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"THE PSYCHIC STREAM"

MR. ARTHUR FINDLAY ON SOURCE AND GROWTH OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

MR. ARTHUR FINDLAY makes a further effort in this capacious volume* to "trace the source and growth of the Christian Faith." That, of course, has been done already in many compilations by various learned men, on the accuracy of whose efforts Mr. Findlay, no doubt, has to rely; since for original work in these directions a high attainment in scholarship must be demanded.

Therefore one cannot look for any novelty in research or presentment; but those who are anxious to learn all that at present there is to learn about the making of Christianity, as apart from the teaching of Christ, will find it here, reviewed comprehensively.

Mr. Findlay sets out to show that, in the manufacture of its narrative and dogma, the Christian Church has raided the compilations of older religions. That, of course, has been understood for many years by all those who have been sufficiently interested to study the literature of the subject. On the ordinary Church member it is unlikely that Mr. Findlay's revelations will produce any effect.

It must have occurred to him, while exploring religious histories, that, where supernatural beliefs are concerned, the mind of man follows, and for thousands of years has followed certain definite channels. That it matters no whit from what roots a religion rises, in the end it bears the customary flowers.

Back of every spiritual thought is the vast insistent pressure of the universe, and every religion tends to take in time an impress from Nature, however disguised may be its colouring.

Living, as we do to-day, in foul cities, we can no longer appreciate the urgency of the Seasons, the compelling influence of the tides; but by such prevalence all religions have been moulded, and from them most sacred festivals have been fixed.

Mr. Findlay is anxious, by disclosing the pagan origin of the Church's dogmas, to set its members again where once they stood in the Psychic Stream, before its purity had been clogged by the necessities of a priesthood.

But it must also surely have struck him, seeing the way all religions have gone, that there is in the religious mind of every century an insistent demand for a faith that can be enriched by fantastic draperies.

As he has pointed out, not only have virgin-births been considered a necessity for the founders of most religions, but from that birth to a tragic death, their stories have scarcely varied even in apparently unimportant particulars.

Is not this proof that, whatever may be the original narrative, the religious mind insists, sooner or later, on its being standardised to meet a popular conception; or, alternatively, one has to believe that every religion has to set in a fore-ordained pattern?

The trouble, of course, is that all religions have purely ethical origins which make but a small appeal to the bulk of humanity. Indeed in that early chrysalis

stage they are not religions, but only teachings, and do not receive the homage of mankind till they have spread their butterfly wings of ceremonial worship and ecclesiastical revelation.

THE MEANING OF MIRACLES

In his earlier writings on the subject, the author has appeared doubtful whether to treat the founder of the Christian religion as a human entity or as a myth.

Aided, perhaps, by his study of Neo-platonic philosophy, he now seems disposed to regard him as a man.

It should have helped him to remember that not until the 4th century was the claim to God-head officially confirmed; and, allowing for later doctoring of the text, neither the Disciples, the Evangelists, nor St. Paul, dreamt of the astounding claims that were formulated at Nicaea.

"A man approved of God among you," was how Peter still thought of Jesus, even after his ascension; and belief in his divinity was rejected by three Councils, before it was accredited, chiefly on political inducements, in 325 A.D.

These considerations, one would have thought, might have persuaded Mr. Findlay to treat the figure of Jesus in a less tentative manner.

He seems always afraid of an admission that would lend colour to beliefs he is anxious to discourage.

In the matter of miracles, for example. "Miracles never happen," he tells us, "but psychic phenomena have often been turned into miraculous stories."

Well, miracle, in its primary and proper meaning, is no more than a marvel, but Mr. Findlay seems terribly afraid of its being applied to anything that Jesus could do, for fear, apparently, of exalting his status.

"We know," he says, "that the people believed that he performed miracles, and that, as miracles never happen, what has been handed down to us must, at the most, be only a garbled account of what he said and did, and how he died and was seen again. None of these stories can be accepted as true."

But why? Such a statement makes one wonder to what extent Mr. Findlay is a Spiritualist.

He is apparently ready to concede that Jesus was some sort of a Medium; not, one gathers, a very powerful one; but able to perform the typical mediumistic feats which may be witnessed on London platforms.

Well, that explains many of the author's inabilities, but it does not explain the origin of the Christian religion.

For some reason Mr. Findlay is frightened of miracles, he seems to think that Jesus can only be made credible by denying his power to perform them.

But the very reverse is the case; it is his miracles that make him credible.

It was as a worker of miracles that he burst upon the countryside.

"His fame went throughout all Syria . . . and a great multitude followed him because they saw the miracles which he did."

Only the working of miracles can explain his following; and it was the working of miracles that brought about his death.

Neither his pretensions, nor his alleged treason had anything to do with it.

"What do we?" asked the Chief Priests and the Pharisees; "for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him."

It was because he knew all that we don't know about the laws of Nature; because he was a master of magic, that his people acclaimed him as the Messiah; and surely a Spiritualist should not boggle at the production of edible apports, or at such a psychic trifle as walking on the sea.

Remember Gautama's reproof to the monk who had taught himself in twenty-five years to walk across the river!

"Why spend your life on such a shadow, when the ferryman would take you over for a penny?"

"The number of parallels," says Mr. Findlay, "between the miracles attributed to Dionysus, the saviour-god of Greece . . . and those attributed to Jesus, is worthy of notice."

It certainly is; since it suggests a similarity in equipment possessed by every master of magic.

Miracles which the author cannot explain, he describes as "symbolic legends." One wonders how he would designate modern miracles, like those, for instance, wrought by a West African witch-doctor, as reported by Mr. William Seabrook. Would they too seem to him only "very apt symbolic stories?"

"The origin of the story related of Jesus raising the daughter of Jairus may," says Mr. Findlay, "have been copied from a similar episode in the life of Apollonius of Tyana, who lived a generation after Jesus."

Could anything better reveal the author's inexplicable aversion from traditions that might exalt the figure of Christ. Why should not the annals of Apollonius also prove to be "symbolic legends?"

THE CHURCH RESPONSIBLE

"The doctrines which the Church produced," says the author, "are in many instances debasing, vicious and corrupt. The entire Christian scheme is immoral, and it is not therefore surprising that the reign of the Christian Church has been one of the utmost wickedness."

