THE READING OF MACKENZIE KING

by

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A thesis submitted to the Department of History
in conformity with the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Queen’s University
Kingston, Ontario, Canada
January 2008

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This study observes Mackenzie King as a reader. By examining the marginalia in the books preserved in his library and his responses to that reading recorded in his diary and correspondence, this study shows that King was a critical user of texts and that he worked all his life to improve himself. King habitually read for information and inspiration; he sought to perfect the mind, the body and the soul.

Three case studies trace out important phases in King’s development. King learned from reading political biography and, in particular, he studied the life of Gladstone to prepare himself for the role of prime minister. He found in the psychology of William James new ways to achieve psychic health; he enlarged his outlook and deepened and broadened his faith. In a final phase, King turned to the reading of spiritualism which complemented his Christian idealism and provided solace to a lonely man. The newly opened files on spiritualism at the National Archives reveal King to be a man who seriously explored psychical research. Reading was an important part of King’s life; it informed his politics and it shaped his religion.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to Professor Ian McKay, my thesis supervisor, for his help, his advice and his encouragement. I thank him for his time and patience.

I must also express my gratitude to the staff at Laurier House for their assistance. In particular, I want to thank Mr. Bernie Roche, who made every effort to accommodate my needs and made my visits very worthwhile.
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Mackenzie King stands out as the consummate Canadian politician. He mastered the techniques of power as no other and held office longer than any other prime minister. Historians have readily acknowledged King’s political skills but even his greatest admirers have held their praise in reserve. Detractors have viewed King as long on cunning but short on intellect and have had enormous difficulty understanding how King’s Christian faith shaped and defined this political opportunist. This thesis intends to approach King as a working intellectual responding to the challenges of his world with an active program of exploration. Accessing not only an unrivalled body of writing and reflection in the diaries and the recently opened files on spiritualism at the National Archives but also the rarely-explored treasure of King’s library at Laurier House in Ottawa, this thesis attempts to reconstruct King as a critical user of texts who worked to define himself against the almost infinite dangers of modernity.

When King was a young student at Harvard in 1899, he was acutely aware of his intellectual inadequacies - “I feel daily that I am very poorly read, a scholar who has read nothing especially do I feel it, when with those who are cultured & scholars themselves.”1 All his life he made a concerted effort to improve himself and though King’s education at the University of Toronto and Chicago and at Harvard has been well documented, he has never been accorded the intellectual credit his record demands. His success in the traditional field of political economy and the new field of sociology led to a career in practical administration in the civil service at the age of twenty-five. King set up Canada’s first Department of Labour and became its first Deputy Minister. During this time he edited the Labour Gazette and his activities as an industrial conciliator made him a national figure. In 1908, King made the transition from civil servant to elected Member of Parliament and took his seat in the Cabinet of Sir Wilfrid Laurier as Minister of Labour. As Minister he drafted legislation for the

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settlement of industrial disputes by compulsory investigation into their causes. In 1911, along with the Liberal Party, he went down to defeat but rose again during the war as the head of the new Department of Industrial Relations for the Rockefeller Foundation. King was chosen by the Foundation, upon the recommendation of Charles W. Eliot, President of Harvard University. At the time he was considered “a leading authority in industrial problems” and the “best man available,” because he brought to the task “the mind of a scientific investigator, the sympathy of the social worker and the practical experience of a man of affairs.” This new work brought King into association with the wealthiest and most influential businessman in the world, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and the two men remained close friends for the rest of their lives. King’s first task in his new position was to restore industrial peace to the strike-torn Rockefeller mining properties in Colorado, which he did with conspicuous success. Part of King’s contract with the Rockefeller Foundation resulted in the publication of Industry and Humanity. Though not an obvious success as a writer because his ponderous style and habit of moralistic argument too often obscured the originality and force of his ideas, King was the first major political leader in Canada to examine and write about the industrial experience. Appended to Industry and Humanity were nine unusual charts constructed by King to illustrate the social forces that were shaping industrial relations. They also revealed King’s vision of modernity and an idealistic, progressive and spiritual view of the world where all discord was changed to harmony by reconciling man to God.

The year 1916 proved to be a troubled one for King. He suffered a serious depression that forced him to look for outside guidance. With the help of the world-famous psychiatrist, Dr. Adolf Meyer, King recovered sufficiently to complete his book and move on to a short but lucrative stint as an industrial consultant for large American corporations such as General Electric. However, King’s intention was always to return to political life and when Laurier died in 1919 he sought and won the

3 See Margaret Bedore, “The Infamous Charts of Mackenzie King from Industry and Humanity” (MA thesis, Queen’s University, 2003).
leadership of the Liberal Party and in 1921 became Prime Minister of Canada’s first minority government. Over the next twenty-seven years King was to hold the office of Prime Minister for all but five years. His achievements as leader were legendary. He developed a separate foreign policy for a more independent Canada. He rebuilt a divided Liberal Party into a formidable governing machine by finding compromises acceptable to all regions of Canada. King presided over the prosperity of the 1920s, was defeated at the onset of the Depression, but returned again in 1935 to lead Canada out of the Depression and into war. By King’s careful calculation Canada entered the war in 1939 with the support of Quebec and King held the country together through the war and survived to win his last election in 1945. He then presided over a period of economic adjustment and introduced a number of social measures that strengthened the support for the Liberals and thus assured the succession of Louis St. Laurent. King died at his much-loved Kingsmere retreat in the Gatineau Hills on 22 July 1950.

This thesis examines some of what King read and commented on in order to understand the perspective from which he viewed the world. Gladstone once remarked that “it is but rarely that we can trace the influence exercised by particular books upon particular minds through the medium of actual record.” Gladstone himself stands as one of the most striking exceptions to his own generalization. King also represents an exception. His diary and some of his vast correspondence allow the student of his mind to identify when and sometimes what he thought of specific works. Beyond the diaries, however, are the actual books King read, most of them preserved in his library at Laurier House or at the National Library of Canada. In the margins of his books are found King’s contemporary responses to what he was reading. King’s tangible notations make us aware of his initial reactions, revealing something of his state of mind. When cross-referenced to his diary entries and to comments in his writings and letters to his personal friends and relatives, King’s

reading responses reveal a mind struggling to understand the modern world. For the most part, King’s marginalia has been untapped. On occasion Blair Neatby, one of King’s official biographers, footnoted a reference to a text marked by King.\(^5\) However, pursuing these markings in many texts in conjunction with King’s diary provides a unique approach to the intellectual life of this important Canadian politician.

The marginalia of readers has long been studied by historians but its study is now taken more seriously because it is clearly in tune with current literary theory which reverses the traditional perspective of intellectual history by focusing on readers rather than writers. Rather than discerning the message a text transmits to an audience, this new approach begins with the reader not the text and accepts the notion that readers make the meaning. Rather than focusing on the importance and influence of the text and its inherent meaning, it focuses directly on the reception of the text. According to Michel de Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, “the text has a meaning only through its readers; it changes along with them; it is ordered in accord with codes of perception that it does not control.”\(^6\) This critical turn away from the text puts to rest the old model of the passively receptive reader. Reading is “an intertextual process governed by an active reader.”\(^7\) It is always at once the effort to comprehend and the effort to incorporate the text. The latter activity is described by Roland Barthes as “rewriting the text of the work within the text of our lives.”\(^8\) In current reader response theory, the reader is recognized as a producer of meaning not just as a passive consumer of text. How the reader reads the text is always a function of prior experiences. Questions of social, economic, gender and ethnic


difference become inescapable in reading theory. Certeau uses the evocative metaphor of ‘poaching’ to suggest an unauthorized appropriation of texts. “Readers are travellers; they move across lands belonging to some one else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write, despoiling the wealth of Egypt to enjoy it themselves.”\(^9\) For Certeau, reading involves the tactics of wandering, of improvisation: for him, it constitutes “an ephemeral dance” across textual space, and an illicit, even secretive reinvention of the text, that is, reading as resistance.\(^10\) In this way, de Certeau seeks to describe a politicization of reading and a liberation of the text and of reading from the “strong-box full of meaning.”\(^11\)

The historical work of Jonathan Rose reflects the shift of attention from the writer to the reader. His earlier work, *The Edwardian Temperament, 1895 - 1919*, described six important intellectual movements by concentrating on the best minds and works of the Edwardian years.\(^12\) Such a methodological approach, Rose later admitted, “ignores actual readers” by committing what might be called “the receptive fallacy” whereby historians try to discern the messages a text transmits to an audience by examining the text rather than the audience.\(^13\) Rose’s latest work, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, is a history of reception which addresses the impact of literature on political consciousness. By tapping into memoirs, diaries, and school and library borrowers’ records, it explores the reading experiences of ordinary workers to discover not only what they read but also how they read it. The book describes how people at the bottom of the economic pyramid appropriated classical literature. It is an audience history of how people read their culture and how they experience education in the widest sense. At present, Rose is continuing his research on the role of reading, this time on its importance in the political life of Winston Churchill.

\(^10\) Ibid., xxi.
\(^11\) Ibid., 171.
There is no question that the subject’s reading has been seen as some kind of factor in his views and attitudes following the pioneering analysis of British Labour MP’s reading by W. T. Stead in 1906. When Stead asked the Labour MP’s which books they had found helpful in their early struggle with adverse circumstances he did so because he believed that the character of a man was “largely moulded by the books he reads.”14 The responses he was given most frequently were also the same standard texts read by King - Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s Progress, Carlyle’s Sartor Resartus, Heroes and Hero Worship and Past and Present, Henry George’s Progress and Poverty, Ruskin’s Unto the Last and Henry Drummond’s Ascent of Man. Though political biographies have often listed the works read, they have generally failed to examine the nature of the reading of their subject. Instead, the reading habits of the subject are briefly listed at the outset and “their influence is assumed to be formative, somehow part of the bedrock upon which the rest of the life is based.”15 The reader is seen very much as a tabula rasa waiting to receive the positions of the author.

Peter Catterall is concerned with the role of reading in political lives and the reluctance of much modern political biography to take reading seriously. Citing Roy Jenkin’s biography of Gladstone, Catterall suggests that the tendency of political biographers is to illuminate the prodigiousness of the great man’s reading rather than examine its significance. We are told little about what the subject thought about what he read. In his essay on Harold Macmillan’s reading, Catterall suggests that Macmillan’s voluminous diaries, in which his reading and re-reading is so carefully chronicled, recapture not only what he read but when, in conjunction with the other traffic in his life. Catterall is able to identify old favourites which Macmillan re-read and among his other habits, his tendency to read history through the prism of biography. Biography for Macmillan dealt with how individuals met with the challenges of

contingency; he preferred political biographies in which the subject speaks for himself as much as possible through their contemporary papers and letters. Catterall found that reading was a key part of Macmillan’s life: “it informed his political life, but just as much his political career could inform his reading, drawing him to biographies of Gladstone with renewed interest and insight after he had himself attained the Premiership.” 16 For Macmillan, Catterall concludes, reading was “an exercise in intellectual curiosity;” it gave him “a framework and perspective within which to view contemporary events” and it was “a reflective process, which might help to crystallise his thoughts, but rarely to shape them.” 17

Given the recent shift of attention from the writer to the reader and to the reception of texts, marginalia appear to be a goldmine for historians but as H. J. Jackson acknowledges, it is “a contested goldmine.” 18 Critics disagree about the reliability of readers’ notes and consequently about the ways in which they might be legitimately used to reconstruct the mental experience of a particular reader. Jackson’s *Marginalia: Readers Writing and Books* explores the potential value of marginalia as another form of evidence for historical studies of reception. Marginalia are a common responsive practice of readers for centuries and are suggestive of human thought. As Jackson suggests, “they are spontaneous, impulsive, uninhibited; they offer direct access to the reader’s mind; they are private and therefore trustworthy.” 19 Readers’ marginal comments range from hasty marks to extended essays. A line running down the margin, brackets or underlining of the text itself are the most basic forms of marginalia. They are often coupled with conventional symbols indicating approval or disapproval: the check, exclamation mark, cross, or question mark. Multiples are used to heighten the effect, five exclamation marks expressing perhaps the maximum of astonishment. These crude and unrefined symbols are readily understood and easy to decipher. Brief words or phrases such as “good

16 Ibid., 19.
17 Ibid., 20.
19 Ibid., 99.
idea” or “don’t agree” register the reader’s reaction fluctuating between resistance and engagement. Marginalia have a creative function; the reader leaves a mark and thereby alters the text. They are signs of attention that arise out of a reader’s reaction to a prior printed text and are by definition dependent upon that text for their meaning. Therefore historians find themselves having somehow to juggle the two.

Writing marginalia is akin to “talking back to the TV set.” A conversation of sorts is going on whereby the annotator is either talking to himself or to the author. If he interrupts his reading and marks a line to assist his memory or to jog his attention upon re-reading, he is most likely talking to himself. If he is making a minimal remark such as ‘excellent’ or ‘true’, he is in some way congratulating the writer. However these responses are not written for the benefit of the author to whom they are ostensibly directed. Marking and adding notes as well as underlining are traditional devices for remembering and assimilating text. Psychologically, these techniques seem to function by forcing the reader to slow down or stop and go back over the material. Critical marginalia arise over points of difference and annotators by marking passages that have captured their attention break off from the text in the name of independence. Every note of conscious agreement or dissent alike entails a degree of self-assertion and is part of a process of becoming, maintaining, and cultivating the self. As Jackson suggests, “a marked text traces the development of the reader’s self-definition in and by relation to the text.”

John Powell finds that the detailed marginalia of Gladstone provide “a rare access to his inner life” and as they provide a contemporary response, they help answer questions which resist explanation on the basis of traditional documentary sources. Gladstone left a large number of annotated books that are preserved intact in St. Deiniol’s Library at Hawarden in Wales, together with diaries that methodically recorded his daily readings for his whole life. Gladstone was an prolific reader; daily

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20 Ibid., 85.
21 Ibid., 87.
entries record the reading of some 20,000 titles. It was rare, even when Gladstone was prime minister for a day not to include a bloc of general reading. He habitually added marginal notes during his reading and compiled an index to specifically significant passages at the end of many volumes. In 2001, Ruth Clayton published Gladstone’s own key to the symbols used in his marginalia. It included ‘ma’ (the Italian for ‘but’) for reservation, ‘t’ for approbation, ‘x’ for disapprobation, and ‘xx’ or even ‘xxx’ for special disapprobation. These symbols reveal something of Gladstone’s interior state of mind as well as his view of fresh opinions. David Bebbington’s latest work on the intellectual development of Gladstone uses Gladstone’s personal musings in the margin, in conjunction with his other writings, to illuminate the man of action. Bebbington’s aim “is to study Gladstone from the inside out.” In this way, Bebbington examines three areas which remained the intellectual preoccupation of Gladstone - political theory, theology and classical study - and shows that in each of these fields there was development in his thinking. In the vast number of annotated books that remain unexamined at Hawarden, Bebbington sees endless scope for the future study of Gladstone’s mind.

The field of scholarship on William James has also benefited from the methodologies of book history. While reading the James papers, Eugene Taylor discovered 125 pages of handwritten lecture notes for a series of Lowell Lectures that James had delivered in 1896, but never published. The series was called “Exceptional Mental States” which became the focus of Taylor’s project. In the course of his research, Taylor was also able to locate 1000 volumes from James’s personal library that had been donated to Harvard in 1923. Many of these texts contained James’s hand-penciled annotations and were on the subject of the 1896 Lowell Lectures. Taylor also discovered through charging records, lists of all the books that James checked out of the library during the course of his career as a student and a faculty member up to the late 1890s when a different system of

recording books taken out was adopted. Taylor found that James kept many of
these books out for several years at a time and numerous volumes contained his
marginal notes that were keyed to the 1896 lecture notes. Many of these finds had
not been checked out since James had returned them. With these new resources,
Taylor was able to reconstruct the 1896 lectures and against other scholarship which
had neglected these lectures, he was able to show their importance in the
development of James’s philosophy.25

Any new piece of evidence on the mind of such an ambivalent thinker as Mackenzie
King is welcome. The principal virtue of King’s marginalia is that it isolates the material
which King found particularly stimulating. Some time after he left university King
began to pencil vertical lines down the side margins of his texts as opposed to
summarizing texts in notebooks as he did in his student days. He continued this
habit of side lines for most of his life making each text uniquely his own. Careful
reading is what these reader’s markings are all about. Marked passages indicate
what particularly captured King’s attention. A text with occasional lines suggests
moderate engagement. Many lines marked throughout the entire text suggest
greater interest. At times certain passages were marked with more than one vertical
line. If two or three or even six or seven vertical lines appear beside a certain
section, one may logically argue that King was intensely engaged with the ideas
expressed in that passage. In certain sections of his own diary, he occasionally
made markings in those margins too.

King often reread material that he had “marked at the sides” and noted this in his
diary.26 Commenting on what he had marked in the book, Death Cannot Sever,
King wrote that “the markings” seemed “to make clear these passages were true.”27
They tell us which ideas conformed to his own. When he reread particular passages

25 Eugene Taylor, “Metaphysics and Consciousness in James’s Varieties,” in William James and
The Varieties of Religious Experience, edited by Jeremy Carrette (London: Routledge, 2005),
12 - 14.
26 W.L.M.K. Diary, 20 December 1932.
27 Ibid.
from his devotional books and his own Bible, he often “noticed the markings” that he had previously made. 28 King noticed the markings made by others as well. Seeing “the passages marked” in the Bible that had belonged to his grandfather, he took his own Bible and “compared its markings with those of grandfather’s.” 29 When discussing William James’s *The Varieties of Religious Experience* with Bishop Jefferson, King went to his shelf and “handed him the book with its markings” in “the very chapter re conversion which Bishop Jefferson had quoted.” 30 The markings in his texts continued to have significant meaning for King and indicate the passages that were important to his thinking.

When King occasionally wrote in the margin ‘true’, we know he was agreeing with the writer but when he jotted a question mark, he must have had some concerns.

Careful study of the passages selectively marked in conjunction with his diary, reveal more often a pattern of agreement with the text rather than criticism. In many of the texts examined, King was reading attentively and at times appears to have been conscientious enough in most of his reading to focus on the details in footnotes.

Occasionally King checked off in the index the chapters he had completed. 31 When King noted on the last page of the text the date he had finished the book, we are informed about how contemporary his reading was, important information to the historian trying to trace the development of King’s thought. Similarly, ownership marks that include the date of acquisition and place are important clues and presentation inscriptions show that a book was passed on to King, telling of human relations. 32 When King penciled his own religious poetry in the pages of *A Garden*

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31 For example in the index of Keith Feiling’s *The Life of Neville Chamberlain*, King checked off twelve chapters and vertical markings are found only in these chapters.
32 King’s copy of Annie Payson Call’s *Power through Repose* provides an ownership claim: Mackenzie King Baltimore Maryland Nov 3 1916. King’s copy of William James’s *The Varieties of Religious Experience* is inscribed by King’s brother: To my dear brother on his birthday anniversary Dec 17 1918 with love and this belief that virtue is wisdom and that wisdom is freedom Max.
of Consolation, he was offering his own special prayerful response. King underlined text sparingly but when he did, it was usually in conjunction with multiple vertical markings and thus more important. By treating King’s personal system of notation, especially the frequency of those vertical lines, as new pieces of evidence, King’s responses can legitimately be used as textual evidence to reconstruct his mental experience. And since King virtually always read with a scrupulous regard to himself, frequently marking passages related to his own needs and beliefs, one can also determine that certain books strongly reflected King’s thought at the time. (See Appendix X).

