
Wednesday, September 20th, 2.30 p.m. Group, Mrs. Dolores Smith
Wednesday, September 20th, 5.30 p.m. Group, Miss Lily Thomas
Friday, September 22nd, 5.30 p.m. Psychometry, Mrs. Helen Spiers (20 sitters).

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