Rather strong language; but, even so, the Church's malefactions have nothing to do with the figure of Christ, and Mr. Findlay's crusade suffers from his inability to keep them apart.

Even from his own point of view there is nothing to be said for this persistent depreciation, since the more compelling the figure of Christ the more heinous become the Church's crimes.

"Where might we not have been to-day, in knowledge and culture," he asks, "if the Christian Church had not been brought into being?"

Who shall say? Eras of knowledge and culture have no abiding anchorage; they come and go; and though the Church may have suppressed Alexandria, it had no hand in the eclipse of Greece.

One is sorry to devote so much space in a war-restricted review to one feature in a very notable volume. It is because one knows that the great service the author might render to Spiritualism is sadly hampered by this insistent trend of his thought.

The Psychic Stream is packed with information which it can hurt no Christian to possess; but it is unfortunately too often presented with an acrimony which may tend to discourage readers. With his indignation any one who has made a study of Church history will sympathise, and Mr. Findlay has, in Europe to-day, a virulent commentary on any Christian complacence.

There is an admirable index by Dr. Albert Neale, who has already proved his indexing ability; but a list of authorities would be welcome in future editions. Noticeable slips are not many, but one at least should be amended.

"The Buddhist religion, which is not one of gods or saviours, but of the spirit ultimately reaching Karma through successive reincarnations, teaches the faithful that the more liberal they are to the priests the sooner will Karma be reached."

That should give quite a jolt to a devout Buddhist.

**The Psychic Stream* by Arthur Findlay. London. Psychic Press, Ltd. 1939. 12/6.

ON PRYING INTO THE FUTURE

By W. H. EVANS

THE wise man does not seek to pry into the future, well knowing that if he honestly performs his present duties, that is all which is required of him. But prying curiosity as to the future must not be confused with that order of mind which is prepared for any circumstances that may arise, and which intelligently anticipates the outcome of present action. Those who constantly seek to pry into the future become unsettled in mind and unfitted for present duties; they are always ahead of themselves and impatient to grasp what is to come. Live in the now is a wise maxim, for it tends to make the mind stable and established in its knowledge.

Curiosity about the future has been fostered in us by many things. Our religion is not entirely free from inculcating a desire to pry into what is to come, for does it not offer to tell the state of the soul on its arrival in the next life? Moreover, much of our theology is wrapped up in prophecies, some of which have been fulfilled, and some which many expect to be. Where such a powerful influence as religion tends to promote this curiosity about the future, we must not complain if many seek to know about the lesser things that life has in store for them.

That unfulfilled prophecies may have a dire effect upon men's minds is seen by the way some people talk about a coming Armageddon. Why this dreadful catastrophe should fall upon the race I don't know, but I do know that if the majority of people talk and think it must, then it assuredly will. For when the mass-mind constantly thinks that war must be, that thought will work itself out on the plane of manifestation. Here we see that prophecy of woe can have a very bad effect.

There is, happily, a brighter aspect, for if thinking of woe tends to bring woe upon us, thinking of good will eventually bring good about. Much, however, depends upon our conception of what is good. We are not always wise enough to know what is good for ourselves, and because present conditions may not express our hopes and desires, we are apt to complain and grumble. Wisdom says, make use of the present, but often we don't wish to, we want the good to drop into our laps like apples from a tree. Probably if we had vision to see beneath the current of our life we should realise that the conditions we are in are the best for us. That is very difficult for us to realise, the more so when we look over the world and see how much suffering there is. But if this be a world of law—which we think it is—and there is any justice in life, there must be a reason for pain and suffering as there is for joy and gladness.

There is in our efforts to escape present woes a prophecy which we overlook. It speaks of possibilities that will be realised, of abilities not yet used, and gives promise that, when the time and conditions are ripe, all that for which we long will be ours. Our mistake is in overlooking the fact that we cannot have what we desire until the time is ripe. That implies that we have to work for the thing we look at with such longing!

But looking to the future while it can be an encouragement, can also be a disaster. When it takes the gaze from present duties it unfits us for them. By all means look ahead, but don't live ahead; live in the now. By and by we shall catch up with what is ahead of us.

Speaking in this way of what is ahead of us seems to imply that the future already exists. Such a statement does violence to our sense of logic, for if it exists, it is here and not in the future. The future can only exist as a possibility and not as an actuality. It holds nothing, for it can only reveal what is hidden in the seeds of the present and past. We know when we look at a seed that it holds possibilities of a plant and flowers, but if the seed is not sown in suitable soil the plant and flowers potential in it will never come into being. The future is the unrolling of the possibilities of past and present thought and action. By this we see that we have the power of shaping our future.

This power of shaping the future should be considered more than it is. "Take no thought for the morrow," has its philosophy, but as we are children, with a future that depends upon how we think and act now, it is necessary for us to take thought that we live right in the present if the future is to be what we hope.

"UNWISE PRYING"

The danger of unwise prying into the future is its tendency to create a fatalistic attitude, and to think it doesn't matter how we act, such and such an event is bound to happen. The factor of our free-will is thus left out and we become drifters instead of mariners on the sea of life. An orderly mind will not let its energies be dissipated by any tales of woe, but face all possibilities with the serene assurance that it can ultimately overcome all things, and so is saved from the despair that grips the fatalistic.

Another attitude of mind to be avoided is the pessimism that comes at the inability to ease much of the suffering of the world. If only I had the power, folks say, I would help so many. It is a worthy desire, but if circumstances for the time decree that we cannot give the help we wish, we can still live up to the limits of our opportunities.

Human life is like a river that by its flow is ever changing and creating new conditions. Those who suffer learn to value the ministry of sorrow. Do what you can and do not despair over what you cannot do.

This, then, is a philosophy of contentment, not of self-satisfaction, but that which comes from striving. It reveals our present capacity and how by living up to it it may be increased. It promotes the calm so essential to effective living upon all planes of life. It kills fear and promotes faith and trust. It shows the love at the roots of all pain and reveals the flowers of beauty breathing the perfume of an unselfish spirit.