King’s library at Laurier House contains over 2500 titles and the National Library holds at least an equal number of his books. The texts at Laurier House are supposedly as King left them; they are shelved in no discernible order. There is a basic shelf list of the Laurier House collection that provides the details of title, author, date of publication and also notes and clippings enclosed in the book and some inscriptions. The shelf list also denotes “passages marked” and “many passages marked.” However, this information has proven inaccurate and incomplete. Unfortunately, the shelf list was not professionally prepared and contains many spelling errors and omissions. On the other hand, the National Library catalogued the materials it received from Laurier House. Particularly helpful is the discernment between annotations and marginal markings. Annotations refer to written marginal notes whereas marginal markings refer to lines or question marks. Most of his extensive collection on spiritualism is at the National Library as these titles were never shelved in King’s private library at Laurier House. They were kept next door

33 A Garden of Consolation for All Those That Are in Any Way Afflicted or Distressed in Mind, Body, or Estate (New York: Barse and Hopkins, nd.), 36 - 37, 42, 60. Several religious poems are scribbled on these pages in King’s own hand.
34 Some texts were removed and placed in Rare Books at the National Library. One example is Arnold Toynbee’s Lectures on the Industrial Revolution.
35 Rumour has it that the shelf list was prepared by a security guard.
in the small room reserved for seances. Although this study examines only a small proportion of King’s collection, the texts chosen were generally well marked and the diary indicated that they critically influenced King.\(^\text{36}\)

Referencing marginal markings presented a technical problem in the writing of this thesis. I have chosen to put in italics all quotations that King marked. If King marked a section of text with one vertical line, it will appear in italics. If he marked a section with two or more vertical lines, that section quoted will of course be in italics, but in a footnote the number of vertical lines will be noted. This method is important for tracing how closely King followed a particular argument and the intensity of his engagement. The intent of this study is not to focus on the writing and interpretation of an author such as William James, but rather on how King read James and what he found significant in his work and what thinking was in accord with his own.

King wrote about the nature of his reading in The Secret of Heroism in the context of his relationship with his close friend and colleague in the Department of Labour, Bert Harper, who lost his life in 1901 in an endeavour to save a young lady from drowning. This book gives expression to the social and political ideals that were shared by King and Harper. They also shared accommodations and many evenings were spent together “in company with books, from which each in turn read aloud to the other, and which were laid aside only that a deeper searching of the heart might follow.”\(^\text{37}\) They found “companionship and instruction” in books, the selection of which was “carefully made.”\(^\text{38}\) The “distinguishing mark” of their shared reading was that they chose, “for the most part, only such works as were likely to be productive of intellectual or moral growth.” They read little “for the sake of mere entertainment.”\(^\text{39}\) Both understood that “a man’s intellectual as well as his physical

\(^{36}\) The author examined many more texts than were chosen for this thesis. Guided by the National Library catalogue and the more amateur listing at Laurier House, the author attempted to identify the well marked texts.


\(^{38}\) Ibid., 65.

\(^{39}\) Ibid.
powers must be stimulated and strengthened by sustenance of the proper sort."  

They believed, as Matthew Arnold did, that “a man cannot be saved from intellectual sterility, unless, to more than a limited degree, he familiarizes himself with the best thought of the strongest minds.”  

Both King and Harper were “strongly influenced” by their reading though its influence, as was in the case of Harold Macmillan, was “one rather of clearer definition and understanding of [their] own beliefs and convictions, than of conversion to other and different views.”  

Harper reminded King early in his career of the importance of reading:

> No man who desires to make progress in the world can hope to do so if he squanders his evenings. There are two ways in which a man may equip himself so that he may be in the van of progress: - first, by strengthening his own mind through a study of what is and has been in the minds of great men of thought, - this, one can do from books: - secondly, by pursuing positive original work along the special line to which he has devoted himself.

The books with which Harper and King sought to become the most familiar were “the works of writers whose intellectual preeminence was undoubted, and whose main concern, though they viewed it from many and frequently different standpoints, was the problem of existence, the meaning and the duties of life.”  

Of this class, Carlyle, Arnold, Emerson, Tennyson and Hamilton Wright Mabie were those to which they devoted most of their time. King had “a real thirst for some inspiring and well written literature” and Mabie’s *Nature and Culture* satisfied this need:

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Ibid., 66.

Ibid., 67.

Ibid.

Bert Harper to King, 30 December 1900, in *The Secret of Heroism*, 97 - 98.


Hamilton Wright Mabie (1845 - 1916) was a popular literary critic at the turn of the century. He represents the much maligned Genteel Tradition which was later criticised for dispensing moralistic pap which today embarrasses the reader with its sentimentality and platitudinous didactic tone. Mabie was an idealist and his books fall within the category of spiritual and ethical improvement. King’s library at Laurier contains many of them.


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It has helped cleanse my mind of worthless thought and to refresh it with what is purest & best. It is a book on how to live, it touched on rather it is concerned entirely with the greatest of all human problems, how to make the most of this life we have and attain towards that Infinite Perfection which is ours to gain. I think in pointing out Nature as a guide the author is right. The part that Nature plays is in our development. Every chapter is full of profound truth and one by reading it soon shares the author’s feeling & belief. Indeed I have seldom found a book which expressed better to me my own feelings & beliefs, carrying them often farther than I had been willing or sought to. The book helped to bring me back to what is best & most real in life & to reawaken in my memories sensations of years gone by, when to seek only Perfection seemed to hold sway above the trivial things of life. This is my real aim at heart and the inroad of worldly cares & fears & trifles which I have permitted must be stopped. My nature the past year has been running shallow & not deep.\

Many selections in King’s library reflected what he considered “the writings of master minds.” As King was not a public library user, most of his reading was of purchased books or those given to him by friends and authors. King’s collection included both carefully selected texts but also many presentation copies. King often perused publisher’s catalogues from which he ordered new titles. For example, his collection contains many titles from Fleming H. Revell, the most significant publisher of evangelical books in North America. He often asked his long-time Liberal confidant, Violet Markham, for suggestions and “profited greatly” from her recommendations. In 1930 he asked her to “place on order” her recommendations “with the publishing house so I can get the English editions - I am fond of good editions.” A letter in 1933 demonstrated the pride King felt for his collection:

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46 W.L.M. King, Diary, 8 May 1900.


48 Fleming Revell was the brother-in-law of the evangelist Dwight Moody. He published the books of Henry Drummond, several of the religious novels of the Presbyterian minister, Charles Gordon, under the pen name Ralph Connor, many titles by the Presbyterian minister, Newell Dwight Hillis read by King and his brother’s book, Nerves and Personal Power.

48 King to Violet Markham, 25 August 1930.
Little by little, I am coming to have a very valuable library. Many of my books have been presented to me by the authors, and, in some cases, where as with respect to Lloyd George’s Memoirs, I have known the author, I have not hesitated to seek an autograph. The little personal touch of the name and a line from an intimate association with their lives and works means very much to me.\textsuperscript{50}

It is very difficult to give a general description of the nature of the King collection as it covers such a wide range of subjects. It includes Canadian, American and British politics, economics and history, as well as literature, psychology, sociology, religion and works on gardening, traditional painting and opera. As expected, the collection contains many research materials on industrial relations that were used by King in the preparation of \textit{Industry and Humanity}. Some of these materials such as reports, pamphlets, speeches and newspaper clippings had been bound into volumes by the King’s archivist friend, Arthur Doughty.\textsuperscript{51} Of interest were the number on women in the trades.\textsuperscript{52} There are also the debates from the House of Commons and the Senate, handbooks, Royal Commissions and copies of \textit{The Labour Gazette} and the publications of the Royal Society of Canada. Also as expected, since King was not a man to discard anything, many of his university books are there, along with

\textsuperscript{50} King to Violet Markham, 11 December 1933.
\textsuperscript{51} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 16 December 1922.
\textsuperscript{52} For example King’s collection includes the pioneering studies on labour conditions by Mary van Kleeck. King met this social investigator in 1921 when she was working for the Russell Sage Foundation and preparing a report on employee representation in the Colorado coal mines. Mary van Kleeck, \textit{Working Girls in Evening Schools: A Statistical Study} (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1909); \textit{Artificial Flower Makers} (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1913); \textit{Women in the Bookbinding Trade} (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1913). King’s collection also contains the British study by the notable reformer, Olive Schreiner. Olive Schreiner, \textit{Women and Labor} (Toronto: H. Frowde, 1911).
works by his professors and other important leaders and intellectuals he had met.\textsuperscript{53} If King enjoyed the lectures or sermons he attended, he often obtained the published works of these speakers.\textsuperscript{54} There are, of course, many religious works, many of which were sentimental fare designed to provide spiritual uplift and comfort to the general reader. There are also King’s special “little books” of devotion and a wide range of texts on spiritualism.

King also enjoyed poetry. All the major British poets are represented as well as American poets such as Whitman, Longfellow and also Edna St. Vincent Millay. King loved Tennyson’s \textit{Idylls of the King} and its gentle teaching “that we must be swayed by high resolves and noble motives.”\textsuperscript{55} He thought “such poetry as this makes a nation’s life blood rich.”\textsuperscript{56} Placed on “the shelf containing a few especially prized books” is “a little memoir of Longfellow” which had been given to King by its

author Charles Eliot Norton in 1907. In 1934 King was reading about the life and unfulfilled genius of Wordsworth. The library has the complete works of Shakespeare, Lord Macaulay, Byron, Kipling and Emerson and the series World’s Great Classics and Makers of Canada as well as the 1923 Book of Knowledge. Special to him were the works of his friends, Duncan Campbell Scott and Wilfrid Campbell. King loved the work of Ruskin and Carlyle and especially Matthew Arnold and treasured those books purchased from Arnold’s own library.

What is unusual about King’s collection is the paucity of novels. Some classics by Jane Austen and George Eliot are there but the other novels appear to be those of his friends, Ralph Connor, John Buchan and Norman Duncan. Ralph Connor was the pen-name of the Presbyterian minister, the Reverend C. W. Gordon, who, along with King, was one of the most successful mediators of industrial disputes in Canada and whose novels appealingly fused romance, religion and social issues. Norman Duncan was a friend from his university days in Toronto and King had at least twelve of his novels including those that were the result of his visit to Newfoundland and the Grenfell mission. What is also unusual about the collection is the number of self-help books, which range from How to Get Strong and Stay So and The Culture of the Abdomen to The Efficient Life.

Given King’s abiding interest in religion and politics it is not surprising that some of these works are the most marked texts and also are referenced in his diary. John Bunyan’s classic, *Pilgrim’s Progress*, has many passages marked as does the life of the modern saint of the East, *The Autobiography of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore*. A close examination of King’s collection reveals that he read biography more carefully than most other classes of writing. Biography in some sense implies that great individuals make history. The library, for example, includes the six volume autobiography of Joseph Mazzini, the democratic Italian patriot so passionately revered by British and Canadian Liberals. King took pleasure in reading memoirs and biographies of many politicians, British politicians in particular. John Morley’s *The Life of Gladstone* holds a special place in King’s collection and his diary suggests that it provided a key source of inspiration to the young King. Gladstone was the model that King followed his entire life. Morley’s biography was often consulted by King in times of trouble and provided the continuity with a Liberal past that King so desired.

Religion constantly preoccupied King, regulating his daily life through worship, devotion and self-examination but it also formed his mind as well as his behaviour. Consequently it is crucial in the case of King to integrate religion into the study of his intellectual world. In 1916, King began to read William James extensively. An examination of this reading, in particular his classic study of religion, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, demonstrates King’s evolving religious thinking. Although King worried about the future of a world where religious meaning was dissolving under the corrosive influence of secular society, religion was not a static, accepting and immature aspect of his life as some of his critics have contended.

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Canadians seem to prefer not to know much about the religious and spiritual inclinations of their political leaders with two notable exceptions: Mackenzie King and Pierre Trudeau. In the case of King, most historians have failed miserably to come to grips with the religious dimension in his life and instead have generally ridiculed his religiosity. In the case of Trudeau, a recent conference specifically on Trudeau’s very private faith engendered respect. The ensuing publication *The Hidden Pierre Elliott Trudeau: The Faith behind the Politics*, integrated his religion and intellectual development showing clearly how faith shaped the man and infused Trudeau with a sense of public duty. Mackenzie King needs to be re-examined in the same light for he too was intensely driven by religious belief and considered politics his vocation. In the religious extensions of his thought, King reveals more of what he thinks of himself than we would know otherwise.

Mackenzie King must be situated in the context of the rising religious liberalism of the late nineteenth century. He was brought up in a traditional Presbyterian home and his family practiced their faith in the small town of Berlin, Ontario. His mother, Isabel, the daughter of William Lyon Mackenzie, endured a strict puritanical upbringing but soon learned to shrug off the stern Presbyterianism of her childhood. She had a taste for pretty things and joyful hymn-singing and Sunday churchgoing was the social highlight of the week. As Charlotte Gray suggests, Isabel “entertained a vague belief in some omnipotent deity, but she felt no intimacy with this ‘Supreme Being’, as she referred to God.” John King, on the other hand, was well educated in science and literature and was an elder in Berlin’s Presbyterian church. His dearest friend was the Reverend James Dickie. He was an early exponent of the Social Gospel and an avid reader of Charles Dickens whose work emphasized the need for social reform. Soon after Mackenzie King began his university education at the

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John King’s library where King spent much time is preserved at Woodside in Kitchener-Waterloo.
University of Toronto, the family also moved to Toronto and joined St. Andrew’s on the corner of Simcoe and King Street. St. Andrew’s was the spiritual nerve centre of Toronto’s Scottish community and there the family mingled with the elite of the city.

St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church was an early institutional church that served its community by offering social services, educational lectures and cultural activities. It was known for its preachers and good works. Its most distinguished preacher was the liberal clergyman, the Reverend D. J. Macdonnell, a fiery orator with an unquenchable ambition to improve the world. Macdonnell had studied in Scotland and Germany only to return with a mind that was intellectually more alive but forever incapable of dogmatic commitment. His powerful sermons generated controversy and his doubts about dogma had resulted in heresy charges. King’s sisters were moved like Macdonnell by the plight of Toronto’s poor and participated in many of the church’s programs including Sunday school, night school lectures, and work at the mission at Nelson Street. King was also drawn to these church activities that were part of a Social Gospel movement that “required response to concrete human needs.”

Looking for ways to put his Christian ideals into practice, King volunteered at the Sick Children’s Hospital and took an interest in various charities. He also devoured books of moral inspiration and social concern by authors such as Charles Kingsley. His particular hero was Arnold Toynbee, the brilliant young English economist who described the inequalities and conflicts of industrial society in his Lectures on the Industrial Revolution. He stressed that industrial civilization was acceptable only if it operated according to Christian principles.

King’s mother had little interest in her son’s affection for the underprivileged and she was less than enthusiastic when he enrolled at the University of Chicago and moved into Hull House, a settlement house modelled on London’s Toynbee Hall and run by Jane Addams. King’s short period of volunteer work in the company of other

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70 Arnold Toynbee, Lectures of the Industrial Revolution of the 18th Century in England (New York: Humboldt, 1884). This is the most annotated book in the King collection.
social reformers at Hull House seemed to answer King’s need to feel he was being of service and doing God’s work among the poor. Undoubtedly Isabel was relieved when King left Hull House to be closer to the university. As Gray has suggested, the slum-dwelling poor of Chicago did not make up the crowd she wished her son to mingle with. Isabel was more impressed with the contacts that King made later in the social circles of Harvard which would in the end advance his career.71

King’s youthful idealism and social Christianity placed him firmly in the camp of the religious liberals of the day. And although the movement encompassed a wide range of thinking, it was generally reformist in spirit. Religious liberalism was not only a movement responding to the forces of industrialization and the immense social changes that accompanied its acceleration in the nineteenth century but it was also a response to the new developments in science and higher education which were eroding Protestantism’s dominance in culture in general. Darwin’s *Origin of Species* (1859) sparked the debate that led to the widespread acceptance of a developmental evolutionism. However, attitudes towards adaptation and natural selection, the core of Darwin’s theory of evolution, were more ambivalent. Evolutionism was a less radical compromise position which tended to ignore the random variation inherent in the materialism of natural selection. As Peter Bowler has suggested, “most Victorians, including a majority of the scientists themselves, retained the view that the material universe must have a moral purpose, and they were determined to interpret science in a way that would not destroy that sense of purpose.”72

Darwinism and higher criticism did challenge the Bible and required the rejection of certain key aspects of creationism. The new historical, sociological and psychological ways of thinking were revolutionizing thought at almost every level. The debate

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71 Charlotte Gray, *Mrs. King*, 139.
over Darwinism, which began in earnest in North America during the early 1870s, did undermine the authority of the Bible literally construed and challenged the whole Protestant view of God, creation and man. The higher criticism, which began to arouse popular interest in the early 1880s, was based on the premise that the best way to understand a text in Scripture, the only scientific way, was through historical or developmental explanations.\textsuperscript{73} In this way, by accepting ever looser interpretations of Scripture, liberal theologians managed to reconcile evolutionary thinking with the Bible. The popular Scottish theologian, John Watson (1850 - 1907), defended the spirit of criticism which viewed the Bible as “a progressive and gradual revelation.”\textsuperscript{74} Criticism rendered the Bible “more real, because it is more human; not a book dropped down from heaven, untouched with a feeling of our infirmities, but a book wrought out through the struggles, hopes, trials, victories of the soul of man in his quest for God.” Criticism swept away many traditions and laid aside many theories “but above the dust of controversy rises the face of Christ.”\textsuperscript{75} Historical criticism gave Protestantism an earthly Christ and the concept of Divine Fatherhood.

Theology and actual religious faith are of course very different things. Still, most people for whom faith is real take seriously the doctrines that articulate that faith. In the late nineteenth century, however, there is every indication that doing good mattered far more than doctrine to many churchgoers including King. King accepted a liberal approach to Christianity that privileged individual reason and experience over the appeal to external authority. Theological liberalism or modernism stressed accommodation and adjustment to modern intellectual inquiry, especially historical criticism and the natural sciences. As Harry Emerson Fosdick, America’s most famous liberal preacher, was to put it some years later, liberalism made it possible

\textsuperscript{73} King’s library at Laurier House contains the important work of Ernest Renan who was on the side of biblical criticism and whose writings in the nineteenth century began to ferment in the minds of many educated men. Ernest Renan, \textit{The Life of Jesus} (New York: Modern Library, 1927).

\textsuperscript{74} John Watson, \textit{The Cure of Souls} (Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1896), 143. In King’s collection at Laurier House.

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 144, 148.
for a man to be “both an intelligent modern and a serious Christian.” Liberal theology put Protestant orthodoxy on the defensive and questioned the importance of church dogma. In the United States it was linked with a rising Progressivism in politics and in the early twentieth century, according to Gary Dorrien, theological liberalism became “a field dominating movement that redefined the religious teachings and social ambitions of mainstream American Protestantism.”

Religious liberals in general and King in particular found in idealism a spiritual conception of the universe and an intellectual basis for religious faith that provided the solution to the conflicts and tensions they experienced in thought and social conditions. Their liberal theology was primarily “a mediating Christian movement” that sought to create “a third way between authority-based Christian orthodoxies of their time and a rising tide of rationalistic deism and atheism.” It reconceptualized Christianity as an ethical way of life in order to make Christianity more credible and socially relevant to contemporary people. They combined a belief in the supreme importance of the individual’s relation to God and a belief in the gradual, universal improvement of society by human effort. At the end of the nineteenth century the liberal Christianity that King embraced was characterized by an idealist’s conception of the essence of Christianity. It was inspired by the historic Christ and based on the immanentistic position that God existed within all humanity. It was a religion that had adjusted to the tenets of science and was largely shorn of traditional doctrine. It was based on an organic and progressive evolutionism that had been communicated to King by the writings of such key idealists as Edward Caird. This theological

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78 Ibid., 2.
liberalism tended to sentimentalize the divine nature, underestimate the force of sin and evil and overestimate the goodness of reason and modern culture. Religious liberalism came to terms with modernity by denying its darker side, by blunting all its sharp edges producing what Jackson Lears called “a bland religion of reassurance.”

Liberal theologians repudiated original sin and the theories of atonement that conceived Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary as a means of satisfying God’s wrath. Satan and hell were relegated to the far-off corners of the Christian mind. The intense yearning for salvation waned. Discarding Calvinistic severity, the liberal theologians formulated a Christ-centred evolutionary creed which married the spiritual to material progress and yielded the kingdom of God on earth. “As Calvinism softened into platitudinous humanism,” as Lears critically suggests, Protestant Christianity lost the gravity provided by older, sterner creeds and it entered a period “marked by hazy moral distinctions and vague spiritual commitments.” The decline into sentimental religiosity further undermined a solid sense of self; a culture of spiritual blandness bred persons who longed for intense experience.

Ann Douglas has also written on how American Protestantism lost its Calvinistic toughness and its intellectual rigour in the nineteenth century and was instead pervaded by “a sentimental sensibility” that gave rise to substantial criticism by the 1920s. The Niebuhr brothers denounced the liberalism which had defeated the sterner orthodox creed and condemned its persistent refusal to face the tragic nature of reality. In his seminal book, The Kingdom of God in America (1937), Richard Niebuhr mocked the intellectual fallacies and namby-pambiness of such facile theology which was “naively optimistic” and which “in politics and economics ... slurred over national and class divisions, seeing only growth of unity and ignoring the

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82 King never records a specific conversion experience in his diary.
83 Ibid., 32. In his diary King does not appear to use the word hell in the theological sense of hell fire and damnation. He seldom uses the word but he did say that “war is all Hell.” W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 October 1916.
increase of self assertion and exploitation.” He scornfully summed up its underlying
credo: “A God without wrath brought man without sin into a kingdom without
judgement through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross.”

However, a liberalized view of religion allowed King to welcome science and
technology without forfeiting his faith: unlike many contemporary intellectuals, he
never experienced doubt nor accepted that conflict between science and religion
was inevitable. In his view: “The work to be done is to bring a scientific mind to the
doctrine of the bible & make science the new interpreter of religion. Science will lead
men to God as nothing else has done.”

For King’s generation of scholars, evolution provided the standard of thinking about almost everything. Growth became
recognized as the fundamental law of life and just as Darwin explained biological
development through natural processes, so history and society were interpreted in
much the same way. When King was reading Lester Ward’s chapter on Social
Genesis, he wrote that he was “much impressed with the teachings of science on
evolution ... I feel that I accept the doctrine of evolut’n., it is natural & appeals to
reason but it only serves to strengthen my faith in a life hereafter, rather than destroy
it.”

King found “the insight into scientific thought” which he gained from Ward to be
“most helpful” and he found that Science was “a great revealer of truth, & the scientific
method is the true one in all our speculations & researches.” In King’s world,
Science presented no threat to familiar religious beliefs; on the contrary, Science
underwrote Protestant Christianity at every turn.

King also responded favourably to the evolutionary thinking of the Presbyterian
preacher, Henry Drummond, who as professor of natural science at the Free Church
College in Glasgow taught science to students on weekdays and religion to working
men on Sundays. Drummond believed that science and religion would exchange

86 W.L.M.K. Diary, 30 October 1898.
87 W.L.M.K. Diary, 13 October 1898.
88 W.L.M.K. Diary, 15 October 1898.
“reciprocal favours” and that “the purification of Religion comes from Science” just as “the purification of Science, in a deeper sense, shall come from Religion.”\[89\] In the Victorian battle between religion and science, Drummond defended the deepest human religious experiences on the basis of the dominant scientific methods and ideas. King also remarked on the application of science to religion in his diary: “Religion will make its strongest hold on the people when ... the teachings of Christ are by the light of science shown to be of the nature of inevitable and irretrievable laws. Science will be the greatest interpreter of religion.”\[90\] And after reading Drummond’s *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* (1883), which affirmed “the belief in Science as an aid to faith,” King was immensely pleased:

> I find in it that which satisfies me and confirms my convictions. I have been groping my way in this direction for some time in the past, for some years in fact... I remember distinctly feeling and stating to myself in my diary, that the great work to be done was to make religion scientific or rather to show it to be such & to show the teachings of Christ to have been the statement of law.\[95\]

The idea that God works through law provided an easy compromise for anyone wishing to reconcile evolution with traditional Protestant values. Drummond insisted that both the physical world and the spiritual realm were governed by the same law.

Drummond’s response to Darwin posited an ascent of humanity based on the evolutionary principle of self-sacrificing love, “the Struggle for the Life of Others” rather than a descent of humanity from lesser species through a process of the survival of the fittest.\[92\] In his aptly titled *Ascent of Man* (1894), Drummond claimed that the drive toward altruistic behaviour illustrated a divine purpose underlying evolution. In addition, Drummond’s published evangelical addresses focused on the

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\[90\] W.L.M. King, Diary, 23 March 1898.

\[91\] W.L.M. King, Diary, 15 January 1899.

love of God in Christ. The business of the Christian life was to apply the elements of love to the needs and problems of everyday life. Using images from natural science that characterized his writing, Drummond argued that the soul developed according to the same laws as the body and the mind:

If a man does not exercise his arm, he gets no biceps muscles; and if a man does not exercise his soul, he has no muscle in his soul, no strength of character, no robustness. Love ... is a robust, strong, manly, vigorous expression of the whole character and nature in its fullest development.93

Drummond’s muscular Christianity was aimed at the young men and college students with whom he did most of his evangelistic work. It was intended to shape the characters of those men who would become leaders in a society that sought to Christianize civilization. Again drawing the parallel between the natural and the spiritual laws that governed the universe, Drummond wrote:

You put a piece of iron in the mere presence of an electrified body, and that piece of iron for a time becomes electrified. It becomes a temporary magnet in the presence of a permanent magnet, and as long as you leave the two side by side, they are both magnets. Remain side by side with Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, and you too will become a permanent magnet - a permanent attractive force; and like Him you will draw all men into you.94

Drummond’s Ascent of Man met King’s criteria of a good read. Drummond had “a most charming style, words well chosen & thoughts well expressed, ... his point of view is entirely the right one.” Drummond filled King’s need for “some solid thought and this large subject of evolution affords food for the larger vision in thought, is stimulating to the imagination, appeals to the reason, and uplifts the soul.”95 King

94 Ibid., 49.
95 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 14 January 1902.
admired Drummond “greatly” and wrote in his diary that “the more I reflect on his
text, the more it seems to me he has struck the effective chord. He had made
science the great interpreter of religion.”96 Drummond presented an apologia for
Christianity that centred on the ideals of love, service, sympathy, sacrifice, co-
operation and world community and King agreed “entirely with his interpretation of
religion.”97 As Brian Fraser suggests, Drummond highlighted “the inevitability of
evolutionary moral progress” at the same time he “sought to preserve the essentials
of an evangelical Protestantism in the midst of social and intellectual change.”98

King brought a liberal Christian viewpoint that reflected Drummond’s modernized
evangelicalism to his work on industrial relations. Industry and Humanity was the
expression of King’s vision of harmonious industrial relations based on the Christian
principles of Love, Brotherhood, the Golden Rule and The Law of Christian
Service.99 He described his crusade to prohibit the use of white phosphorus in the
manufacture of matches that resulted in a hideous disease that affected the workers’
jawbone.100 In the series of nine charts which have been the subject of my earlier
work, King depicted “a perfectly-adjusted industrial order” where there was “due
regard for the principles underlying peace, work, and health.”101 Chart II, in particular,
was intended to illustrate that Progress in Industry depends upon the proper
adjustments between Capital, Labor, Management and Community. Using the
circle which he thought of as “the symbol of love,” King constructed a Venn diagram
of three intersecting circles representing Capital, Labor and Management,
circumscribed by a circle representing the Community, depicting the perfect co-

96 W.L.M.K. Diary, 13 January 1899.
97 W.L.M.K. Diary, 28 December 1898.
98 Brian Fraser, The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada,
99 William Lyon Mackenzie King, Industry and Humanity: A Study in the Principles Underlying
Industrial Reconstruction (Toronto: Thomas Allen, 1918), 126.
100 Ibid., 324 - 330.
101 See Margaret Bedore, “The Infamous Charts of Mackenzie King from Industry and Humanity”
(MA thesis, Queen’s University, 2003). William Lyon Mackenzie King, Industry and Humanity,
162.
operation and co-ordination of Industry. If the relations among the four parties are not properly adjusted, production is affected - which makes for Confusion, not for Progress. (See Appendix II).

There is a very strong spiritual dimension to King’s charts. In Chart II King fastened the pseudo-laws of peace, work, and health to a divine triangle which drove industrial progress. These laws are a marriage of the material and the spiritual, a melding of the sacred and the secular. King defined health in terms of “physical, mental and moral well-being,” work as “physical, mental and moral effort,” and peace as “physical, mental and moral harmony.” Industry is the zone of intersection and is represented by the mandorla, an almond-shaped figure formed by the overlapping of the circle of earth with the circle of heaven. The zone of existence symbolized by the mandorla embraces the opposing poles of all dualisms; it is the union of matter and spirit. In this chart King merged moral progress with material progress in an attempt to regenerate a spiritually sterile industrial capitalism.

That King’s view of industrial relations was deeply influenced by his religious beliefs was not unusual. This was the case for most of the social reformers of his day. However, as the Social Gospel movement waned after World War I, King’s interest in social issues followed suit. In the 1920s the fundamentalist-modernist controversy, as demonstrated most famously in the attack on evolutionism in the Scopes trial, challenged the theology of liberal mainline Protestantism which had generally side-stepped many traditional doctrines. Fundamentalists insisted on the “inerrancy” of the Bible in scientific and historical detail. What also preoccupied these conservative evangelicals was the saving of individual souls and they retreated from some of the progressive social policies that grew out of the Social Gospel in favour

102 W.L.M.K. Diary, 29 January 1939.
103 William Lyon Mackenzie King, Industry and Humanity, 145.
104 NAC, W.L.M.K. Papers, Industry & Humanity, Notes and Drafts, MG 26 J4, C12055. This an outline of the definitions of the concepts used in Industry and Humanity. King used these definitions at the beginning of each chapter on Peace, Work and Health, in Industry and Humanity, 168, 232, 304.
of soul saving. Many ardent religious liberals like King changed too and became more inward-looking. They thought less about social reformation and more about the inward transformation of men’s lives.

Critics of American intellectual life after the turn of the century, such as Harvard Professor George Santayana, attacked not only the “unintelligible sanctimonious and often disingenuous Protestantism” which he found repulsive but cultural life in general.\footnote{Douglas L. Wilson, ed., The Genteel Tradition: Nine Essays by George Santayana (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 2. Wilson cites a letter Santayana wrote to William James in 1900.} Santayana called America a “prig’s paradise” and warned that a whole generation was awakening to the deficiencies of its literary and intellectual heritage - a generation that was to mount a critical onslaught that would precipitate a cultural revolution. Santayana came to think that American thought was plagued by ‘the genteel tradition’ which he summarized in an address at Berkeley in 1911:

America is not simply ... a young country with an old mentality: it is a country with two mentalities, one a survival of the beliefs and standards of the fathers, the other an expression of the instincts, practice, and discoveries of the younger generations. In all the higher things of the mind - in religion, in literature, in the moral emotions - it is the hereditary spirit that still prevails, so much so that Mr. Bernard Shaw finds that America is a hundred years behind the times. The truth is that the one-half of the American mind, that not occupied intensely in practical affairs, has remained, I will not say high-and-dry, but slightly becalmed; it has floated gently in the backwater, while, alongside, in invention and industry and social organization the other half of the mind was leaping down a sort of Niagara Rapids. ... The one is all aggressive enterprise; the other is all genteel tradition.\footnote{George Santayana, “The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy,” in The Genteel Tradition: Nine Essays by George Santayana, edited by Douglas L. Wilson, 39 - 40.}

King’s understanding of culture was to a large degree based on Matthew Arnold and had been reinforced by the custodians of culture at Harvard. “His philosophy, the pursuit of perfection, of sweetness and light, and the sweeping away of viciousness,
had always influenced me strongly since I first read *Culture and Anarchy*.”

Much could be learned from the English prophets of culture. At Harvard King joined the social circle at Shady Hill where Professor Charles Eliot Norton, Professor of fine Arts, translator of Dante and friend of John Ruskin and Thomas Carlyle, was perhaps the most important late-nineteenth-century arbiter of elegant American taste. Generations of Harvard students learned something of Ruskin’s love of Italian art at Norton’s house. In 1898 Professor Norton offered his home at Shady Hill to King for the summer and King “felt this a very great honor.” He rejoiced that he was “in the home of the greatest man in America.” King used the name Shady Hill for one of his cottages at Kingsmere. When King was reading aloud from Norton’s *Letters* in 1914, he recalled “the life at Shady Hill” and “Norton’s simplicity and directness” and he “gained help from the thought that the man of culture, helps to keep the world up to true standards.”

King also was cozy with another custodian of American culture, Charles W. Eliot, President of Harvard from 1869 to 1909. King later expressed the view that both Norton and Eliot and others at Harvard fostered “creative genius” and “must have seen some such possibility in me.” Eliot represented the majority Victorian faith in moralized science and benevolent, expanding industry as did King. This university president resembled the best of the captains of industry in his views and

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108 W.L.M. King, Diary, 14 April 1898.
109 W.L.M. King, Diary, 20 May 1898.
110 W.L.M. King, Diary, 23 June 1898.
111 W.L.M. King, Diary, 19 April 1914.
112 King’s library contains works by Eliot and about Eliot.
113 W.L.M. King, Diary, 8 April 1934.
achievements. He was a “vigorous doer” and preached popular education in both science and literature and his praised “five-foot shelf” of essential reading materials was designed to bring culture to the average busy man.\textsuperscript{114} In \textit{The Happy Life}, which King gave to his sister, Bella, for Christmas in 1898, Eliot wrote that one of the elements of happiness in life was “\textit{frequent contact with quick and well-stored minds in large variety}” and that fortunately “\textit{the cheap printing press has put within easy reach to every man who can read all the best minds both of the past and present}.” For Eliot, “\textit{books are the quietest and most constant of friends, they are the most accessible and wisest of counselors, and the most patient of teachers}.” Ten minutes a day devoted affectionately to good books “\textit{will in thirty years make all the difference between a cultivated and an uncultivated man, between a man mentally rich and a man mentally poor}.”\textsuperscript{115} That same Christmas King also bought a copy of \textit{The Glory of the Imperfect} for his sister, Jennie, and \textit{Self-Cultivation in English} for his brother, Max. Both were by Professor George Herbert Palmer and King “enjoyed both very much” finding “much inspirat’n as well as helpful practical suggestion in both of these.”\textsuperscript{116} The former “tries to aid the student in fashioning his ideals and describes what the daily attitude of his mind should be,” the latter applies the ideals to a particular field.\textsuperscript{117} For his mother King chose “the little sermons from Mornings in the Chapel” which he “enjoyed ... exceedingly” and “views of Harv. University for father.”\textsuperscript{118} All his life King presented his friends with these uplifting sorts of texts which he himself so frequently read.

\textsuperscript{114} Henry F. May, \textit{The End of Innocence; A Study of the First Years of Our Own Time}, 1912 - 1917 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959), 36 - 37.
\textsuperscript{116} W.L.M. King, Diary, 17 December 1898.
\textsuperscript{119} W.L.M. King, Diary, 17 December 1898.
Any study of King’s intellectual life must not only consider King’s religious views and the cultural climate of the day but also the related value system that operated at the turn of the century in North America. King’s generation was taught to work hard, postpone gratification, repress themselves sexually and above all improve themselves. This culture of improvement placed a high premium on education and planning ahead and using time wisely. It was often through the printed media that Victorians sought to improve themselves. Individual moral growth simultaneously contributed to the good of the community. Though undergoing great change, the educational system still emphasized the classics, moral philosophy and idealized heroes which fostered what Daniel Walker Howe termed “a self-righteousness of style.”

King’s late Victorian generation habitually expressed themselves in moral terms:

Victorian terminology laden with words like “duty” and “virtue,” has a ring of intolerable self-righteousness to our ears; the moral seriousness of the Victorians seems narrow-minded or, alternatively, hypocritical. It is the Victorian reformers who most often bear the brunt of our resentment. Historians need to begin with the recognition that such self-righteous tone was not peculiar to reformers, being also common among political conservatives and moderates in Victorian America.

King approached industrial relations both as a social scientist and as a moralist. He read thoroughly the important research in the field as well as works of such writers as the Reverend Hugh Black. Black’s book, Work, is not a discussion of economic problems but rather a sermon on the lessons of work and the subject of personal duty for “work is needed to attain moral progress and to conserve it when attained.”

To understand King, historians need to be willing to recover a sense of Victorian idealism and moralism. Only if they understand Victorian values and beliefs will they

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120 Ibid. 525.
121 Hugh Black, *Work* (Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1903), 8. King marked this section with two vertical lines. The book is signed by Hugh Black and the last page is dated, Dec 29-03. King met Rev. Black on at least two occasions and he recorded his visit to Chalmers Church in Ottawa and Laurier House in his diary. W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 21 March 1937.
be able to see King not as simply conservative and hypocritical but as more of a modern intellectual.

This thesis concentrates on aspects of King’s intellectual life not previously considered by historians. It deals with contemporary ideas that were important to King rather than his ambitions, manoeuvres or policies. It attempts to show how the mind of this successful statesman evolved and it demonstrates that his political development was sometimes related to his religious development. This study not only examines King’s reading on Gladstone and the works of William James but also what King read in conjunction with these texts. For example, King’s interest in James grew out of his interest in modern psychology which extended to include self-help books that offered advice on how to live life. These self-improvement books contained both secular and religious messages. This study also explores King’s interest in James as it developed in tandem to his interest in spiritualism. It attempts to determine the connections between his religious views and his contact with the invisible world.

This thesis is really a series of case studies of King’s reading which look beyond the narrow confines of King’s early academic life which has been previously detailed by historians. It examines many of the neglected texts in Mackenzie King’s library that were marked by him. Many of these contemporary writings that King pored over and cheered in his day have since been largely ignored and unread. Close examination of their ideas and pervasive religious rhetoric gives us a basis for understanding his way of thinking and his world view. This study looks at King’s marginalia in conjunction with his writings in his diary and correspondence to show King’s intellectual development. The computerization of King’s diary by the National Archives of Canada has definitely contributed to this study. Although being able to locate easily an author or any text throughout the vast diary was very useful, the nature of the on-line file does not insure that all searches are inclusive. A spelling
mistake by King or typing mark means some entries can be missed. However, the period in which King was reading a certain text is easily found and a page by page reading of the diary for that period can then also be carried out. In the course of this thesis, I have chosen to quote the transcript of King’s diary “as is,” with its spelling mistakes and its short forms in order to give the reader a feeling for this important historical resource.

In this thesis, three case studies trace out important phases in King’s intellectual life. In the early years King learned from reading political biographies, in particular those of Gladstone, the Christian politician, who remained the model for the aspiring King. In his middle years, when he suffered a breakdown, King turned to William James and re-examined his religious beliefs in terms of modern psychology. King shared his responses to James with his brother who also had a deep interest in psychology and who authored one of the many self-help books that King read to improve his ability to order his life. This study shows that King’s engagement with the works on Gladstone and the writings of William James contributed to his intellectual and political development. King’s mind was not fully formed in the nineteenth century.

Some searches due to the nature of the typed text yield odd results. For example, in a search for Salem Bland, using the name Bland, yielded hits in which the words Island and England are highlighted but no hits for Bland himself. In a search for hell the word ‘hall’ was highlighted as well as an article titled “Heil” Stalin. This may be because the typed letters are not distinct.