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TRUE PROPHETS ARE SELDOM BELIEVED

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

THE gift of prophecy is a strange thing. True prophets are seldom believed. They make their reputation after the event. This is typified in the legend of Cassandra, the most beautiful of the daughters of Priam, King of Troy, and his wife Hecuba. Courted by Apollo, she asked and obtained the gift of true prophecy, but on her failure to carry out her promise, the god added the curse that she should never be believed. Her true predictions of her country's history, culminating in the downfall and destruction of Troy, were laughed at as the ravings of a mad woman, though if her advice had been taken the disaster might have been avoided. But then her prophecies would not have been true.

Is this not the dilemma into which any true prophecy, at least if it were evil, must lead us? Either this or else the prediction must be so cloaked and obscure that its meaning is not clear until the disaster has occurred. Such was the prediction of the death of Dr. Geley in an aeroplane accident which, after the event, was clear beyond doubt; yet before, it did not warn the doomed man himself.

History records many other true prophecies, but they were seldom if ever believed when they were made and had no influence on the course of public events. Yet they were often so detailed that chance could not account for them. Such was the prophecy of Leon Sonrael in 1869 of the future of himself and his friend, Dr. Tardieu, and the course of the Franco-Prussian War; that of Sophie concerning the Great War published in Athens in August, 1914; and that of Mme. Przybylska regarding the details of the Russo-Polish war of 1920. Numerous other examples could be given. But it is generally true that accurate prophecies of public events are rare and that true prophecy is usually concerned with the future of an individual.

Equally true it is that there are many utterly false predictions given in great detail and with complete assurance. Dr. Eugene Osty, who gave up years of his life to the study of this and kindred subjects, has devoted a long chapter in his book *Supernormal Faculties in Man* to the "Psychological Determination of Errors," He gives a number of examples regarding individuals (including himself) which turned out wrong in practically every particular. He accounts for these failures in several ways. "Sometimes it happens that the subconscious functional plane of the subject, liberated from conscious direction, and receiving no stimulus from outside, begins to work on its own account and constructs a romance unrelated to the personality to be delineated, round some other perception." However, "fabulation based on some informative influence from the person to be delineated" (that is the person regarding whom information is desired) "or derived thence, is relatively more common than total fabulation. The subconscious mind of the subject (*i.e.*, the Sensitive) . . . grasps (on the plane of sensorial thought) some project, belief or desire on which it builds a romance . . . My records abound in errors of this kind."

After giving other types of error, Dr. Osty says: "There is yet one more kind of error by the conscious mind of the Sensitive. It consists in demanding from the metagnomic faculty (*i.e.*, the faculty of the delineation of human lives) more than it can produce . . . The subject, aware of the power to foretell the future of a person, thinks himself also able to foretell future events and life in general—the future. When he endeavours to do this, either by request or on his own initiative, either nothing answers to the effort or the subconscious mind begins to work and builds up a romance on data supplied by the conscious mind."

The whole chapter deserves careful study in the light of our recent experiences, but sufficient has been quoted to show that what has occurred is nothing extraordinary. The magnitude of the event has drawn special attention to the result, but nothing more. The fact remains that prophecies of a general or particular nature have been made in great detail and proved true by the event, but many others have turned out quite wrong. *Until all is over, it is impossible to say whether a prophecy will be fulfilled or not.*

The moral of this is—Don't ask for knowledge of the future or rely on predictions as a guide to conduct. If the recent events have convinced all Spiritualists of the truth of this, then it is a good thing and nothing to lament over. From what I have seen of the movement, some such striking lesson was very much needed.

If the failure of predictions is a common experience, why has such consternation been caused in the present instance? Partly because of the disaster of war itself, but perhaps even more because the prophets were Guides who seemed to speak with more than human authority and often with an air of complete certainty, rather than the Seer's usual vague and carefully-guarded surmise. These Guides, associated with well-known Mediums, by the lofty tone and proved truth of their communications, no less than by the publicity they had obtained through the Press, had built up for themselves nation-wide reputations. Some at least claimed a special mission and professed to draw their knowledge from the highest spheres.

HARD QUESTIONS

It is not unnatural, then, to ask why have they been allowed to deceive us, or is their failure proof that, after all, their inspiration was not derived from above?

These are hard questions to answer, but a little consideration will give us some clue to the solution. It can hardly be denied that exact knowledge of the future, so far from being a blessing, would be the greatest curse to mankind. The belief that prosperity and good health were certain would be as enervating to the will and character as the conviction that disaster, disease and suffering were unavoidable. Anyone who has lived in an Eastern country, where belief in a pre-ordained fate is common, knows how it saps the energy and courage and takes away even the desire to struggle.

What could be a greater curse to me than to learn that in two years from now I am to develop cancer and, in spite of all treatment, am to die after months or even years of suffering; or that I am to lose my nearest and dearest by a sudden accident? Hardly less enervating to my character would it be to know that I have nothing to fear and am destined to end my days in comfort and good health.

One of the strangest kinks in human nature is the only too common desire to know the future. If it is inescapable, the only result can be to depress; or, in the case of a good forecast, to deprive the individual of all incentive to effort. Common sense and experience should convince us that, while we may be born with certain tendencies and events may shape themselves towards certain probable results, human endeavour can modify every situation.

The chief duty of our Guides—if Guides there be—must be to influence us for good and, when they can communicate directly, to help us to a better life by good advice. All of them claim to be human in origin and, like us, they must be fallible. When they forecast the future with certainty, they seem to exceed their functions, however good their motives. They may have hoped in this case, as indeed it seems, by creating a wave of good feeling and confidence, to counteract the forces of evil. If so, who can say they were not justified?

I, for one, cannot accept the explanation so commonly given that our own thoughts have prevented our receiving true information. I feel that Guides of such eminence and power cannot have been so continuously and repeatedly set aside by the ideas of those on earth. It is a very common experience for sitters to receive information quite contrary to their own notions, and I feel it difficult to believe that these Guides were unable

(Continued at foot of next column)

SPIRITUALISM AND WAR CONDITIONS

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

REFLECTING on the war of 1914-18 brought to my mind a number of interesting experiences. That war came upon us with even greater suddenness than the present one. We were much less prepared for it and very soon heavy casualties occurred. This naturally upset everybody very much, and our emotional states were intense and worried. Unsettled feelings of this sort are bad for spirit-communications, and one expected supernormal phenomena of every kind to be effected.

This proved true to some extent, and it required every effort on the part of Mediums to get good results. Soon, however, matters began to improve, and in time we were getting some of the best results. Clairvoyance, upon which we in England have always relied for the general propaganda of our Cause, reached a high standard of efficiency, and through it Spiritualism became a tremendous spiritual power.