The entire diary is not computerized. Several sections have been left out. For example, the pages dictated to his private secretary, W.H. Measures during King’s trip to the Imperial Conference in October/November 1923 are not on-line. This special diary, which is indexed, is particularly illustrative of the nature of the diaries. Events and personages at the Conference are illuminated. As well King’s private meetings, social functions and travels indicate a full calendar. King was the guest at many luncheons and dinners given in his honour by important political people. A dinner at Lord and Lady Astor’s was a magnificent affair with a most interesting gathering of men that included the author, J.M. Barrie and Leo Strachey, the editor of The Spectator. King gave speeches in the North on industrial relations and all the newspaper reports are included. King visited old friends such as Gertrude Toynbee, Lord Grey and Lord and Lady Lyytelton. He attended the theatre and on a side trip to Paris, went to the Opera and visited the Dior clothing establishment. He went to Chatsworth and Gladstone’s estate at Hawarden. One of the most revealing sections was King’s swearing in ceremony as Privy Counsellor at Buckingham Palace. His thoughts as he was waiting to have the oath read were of the music which was the Holy Grail motive, The Pilgrim’s Chorus from Tannhauser. When the oath was being administered King’s thoughts were of his family. He experienced a feeling of emotion as he thought of his grandfather and what it would mean to him to witness the ceremony. He thought too of the Holy Grail, and its significance “in endeavouring to realise what is best and highest in life.” W.L.M.K. Diary, 10 October 1923
when he was at university, but as his reading demonstrates, he was still struggling and growing in his later life as he felt the force of certain tendencies in his culture. He learned from reading the memoirs and biographies of successful British politicians, especially Gladstone. That King’s mind was still open and adjusting to the modern challenges to his faith can be shown by an examination of his reading of William James.

In a final phase, King turned to the reading of spiritualist works, particularly in the period from 1930 - 1935, when he was in opposition. With the aid of the recently opened spiritualism files of the King Papers, and some of the many marked works on spiritualism in King’s library, this study attempts to examine King’s controversial connection to the spiritual world in a professional way. That King devoted so much time to the reading of works of spiritualism, may suggest that he was disenchanted with a secular world stripped of spiritual values. Religion was the most powerful influence on King’s life and it is a thread that links the three phases of King’s intellectual development. Gladstone’s faith stirred him and his ideals guided him. James’s pragmatic approach to religion and the notion of a truth other than that provided by science appealed to King. His focus on the subconscious rationalized King’s path to spiritualism which never overstepped the boundaries of King’s religious beliefs.

This thesis takes King seriously as a thinker with respect to his religious beliefs and even his spiritualism. Against many King scholars, who have viewed King as a man of demonstrably inferior intellect, I interpret King as an intellectual unusually attuned to the cultural concerns of his time. Against many secular historians who have scorned his religiosity, berated his intense moralism and his sentimentalism and dismissed his Christian idealism, I have not ignored his political vocation and sense of mission nor underrated his modernist impulses. The academic community today respects diversity and complexity and recognizes the importance of contextualization in understanding situations and people in relation to their particular culture. In my thesis, I extend this respect to Mackenzie King. We have been led to dislike Mackenzie
King because he is so middle of the road in nature, so ideologically moderate, so bland, and so ambivalent. This thesis explores his intellectual world and tolerates the very ambiguities that constitute the essence of King.

In Chapter Two there will be a brief literature review of the major works on King that attempt to address his intellectual development focusing on those which dispute King’s intellectualism. This chapter will also show the difficulty historians have had in interpreting the nature and importance of King’s religious views. Chapter Three presents the first case study - King’s reading of Gladstone. The focus is on the important reading of Morley’s *Life of Gladstone* which he began in 1904 and finished in 1906, but also includes all that King read about Gladstone throughout his entire life. Chapter Four explores King’s interest in psychology, in particular that of William James, and a whole range of self-help texts that King studied in order to improve himself. James’s religious writings presented a defence of religious truth which King found attractive in the period following his breakdown in 1916. Chapter Five attempts to explain King’s growing interest in spiritualism in relation to his liberal Christianity. Spiritualism was an extension of King’s religious convictions. The more politics dominated King’s outward activities, the more spiritualism dominated his interior life.
Mackenzie King has not been well remembered by the general public. When asked about King, the average Canadian knows about how he attended seances in an effort to communicate telepathically with the dead. The image of King as a strange little man who loved his mother who guided him from beyond has persisted. He is not generally remembered as the extraordinarily able politician that he was for so many years. The focus on his spiritualism has obscured a remarkable political record.

Nor has Mackenzie King received the attention he deserves as a thinker though the partisan Norman Rogers stressed that “the governing fact” about King was that he was “a student with the true student’s infinite capacity for taking pains.” King maintained long past his college days “the habits of a student” and approached political problems as well as spiritualism in the same studious way. It was King’s approach to learning that particularly fitted him to lead the Liberal Party of Canada. Intellectually, King was dominated by the scientific world view, especially evolutionary thought. Emotionally, however, King was still living in a spiritual universe in which man was a special creation of a beneficent deity. It was God’s world not man’s. How King struggled to successfully reconcile these two conflicting worlds to accommodate the new realities of organized capitalism in an urban-industrial environment remains important to the understanding of this complex political leader. The hopes and fears of the late Victorian period have faded and a gulf separates our world from theirs making it difficult to understand their anxieties about the fate of religion. It also makes it difficult for us to understand just how important it was for King to achieve a balance between his need for continuity and his desire for change.

King’s official biographers, R. McGregor Dawson and Blair Neatby produced excellent scholarly works.\textsuperscript{125} They were detailed political histories that gave the man credit for his “extraordinary gift of political insight.”\textsuperscript{126} Dawson’s biography of King’s early life reflected the conditions of King’s executors who did “not desire a purely laudatory work, but a truthful account as written and interpreted by one who is in general sympathy with Mr. King and his work and career.”\textsuperscript{127} *The Lonely Heights* and *The Prism of Unity* move chronologically through King’s relations with his party and with Great Britain and examine each session of the House of Commons and each election. In Neatby’s analysis of King’s minority government, there are lessons for contemporary Canadian political leaders. King’s patient courting of the Progressives resulted in an important victory in 1926. The victory revealed King as a strategic genius who had avoided three-cornered contests by encouraging co-operation at the constituency level. In Manitoba, for example, no riding nominated rival Liberal and Progressive candidates and six constituencies ran joint candidates. King corresponded with J.S. Woodsworth and sent congratulation telegrams to anti-Tory opponents. Increased support for the Liberals in 1926 was at the expense of the very Progressives King wooed. King succeeded in convincing western voters that a victory for the Liberals was the preferred option to a Tory win. Progressives were treated as misguided Liberals who could be returned to the fold. King’s tactics displayed an intuitive understanding of public opinion. In a time without polls, he knew where he was gaining votes. He demonstrated astonishing reserves of strength during the campaign and his audiences responded more to his fervent conviction that to his arguments.\textsuperscript{128} In 1935 the election results justified King’s focus on co-operation of federal and provincial governments amidst other party’s demands for radical reform. By his insistence on party unity, he avoided alienating


\textsuperscript{128} H. Blair Neatby, *The Lonely Heights*, Chapter Nine.

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any major region or group and he was rewarded with a large majority representing
every region of the country. As a politician, King believed that “enduring reform
depended upon moderate opinion which ‘would carry the great body of a nation with
him.”

Historians in recent years, myself included, have attempted to restore the reputation
of King constructed by the Canadian historical establishment of the 1960s and
1970s and want to present a more realistic portrait of this successful political leader
who remade the Liberal Party of Canada into the most powerful political force in the
country and whose cautious policy brought a united Canada into the Second World
War. In the 1970s when the secrets of King’s diary became public, historians had a
field day with his private oddities. C. P. Stacey’s *A Very Double Life*, published in
1976, helped insure that King’s memory would be covered with ridicule. Stacey, a
distinguished military historian, was bent on making King ludicrous and as much as
anyone established King as a figure of fun. Stacey’s narrative speculated on the
women in King’s life; he savoured King’s frustrated love life and showed no
compassion for his painful struggles over sexuality. Nor did he show any
understanding of how the belief in immortality led many millions of lonely people into
an intense effort to communicate with their departed relatives. Canadians learned
that King consorted with prostitutes and was obsessed with his mother. As
Charlotte Gray has suggested in her biography of King’s mother, “Stacey’s book
transformed the image of King from a canny politician to a selfish, strange little man.”
Whereas Stacey insisted that King’s diary comments on his “strolls” as time “worse
than wasted” were in fact visits to prostitutes, Gray believes that they might easily
have referred to other impulses equally repugnant to the earnest young Christian. If
Willie “had patronized such dens of iniquity, he would be riddled with remorse. If his

129 H. Blair Neatby, *The Prism of Unity*, Chapter 7 King or Chaos.
131 Charlotte Gray, *Mrs. King: The Life and Times of Isabel Mackenzie King* (Toronto: Penquin,
1997), xii.
time - wasted by sin was masturbation, he would be equally contrite afterwards.\textsuperscript{132}

Michael Bliss has also decried the impact of Stacey’s biography of King and suggested it was coloured by his feelings of contempt for King’s handling of the conscription crisis, resulting in the vulgarization of someone who was arguably one of Canada’s most important political leaders. Stacey became “sidetracked by the colourful trivia of history” and was aware that a little money might be made of an exposé of prime-ministerial sexuality.\textsuperscript{133} Unfortunately \textit{A Very Double Life} is still the first book about King that Canadians are apt to pick up. Although Stacey had a grudging regard for King’s talents as a politician, he thought that King had a second-rate mind, and that his experiments with ouija boards, table-rapping, and mediums proved it. Stacey acknowledged that King was “a ‘religious’ man, to the extent that the name of God, if not always on his lips, was very frequently in his diary,” but he focused on the superstitious rather than the religious and documented all of the oddities that marked King’s infamous path to spiritualism.\textsuperscript{134}

Neatby’s treatment of King’s spiritualism had been more compassionate and less sensational. For King spiritualism was a form of distraction:

\begin{quote}
In his years as Leader of the Opposition politics absorbed less of his time and he was therefore more free to yield to his fascination for the many manifestations of the spirit world; his ventures into the occult helped to disipate his loneliness and also to reassure him of his significance as a person as well as a public figure. Politics would continue to be his major occupation but in this less hectic interim he could allow himself the luxury of a private world.\textsuperscript{135}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{132} C. P. Stacey, \textit{A Very Double Life: The Private World of Mackenzie King} (Toronto: Macmillan, 1976), 42. Charlotte Gray, \textit{Mrs. King}, 136. W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 9 October 1893. The diary entry reads: “The night was worse than wasted. Went out about 8 P.M. and returned at 11.30. All the intervening time worse than wasted. Saw a little side of the dark side of the world which results in my making a firm resolution which with God’s help I will keep.”


\textsuperscript{134} C. P. Stacey, \textit{A Very Double Life}, 160.

\textsuperscript{135} H. Blair Neatby, \textit{The Prism of Unity}, 70.
Neatby cited King’s correspondence with one of his psychical friends:

The time I give to it, however, is rather by way of diversion and relaxation, and I should add, inspiration, than anything in the matter of serious study and research. I recognize that my real work is in Parliament and in dealing with present day affairs, and, in particular, the problems of the people. Nothing, however, has helped me quite so much in the prosecution of my day to day work than what I have gained, and continue to gain, from the time I am able to give at odd moments to reading and reflection along psychical lines.¹³⁶

Neatby suggested that King’s faith in the immanence of the spiritual world was “unorthodox” and “even eccentric” but he claimed that without it King might not have survived. King’s “emotional insecurity” might have destroyed a less resourceful man but King was able to find the reassurance he needed by contacting the spiritual world. Neatby concluded that “it was almost paradoxical that this faith in the occult, which some might have interpreted as evidence of emotional instability, gave King the stability to cope with the strains and stresses of a long political career.”¹³⁷

History was already being unkind to King before Stacey’s attack on his private life. Critics both from the left and the right had begun the assault on King. Donald Creighton portrayed him as a pudgy waffler “with an audible wheeze when in full voice.” In Canadian politics, King’s work was “purely negative and destructive.” He broke up “the Britannic union” and prepared Canada for eventual absorption into the United States.¹³⁸ Ferns and Ostry dismissed the celebratory work of Bruce Hutchinson so justly entitled, The Incredible Canadian, that had pictured King as a radical sympathizer of the labour movement. From their Marxist perspective, they claimed that King actually “placed obstacles in the way of labour and limited the

¹³⁷ H. Blair Neatby, The Prism of Unity, 79.
power of labour to bargain.”

Without the access to the King papers that the official biographers were given, they produced an alternative interpretation which presented a harshly unsympathetic and unflattering picture of King, questioning his motives, effectiveness and even his integrity. Though they constantly threw King’s inconsistencies before the reader, describing him as “gyrating... like a magnetic compass in the vicinity of a cyclotron,” their final assessment of King’s success did acknowledge that “he was a scientific politician” and that he understood better than any of his serious rivals in Canada the actual forces he had to deal with. Ferns by his own admission had studied King “through a Marxist microscope.” In his memoirs, “with the missionary blinkers off,” he recanted and made a point of correcting the impression that Stacey had gleaned from the diaries. Canada was not governed by “a superstitious lunatic” but rather by “a sensitive, clear-headed, political technician with an unrivalled sense of the nuances of Canadian politics. ... In terms of understanding the political problems of Canada and in knowing what the Canadian people as a whole were willing to accept from a government, Mackenzie King was miles ahead of any of the active participants in politics.” Ferns recognized that the diaries had diminished King and portions revealed “a foolish and childish immaturity of private personality in contradiction to his great ability as a public man.”

In 1974, the centenary of King’s birth, a colloquium was held at the University of Waterloo on King’s impact on Canadian politics. This conference produced a collection of papers much more sympathetically attuned to King’s achievements. Assisted by the new access to King’s diaries, and less preoccupied with partisan politics, the new King scholars produced a more convincing portrait of King. In “Mackenzie King and American Progressivism,” Keith Cassidy examined King’s close ties with American intellectual and economic leaders and “the often contradictory

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140 Henry S. Ferns and Bernard Ostry, The Age of Mackenzie King, 169, 278.
141 H. S. Ferns, Reading from Left to Right: One Man’s Political History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 140 - 141, 336.
142 Ibid., 141.
character of his ideas which clearly mirror those of the American reformers.”  Yet Cassidy suggests that in some ways King was out of step with the rest of his contemporaries: “In an age increasingly practical and secular in temper, King’s religious fervor and emphasis on the spiritual was unusual. ... Certainly many shared his Protestant moralism but they did not employ the sustained religious symbolism which is so marked a feature of Industry and Humanity.” Cassidy understood how important Christianity was in shaping King but he maintained that his religious convictions pulled him in different directions. They created “a tension” in his mind “between social concern and distrust of human nature.” One led to a reformist stance, the other to a rejection of socialism. Socialism was impossible and undesirable because it weakened the character of the individual. Another tension was the dichotomy between the material and the spiritual. As a labour expert and politician, King was of course caught up in the world of material reality but as Cassidy argued, “he became increasingly convinced that the material world was defective and illusory and that the spiritual realm was alone truly good and real.” Cassidy found this emphasis on the spiritual rather than the material, “curious” in a man who in many ways was so “anti-speculative and so capable of shrewd manipulation in the worlds of business and politics.” In Cassidy’s final analysis King was “unique, and the historian should recognize the idiosyncratic character of his thought.” Although King “borrowed freely from others, and can hardly be said to have been a creative and original philosopher, he was something more that an unreflective copyist of other people’s ideas” and thus “worthy of respect.”

Historians of the left have continued to capitalize on the ‘weird Willie’ phenomenon

144 Ibid., 126.
145 Ibid., 112.
146 Ibid., 106.
147 Ibid., 112.
148 Ibid., 112.
149 Ibid., 127.
150 Ibid., 127.
and have used his ghostly ravings to further denigrate King. In particular, Reginald Whitaker described his first examination of King’s diaries as “a descent into delirium” from which he staggered “shell-shocked and blinking from the Public Archives into the bright sunshine of an Ottawa afternoon.” Following in the tradition of Ferns and Ostry who acknowledged that King had been taught by men of profound insight, Whitaker granted that King was an important intellectual who formulated an abstract and systematic vision of society. His understanding of the economic and class aspects of political conflict “distinguished him sharply from fellow Liberals who lived in the nineteenth century” and gave King “a special touch of modernity” which other Liberals lacked.

Whitaker focused on the contradictory nature of King’s thought: “King without contradiction would be like Canada without conflict.” He carefully outlined the major influences of Arnold Toynbee, an English economist and social reformer who had attempted to Christianize capitalist economics and Henry Drummond, a popularizer of Darwinism, “of somewhat dubious authenticity,” who argued that evolution was a teleological process leading toward the ultimate perfection of God, with altruism, and charity incorporated into the struggle for survival. Whitaker recognized King’s superior education. At the University of Toronto, William James Ashley, Toynbee’s most eminent disciple, taught King an economics influenced by the German historical school which challenged the laws of classical economics. At Chicago, Thorstein Veblen introduced King to socialism and the institutional school. At Harvard, which provided King with his greatest intellectual stimulation, Frank Taussig lectured on classical political economy and William Cunningham, another student of Toynbee, devoted considerable attention to the relationship between economics as a science

154 Ibid., 139.
155 Ibid., 146.
and the moral imperatives of religion.\textsuperscript{156} The absorption of such thinkers, claimed Whitaker, created “a permanent tension in his emotional as well as in his intellectual life.”\textsuperscript{157}

Whitaker also very briefly examined King’s reading in the early period after his university days were over. King immersed himself in the practical literature of labour relations rather than in theoretical works. King’s passion for significant writers such as Arnold, Carlyle and Ruskin was seen by Whitaker as evidence that King was moving in a conservative direction. King’s interest in “the spiritual and inspirational type of literature ... showed a certain lack of discrimination” and King “took some works seriously which no one with any taste or intelligence ought to have wasted time on.”\textsuperscript{158} No examples were given but one may assume that Whitaker was referring to those popular moralistic works favoured by King which elitist academics abhor. For a secular Whitaker, “Christianity made King a natural conservative.”\textsuperscript{159}

Although Whitaker’s treatment of King’s \textit{Industry and Humanity} was revisionist in that he regarded the work as “an important statement of liberalism” with “a fundamentally visionary quality,” he viewed King within an academic Marxist framework that saw King as a corporate liberal offering “an alternative to socialism” and “an answer to labour militancy” without changing the basic structure of capitalism.\textsuperscript{160}

Paul Craven was one of the first labour historians to approach King in terms of his role as an intellectual.\textsuperscript{161} He argued that “a sophisticated ideology” informed his policy and that he performed the social role of ‘organic' intellectual as defined by Gramsci.\textsuperscript{162} Craven examined more closely King’s intellectual orientation which was

\textsuperscript{156} King’s library contains the works of Toynbee, Ashley, Taussig, Cunningham and Veblen.
\textsuperscript{157} Reginald Whitaker, “The Liberal Corporatist Ideas of Mackenzie King,” 146.
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{159} Ibid., 150.
\textsuperscript{160} Ibid., 159, 169.
\textsuperscript{161} Robert Fisher-Mahood, “Ideology in the Work of Mackenzie King” (M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1973). This little known thesis also examined King as an organic intellectual and found an underlining unity in King’s work.
\textsuperscript{162} Paul Craven, \textit{‘An Impartial Umpire’: Industrial Relations and the Canadian State, 1900 - 1911} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 364.
conditioned by his exposure to academic social thought. Deeply influenced by Toynbee’s seminal analysis of modern society, his allegiance was claimed early by the new English historical school which leaned heavily towards the view that trade unions could improve the position of workers and advocated a positive role for the state. Changing social conditions challenged the iron laws of political economy which had become overly abstract and divorced from social reality. Craven chose to view King in terms of the transitional thinking of the new economists rather than focus on King’s contradictions and inconsistencies.

Craven’s view of King’s intellectual formation in terms of King’s university career is perhaps too narrow. Contesting the view that his intellectual awakening came as a graduate student at Chicago and Harvard, Craven claims that though Chicago and Harvard were important, “King’s ideas and vocation were essentially formed during his University of Toronto years.”

This emphasis leads to an extensive analysis of the influence of James Mavor, for example, but unfortunately leads Craven to downplay other important influences. For example, Craven easily dismissed King’s encounter at Chicago with Albion Small whose text was to prove so important to King in his work on the infamous charts appended to *Industry and Humanity*.

Craven did explore King’s reading of a less noticed work by Charles Kingsley. In *Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet*, “a rather dreadful novel of Christian Socialism and class relations,” Kingsley defended the church and its relation to social problems and described the ‘sweating system’ in the tailoring trade most vividly. King’s own report on sweating in government contract work in 1898 led to government action. However, generally Craven focused on King’s university professors as key to his intellectual development. He maintained that the great themes of *Industry and Humanity* were those which reflected the thinking of Toynbee, Ashley, Mavor and Veblen and that the time for accumulation of intellectual capital was spent early in

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163 Ibid., 51 - 52.
164 See Margaret Bedore, “The Infamous Charts of Mackenzie King from *Industry and Humanity*” (MA thesis, Queen’s University, 2003).
King’s career.  

Ramsay Cook provided a broader view of King’s intellectual development as part of a study of a religiously inspired body of social reformers. In *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada*, Cook explored the way in which reformers attempted to maintain religion’s centrality by giving it a close relationship to social issues. In response to the modernist challenges of Darwinian science and higher criticism, Cook argued that liberal Protestantism redefined Christianity to emphasize its ethical and social meaning. By playing down dogma and theology, social reform thought moved from a religious to a social science perspective.  

The irony of the reformers’ quest for relevance was that this liberalized Protestantism led to its own demise: “the path blazed by nineteenth-century religious liberals led not to the Kingdom of God on earth but to the secular city.”  

In his attempt to round out King’s development, Cook covered the same academic territory discussed by other historians concluding that the leftward drift to socialism King experienced at Chicago was “halted and reversed at Harvard.” In Cook’s view, King’s academic education only “supplemented rather than supplanted the convictions and values which liberal Christianity had taught him.”  

Although King worked hard and learned a great deal from his academic advisors, “what he learned fitted into a set of social principles based on his liberal Protestantism which altered very little during his university years - or later, for that matter.” This thoroughly liberalized version of Christianity was the product of his Presbyterian home, his regular Bible reading and also the hundreds of sermons and religious tracts he had absorbed in his early years. Cook examined more than King’s academic life. He noted his contacts with working people and radicals. “The most underestimated

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166 Ibid., 75.
168 Ibid., 229.
169 Ibid., 205.
170 Ibid., 201.
171 Ibid., 207.
aspect of King’s education ... took place in the university of the streets,” where he met socialists and trade unionists and attended lectures by Jane Addams, Henry George, Washington Gladden and Eugene Debs.\textsuperscript{172}

More important to this study, Cook used King’s reading, relying on the record from King’s diary and also some texts at Laurier House, including references on occasion to the marginalia, to show King’s conservative nature.\textsuperscript{173} For example, he wrote that King read Edmond Demolins’ \textit{Anglo-Saxon Superiority: To What Is It Due} “very attentively.”\textsuperscript{174} He “swallowed the message whole” from W. H. Mallock’s \textit{Aristocracy and Evolution} which strongly supported an anti-labour and individualist point of view.\textsuperscript{175} Cook’s judgment on King’s reading reflected his own bias:

He found writers like Adam Smith and Karl Marx indigestible. The Toynbees, Veblens, Demolins and Mallocks, with their sweeping generalizations and moralistic conclusions were the thinkers who caught King’s fancy. Their ideas fitted into his own moralistic mentality and they seemed more useful to a young man who despite his intelligence was not an intellectual. Application not speculation, attracted King. And he was not always willing to distinguish rhetoric from analysis.\textsuperscript{176}

That Cook placed Thorstein Veblen in the company of W. H. Mallock is certainly surprising considering the importance of Veblen’s evolutionary economics and his serious critique of socialism.\textsuperscript{177} Cook seemed also to have regarded William James, America’s foremost philosopher, the first of its psychologists and a champion of religious pluralism, as also intellectually suspect. King’s reference to James’s notion of ‘human blindness’ in \textit{Industry and Humanity}, according to Cook, was merely “a

\textsuperscript{172} Ibid., 197.
\textsuperscript{173} Ibid., 273, Footnote 8.
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid., 205.
\textsuperscript{175} Ibid. 206.
\textsuperscript{176} Ibid. 206.
naive faith in the power of positive thinking."\textsuperscript{178} Cook indicated in a footnote that King’s copy of William James’s \textit{Memoirs and Studies} was “very carefully read especially the essays arguing for the validity of the findings of psychic research."\textsuperscript{179} Although King undoubtedly found psychical research interesting, a closer look at his marginalia does not support Cook’s case nor does King’s diary. There are more markings in the very well known essays, “The Moral Equivalent of War” and “The Energies of Men.”\textsuperscript{180} Although Cook acknowledged that King read a good deal of James’s writings on religion, he referred only to his earliest reading of \textit{Human Immortality} in 1902 which was shortly after the death of King’s close friend, Bert Harper. Cook wrote that James’s “untheological case for immortality” impressed King.\textsuperscript{181} The point that King had “no interest in theological works” was repeated by Cook to devalue King’s liberalized Christianity that Cook found was weakened by the abandonment of theology. Cook continually represented King’s liberalized faith as simplistic, shallow and “self-serving.”\textsuperscript{182} Lacking “a systematic theology,” King’s religious beliefs and ideas were “a mélange of modernist platitudes that were more often sentimental than coherent.”\textsuperscript{183} In this way, as in many other ways, “King reflected the intellectual confusion of a society passing from Protestant orthodoxy through religious liberalism to a secular humanism founded on social science.”\textsuperscript{184}

In the context of this secularization thesis developed in the 1960s and 1970s, Cook saw the erosion of religious faith as inevitable and not an occasion for regret. He complacently approved the demise of religious influences in the face of modernity. As societies became modern, democratic and rational, religious mentalities would decline. As people became more rational and scientific they challenged religious beliefs. For example, they looked to evolutionary biology rather than the book of \textit{Genesis} to account for the origins of the human species. In the face of illness or
\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{178} Ramsay Cook, \textit{The Regenerators}, 210.
\bibitem{179} Ibid., 216, Footnote 16.
\bibitem{180} William James, \textit{Memories and Studies} (London: Longmans, Green, 1911).
\bibitem{181} Ramsay Cook, \textit{The Regenerators}, 200.
\bibitem{182} Ibid., 197 - 198.
\bibitem{183} Ibid., 210, 197.
\bibitem{184} Ibid., 198.
\end{thebibliography}
depression people demanded medicine and psychology not miracles and prayer. King and also Trudeau, however, have defied this secularization model. Although both participated in the secularization of Canadian society, both remained devoutly religious and their religion was an important part of their intellectual development.

In 1980, Joy Esberey attempted a psychological investigation of Mackenzie King. She challenged the “double vision” of King and the tendency to separate his private life from his public career, “an approach which makes much of his behaviour inexplicable except in the crude terms of hypocrisy or political expediency.” Instead she argued that King must be viewed as an integrated whole. Her Freudian melodrama was a devastating critique of the King family which Esberey suggested had a great deal to do with the development of King’s neurotic personality. “As a result of this trip to the psychiatrist,” by Esberey, Robert Keyserlingk argued that “King emerges as an even more hopelessly neurotic, egotistical, hypocritical, and self-deluded shell than has usually been assumed.”

Esberey acknowledged the importance of religion to King in her chapter, “The Neurotic Self.” Without comprehension of the nature of his beliefs it would be difficult to grasp the essence of his motives and actions. She supported Blair Neatby, one of the official biographers of King, and his view that King never outgrew his “Sunday School version of Christianity” and that King never understood that “the black and white honesty of childhood was too simple for the complexities of adult life.” King’s religious sentiments were “immature” and he accepted religion unreflectively and uncritically. From this viewpoint Esberey made an incredible leap to suggest that King’s political views were also immature and that this perspective explained “the rather simplistic ideas that King held on industrial and international affairs and his

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attitude to his party and the British connection.\textsuperscript{189}

According to Esberey, King had internalized the model of Gladstone and he had added emotional links through contacts with Gladstone’s living relatives. King stood “with both feet firmly planted in the mainstream of Gladstonian Liberalism and viewed the problems of modern Canada from this nineteenth-century stance.” When in opposition in the thirties, King, according to Esberey, failed to revitalize the party but instead reaffirmed his commitment to nineteenth-century ideology. He regarded himself as “the only surviving Gladstone Liberal, and Morley’s \textit{Life of Gladstone} was one of the volumes that King frequently turned to for inspiration.” In doing so King looked to the future with “a perspective controlled by the past.”\textsuperscript{190} Esberey’s psychological assessment of King ‘s performance in the 1930s contradicts the earlier work of Blair Neatby, who believed that King’s commitment to party unity resulted in his acceptance of new ideas. On monetary issues, Neatby suggested that King “had begun with the certainty that inflation was a sin but had come to accept the idea of a central bank which might manipulate currency and credit on the basis of social need.”\textsuperscript{191} On fiscal policy, “he had begun with the traditional ideas of a limited role for government with balanced budgets and had come to accept the idea of government responsibility for controlling the level of economic activity.”\textsuperscript{192} By 1938 King’s financial orthodoxy had evolved to the extent that he reconciled himself to deficit financing.\textsuperscript{193} Under King, the Liberal Party did respond, “gradually and tentatively to the pressures of a revolutionary decade,” and under King’s leadership it responded without party division and with popular support.\textsuperscript{194}

Esberey rightly saw King’s research into life after death as connected to his religious beliefs. She also saw his spiritualism in the context of King’s neurosis, as “a

\textsuperscript{189} Ibid., 102.
\textsuperscript{190} Ibid., 141 - 143.
\textsuperscript{191} H. Blair Neatby, \textit{The Politics of Chaos: Canada in the Thirties} (Toronto: Gage, 1972), 86.
\textsuperscript{192} Ibid., 86 - 87.
\textsuperscript{193} H. Blair Neatby, \textit{The Prism of Unity}, 309.
\textsuperscript{194} H. Blair Neatby, \textit{The Politics of Chaos}, 87.
defence mechanism directed to easing the tensions and anxieties aroused in the public world.”

King’s need for reassurance drove him to seek confirmation of decisions already reached and those reflected back from beyond the veil were really “self-direction and nothing more.” Esberey suggested that King’s spiritualist activities were concentrated around elections as they were particularly traumatic times for insecure political leaders. She also identified the period after 1930 when King was in opposition as a particularly active time for his spiritualism but when King was returned to power in 1935 there was a reduced need. Esberey never understood the continuous nature of King’s interest in spiritualism after 1930.

A more recent psychological study of King by Paul Roazen examined the psychiatric data provided by the files of Dr. Adolf Meyer at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore Maryland where King was a patient in 1916. In *Canada’s King: An Essay in Political Psychology*, Roazen focused on King’s mid-life crisis as a turning point in his life and explored what motivated King and how his personality influenced his political career. Meyer’s file casts special light on King’s occult beliefs, his failure ever to marry and also some of the sources of his political strength. King first saw Dr. Lewellys Franklin Barker, who had been born and educated in Canada and was currently President of the American Neurological Association. They established a good rapport, exchanged book recommendations and formed a life-long relationship. King responded well also to Meyer who was a world class psychiatrist and a colleague of William James. Meyer recommended the works of James to King as well as a list of self-help books. Roazen understood that “one of the hard parts to follow about King was the way in which his ambitiousness, spiritualism and religiousness were all bound up together.” King’s whole belief in electrical influences seemed intimately tied up with his religious convictions. His mysticism

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196 Ibid., 131.
198 Ibid., 104.
was “an antidote to his worldly pragmatism.” Roazen suggested that King’s well
known penchant for spiritualism could be specifically traced to his 1916 crisis and that
there was a need to integrate that spiritualism into a discussion of his
accomplishments.

Commenting on King’s leadership style, Roazen agreed that it was not of a
charismatic sort but that at the same time he was a great prime minister. King knew
how to direct his cabinet and how to delegate responsibility. He was not fearful of
having strong and capable associates. A recent study of the relationship between
Ernest Lapointe and Mackenzie King by Lita-Rose Betcherman demonstrates the
nature of their very close and effective partnership. Lapointe was a soulmate to King
as they essentially agreed on Canada’s place in the world, on national unity and how
to keep the Liberal Party in power. The partnership began at the leadership
convention in 1919 and remained paramount in the careers of both men until
Lapointe’s death in 1941. Lapointe promoted King’s policies in Quebec and also
influenced those policies by giving King the French-Canadian perspective and in
matters pertaining strictly to Quebec, King invariably deferred to his Quebec
lieutenant. Together they “coped amazingly well with the Canadian duality” and King
never wearied of referring to their closeness.

Betcherman’s analysis of the King-Lapointe partnership differs from that of Esberey
who claimed the relationship required “little in the way of analysis.” Esberey
suggested that Lapointe, as with Joan Patteson in King’s private life, was willing to
surrender his personal preferences to King’s view of political necessity. She
dismissed the real significance of Lapointe, noting he was “an ideal colleague” who
made no demands on King over and above the necessary in the cause of national
unity and political success. On the other hand, Blair Neatby, one of the official

199 Ibid., 147.
200 Lita-Rose Betcherman, Ernest Lapointe: Mackenzie King’s Great Quebec Lieutenant (Toronto:
University of Toronto Press, 2002), 349.
202 Ibid., 190.
biographers of King, maintained that King creatively shared power with his French lieutenant, and that “no other English-Canadian prime minister in the twentieth century has succeeded in establishing this relationship, although it is not for want of trying.”

King realized that he was not an expert on French Canada. His solution was to create a unique structure within the party to ensure French-Canadian input into all political decisions. Lapointe was King’s closest associate within the party and was consulted on every political issue and King weighed his opinions carefully. Although Lapointe expressed his views frankly, at the same time he was a loyal Liberal and, as Neatby suggests, “he accepted his subordinate role and never questioned King’s authority as his chief.”

Whereas Esberey’s psychological profile of King as an insecure politician coloured her view of all King’s relationships, other historians have acknowledged the skill with which King handled people. In particular, J. L. Granatstein, who has examined how King operated in cabinet during the Second World War, found that King put together and managed an efficient cabinet and that King’s self-confidence in his own judgment was a central factor. King had the ability to judge men: “He was a traditional prime minister, a professional, hard when he had to be, ruthless in disposing of other men when necessary.” Granatstein’s view echoes Blair Neatby’s assessment of his political leadership. King was “an ambivalent figure” and although he seemed “flabby and indecisive” he picked forceful and powerful colleagues whom he “controlled and dominated.” King had the force of personality and leadership skills to impose himself on his colleagues.

Rather than focusing on the oddities which have tended to obscure King’s remarkable political record, Robert Wardhaugh attempted a more realistic portrait of

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204 H. Blair Neatby, The Prism of Unity, 128.
206 Ibid., 189.
207 H. Blair Neatby, “King and the Historians,” 12.
King by approaching King’s success through the opinionated but insightful perspective of John Wesley Dafoe.\textsuperscript{208} From the editorial desk of the \textit{Winnipeg Free Press}, Dafoe’s view of King in 1919 after King’s selection as leader was that King generally belonged to the progressive end of the party but also was the puppet of the Quebec Liberals who had ensured his selection as leader. As King took a strong position on dominion autonomy, Dafoe’s opinion gradually began to change. As King began to master the skills of brokerage politics, Dafoe saw these skills as valuable in governing such a diverse nation as Canada. Although he was occasionally annoyed at King’s hesitation, he also thought that King usually made the right decision when he acted. Dafoe’s changing views provide an important perspective on the success of King. He did not inspire enthusiasm and his brokerage politics were difficult to praise but they were effective and Dafoe came to recognize this essential fact.

Much has been written of King’s relationship with the American capitalist, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. However, as historians have gradually moved away from a narrow Marxist perspective, interpretations of this relationship have moderated. Stephen J. Scheinberg convincingly challenged the view of Ferns and Ostry that suggested that King merely supplied window-dressing for the anti-unionist Rockefellers and the American historian, Howard M. Gitelman, recorded the remarkable skill which King displayed in guiding the conservative Rockefeller to a more progressive stance.\textsuperscript{209} Albert F. Schenkel, another American historian, has described the relationship in the context of their shared religious convictions. Mackenzie King was “the person who sought to help Rockefeller to step outside the confines of his privileged class and genuinely to encounter the situations of others.” The two seemed to enjoy “a


spiritual affinity” and under King’s tutelage, Rockefeller was able to present himself in a way that won the sympathy of some part of the public. Joe Martin suggested that the importance of King as Canada’s first management consultant deserves greater recognition. King “won the support of Rockefeller and the workers, in spite of subsequent denunciations by Samuel Gompers and Canadian left-wing academics.”

In 1908 when Harvard University established what has become the most famous business school in the world, King had been offered the deanship.

What is very interesting about the historiography of Mackenzie King is that it seems to be coming full circle back to the official biographies. Recent works focus more on King’s public contributions rather than his private idiosyncrasies. In Right Honourable Men, Michael Bliss concludes that of Canada’s greatest prime ministers, King “appears to have been smarter and more successful, doing more for the party and the country” than other prime ministers. Only Trudeau’s abilities and achievements vied with King’s. King was the “most highly-educated.”

Even during his student years, King was the great ‘networker’ and made the acquaintance of dozens of the leading lights of the Anglo-American intellectual and political world. In 1909 Harvard accepted a government report he had written on Oriental immigration to Canada as a doctoral thesis. “The qualities that he brought to governing Canada -- high intelligence, immense knowledge of government and politics, caniness, wariness, and utter dedication to his calling -- helped him keep the ship of state on course and prevent disasters in stormy, shark-infested waters.”

Bliss has questioned the use made of King’s diaries. Much of what Stacey and the psychologists found in King’s private life was “at best half true.”

212 Michael Bliss, Right Honourable Men: The Descent of Canadian Politics from Macdonald to Mulroney, 129.
213 Ibid., 183.
214 Ibid., 129.
diaries are “carefully read,” they “portray an extraordinarily gifted and sensitive man, the product of a certain moment in cultural history, who dedicated his life to public service.” When the diaries are placed in the context of their religious purpose, they portray a young man struggling to set a course for his future:

His diaries contain a sometimes moving record of a Christian’s struggles with sin and temptation, a pilgrim’s efforts to progress. ... All his life he from time to time berated himself for his failings, endlessly seeking perfection, endlessly falling short. What Stacey dismissed as “orgies of self-contempt” had a lot to do with ideas of sin and salvation and the impulse to Christian perfectionism. ... When Mackenzie King went down on his knees, as he did almost every day of his life, it was to pray for guidance and strength to be a better man ... or to do a better job -- a form of self-abasement probably foreign to most Ottawa bedrooms in our time.

The historiography of King is following the gradual movement of history towards cultural studies. The promoters of a dominant social history, often coming from a Marxist perspective, have generally been unwilling to address the ideas and programs of social movements that are not “certifiably subaltern” and as a result, cultural historians are beginning to fill the breach. As James Livingston has suggested, “cultural historians typically treat great books, ideas, and individuals with great care because they believe these ‘texts’ can neither be reduced to nor understood apart from their historical contexts.” Their focus is on language rather than class. As many Canadian historians gradually adopt a cultural approach and abandon their class theories, a more well-rounded and more charitable picture of King will emerge.

Recent articles in Mackenzie King: Citizenship and Community, the product of a major conference on King held at the University of Waterloo in 2002, focus on how

King was very much a product of the community where he spent his early years and

Ibid., 129.
Ibid., 131 - 132.
indicate how these experiences may have influenced his later career. New relationships and new areas are introduced that reflect current trends in cultural history. In particular, Stephanie Bangarth’s essay on “Mackenzie King and Japanese Canadians” reflects the preoccupation of contemporary historians with racism. Tracing King’s long experience with the ‘Oriental question’, Bangarth suggests that his attitudes towards Asians were very much in keeping with, though often more moderate than, the general opinion of the day. King was “guided by the middle-class Victorian notions on race which permeated his government’s policies concerning Asians, the climax of which was the 1942 internment of Japanese Canadians.” Another article by Ian E. Wilson describes King’s thirty year intellectual relationship with Arthur Doughty, Dominion Archivist from 1904 to 1935. Each had a sense of the past and the need to preserve its records, that came to bear on the relationship. However, Kenneth Westhues’s approach to King as a sociologist in training in Chicago retains a Marxist frame of reference that sees the rise of corporate capitalism as a tragedy. According to Westhues, King gradually abandoned sociology, shifted his priorities away from trying to transform the status quo and ‘sold out’: he became “a lackey of the capitalist class he had once ridiculed, the Rockefeller family in particular. His retreat into the spirit world is probably best understood as his way of dealing with the failure he knew he had become, by the standards of the man for whom he was named.” Similarly, James Struthers’s article based on his earlier work, No Fault of Their Own, is an ideological critique of the Canadian “liberal residualist, or means-tested welfare state,” the roots of which he traced to King.