Spirit-controls expressed their delight at this turn of affairs, as they had not thought it possible so easily to communicate with us under such stressful conditions. According to them, it had required no small effort to overcome the obstacles, and, as one of them said, they were agreeably surprised.

We are now passing through a similar psychological condition as that which ushered in the Great War. I noticed that psychic results were not so good during the first few days after the outbreak of hostilities. They are now becoming easier. It is to be hoped that there will be a speedy end to the present situation, but we must prepare for eventualities and every sincere Spiritualist must do his part. Wars call for comforters. Every religion is prepared to do its part; but every religion is not able to rise to the occasion. This was demonstrated in 1914-18, when we saw the survival of the fittest. Spiritualism, with its realistic as well as its idealistic message, met the demands of the public and the movement grew.

One meeting which Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and I addressed at St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, attracted 13,000 people. The hall had been specially enlarged to seat 5,000. The meeting was timed to commence at 6.30 p.m. By 2 p.m. the hall was filled to overflowing, and 8,000 people were turned away.

What were the kind of phenomena that aroused this interest? The following are examples.

In 1914, soon after the outbreak of hostilities, I sat with an American Voice-Medium. During a seance packed with evidence of survival, there was a break in the ordinary communications, and the Medium's habitual Spirit-Guide said he was about to switch us over to one of the battlefields of France, where an engagement was being fought. After a brief silence, all present heard a woman's faint, clear voice, speaking as if from a great distance, say: "Come, my man, get up."

"'Ow can I," replied a man's voice plaintively, "I've lost me leg."

"Don't worry about that," replied the woman. "That wasn't a real leg—at least not so real as the ones you have now. You have two good legs now. Just get up and see for yourself."

There was a brief pause, during which the man evidently rose, as a moment later we heard him exclaim excitedly:

"Blimey, Miss, you're right, I 'ave two good legs. Well I never!"

To convince the reader that this was a genuine spirit-communication, I should like to point out that the sitters consisted of the Deputy Postmaster of Belfast, an important Government contractor, myself and the Medium. The Medium spoke with a strong American accent, was a lady, and could not have imitated the Cockney voice of the soldier. Neither his nor the spirit-woman's voice had the slightest American accent.

STRIKING PROOF OF SURVIVAL

Here is another striking proof of survival. One Sunday morning in 1916 I was conducting the morning service in McLellan Galleries for Glasgow Spiritualist Association. After the address I gave some clairvoyant descriptions and messages. In the audience were two men, perfect strangers to me. Between them I observed standing the spirit of a short, bearded man, who told me his name was John Cameron. I mentioned this to the elder of the two gentlemen, and he immediately acknowledged the correctness of what I said.

On enquiring whether my description of John Cameron was correct I was surprised to learn that neither of the men knew him except by name. While I was questioning them, the apparition disappeared and returned a few moments later with an auburn-haired young man, whom John Cameron informed me was named Arthur, and was the son of the younger of the recipients. I saw, by the look of delight on the faces of these men, that I was right.

After the service, the recipients came to me and told me an astonishing story. The day before, the younger man had received a telegram from the War Office notifying him of the death of his son Arthur, a soldier in France. According to the elder man, his friend was so distressed at the news that he seemed liable to lose his reason. The situation was so bad that his friend realised that something must be done to relieve his distress. Although he had never attempted such a thing before, he hit upon the idea of seeing if they could get any information from the spirit-world through a table. Neither of them were Spiritualists, but the experiment proved successful.

Using the alphabet, the table tapped out the name of "John Cameron," a person entirely unknown to them. Cameron went on to say he was in charge of Arthur, the deceased soldier, and that if they went to McLellan Galleries the following morning he would bring the young man to them "Through Mr. Horace Leaf."

They assured me that they had never heard of me before, that they did not know that Spiritualist meetings were held in McLellan Galleries. To discover if this was correct, they bought a Saturday evening newspaper, in which services were advertised, and found that the table was right, and that I was the clairvoyant.

Arthur's message to his distraught father was extremely cheerful, assuring him that he was very happy in his new world, and that his father was to try not to mourn for him. "That," he said, "is what would make me sad."

The message might well be taken as the usual one which soldiers sent through to their loved ones. It is not difficult to realise how consoling it was. As one father, who had lost his only son, said to me: "If Spiritualism isn't true, it ought to be."

I can conceive no higher compliment than that. It is to make the world more conscious than ever of this truth that Spiritualists must hold high our standard and work for our Great Truth.

(Continued from previous column)

to get through even a hint of what would happen, *if they themselves knew it.* No: it seems to me clear that they themselves had a wrong view of the future.

One good result, as Mr. Maby points out (LIGHT, September 28th) is to prove that free-will does exist and the future course of events cannot be foretold with certainty even by those with more than human wisdom. Another, I hope, will be to kill or weaken the constant attempts to pry into the future which tend to degrade Spiritualism to a kind of superior fortune-telling.

At any rate, as many persons have said already, these false predictions have nothing to do with the two main planks of Spiritualism—the truth of survival and the possibility of communication with the departed. Indeed, all the so-called seven principles remain unaffected.

Light

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EDITOR - - GEORGE H. LETHEM

AS WE SEE IT

ARCHBISHOP AND SURVIVAL

IN these days of war, when sudden death is a constant threat, at home as well as in the battle-line, we wonder how many people there are who agree with the Archbishop of York (Dr. William Temple) that "it is positively undesirable that there should be experimental proof of man's survival after death"? That there are some, we know; chiefly religious people who cannot understand why anyone should doubt the Faith which to them takes the place of Knowledge.

"To ask for proofs of Survival is a sin," we were told not long ago by a Roman Catholic layman, "because it indicates lack of faith in the teaching of the Church." This friend did not question the possibility of obtaining proof—he is himself a Sensitive and knows it can be obtained; what he denied was that any need exists for seeking proof. For him—at least so he believes—the word of the Church is all-sufficient; to doubt it is sin, to question it actively would be rebellion. Whether he would be quite so confident were his own vision absent is not so certain.