Like many detractors, he portrays King as a very cautious and conservative politician who had to be dragged kicking and screaming into the modern


world rather than the figure depicted by Bliss, “an old fox who was not sure that the young pups knew what they were doing, or that their activities were always good for Canadians.”\textsuperscript{222} That King was cautious and vaguely sensed some of the perils of the welfare state which later surfaced, Bliss suggests, proved him to have had the better foresight.\textsuperscript{223}

While the literature on Mackenzie King reflects considerable disagreement on his political achievements, it also suggests that historians have experienced enormous difficulties in coming to terms with his religious side and his spiritualism. His detractors have had a field day with his personal oddities and his occult practices - “The Mother’s boy in the lonely room With his dog, his medium and his ruins.”\textsuperscript{224} A recent publication for young people, \textit{William Lyon Mackenzie King: The Loner Who Kept Canada Together}, suggested that King “generally preferred the company of his dogs to humans (he had three Irish terriers in a row all named Pat).”\textsuperscript{225} Although Nate Hendley wrote “our Willie was tubby and bland, ponderous and dull (in public that is),” he acknowledged that he was “a strange, steadfast, complex man” who led Canada through “exciting, violent, world-altering times” and “created the social safety net that Canadians in need still count on today” but he could not resist describing King as “hanging around with the dead” and “socializing with the otherworldly spirits.”\textsuperscript{226}

King’s religiosity has been a source of embarrassment for most secular scholars. In order to counter such responses, Robert Keyserlingk has suggested in his more sympathetic study of King that spiritualist beliefs were fairly widespread among educated members of King’s generation and that King’s own spiritualism was “not so unique and strange.”\textsuperscript{227} Similarly, Edwina von Baeyer’s fascinating study of King’s

\textsuperscript{222} Michael Bliss, \textit{Right Honourable Men}, 154.
\textsuperscript{223} Ibid., 183.
\textsuperscript{226} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{227} Robert H. Keyserlingk, “Mackenzie King’s Spiritualism and His View of Hitler in 1939,” 30.
landscaping activities at Kingsmere was a sympathetic treatment of King’s life-long hobby which provided a creative outlet for his spiritualism. As Baeyer suggested, the artificial ruins that King constructed “combined his romanticism, love of antiquity, psychical interest, and his religiosity.”228 Building ruins also “connected King’s North American self with the antiquity of Europe” and provided a sense of continuity that “not only enhanced his feelings of self-worth, but also fulfilled his need to feel loved, to be comforted and to not be alone.”229

The history of King is a rich and voluminous one. This is not surprising given that he was a major political player in Canada during the first half of the twentieth century and such an unusual personality. King has amassed many detractors and many admirers. The detractors have often taken us from the more balanced view of King first recorded by his official biographers. Despite the continuous assessments of historians, King still eludes us. There is no intellectual history of King - The Mind of Mackenzie King. We have not understood how King never regarded his education as ended. There is no complete work on his religious life - The Faith of Mackenzie King. We have not appreciated how religion sustained King throughout a long career and filtrated through all his thoughts. The windows to his mind and his faith need to be opened to bring us closer to the real Mackenzie King.

This thesis examines only a portion of King’s reading but it does examine a range from the works on Gladstone and the writings of William James to the investigation of spiritualism. In order to refute the interpretations of such historians as C. P. Stacey, who questioned the intellectual ability of King and his sincere acceptance of his faith, this thesis looks closely at the marginal markings made by King that show his interaction with the thoughts of many of his contemporaries. It was through his careful reading that King learned much of what was necessary to make him a master politician.

228 Edwina von Baeyer, Garden of Dreams: Kingsmere and Mackenzie King (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1990), 156.
229 Ibid., 158.
When Mackenzie King was a young student, he was introduced to Jane Addams and the work of Arnold Toynbee. His diary records his impassioned response: “I love Toynbee and I love Miss Addams. I love the work in which the one was and the other is & which I hope soon to be engaged in.”

After his return from his tour of Germany and England, on a Harvard travelling fellowship, King read a sketch of Gladstone from Newell Dwight Hillis’ *Great Books as Life Teachers*. His diary records the same kind of enthusiasm for William Ewart Gladstone, who was to become the model for King’s political life: “Oh God I want to be like that man and my whole nature thirsts for the opportunity to do the work even as he did his, to be strong in my ideals, true to the most real purposes, & firm in the struggle for the right & true.”

Historians have often dismissed King’s enthusiasms and have been skeptical of their intellectual origins. A recent text describes King’s library as “lined with British biographies and books on British politics and British thought - most of them unread, to be sure, but nevertheless a sure sign of their owner’s tastes and affections.”

This is a contemptuous comment on King’s lack of intellectualism for many of those detailed memoirs and political texts were carefully read, marked copiously, and discussed in King’s diary. Biographies were an important source of understanding for King and works on British Liberals were his favourite as they were “helpful in letting [him] see the inner relations of politics in Great Britain, the similarity of problems & issues.”

King met with and frequently corresponded with many of these British Liberals or with their relatives. King liked “the distinguished company of Rt. Hon’s - Gladstone, Asquith, Morley, Bryce & Grey Haldane Balfour & others” and considered it fortunate “to have had as friends & coworkers...[such an] illustrious

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230 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 21 July 1895.
231 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 12 August 1900.
233 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 21 January 1926.
234 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 13 April 1922.
lot of men." He studied their domestic and foreign policies in their memoirs but it was Gladstone, the Liberal and Christian politician, who inspired his entire political life.

William Ewart Gladstone was an imposing figure in Victorian politics. He governed Britain at a time when the country stood at the apex of world affairs and his practical achievements and influence were immense. The cumulative effect of sixty years of Gladstonian reforms which, taken as a whole, acquired a semi-mythical dimension in the collective memory of three generations of democratic sympathizers and Liberal voters reflected his reputation as the ‘People’s William’. Progressive politicians throughout the world regarded him with reverence. President Woodrow Wilson of the United States hailed him as a model. He was admired by Ramsay MacDonald, leader of the British Labour Party and by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, King’s mentor. Even in recent times he was claimed as a model by Tony Blair and his Labour Party.  

Gladstone was introduced in the foreword of one of the many volumes on the man as the Christian statesman whose strange union of qualities the modern world has largely divorced:

He was both a genuine scholar and a consummate political operative, a thinker and an orator. He devoted his life to the rough-and-tumble world of parliamentary politics yet was acknowledged by friend and foe alike for his commitment to principle and to Christian ideals. He was a man of action and accomplishment, formulating many of the systems still at the heart of the British government, such as the Prime Minister’s Question Time. Yet he continuously restocked his mind with fresh reading. He was a serious student of Augustine, Homer, and Dante as well as a full range of Victorian intellectuals and poets. He was both the architect of the financial machinery of modern Britain and the author of serious theological reflection. This multifaceted statesman articulated a progressive philosophy of international affairs even as he negotiated the interests of Great Britain in the starkly realistic climate of

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235 W.L.M.K. Diary, 10 October 1918. Reference to Gladstone is to the son.

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European power politics.\textsuperscript{237}

At the turn of the century, that King should be so powerfully influenced by the life of Gladstone is not surprising. As John Morley suggests:

\begin{quote}
The intensity of his mind, and the length of years through which he held presiding office, enabled him to impress for good in all the departments of government, his own severe standard of public duty and personal exactitude. He was the chief force, propelling, restraining, guiding his country at many decisive moments.\textsuperscript{238}
\end{quote}

The nineteenth century was, as Cockshut suggests, “a golden age of biographical writing.”\textsuperscript{239} Victorians particularly loved laudatory and commemorative biographies which implied that great men made history. Perhaps this love of biography was in part a response to the threateningly impersonal natural forces posited by Darwinism and its implied belittlement of human achievement.\textsuperscript{240} Victorians reacted to a general sense of spiritual dislocation by embracing the lives of great men. Writers such as Thomas Carlyle described men of towering stature, providing at once an escape into a grander world and a model for imitation. Carlyle urged his readers to find their hero and to follow him. King and his close friend, Bert Harper, read Carlyle’s \textit{Hero Worship} together in the fall of 1900. Their romantic minds were moved by a historical consciousness in which great men worked at great deeds. King returned to the volume many times during his life.\textsuperscript{241} In 1929 he was reading it aloud with his friend Joan Patteson and again in the spring of 1949 they read aloud together and

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[238]{John Morley, \textit{The Life of William Ewart Gladstone}, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1904), 4. There are two copies of the three volume work by Morley at Laurier House but only one is marked by King.}
\footnotetext[241]{W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 9 October 1900, 6 January 1947.}
\end{footnotes}
King recalled his visit with his father to Carlyle’s home.\textsuperscript{242} King marked many passages in the chapter on the “Hero as Prophet.” He noted the importance of “sincerity of vision” and that “a deep, great, genuine sincerity, is the first characteristic of all men in any way heroic.”\textsuperscript{243} In his diary he commented: “What he says on sincerity as the essence of greatness appeals to me.”\textsuperscript{244} King found Carlyle “to be healthy, wholesome and full of moral fibre.”\textsuperscript{245} He liked Carlyle better even than Tennyson: “Carlyle is wonderful heaving blocks of truth.”\textsuperscript{246} In \textit{Hero Worship} Carlyle argued that:

\begin{quote}
The history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the history of the great men who have worked here. They are the leaders of men, these great ones; the modelers, patterns, and in a wide sense creators, of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain.\textsuperscript{247}
\end{quote}

Carlyle believed that “society is founded on hero-worship” and that “in all epochs of the world’s history, we shall find the great man to have been the indispensable saviour of his epoch.”\textsuperscript{248} The great man was “always as the lightening out of heaven” and “the rest of men waited for him like fuel and then they too would flame.”\textsuperscript{249}

Early in the twentieth century there was a revolt against traditional biography which nevertheless did continue to flourish down to the First World War. Traditional biographies generally relied heavily on letters, extracts from diaries, documents and autobiographical fragments. They were massive compilations which allowed the subject to depict himself with minimal intervention from the biographer; they

\textsuperscript{242} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 10 October 1929, 6 March 1949.
\textsuperscript{243} Thomas Carlyle, \textit{Heroes, Hero Worship and the Heroic in History} (New York: A.L. Burt, 1899), 80, 52. First quote marked by two vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{244} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 23 October 1900.
\textsuperscript{245} William Lyon Mackenzie King, \textit{The Secret of Heroism}, 77.
\textsuperscript{246} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 20 October 1900.
\textsuperscript{248} Ibid., 14, 16.
\textsuperscript{249} Ibid., 91.
assumed that “manifest and inner selves coincide, that intention moves smoothly
from willed to completed action.” However, at the turn-of-the-century there was an
impatient sense that the nineteenth-century biography was too good to be true and
there was a call for the “imperfect life, ... more true to experience.” In particular,
Lytton Strachey rejected “the moral earnestness and awe-struck hero-worship of
Victorian biography.” Victorianians, he said, lacked “self knowledge, as revealed by
the very sincerity with which they managed to make the best of both spiritual and
material worlds, ignoring the uncomfortable implications of either their religiosity or
their ambition. When they should have looked inward, they looked to others,
proselytizing when they should have been questioning.” Strachey disliked the
way Victorians claimed “wholly selfless aims which allowed the eminent to insist on
their own selflessness while achieving their egotistic ambition.” Eminent Victorians
(1918) was a revolt against Victorian hypocrisy, self-complacency and self-delusion.
Strachey ridiculed the “fat volumes” with “their ill-digested masses of material” and
“their tone of tedious panegyric”; he despised Gladstone “as a demagogue” and “as
a crafty manipulator of men and things for the purposes of his own ambition.” He
detested the moralism, the evasion and concealment in Victorian biography. His
Gladstone was a snake with “soft serpent coils” that was “distrusted and loathed.”

King’s image of Gladstone was in part derived from a body of myths which had
grown up around the Grand Old Man. The cult of Gladstone can be traced through
the biographies of him which appeared in a steady stream from the late 1870s until
after his death, reaching a climax with John Morley’s The Life of William Ewart
Gladstone, which was published in 1903 and which marks the transition to the more

251 Ibid., xiii.
252 Ibid., 5.
253 Ibid., 22.
254 Ibid., 24.
256 Ibid.
seriously researched biography. Earlier works were often characterized by an
abundance of illustrations and anecdotes; other biographies had an explicitly moral
purpose. King’s library at Laurier House contains these two earlier types: J. Ewing
Richie’s *The Real Gladstone: An Anecdotal Biography* and George Barnett Smith’s
*Thoughts from the Writings and Speeches of William Ewart Gladstone*. Although
King’s copies were not the multi-volume pictorial editions by these authors, they
were representative of popular works of the day. These two copies were
presented to King in 1944 as a gift from a friend who understood the importance of
Gladstone to King and who called King, “Canada’s Gladstone.” Bernard Rose
inscribed Richie’s work: “To the Rt. Hon. W.L. Mackenzie King devoted able
exponent and interpreter of the Liberalism that marked the illustrious career of the
greatest British statesman.”

The young social reformist King began his reading of Gladstone with the thoroughly
researched work of George W. E. Russell and the pious hagiography by the
Presbyterian minister, Dwight Newell Hillis, both of which he read on his return
voyage from his tour of England in 1900. A personal acquaintance of Gladstone,
Russell aimed in his biography at “a clear statement of facts chronologically arranged
... allowing the successive events of the great man’s life and his own recorded words

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259 Bernard Rose inscribed Smith’s work: To the Rt. Hon. W.L. Mackenzie King Canada’s
Gladstone, since he possesses the many qualities of heart and intellect that distinguished the
eminent British Prime Minister from his predecessors and successors.
Lionel A. Tollemache, *Talks with Mr. Gladstone*. (London: Edward Arnold, 1898). Inscribed: To
the Rt. Hon. W.L. Mackenzie King Prime Minister of Canada, the Gladstone of the Empire’s
greatest Dominion with the compliments of Bernard Rose (Montreal Feb 5th 1939).
260 King’s Diary records his reading of George W.E. Russell and Dwight Newell Hillis. W.L.M.K.
*Diary*, 20 July 1900 and 12 August 1900. Dwight Newell Hillis, *Great Books as Life-Teachers: Studies of Character Real and Ideal* (Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1899). In the Laurier House
collection. Some passages marked. King’s diary records his reading of other works by Hillis at the
same time but they are not found in King’s collection.
to speak for themselves." His hero was presented as a solitary champion in a struggle against a hostile world; he is the “terrible emancipator, ... gravely, terribly, incessantly in earnest.” Russell included an excerpt from the sermon preached by Dr. Wilkinson, Bishop of St. Andrews, on the Sunday after Gladstone's death, which recalled Gladstone “as a young man in the ancient legend girding on his armour for that life-long effort.” The people who read this biography saw Gladstone as someone very like the hero of a novel or Wagnerian opera. The spectacle was laid out for them to marvel at; Gladstone, suggests David Hamer, was like “the chief protagonist, not subject to any of the normal restraints on the ability of a politician to control circumstances.”

There were three stages in the great advance in Mr. Gladstone’s progress. The central part from 1847 to 1868 marked a period of transition: “On the one side the Conservative Free-trader clings fondly and tenaciously to the Toryism of his youth; on another, he is reaching out towards new realms of Liberal thought and action.” These years were “a period of mental growth, of transition, of development” and “tendency towards Liberalism.” By 1894, his political transformation was complete. The man who as a young politician had opposed the first Reform Bill and defended slavery and the established church, in a public letter of farewell, looked back on the preceding period as “predominately a history of emancipation ... political, economical, social, moral, intellectual.”

After reading Dwight Newell Hillis’ sketch of Gladstone it was easy for King to worship Gladstone and to see him as the perfect model of the upright man - the man of virtue and faith - the man whose whole life had been devoted to the application of

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262 Ibid., 268.
263 Ibid., 75.
265 Ibid., 87.
266 Ibid., 87 - 88.
267 Ibid., 268.
high principles to the affairs of state - the man King wanted to be. Hillis’ Gladstone was the Christian scholar in politics. With “his splendid talents, his pure purpose and blameless deeds,” he was the conscience of England.\textsuperscript{269} Gladstone was the liberator:

At once the child of genius, wealth, and power, this young patrician took as his clients, not the rich and great, but the poor and weak. Oft through voice and pen did he plead the cause of the oppressed in Italy and Ireland, in Bulgaria and Armenia. Countless reformers and philanthropists there are in this and foreign lands who in hours of discouragement comforted themselves with the thought that this knight-errant of the poor was in Hawarden, and felt that our world was a little safer because the “great commoner” was there.\textsuperscript{269}

Mackenzie King began in 1904 reading aloud with his neighbour, Mrs. Herridge, Volume I of John Morley’s \textit{The Life of Gladstone}.\textsuperscript{270} When he completed all 1975 pages, he marked the last page of Volume 3: “Finished at Kingsmere August 11 - 1906 at 5:10 pm.”\textsuperscript{271} Of Gladstone’s early years at Eton, King marked only one section - a reference to Arthur Hallam and their youthful reading which described Hallam as “not without the graceful melancholy of youth, so different from that other melancholy of ripe years and the deepening twilight.”\textsuperscript{272} Arthur Hallam was the chief love of Gladstone’s school days and the subject of Tennyson’s great elegy, \textit{In Memoriam}, occasioned by his death and a favourite of King’s. According to H.C.G. Matthew, the friendship of the pair, “though not directly sexual,” was very intense.\textsuperscript{273}

\textsuperscript{268} Dwight Newell Hillis, \textit{Great Books as Life-Teachers: Studies of Character Real and Ideal} (Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1899), 310.
\textsuperscript{269} Ibid., 309 - 310.
\textsuperscript{270} W.L.M.K. Diary, 12 September 1904.
\textsuperscript{271} John Morley, \textit{The Life of William Ewart Gladstone}, vol. 3 (New York: Macmillan, 1904), 552. King’s diary has no entries between 4 April 1906 and 31 August 1906. There are only comments on King’s reading of volume one. However, Vols. 2 & 3 are well marked texts.
They shared a taste for good books and serious thoughts. They took walks together arguing about Wordsworth, Byron and Shelley and politics for Gladstone was a tory and Hallam pure whig. At his death in 1833, Gladstone mourned for Hallam as his “earliest near friend” whose mind was “full of beauty and power.” There is no doubt that King identified with Gladstone’s close relationship with Hallam. In his diary King wrote about the friendship:

The description of his friendship with Hallam, and the account of the early severance of that friendship thro Hallam’s death, brought before [me] my association & affectionate relations with Harper. There was a singular parallel between the natures of Harper & Hallam, an earnest cheerfulness, and a plaintive seriousness or even sadness which made them much akin.

King and Harper enjoyed the same literary sensibility and intellectual interests and the same breath of a busy and changing age. The Secret of Heroism was King’s tribute to Bert Harper and it described their political and social ideals and many evenings of shared reading.

What “delights” King most in Gladstone’s early life is “his deep religious nature, the reverence he had for God, himself & his fellow men one feels always like saying ‘How firm a foundation’. Morley maintained that “the detailed history of Mr. Gladstone as theologian and churchman” would not be found in his work but he acknowledged that “Mr. Gladstone cared as much for the church as he cared for the state; he thought of the church as “the soul of the state” and “he was sure that the strength of a state corresponds to the religious strength and soundness of the community of which the state is the civil organ.” Although Morley was an agnostic,
his Gladstone, suggested Strachey, was shown “through a haze of reverence” and “religious atmosphere fills his book and blurs every outline.” Morley quoted from Gladstone’s diary that expressed the religious convictions that pressed upon him at Oxford:

One conclusion theoretically has been much on my mind - it is the increased importance and necessity and benefit of prayer - of the life of obedience and self-sacrifice. May God use me as a vessel for his own purposes, of whatever character and results in relation to myself ... that I might work an energetic work in this world, and by that work ... I might grow into the image of the Redeemer.

King treasured his copy of Gladstone’s own special prayer written by Gladstone himself as “a prayer for a friend out of sight.”

Born in a more secular age, King could still appreciate that for Gladstone, “political life was only part of his religious life” and that “it was religious motive that ... stirred him and guided him in his whole conception of active social duty.” Raised as an evangelical, the devout Gladstone was “conscious of life as a battle and not a parade.” Gladstone stood firm on “the old Christian faith” and “life was to him in all its aspects an application of Christian teaching and example.” His career demonstrated “the correspondence between the rule of private morals and of public” and “that right and wrong depend on the same set of maxims in public life and private.” In Gladstone there was:

... the vigour of soul that maintained an inner life ... amid the ever-

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281 W.L.M.K. Diary, 10 November 1933. Gladstone’s prayer was given to King by his spiritualist friend, Mrs. Lambert in New York.
283 Ibid., 89. King’s underlining.
284 Ibid., 204.
285 Ibid.
swelling rush of urgent secular affairs. Immersed in active responsibility for momentous secular things, he never lost the breath of what was to him a deviner aether. Habitually he strove for the lofty uplands where political and moral ideas meet. Even in those days he struck all who came into contact with him by a goodness and elevation that matched the activity and power of his mind.  

King pondered the intensity of Gladstone’s religious disposition and “that double-mindedness, that division of sensibility between the demands of spiritual and of secular life, which remained throughout one of the marking traits of his career.” Morley found in Gladstone “a vivid example of public duty and of private faithfulness.” King noted that Gladstone was a man “guided in all the steps he took, in all the efforts that he made, by a high moral ideal.” He was a great man because he combined “intellectual qualities .. with the moral qualities needed for the given circumstances.” He was “a great example ... of a great Christian man” who left behind him “the memory of a great Christian statesman.” In his diary King wrote that “the generous nature of Gladstone is splendidly portrayed as is his conception of duty & obedience to the Divine Will.” He was “quite sure that peace is to be found in such a way of life as in no other” and that “it is the true way” because it is “in harmony with the external realities and the purpose of God in the Universe.”

When King was reading Volume I of Gladstone’s Life, he was at Kingsmere and his routine included re-reading some chapters from Mornings in the College Chapel, reminiscent of his Harvard days and “an hour or two chopping, sawing & clearing up underbrush,” continued reading with Mrs. Herridge after lunch and again in the evening. The evening’s reading might be supplemented by other works, for example Dante’s Inferno, a favourite of Gladstone, which was “quite magnificent ...

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286 Ibid., 197 - 198.
287 Ibid., 81.
289 Ibid., 529.
290 Ibid., 541.
291 Ibid., 529 - 530.
292 W.L.M.K. Diary, 16 September 1904.
We could hardly put down the book which held us till midnight.\textsuperscript{293} King’s copy had been sent to him by Harvard Professor Charles Eliot Norton, along with his \textit{The New Life of Dante}.\textsuperscript{294} Reverend Peabody’s inspirational addresses given during morning prayers from \textit{Mornings in the College Chapel} that frequently prefaced King’s reading of Volume I provided a “very wholesome” and “healthy” start to the day.\textsuperscript{295} At Harvard King had attended chapel regularly and wrote in his diary: “Peabody has the truth & expresses it well.”\textsuperscript{296} As Plummer Professor of Christian Morals, Peabody strongly influenced the religious, moral and philosophical climate at Harvard. The two spoke together at a labour rally and King “admir[e]d him with all [his] heart.”\textsuperscript{297} Accompanied by Jane Addams, King attended “a most inspiring & able address” by Peabody on “The Social Updraft.”\textsuperscript{298} King never forgot his experiences at Harvard and the “splendid service” at chapel was one of them.\textsuperscript{299} In 1941, when they were discussing city populations, he reminded Roosevelt of Peabody’s lecture “in which he compared cities to fireplaces - the cities being the consumers, but being fed by the people coming in from the country: the indraft and the outdraft.”\textsuperscript{300} In the tradition of the Social Gospel movement, Peabody stressed the need to study religious and social implications stimulated by industrialization and he also championed liberal interpretations of the New Testament. In his teaching he characterized Christianity as a religion that required Christians to act as agents of

\textsuperscript{293} W.L.M.K. Diary, 19 September 1904. Chopping down trees was a legendary activity of Gladstone and pilgrims to his estate at Hawarden often took home a wood chip as a souvenir. 
\textsuperscript{295} W.L.M.K. Diary, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 September 1904, 27 December 1898. Francis Greenwood Peabody, \textit{Mornings in the College Chapel: Short Addresses to Young Men on Personal Religion} (London: Constable, 1896). King also at this time read from Francis Greenwood Peabody, \textit{Afternoons in the College Chapel: Short Addresses to Young Men on Personal Religion} (London: Constable, 1915). Both are missing from King’s collection. King’s diary records that he had read excerpts from \textit{Mornings in the College Chapel} to his mother in 1898 when he was attending Harvard and “enjoyed them very much.” W.L.M.K. Diary, 27 December 1898.
\textsuperscript{296} W.L.M.K. Diary, 19 June 1898.
\textsuperscript{297} W.L.M.K. Diary, 29 September 1897.
\textsuperscript{298} W.L.M.K. Diary, 12 July 1897.
\textsuperscript{299} W.L.M.K. Diary, 3 October 1897.
\textsuperscript{300} W.L.M.K. Diary, 20 April 1941.
social change, de-emphasizing personal salvation in favour of social action.

Morley’s chapter “Characteristics,” which Gladstone’s daughter felt was “possibly the masterpiece of his great Biography,” was “especially interesting” for King as “psychological study always interests” and he found the character revealed in Gladstone “strong.” Morley claimed that the figure of Gladstone was “without any near or distant parallel and composed of so many curious dualisms and unforeseen affinities.” King noted an opening accolade of the chapter:

_We are dazzled by the endless versatility of his mind and interests as man of action, scholar, and controversial athlete; as legislator, administrator, leader of people; as the strongest of his time in the main branches of executive force, strongest in persuasive force; supreme in the exacting details of national finance; master of the parliamentary arts; yet always living in the noble visions of the moral and spiritual idealist._

Gladstone’s physical vitality was legendary. He was a great walker, sportsman, and he often was pictured chopping trees at his Hawarden estate. “He was always wont to enjoy proofs of physical vigour, never forgetting how indispensable it is in the equipment of the politician for the athletics of public life.” His physical and mental force was such that he could speak for more than four hours at a stretch; his powers of work were enormous and he was a voluminous writer and reader. “The only rest he ever knew was change of effort.”

In an age that focused on the role of character, King was predictably most interested

302 W.L.M.K. _Diary_, 15 September 1904. The Chapter is in Morley’s Volume 1, 184 - 218.
304 Ibid., 184.
306 John Morley, _The Life of William Ewart Gladstone_, vol. 1, 550. King not only marked this line but also underlined it.
in Gladstone’s “strength and steadfastness of Will.” From his force of will, “with all its roots in habit, example, conviction, purpose, sprang his leading and most effective qualities.” King marked many of these qualities throughout the three volumes: “the steadfast self-control” and “such steadiness, such under-sense and feeling of the whole ... ever stirring him to duty and manful hope, to intrepid self-denial and iron effort.” When asked what he regarded as his master secret, Gladstone always replied that it was concentration. “Steady practice of instant, fixed, effectual attention, was the key alike to his rapidity of apprehension and to his powerful memory. ... There was nobody like him when it came to difficult business, for bending his whole strength to it, like a mighty archer stringing a stiff bow.”

Gladstone trusted in the fundamental goodness of others: “He knew men well enough ... to have found out that none gains such ascendancy over them as he who appeals to what is the nobler part in human nature.” Gladstone had “the determined conviction that life is not lottery at all, but a serious business worth taking infinite pains upon.” Gladstone’s motto prefaced to the chapter, “Characteristics,” remained important to King: “Be inspired with the belief that life is a great and noble calling; not a mean and grovelling thing that we are to shuffle through as we can, but an elevated and lofty destiny.” This motto was repeated by Morley at the close of Volume 3 and again marked by King by two vertical lines. In 1934 in a state of “fatigue and nervousness.” King returned to this passage on the last page: “I feel certain this passage from Gladstone is sent to help.” In 1949, in his diary, King wrote of his farewell to parliament which ended by saying that he had begun his interest in politics “under the inspiration of Gladstone” and he then quoted the last

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307 Ibid., 185.
308 Ibid., 186.
311 Ibid., 197. Marked by three vertical lines.
312 Ibid., 205.
313 Ibid., 184.
315 W.L.M.K. Diary, 10 September 1934.
words of Morley’s *Life*. These words also came to King in one of his dreams of Gladstone, “as noble guidance from beyond”; King wakened saying over to himself those famous words and despaired that “if I could only see myself in the role of a Gladstone, of one whose words would mean something to the nation, and gain the feeling that there was a real work for me to do, I should be so happy.”

Gladstone held a fundamentally optimistic outlook on life which “lightened and dispelled the inevitable hours of disappointment and chagrin that, in natures of less lofty fortitude than his, are apt to slacken the nerve and rust the sword.” King marked the words that reflected this philosophy of public life: “And even as to the contemptible summing up between suffering and enjoyment, my belief is that the latter will endure, while the former will pass away.” Gladstone was not downcast if progress was slow. “In watching public opinion, in feeling the pulse of a cabinet, in softening the heart of a colleague, even when the skies were gloomiest, he was almost provokingly anxious to detect signs of encouragement that to others were imperceptible.” He always kept before him the pragmatic conviction that in political life you must be prepared to do what you can, not what you want, and he fulfilled to the best of his ability, the counsel of Marcus Aurelius: “Be content with ever so small an advance, and look on even that as a gain worth having.”

Even after the defeat of Irish Home Rule in 1886, Gladstone maintained his optimism. His whole soul rose in challenge against the tragic tones of Tennyson’s bleak ruminations on the modern world. The triumphs of the past inspired confidence in victories for the future for undoubtedly Gladstone believed in social evolution and he attached strong moral significance to the march of society in Victorian England:

*The sum of the matter seems to be that upon the whole, and in a*

316 W.L.M.K. Diary, 27 April 1949.
317 W.L.M.K. Diary, 5 May 1933.
319 Ibid.
320 Ibid., 207.
321 Ibid. King was a fan of Marcus Aurelius. His library at Laurier House contains three copies of the classic, *Meditations of Marcus Aurelius.*
degree, we who lived fifty, sixty, seventy years back, and are living now, have lived into a gentler time; that the public conscience has grown more tender, as indeed was very needful; and that in matters of practice, at sight of evils formerly regarded with indifference or even connivance, it now not only winces but rebels; that upon the whole the race has been reaping, and not scattering; earning and not wasting; and that without its being said that the old Prophet is wrong, it may be said the young Prophet was unquestionably right.\footnote{322}

King noted in particular the last chapter of Morley’s Volume I, “Junction with the Liberals,” which described Gladstone’s move away from the Tories. King’s diary expressed his simple view of the Liberal Party:

Gladstone’s junction with the Liberals was the full blown fruit of an evolution begotten of honest convictions & beliefs which had been permeating his whole nature thro the years preceding. Contrasted with the views it threw off, it was a genuine expression of the radical difference between two classes of men in the world, the man who believes in the many, as against the few who trusts beliefs rather than forms of belief, the spirit rather than the institution in which it is housed, who loves equality & abhors distinctions, who seeks freedom & cannot abide unjust restraint, whose law is “shalt” & not “shall not”.\footnote{323}

Gladstone’s words of explanation prefaced the chapter:

Conviction, in spite of early associations and long-cherished prepossessions - strong conviction, and an overpowering sense of the public interests operating for many, many years before full effect was given to it, placed me in the ranks of the liberal party.\footnote{324}

Several more passages indicate how Morley saw Gladstone’s protracted journey from Tory to Liberal:

\footnote{322}{John Morley, \textit{The Life of William Ewart Gladstone}, vol. 3, 354.}
\footnote{323}{W.L.M.K. Diary, 19 September 1904. This section of the diary was marked by two vertical lines as well as underlined and the note “Libs & Times” jotted in the margin. King sometimes marked his own diary when he was rereading sections.}
\footnote{324}{John Morley, \textit{The Life of William Ewart Gladstone}, vol. 1, 621. Marked by two vertical lines.}
... it was not a conversion. Mr. Gladstone was at this time in his politics a liberal reformer ... a born lover of good government, of just practical laws of wise improvement, of public business well handled, of a state that should emancipate and serve the individual.\textsuperscript{325}

From Mr. Gladstone’s point of view, there was “the need for a ministry with men in it acting with some measure of boldness and power, grappling with abuses, and relying upon the moral sense and honest feeling of the House, and the general sympathy of the people of England for improvement.”\textsuperscript{326}

Morley’s evolutionary interpretation takes its strength from a shrewdly intelligent understanding of Gladstone in action. It is a compelling view of ideological and party evolution, an extraordinary transit across the spectrum of British political life from right to left, of Gladstone moving steadily and irrevocably in his ideas from illiberalism to liberalism. Such a view of gradual intellectual enlightenment could be used to tackle the charge of inconsistency for which both King and Gladstone were so often put on trial. In the first place, Gladstone “started on his journey with an intellectual chart of ideas and principles not adequate or well fitted for the voyage traced for him by the spirit of his age.”\textsuperscript{327} Gladstone’s “change of opinion” was “a much smaller evil” than “persistence in a course” which was known to be wrong.\textsuperscript{328} In his youth his ideas were illiberal; Oxford had tended to hide from him the fact that “liberty is a great and precious gift of God and that human excellence cannot grow up in a nation without it” but love of truth led Mr. Gladstone onward and he was shown as “slowly and almost blindly heaving off his shoulders the weight of old conservative tradition.”\textsuperscript{329} This convincing portrayal of the steadily developing liberator that emerged from Morley’s own evolutionary perspective derived in part from Gladstone’s own powerful personal explanation that he had simply grown away from the illiberalism of his

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\textsuperscript{325} Ibid., 631.  \\
\textsuperscript{326} Ibid., 632.  \\
\textsuperscript{327} Ibid., 212.  \\
\textsuperscript{328} Ibid., 211.  \\
\textsuperscript{329} Ibid., 84 and 389. First quote marked by two vertical lines.
\end{flushright}
youth: “I can truly put up all the change that has come into my politics into a sentence; I was brought up to distrust and dislike liberty, I learned to believe in it. That is the key to all my changes.”

King marked with two vertical lines the section in which Morley pictured Gladstone as a leader who embraced change:

In a new time, marked in an incomparable degree by the progress of science and invention, by vast mechanical, industrial, and commercial developments, he accepted it all, he adjusted his statesmanship to it all, nay, he revelled in it all, as tending to ameliorate the lot of the ‘mass of men, women, and children who can just ward off hunger, cold and nakedness’. He did not rail at his age, he strove to help it.

In foreign affairs, Gladstone was a non-aggressive internationalist but as Robert Kelly suggests, “foreign policy to him was not simply a secular and practical matter. It was charged with the highest religious significance.” Morley’s view was the same: “When he talked of ‘the sacred purposes of humanity’ it was not artificial claptrap in a protocol.” Goldwin Smith, King’s Toronto neighbour, wrote that Gladstone recognized the “two deep principles ... that shook Europe in 1848 - the principle of Liberty, the sentiment of Nationality.” He demonstrated his strong feelings in favour of nationality when he led the crusade against the iniquities and cruelties of the Bourbon government at Naples and when he promoted the emancipation of the Ionian Islands and their union with Greece. Soon after his visit to Naples in 1851 where “he had visited prisons, descended into dungeons, examined cases of the victims of illegality and injustice,” he “sought to rouse the public opinion of Europe.”

334 Goldwin Smith, My Memory of Gladstone (Toronto: W. Tyrrell, 1904), 16. In King’s library at Laurier House.
sensational pamphlets which pleaded the cause of oppressed Italy “sent a thrill through Europe and made all the powers of tyranny and iniquity tremble on their thrones.”

These pamphlets made Gladstone an object of affection among Italian patriots and as Robert Kelly suggests, “he became a national hero and a moral force of Europe.”

King sometimes marked a section in Morley’s *Life* and then entered into his diary a similar statement. For example, during Gladstone’s special mission to the Ionian Islands, he advocated constitutional reforms as the key to regeneration of the protectorate. Morley stated that “in conceiving and drawing up his Ionian scheme, close contact with liberal doctrines as to free institutions and popular government must have quickened Mr. Gladstone’s progress in liberal doctrines in our own affairs at home.”

King reiterated this opinion in his diary when he referred to Gladstone’s mission “and the peculiar social and political effect which the struggle for independence and freedom ... had on Gladstone’s inclination towards free institutions.”

Morley always let Gladstone’s words speak for themselves. In 1890 Gladstone gave his own explanation of the course of change in his life:

> I have been a learner all my life, and I am a learner still. ... I do not like changes for their own sake, I only like a change when it is needful to alter something bad into something good or something which is good into something better. I have a great reverence for antiquity.

And King marked the part of this famous speech which explained the basis of Gladstone’s liberalism: “I am a lover of liberty; and that liberty which I value for myself, I value for every human being in proportion to his means and

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335 Ibid.
338 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 19 September 1904.
Morley included a letter written by Gladstone in 1894 which expressed his own summary of his long journey in politics. He believed that he had “governed at least by uprightness of intention and by a desire to learn.” King marked the last section of the letter by two vertical lines and some underlining:

Now is the time for the true friend of his country to remind the masses that their present political elevation is owing to no principles less broad and noble that these - the love of liberty, of liberty for all without distinction of class, creed, or country, and the resolute preference of the interests of the whole to any interest, be it what it may, of a narrower scope.  

King was attracted to Morley’s evolutionary vision and marked the long passage which summed up Gladstone’s epic journey of emancipation and development by 1882:

He had learned many lessons. He had changed his party, his horizons were far wider, new social truths had made their way into his impressionable mind, he recognized new social forces. His aims for the church, that he loved as ardently as he gloried in a powerful and beneficent state, had undergone a revolution. Since 1866 he had come into contact with democracy at close quarters; the Bulgarian campaign and Midlothian lighting up his early faith in liberty, had inflamed him with new feeling for the voice of the people. As much as in the early time when he had prayed to be allowed to go into orders, he was moved by a dominating sense of the common claims and interests of mankind. 'The contagion of the world's slow stain' had not infected him; the lustre and long continuity of his public performances still left all his innermost ideals constant and undimmed.

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340 Ibid., 813.
Morley’s theme of both continuity and irrevocable change was persuasive. The consistency was in the form of principles and ideals; the changes were placed in a pattern of liberal enlightenment; and the whole was given a personal imprint of integrity. According to D. M. Schreuder, Morley was “able to provide an explanation for the shape of Gladstone’s politics that not only reconciles tactics and timing with enduring ideals but also avoids crude interpretations of Gladstonian development in terms of sudden changes of mind, or potentially damaging opportunistic switches of position.”

Gladstone’s complex transformation into liberalism from misplaced and mistaken early toryism was cast within the notion of an alignment with the great progressive forces of a liberal age.

Morley had no hesitation in seeing the 1880s and 1890s as the crown and climax of Gladstone’s career. Cockshutt has drawn attention to Morley’s view of Gladstone’s development:

Gladstone was by nature a man of stupendous moral, intellectual and political gifts. These gifts were hampered in their exercise, and thwarted in their public usefulness by inherited Tory opinions. Very gradually this man of great gifts worked himself loose from his restrictions, discarding nothing of value that he had held, but developing all the time in the direction of liberty, liberty for himself in the use of his transcendent powers, and liberty for the people whom he led, in whose wisdom and trustworthiness Gladstone came more and more to believe.