We have met others, belonging to Protestant Churches, who take a somewhat similar line. "Spiritualism *only* proves Survival," they say, "and there is no need to do that, for the Bible teaches Survival and that should be sufficient for everybody." These good people enjoy the blessing possessed by those who "believe without seeing," and they cannot understand why there should be so many "doubting Thomases" who require evidence, or who, under the stress of sudden and desolating bereavement demand a clear answer to the question: "What has happened to my loved one—is the destruction of his body the end, or does he live somewhere?"

What the grounds are on which the Archbishop of York bases his objection to a search for experimental proof of Survival we do not know. As he is reputed to be an authority on Philosophy, his objection may rest on some abstruse reason—but we remember that on another occasion he expressed the view that "direct evidence of Survival is not either attainable or desirable." He does not give his reason for this dogmatic assertion—he throws it at the world and leaves it there.

Now, we have no doubt the Archbishop of York believes in Survival—he is a Christian Prelate and "the life everlasting" is an essential part of Christian doctrine. We have no doubt, also, that, being a man well acquainted with intellectual movements and problems, he knows that a very large number of his scientific friends and those who follow them do *not* believe in Survival, and that they are not prepared to accept either his assurance or that of his Church (or of all the Churches combined) in place of evidence. What does he propose to do about it? Will he, like the Roman Catholic to whom we referred, content himself with denouncing unbelief as Sin? Even if he does, he is not likely to make much impression on the people, mostly outside his or any other Church, who demand evidence.

If the Archbishop faces the position squarely, we think he will find good reason to change his view and to advise his brother Bishops that, if only for the sake of the war-victims, the evidence for Survival should be used to the fullest extent possible. That the evidence is there, ready for use, was admitted by the Church Committee which recently held an inquiry. This we have good reason to believe, although the report presented to the Archbishops has not yet been published.

CHURCH'S HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY

(From *The Guardian*, a Church of England Journal)

IN time of peace, death and immortality do not play a large part in the thoughts of the average Englishman who, when he does contemplate the future life, thinks of it generally not in terms of God, but of self. And the Church, unfortunately, in peacetime has neglected to give its people careful and systematic instruction about their temporal end. Thus it is that, for many in war who have no proper understanding about the future life and the Communion of Saints, the Christian ministry for the bereaved seems to offer a poor consolation. They may create, without consciously intending to do so, their own cultus of the dead; they may drift away in despair from the Christian faith; or in agony of mind they may turn to Spiritualism and seek there proof of Survival and communication with the departed.

For the wanderings of these unshepherded souls the Church bears a heavy responsibility, and it cannot free itself of all blame for any further trials which they may undergo. There are respectable Mediums in Spiritualism, but the movement has had full share of charlatans and frauds who traffic in credulity and profit by others' grief . . .

But these considerations, whether applied to Spiritualism or to other cults, will not persuade a mind that is burdened with grief. Nor is it lack of compassion on the part of the clergy, nor any inadequacy in Anglican doctrine, which has in the past caused mourners to seek consolation outside the Church and become the prey of old heresies and superstitions decked out in pseudo-scientific disguises. The cause lies in inadequate teaching. Plain and definite instruction about the future life is essential at all times, and neglect to provide it in peacetime only makes it the more urgent to-day.

In any statement of the doctrine which will form the foundation of one of the most important ministries of the Church in war, the utmost care must be taken to avoid anything which tends towards self-centredness. Indeed, it is this tendency which has made much Anglican teaching ineffective. "Even when the doctrine of God is established in its Christian form," writes the Archbishop of York in *Nature, Man and God*, "the doctrine of immortality can still, as experience abundantly shows, perpetuate self-centredness in the spiritual life."

We are dismayed to think of the gross pagan beliefs that still surround the dead in this country, not chiefly because old superstition dies hard, but because Church teaching has not been sufficently careful, in presenting the hope of immortality, to transfer the centre of concern from self to God.

* * *

[NOTE.—*The Guardian* and those for whom it speaks would understand the position better if they would but realise that there are many Spiritualists who wish to help the Church and not to hinder it in its work of instructing its members. Assurance of Survival and of the possibility of communication does not detract from, but adds reality to, the doctrine of "the Communion of Saints;" it is, indeed, essential before there can be any true understanding of that doctrine. —EDITOR.]

"SPIRITUALISM'S NEW BASIS"

"Spiritualists face a fact, and a very distressing fact, proving beyond any question the fallibility of spirit-guides.

"But anti-Spiritualists (to whom I do not belong) must also face a fact, or, rather, a whole battery of facts, proving beyond any question that men of the highest intelligence and integrity have tested Spiritualism and satisfied themselves of its value.

"All that is necessary is that Spiritualism should re-adjust its claims and re-establish itself on a narrower but firmer basis."—(Beverley Nichols, in the *Sunday Chronicle and Referee*, October 8th.)

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.)

FACE THE FACTS

Sir,—Mr. Collen-Smith's "Smashing Blow" letter in LIGHT of 21st September may not exactly hit the nail right on the head, but it gives it a sufficiently resounding whack to require only one more hit with the hammer to drive the nail home.

I don't suggest that Collen-Smith is right in all he says about the "no war" prophecies; but, in my opinion, he is more right than many others (including myself) who have advanced theories as to the reasons for the Guides failing to deal adequately with a question which none of the parties concerned, including Hitler, was able to tackle with any degree of certainty. The very fact that the "no war" prophecy was so definite ought to have made us cautious; it ought to have made us look more closely into our own admissions that messages from the Beyond are frequently coloured by the "instrument" used for the reception of them. The gradual building up of an almost universal desire into an emphatic avowal of "no war" must have been going on, not only in the minds of Mediums, but in all our minds for a long time.

So, instead of throwing cold water on the knowledge and foresight of the Guides, let us give the cold douche to ourselves. Then, perhaps, we shall become more wide-awake to the all-important fact that the channels of communication with the Beyond are more blocked by our own stupid credulity than we are in the habit of believing; for are not the Guides constantly telling us to use our commonsense when interpreting the messages given through "instruments" which are still very far from perfect?

We have experienced an unpleasant jerk, and the mechanism needs looking into. We should not merely stand by and shake our heads at the machine, inviting the ridicule of the lookers-on, but set about putting the thing right. However severe the shock may have been, it does not shake our conviction in Survival and Communication. If it shakes our confidence a little in many of the messages received, if we find they are tinged rather lavishly sometimes with the Medium's own mental processes, and if we find that communication with the Beyond is not so easy and commonplace as some would have us believe—let us face the facts.

Above all, let us blame ourselves for the "fly in the ointment," not the Guides and the Mediums.

J. H. WEBSTER (Major).

POWERS BEHIND THE SCENES

Sir,—Why Spiritualists are worrying themselves about the apparent non-fulfilment of the no-war prophecies passes my understanding. All this kind of thing savours more of the professional palmist or fortune-teller's parlour than of the serious study of life's continuity. So many imagine that, upon our shedding of this earth-body, the mantle of omnipotence descends upon our departed friends.

In this connection, at a private "sitting" I had with Mrs. Pamela Nash at the L.S.A., my brother communicated with me; and when I asked him if in his present condition he could tell me anything of the chances of war breaking out, he replied: "I cannot think that England and Germany could be so foolish as to go to war; but I know no more than you do whether such an event will take place."

That predictions are being fulfilled daily, anyone who knows anything about the subject is well aware. Let us remember, too, that as yet there has been no major war, no world-war. Whether or no both do eventuate lies primarily with the Powers behind the scenes, whatever puny man may imagine he decides. If Spiritualists would only realise that even now these Powers are watching "like God the rolling hours with larger other eyes than ours," and rest in the knowledge that, whatever happens in this transitory scene, all will eventually be well, they would not be so discouraged by the apparent failure of a prediction.

Goring-by-Sea, Sussex. J. H. SYMONS.

ST. PAUL AND PROPHECIES

Sir,—In numerous letters and articles that have appeared on the "Failure of the Peace Prophecies," it has been taken for granted that St. Paul is speaking in a similar sense of prophecies that will fail to be fulfilled when he says: "Whether there be prophecies, they shall *fail*" (I. Cor., 13, 8).

But nothing was further from his thoughts. A glance at the context shows that St. Paul is contrasting the *inadequacy* of prophecy, of tongues, and even of knowledge, with the fulfilment of LOVE. Tongues will stop; prophecy will be superseded; even knowledge will be superseded (the same word is used of both). All three alike (great charismata that they are) will be "liquidated" in the sublime consummation of LOVE.

New Milton, Hants. (Rev.) G. MACKIE.

"THE GIFT OF PROPHECY": A CORRECTION

Sir,—In the article entitled "The Gift of Prophecy," published in last week's issue of LIGHT (page 617), there was an error connected with the subject of the Cosmic Christ, which should have read as follows: "Who is the Divine Teacher for this planet and the Voice and Mind *for* the very Godhead Himself."

In the article it read: "*or* the very Godhead Himself." This is a grave error as the Godhead is above the Christ Spheres and above all Attributes.

R. A. CAMPBELL.

MR. C. E. MITCHELL'S WAR FORECAST

Mr. Charles E. Mitchell, of Halifax, author of the book *Foretold by the Stars*, writes (in answer to a criticism) that although the date of the outbreak of war was *not* stated in the prediction in his book, he did give the approximate date in an article published in the *Halifax Courier* of July 3rd this year. The heading of that article contained the words: "A show-down between Now and Next March." In the article he wrote: "I fully expect an outbreak between now (July 3rd) and March, 1940, as that (1940) is the year I have always contended would bring us in."

Mr. Mitchell has sent to the Editor of LIGHT a clipping from the *Halifax Courier* for July 3rd, 1939, in which the forecast appears.

(More letters on next page)

NOTICE TO READERS

In common with other periodicals and newspapers, and in order to avoid waste in printing and paper, after 21st October, 1939, LIGHT will be supplied to newsagents on the basis of allowing credit for only a very limited percentage of Returns (i.e., unsold copies), and after 18th November, 1939, NO RETURNS whatever will be accepted for credit.

This means that Readers who purchase LIGHT from newsagents or bookstalls MUST place a regular order if they are to be sure of obtaining their copy each week, and they are strongly urged to do so AT ONCE, in order to give retailers an opportunity of regulating their supplies in good time.

Why not become a Subscriber? You will then have LIGHT delivered regularly by post without any extra cost. (*See form on page* 634).

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

UNANSWERED PRAYER

Sir,—Much has been written regarding the apparent failure of the " no war " forecasts, but I have seen no reference to a more important matter—namely, the value of organised prayer.

We have been taught that thought is all-powerful, and that the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much, but it would be interesting to know how the advocates of prayer explain the absence of any response by the Deity to the petitions of mankind. The very fact that so many people, up to the very last moment, firmly believed that war would be averted shows that faith was not wanting, and that there was an unprecedented barrage of wishful thought, which in religious minds was translated into prayers for peace. But the disaster was not averted.

What must be the thoughts to-day of religiously-minded Poles, who doubtless prayed that the world should be spared the horrors of modern war? Warsaw is a heap of smouldering ruins; millions of Poles are dead or homeless, while many of the leading citizens escaped the German bullets only to be killed by the Russians. Surely they must echo the mocking words of Elijah: " Cry aloud, for He is a God; either He is talking or He is pursuing, or He is on a journey, or peradventure He sleepeth and must be awakened." For there was no voice nor any that answered.

MARGARET VIVIAN.

CANNOT HAVE IT BOTH WAYS

Sir,—From the letters published in your paper, it seems to me that one point is quite clear—obviously, one set of explanations completely negatives the other set. One set says that because the majority of minds on earth concentrating on hopes of Peace they made such a strong picture on the ether of " no war " that it obliterated the true one of War. The other says that united prayer on this side was not strong enough for Peace to counteract the evil forces on the Other Side, and therefore there was war. One cannot have it both ways.

VIOLET BUTLER.

GOD OR DESTINY?

Sir,—How comes Mr. Cecil Maby to have failed to see that his article headed " Prediction Failures—Seeking an Explanation " (LIGHT, September 28th) is largely made up of statements that contradict one another? In one paragraph, for example, he says that " individual free-will exists, as exhibited by Hitler and Stalin," and then in another he suggests, if he does not state, that Hitler and Stalin are " Tools of Destiny," qualifying this with the words " in some sort," which in fact deprives it of substantial value; but since to individual free-will Destiny stands in stark opposition, what exactly does this same Destiny represent? Is it superior to the will of God?

In that case, Mr. Maby agrees with the ancient Grecian poets who saw in " Até," as she was called—namely Blind Fate or Fatality—a something even stronger than the gods, or as we should state it than God Himself; and if so, then how much stronger than the individual free-will of men! If, on the other hand, Destiny, for him, is only another name for God who has employed Hitler and Stalin as a social and international purgative to rid some millions of men in all nations (including Russia and Germany and even Hitler and Stalin themselves) of certain decadent and sophisticated ways which he then proceeds to enumerate, at the awful and brutal sacrifice and cost of thousands on thousands of valuable lives, what sort of a God or Destiny can it be to whom Mr. Maby would have us pray? As well make our prayers to Hitler and Stalin!

Then, again, can Mr. Maby explain why in one place he expresses the opinion that, towards avoiding undue prolongation or dissemination of war, a " general will-to-peace " is the most decisive factor of all, and therefore to be encouraged; when earlier he admits that he thinks it probable that an almost universal will-to-peace among the peoples of the world not only failed to bring peace about, but was a real and dangerous factor in distorting the messages from the spirit-world, and therefore should logically have been discouraged?

Which Mr. Maby are we to follow, if we desire, as Spiritualists, to receive undistorted communications as to the probability or not of peace ensuing within this or that definite time, and at the same time ardently desiring (as we are surely bound to do) to have peace restored as soon as may be? When did the poison become the medicine? Or is this ardent wish for peace (and hope is but wish in another form), but a dangerous sort of " mass emotionalism? "—a thing which he claims will defeat its own object.

Without straight thinking, our earthly guides will prove as misleading and disappointing as there is some reason to fear that even some spirit guides have been.

Bournemouth. O. L. HOLLAND.

OPERATION OF FREE-WILL

Sir,—My husband passed over five-and-a-half years ago, and for five years I have been in regular communication with him through my Medium (who is well-known). Not only does my husband come into contact with me through her, but many times he has gone to her and sent me messages. This he did about six weeks before war was declared. He said he was happy to send me a message saying " there would not be war for England."

Naturally, I, like others, was greatly disturbed that war came after these great hopes for Peace. I had a sitting on Saturday, 23rd September. My husband came to me quickly, and he also was greatly disturbed that all the help from the Other Side has failed us in this world. He explained that each individual has free-will and described why war has come and why prediction has failed exactly as Mr. J. Cecil Maby suggested in his article of LIGHT of September 28th (page 603) in his " first factor." My husband's message was almost identical to Mr. Maby's suggestion—*i.e.*, that individual free-will is given to Hitler. My husband gave the same message to my son, who communicated with his father.

From this evidence, I feel convinced our friends on the Other Side did not fail us with their messages and hopes for Peace. I feel I should like others to share these certainties with me, for so many seem to have lost heart and feel adrift at getting incorrect messages, as they think.

(Lady) G. FRY.

"THE STARS DO NOT LIE"

Sir,—In the columns of LIGHT, a number of writers keep on asserting that Astrologers were all wrong as regards world events. This is not so. Where there is a pandering to public taste, and individuals have to earn their livelihood by the practice of Astrology, it seems inevitable that truth cannot be served. The genuine students of Astrology—and there are many—have known for several years that 1940 is the year of the great tumult, and up till 1942 the world is going to be turned upside down. Land, property, finance are in for it.

The two Godless ideologies have at last shaken hands, but their power will be smashed.

As a student of Astrology, I have tried to get the dates, etc., of these crises into psychic journals, but have failed. Mediums have preferred to talk Peace instead of Truth.

I shall continue to challenge all the Guides on their flimsy assumptions of Peace where there is none. The stars do not lie.

CONAN SHAW.

(Many letters have had to be held over)

L.S.A. DEVOTIONAL HEALING GROUPS

MAY I suggest to any who are feeling the stress and strain of these days, that much help may be obtained by linking with one or more of the L.S.A. Devotional Healing Groups.

So many of our patients speak of the calm and peace obtained by linking with us, I feel that if it were more widely known what benefit can be gained in this way many would avail themselves of this source of power.

Now we need, more than ever, that inner calm and peace necessary for clear judgment. We need to be able to rise above events and view them in a wider perspective, and that can only be done by linking with the great source of power—God.

The link with the groups can be used to promote an atmosphere and power essential to a just and enduring Peace.

And now, when help is so much needed, I would like as many as are willing to unite with us, to write to me, so that their names may be included in our lists and they may become links in a chain of power that will do a little towards promoting good-will and fellowship in a world riven with war and likely to be riven more deeply with its accompanying hatreds.

It will not be necessary for any who link to attend the groups personally; they can sit at home, or in some church, and use the prayers given to them. They will not only be gaining inward peace for themselves, but also be giving power to heal the sick.

Will all interested please write to me at 16 Queensberry Place, London, S.W.7, enclosing a stamp for reply. W. H. EVANS.

L.S.A. MEMBERS' MUTUAL AID

The dislocation of work and of people owing to war conditions is bearing with very great hardship on many people, and among L.S.A. members are some in most distressing circumstances. In some cases it may be possible to give assistance by providing work.

One case brought to our notice is a lady who is a teacher of languages and music. She is also a needlewoman and would very gladly undertake needlework.

Another lady, in return for a home, would gladly accept a very small remuneration indeed for attendance upon an invalid. She would be pleased to loan an invalid chair. She could offer social references.

Will fellow-members very kindly let me have particulars of any work that might be offered to these two ladies and I would gladly put those concerned in touch with each other. MERCY PHILLIMORE, *Sec., L.S.A.*

A VALUABLE COIN

I HAVE a gold coin, on the front of which, near the rim behind the head are the letters " J.E.S.U." Unfortunately, the letter " S " has been partly rubbed away. Otherwise it is in excellent preservation.

The coin was obtained by me some years ago, and it was found either while excavating the ruins of the palaces of the Cæsars on the Palatine Hill in Rome, or among the ruins of the Circus Maximus, which are quite near. I had it mounted as a tie-pin and it appears in the photograph of myself in Rider's edition of *The Great Problem.*

I took it to the curator of coins at the British Museum and he said it was perfectly genuine, and was worth about £500. They had a few copper coins of the same period (A.D. 40—50), but no gold or silver ones with the name " JESU " on them. They were evidently coined by one of the Royal House who became a Christian, as we know was the case, so that they might be used in payment among the converts who refused to use the coins with the Emperor's head on them, and it might also be used as a pass-token between themselves.

My reason for writing is because there have been a number of letters in LIGHT about likenesses of Our Lord.

Durban, S. Africa. GEO. LINDSAY JOHNSON, M.D.

MR. HARRY PRICE'S NEW BOOK

IN his new book, *Fifty Years of Psychical Research,* published this week (Longmans, 10/6), Mr. Harry Price not only aims at presenting a history of Psychical Research and Spiritualism (in continuation, as he says, of Podmore's history). He also tells readers about his own experiences, what he believes (and that includes " spontaneous telepathy and clairvoyance " and various forms of physical phenomena) and what he does not believe. He expresses the view that " Spiritualists have not proved their case," but admits " that the spirit-theory covers many of the facts." He says " the reason why official science is not convinced " (of the reality of psychic phenomena) " is because, in its corporate capacity, it has never made the attempt . . . because there has been no money for such a purpose."

The book includes lucid descriptions of the investigations in which the author has taken part—and these provide interesting reading. It also contains the full text of the Parliamentary Bill which he would like to see passed into law to regulate the practice of mediumship; and a list of books, magazines and journals—in which LIGHT finds a place.

As was to be expected, Mr. Price says many things with which Spiritualists cannot agree; but he also says many things which will be helpful to the research in which Spiritualists are interested. His general attitude to Spiritualism is indicated in the passage where he writes: " I have not consciously said one word in this book which could possibly offend the sincere and intelligent Spiritualist."

We hope to publish a detailed review by Mr. H. F. Prevost Battersby at an early date.

PSYCHOMETRIC EXPERIMENTS

WHAT is claimed to be a " new method of psychological experimentation " is described in a paper which should have been read at a meeting of the Psychological section of the British Association at Dundee on September 5th, but which remained unread because of the outbreak of war. It was prepared by Dr. J. Hettinger from a thesis—the first on this subject admitted by a British University—for which he was awarded the degree of Ph.D. by London University.

The experiments were carried out at King's College, London, and were directed almost exclusively to the form of " ultra-perceptive cognition " known as " psychometry." Over 150 " subjects " participated, and there were two professional " Sensitives."

" According to this new method," Dr. Hettinger writes, " the Subject is asked to obtain any illustrated paper he fancies, but not to look at its contents until the pre-arranged time of the test, when he shall start perusing it, quite normally, without any effort at concentration, indicating on the paper the time he peruses each page or contemplates each picture; during the same time the Sensitive, miles away, ' psychometrises ' an article of the subject, the experimenter writing down each item given by the Sensitive, and against it the time the items are actually given by the Sensitive.

" From the very outset, the experiments proved highly successful, especially with respect to the relationship revealed to exist between the illustration or matter read and the statements made by the Sensitives at the very time the Subjects were contemplating the pictures or perusing the text.

" Use was made of a large number of illustrated periodicals; of most of the London daily newspapers; also of technical papers. There are numerous instances of complete correspondence between the pictures and the items perceived; also distortions, the reason for which is easily discernible; and many other examples of thought-provoking relationships. The correspondence and relationships between the pictures and the items given by the Sensitive at the very time the subject is contemplating a particular picture were sometimes most staggering."

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"DEADLY DISCREDIT"

THE admirable exposure by Mr. Prevost Battersby, in LIGHT of September 28th, of the obscurantism of those commonly considered as the fine flower of the "cultured" (whatever that phrase may mean) and the "intelligentsia" in the case of Mr. Desmond McCarthy, has a parallel in a recent number of the *New English Weekly*, wherein a writer, pseudonymously named "Pontifex," states that the prophecies of peace "have been a deadly discredit" to the "cult" of Spiritualism.

Now, sir, once upon a time, certain views upon the atom were (am I not correct in saying) universally held by physicists, views later found in the light of advancing knowledge to be untenable. Has anyone ever yet suggested that the erroneous views formerly held were "a deadly discredit" to the "cult" of physics? If not, why not? But from blind prejudice consistency should not be sought, I suppose.

KAIHKOSRU SHAPURJI SORABJI.

THE CONFRATERNITY

In lieu of the usual public meetings, which are impossible under present conditions, "The Confraternity" is concentrating its efforts on the distribution of Mrs. St. Clair Stobart's new series of pamphlets entitled "Questions for the Churches." This is to be a series of six. The first two numbers have been issued already: No. 1, "Survival or Extinction"; No. 2, "Churchianity or Christianity." These are being sent to all clergy members of "The Confraternity," and can be obtained from the offices of the Society at 24 Gloucester Place, W.1, price 2d. each.

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Mrs. LILIAN BAILEY of Crewe is visiting the Institute from Wednesday, October 18th, to Wednesday, November 1st.
Private appointments may be booked.

Thurs., Oct. 19th, at 3 p.m. Group Clairvoyance (limited to 8 persons)
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Sat., Oct. 14th, at 2.30 p.m "Reincarnation and the War"
Mr. SHAW DESMOND

Sat., Oct. 21st, at 2.30 p.m. "Getting Down to Basic Principles"
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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15th.
11 a.m. Mrs. Bertha Harris, Address and Clairvoyance
3.30 p.m. Mr. Horace Leaf, Address and Clairvoyance

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18th, at 3.30 p.m.
Mrs. Susie Hughes, Clairvoyance

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October 15th. 11 a.m.—Major LEITH-HAY-CLARK
Clairvoyante: Mrs. Dolores Smith
5 p.m. Rev. G. MAURICE ELLIOTT
Clairvoyante: Mrs. Bertha Harris

Wednesday Meetings, 12.30 p.m.

With Address, Questions answered and Clairvoyance.
Wednesday, October 18th. Mr. GEORGE H. LETHEM
Clairvoyance: Mr. Roy Morgan

DAILY ACTIVITIES

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Friday, October 13th, 5.0 p.m. Psychometry, Miss Lily Thomas (20 sitters).
Tuesday, October 17th, 2.30 p.m. Group, Mrs. Lilian Austin
Wednesday, October 18th, 2.30 p.m. Group, Mr. Roy Morgan
Wednesday, October 18th, 5.0 p.m. Group, Miss Lily Thomas
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