Morley thought of Gladstone’s development as a “slow ripening” process. Yet Morley’s sense of the man’s gradual evolution into wisdom, suggests Cockshut,
“involves some misrepresentation."\textsuperscript{346} It leads him to underrate the forces of conflict and the uncertainty of choice and Morley makes far too little of Gladstone’s conservative strain. He does not suppress its existence but “he does not see it, as it could and probably should be seen, as one of the master-keys to Gladstone’s whole mystery.”\textsuperscript{347}

In \textit{The Transatlantic Persuasion}, Robert Kelly described Gladstone’s eventual drift leftward in terms of his intellectual development. His reading, together with his experience, worked on his mind steadily for as Morley had suggested and King marked:

\begin{quote}
He was no mere reader of many books, used to relieve the strain of mental anxiety or to slake the thirst of literary or intellectual curiosity. Reading with him in the days of his full vigour was a habitual communing with the master spirits of mankind, as a vivifying and nourishing part of life.\textsuperscript{348}
\end{quote}

As Kelly suggests, Gladstone was “usually aware of the latest intellectual current and reacted to such new ideas as Darwinism with more liberality than is credited to his image as the archetypical Victorian.” His intellect was “open to persuasion by information.” His mind “instinctively reached for wider frames of reference.” It was this “openness of mind” that led him to deplore exclusiveness in the established church and the state.\textsuperscript{349} King, like Gladstone, deplored exclusiveness. King’s view was that “true Liberalism stands for … ‘inclusive’ rather than ‘exclusive’ policies.”\textsuperscript{350} Gladstone came to recognize the great moral change that had come over the ordinary man who had acquired education, self-control and a respect for order. In an 1866 speech, Gladstone called upon the nation to accept the fact that all the currents

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{346} Ibid., 190.  
\textsuperscript{347} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{350} W.L.M.K. Diary, 11 May 1944.
\end{footnotesize}
of history showed suffrage reform to be in the predestined course of events: “You cannot fight against the future. Time is on our side. The great social forces which move onwards in their might and majesty, .. are marshalled on our side.”

Gladstone’s advice to young politicians such as King was respected because Gladstone survived as leader longer than any other British politician. He was four times Prime Minister and lived twenty-four years of his life on Downing Street. This was in part because he understood that “problems of compromise are of the essence of the parliamentary and cabinet system.”

Controversy taught him “to avoid whatever widens the breach; and to make the most of whatever tends to narrow.” For Gladstone the power of working with other people was key and King marked one of Gladstone’s favourite phrases on the subject: “what is wanted above all things ... is the faculty of making many one, of throwing the mind into the common stock.” Aiming at practical ends, he kept in sight the opposition and understood quite clearly that “not all questions are for all times.” A politician must be “able sufficiently to adjust the proper conditions of handling any difficult question, until the question itself was at the door.”

Throughout Morley’s work, King often marked the advice of Gladstone. For example he noted some suggestions on the art of speaking: “Seek a thorough digestion of, and familiarity with, your subject, and rely mainly on these to prompt proper words.” And King did become meticulous in the preparation of his speeches. In the chapter “Junction with Liberals,” Gladstone championed the doctrine of self-help to be achieved by thrift of time and hard work and he cautioned

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535 Ibid.
536 William Ewart Gladstone, Gleanings of Past Years, 1843 - 1878, vol. 7 (London: Murray, 1879), 133.

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against the thirst for fame:

*Believe me when I tell you that the thrift of time will repay you in after life with an usury of profit beyond your most sanguine dreams, and that the waste of it will make you dwindle, alike in intellectual and in moral stature, beneath your darkest reckonings.*

and

*The thirst for an enduring fame is near akin to the love of true excellence; but the fame of the moment is a dangerous possession and a bastard motive; and he who does his acts in order that the echo of them may come back as a soft music in his ears, plays false to his noble destiny as a Christian man, places himself in continual danger of dallying with wrong and taints even his virtuous actions at their source.*

As Chancellor of the Exchequer after mid-century, Gladstone applied his personal views on thrift to the national scene and became internationally famous for his economic skill. He signed a commercial treaty with France which opened a great volume of trade and largely enriched the country. King underlined these comments on the extension of free trade:

*France engaged to reduce duties and remove prohibitions on a long list of articles of British production and export ... England engaged immediately to abolish all duties upon all manufactured articles at her ports, and to reduce the duties on wine and brandy. The English reductions and abolitions extended beyond France to the commodities of all countries alike. Mr. Gladstone called 1860 the last of the cardinal and organic years of emancipatory fiscal legislation; it ended a series of which the four earlier terms had been reached in 1842, in 1845, in 1846, and 1853. With the French treaty he used to*

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358 Ibid., 634.
359 Ibid., 634. Marked by two vertical lines.
say, the movement in favour of free trade reached its zenith. 360

King’s diary records not only his interest in free trade and “above all” in Gladstone’s “religious and liberal convictions, ... his letter to his father about entering the church” and “his refusal of an Earldom,” but also in such matters as the Irish Question. 361 Gladstone denounced “the mischief and futility of Irish coercion” and protested that “force is no remedy.” 362 King’s library contains several texts on the Irish question including a pamphlet by Gladstone himself. 363 The function of Gladstone’s Liberals was to be the voice of the minority groups in British politics and its business was the removal of privilege and the opening up of political opportunities to the talents of every man.

Morley defended Gladstone against the critics who charged him “with habitually rousing popular forces into dangerous excitement, ... by simply following majorities and the crowd” and the detractors who said he had nothing “but a sort of clever pilot’s eye for winds and currents, and the rising of the tide to the exact height that would float him and his cargo over the bar.” King underlined Morley’s view that “all this is the exact opposite of the truth.” 364 Gladstone himself wrote that he recognized the “silent changes” which were “advancing in the very bed and basis of modern society.” 365 He claimed that he understood that “the movement of the public mind” as the nation “passed from a stationary into a progressive period” required changes in the views and actions of its leading men who must be “bound by the sense of the majority.” 366 He believed that a great moral change had come over the common people and had come to the view that the ordinary man had both the intellectual

361 W.L.M.K. Diary, 23 September 1904.
363 W. E. Gladstone, The Irish Question (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1886).
366 Ibid., 11, 58.

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capacity to understand the great issues and the moral character to act rightly upon them. And Morley accepted Gladstone’s own view of his progressive development, his emerging out of illiberalism under the hammer of freedom. In Morley’s view, as D. M. Schreuder suggests, Gladstone was “one of the great facilitators of progress.”\textsuperscript{367} Morley gave King an attractive picture drawn by Gladstone himself that stressed the consistent evolution of Gladstone’s liberalism and downplayed his conservative instincts which later historians have seen to have infused Gladstonian politics and thought.

What did King gain from his reading of Morley’s \textit{Life of Gladstone}? For one thing, Morley presented the complexity and diversity of Gladstone’s life. He presented many details from Gladstone’s massive documentary deposit which gave King the precise knowledge he needed to understand the workings of power. The \textit{Life} surely involved hero-worship but it was a positive view based on very close knowledge of Gladstone and of the Gladstone archive. Morley quoted heavily from the documents, very selectively of course, but in his writing Gladstone lives and he does so in a manner that leaves no doubt as to his charisma, personal qualities and presence.

King returned many times to Morley’s \textit{Life of Gladstone} for inspiration and he felt a spiritual bond with the great Liberal. He dated the first page of the chapter “Prime Minister” from Volume 2 eleven different times between 1921 and 1950.\textsuperscript{368} This was the page that lay open in his mother’s lap in the 1905 portrait by J.W.L. Forster that hangs in King’s library. On a trip with his father to London in 1906, just after finishing Morley’s three volumes, King made a point of visiting Gladstone’s monument in Westminster Abbey where the great men of England were buried. He “prayed God to make me a great man, in the true sense of the word great - morally great, like Gladstone, good, patriotic, true to my fellows & His purpose in the

world.”

On another visit in 1908 he went to the monument in Fleet Street which “deeply impressed” King:

The figures symbolical of Education, Brotherhood, Courage and Aspiration, bespeak the virtues of his life and virtues which I would like to [be] known & remembered by. I find it hard to repress emotion as I look at Gladstone’s monument in the Abbey & this one in Fleet St. His moral greatness is what I admire so much.

In 1934 he returned to Westminster Abbey with Ernest Lapointe:

... we went in together, paying special attention ... to Gladstone’s grave & the statue of him, which is very fine and then looking at the tablet in memory of Asquith on the pillar opposite. We went into Faith Chapel, where we both knelt in silent prayer. ... I prayed to be given the strength & power to do and say what is right. I thought as we knelt there of what was typical in that act of consecration, Lapointe Roman Catholic & French, myself Protestant & English - both pretty much of one mind in our faith & outlook.

Later during his stay in London, King “went to afternoon service at the Abbey, sat near the statue of Gladstone, & prayed earnestly ... I believe Gladstone’s & Asquith’s spirits were not far away.” And again in 1936 he returned to Westminster Abbey and “looked for Gladstone’s Statue; came to it, and looked in along the row to find one seat just beside it vacant.”

Though Morley’s Life of Gladstone remained for King the most significant influence, he read much more on Gladstone and was also particularly interested in the biographies and memoirs of other British politicians of the period. King reflected McKillop’s description of Canadian intellectual life for the period before the First

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569 W.L.M.K. Diary, 29 September 1906.
570 W.L.M.K. Diary, 15 March 1908.
571 W.L.M.K. Diary, 6 October 1934.
572 W.L.M.K. Diary, 14 October 1934.
573 W.L.M.K. Diary, 18 October 1936.
World War. McKillop suggested that the Anglo-Canadian mind was “caught between a British heritage, which many of them conceived to contain the best elements of Western civilization, and an American neighbour, which advanced ineluctably towards modernity in its modes of thought and action.” In his reading during his early years, King sought political and moral direction from the Liberal leaders of Britain. For example, King found in J. A. Spender’s *The Public Life*, “the most delightful & inspiring series of biographical sketches.” They included the noted chapters on “Chamberlain, Barnell [sic], Campbell-Bannerman, Balfour & Morley.”

He studied the detailed writings of other British Liberals - Asquith, Haldane, Campbell-Bannerman, Lloyd George and Grey. King felt a strong connection to these men; the death of Mr. Asquith gave him “a feeling akin to that I felt when father died, of being thrust more to the front, of having responsibility of leadership to a greater degree.” Asquith’s wife sent King a copy of *More Memoirs* inscribed to “a true Liberal” and King marked many of her witty insights. This book was “a real help” to King and he found “much comfort in seeing similarities in Asquith’s nature & attitudes & views” to his own.

Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, sent King his memoirs in 1926 inscribed “in token of very sincere friendship.”

375 W.L.M.K. Diary, 21 September 1927. King’s reference was to Parnell not Barnell.
377 W.L.M.K. Diary, 18 February 1928.
379 W.L.M.K. Diary, 3 January 1934.
marked many passages including Grey’s comments on Gladstone: “I have no doubt, taking force of character, energy and intellectual power, that Gladstone was the greatest man in whose presence I have been.” King found not only Grey’s analysis of foreign policy leading up to World War I important, but also personal matters and his ways of coping with political life. King marked the reference to Grey’s “fishing cottage” that “in the stress of office ... became a sanctuary.” Though King found Lloyd George’s *The Truth about Reparations and War - Debts* “as enlightening as anything” he had read and wished “a copy of that book could find its way into the hands of every thinking man and woman in this continent,” he was “indignant at much of what Lloyd George [had] to say of Edward Grey” in *War Memories.* King wrote that “the two men are not to be mentioned in the same breath.” Lloyd George just did not measure up to the elder statesmen Grey, Asquith, and Gladstone:

> What a pity it is that Lloyd George’s career has not been just a little different from what it has. Had he some of the qualities of Gladstone and Asquith, he might with his many gifts and wonderful personality, have been as great a Prime Minister in peace time as he was at one period of the war.

J. A. Spender (1862 - 1942) was a Liberal journalist and editor of the *Westminster Gazette* for twenty-five years. His more than twenty books reflected his close association with many of the political leaders of his day. His first major work on the life of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was published in two volumes in 1923. It was both a scholarly and readable though it erred somewhat in providing much detailed narrative but insufficient critical analysis for Spender was a product of his time.

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381 Ibid., 28.
382 King to Violet Markham, 28 January 1933.
383 King to Violet Markham, 11 December 1933.
384 King to Violet Markham, 28 January 1933.
and always a Liberal. In *Public Life* he was concerned for the future of British governmental institutions, for the quality of men elected to serve them and for the future of the press.\(^{385}\) He considered Gladstone one of the “first of the real moderns” for he changed the nature of politics.\(^{396}\) During his famous Midlothian campaign, Gladstone came out into the open and “a faithful Press followed him to the platform whence he now made appeals which were at least equal in importance to those which he had made from his place in Parliament.”\(^{387}\) For the old guard, that he should demean himself by stump oratory and become a public man, was altogether intolerable. Gladstone created a new kind of public life in which campaigning was as important a part of a leader’s activities as administering or criticizing from his place in Parliament and “political programmes became a necessity for both parties, and both endeavoured to broaden their appeals so as to make them acceptable to the largest numbers.”\(^{388}\)

Spender summarized “what are in general the qualities which make for success in public life.”\(^{389}\) He suggested that “the essential thing seems to be some capacity of projecting a picture of themselves on the screen of the public mind” and Gladstone was among the first political figures to have his personality, or at least a version of it, projected to a mass audience.\(^{390}\) According to Spender, Gladstone had that most important quality - “the co-operative sense, the power ... of putting your mind into the common stock.”\(^{391}\) King made note of Spender’s views on the importance of a politician’s behaviour in response to defeat and he marked three vertical lines beside the comment that “in no profession is it more important to conceal a wound or more dangerous to endeavour to retaliate on those who have offended you.”\(^{392}\) Spender

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\(^{385}\) John Alfred Spender, *The Public Life*, vol. 1 (London: Cassell, 1925). Inscribed: To the Right Honourable W. L. Mackenzie King with the real regard of Campbell Stuart London 1927. This volume is copiously marked by King.

\(^{386}\) Ibid., 36. Marked by two vertical lines.

\(^{387}\) Ibid., 37.

\(^{388}\) Ibid.

\(^{389}\) Ibid., 173.

\(^{390}\) Ibid., 174.

\(^{391}\) Ibid., 176. Marked by two vertical lines.

\(^{392}\) Ibid., 177. Marked by three vertical lines.
acknowledged that “the public is uncommonly shrewd in its judgements, and has something of a child’s penetration in deciding whom it likes and dislikes. It likes brilliant qualities to be fortified by solid virtues and is never comfortable unless it can think of its hero as honest and straight.”

Gladstone’s qualities, according to Spender, included “a remarkable adroitness - some called cunning - in the management of the party.” As leader of the party he was of the opinion that he should be the last to be converted and “again and again he required the most positive evidence that a question was ‘ripe for action’ before he would commit himself on it.” Gladstone understood the imperative of political timing and how to harness the power of public opinion. In Volume 2 of Spender’s Public Life, Kings markings were almost entirely confined to the chapter on the party system. In his defense of party politics, Spender wrote that politicians “are well justified in making large sacrifices of unessentials for the greater good of keeping parties together.” He believed that a political party must “hammer at a few simple ideas until they have become common place to large numbers of ordinary people” and that discipline was a necessity “for the function of a political party is not to discriminate between shades of permissible opinions, but to organize a dominant opinion for action.” King also focused on Spender’s discussion of the three party system, which he assumed had come to stay, the conflict between Liberal and Labour and the means by which the “differences shall be resolved into a sufficient unity for joint parliamentary action.” King faced these same issues as he treaded through minority government.

In the fall of 1930, after his defeat in July, King read aloud to his friend, Joan, J. A. Spender’s memoir of Sir Robert Hudson who was the principal party manager for

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393 Ibid., 177. Marked by two vertical lines.
394 Ibid., 72.
396 Ibid., 21. Marked by three vertical lines.
397 Ibid., 29. Marked by two vertical lines.
the British Liberal party for more than thirty years. He found “Hudson’s Life - a most delightfully, interesting biography, and most helpful.” As usual, character and methods were of importance to King and he recorded in his diary that “It is a delightful volume, reveals a beautiful character, & is a most helpful inspiring treatise for Liberal Organization work in Canada. Nothing could have been more opportune.” It provided King with the encouragement “to make a fresh start at life and work.”

Spender’s life of Hudson cast light on “the indispensible silent service which the principal organizer of a great party performs in the public life of the country.” Spender acknowledged that “the best leadership and the greatest cause may miss or fall short of their mark, if not backed by good organization.” Hudson was appointed Secretary of the National Liberal Federation when Gladstone was still on the scene and he continued to act as a permanent link between the leaders and the constituencies until his death in 1927. King focused on this important role by marking twelve vertical lines in the margin where Spender suggested that Hudson acted “in accordance with the tradition of independence from the leaders which the Federation always cherished.” During Hudson’s many years at the heart of the organization, “the details of Liberal policy was done not by the leaders but by the Federation, or by unofficial members of the party in and out of Parliament, working in association with it.” Spender wrote that “best of all was the silent influence of his own high character.” Hudson was “a man of deep religious convictions and sensitive honour, to whom meanness, corruption and intrigue were an abomination.”


W.L.M.K. Diary, 18 October 1930.

W.L.M.K. Diary, 19 October 1930.


Ibid., vi. Marked by two vertical lines.

Ibid., 18. Marked by twelve vertical lines.

Ibid., 18 - 19. Marked by nine vertical lines.

Ibid., 188. Marked by three vertical lines.

Ibid., 189. Marked by four vertical lines.
Spender, he was “one of the strongest influences that helped to keep politics clean and sweet in his time.” For this party man, “life behind the scenes was one of cheerful and loyal comradship between men who honestly believed in the policy and principles of their party, and were convinced that in serving it they were serving their country.”

In a letter to his long-time Liberal friend, Violet Markham, King praised Spender’s book on Robert Hudson claiming that “the account which it gives of the organization of the Liberal party in Britain, before the Lloyd George days, was immensley helpful to us in giving to our organization the shape it has come to have.” King and Spender met through Markham and exchanged letters on their “respective battles.” King wrote Spender about the memoir of Sir Robert Hudson suggesting that he had “read nothing quite so helpful to one faced with problems of party organization and finance; and nothing more inspiring as a biography of a truly noble and loveable character.” After receiving The Government of Mankind from Markham, King wrote of Spender that “there is no one whose writings have been as helpful to me in an understanding of public affairs as his. There is no one whose point of view I more completely share.” King found Spender to be “a marvellous man” and “enjoyed immensely the reading of his ‘Oxford and Asquith’” and “by snatches his ‘Fifty Years of Europe’.”

When King was reading These Times he wrote in his diary that he

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407 Ibid., 191. Marked by two vertical lines. King’s underlining.
408 Ibid., 189. Marked by three vertical lines.
409 King to Violet Markham, 28 January 1933.
410 King to J.A. Spender, 4 November 1931.
411 King to Violet Markham, 3 January 1938.
412 King to Violet Markham, 11 December 1933.
And in King’s collection at the National Library: Between Two Wars (London: Cassell, 1943) and These Times (London: Cassell, 1934).
“found it the most inspiring book I have read this year. It brings just what I need & what I wanted most, the opinion of a man whose judgment I trust on the great movements in Europe today.”

To Mrs. Spender King wrote that *These Times* “continues to be cited and quoted from on Liberal Platforms in all parts of Canada. Each member of our party carries a copy with him, and all appear to be agreed that nothing more helpful in dealing with the present day problems has appeared.”

In 1931 King “enjoyed very much” the *Reminiscences of Lord Kilbrachen*. Arthur Godley, Lord Kilbrachen, first became Gladstone’s Private Secretary in 1872 and was intimately associated with Gladstone until his death in 1898. King found Kilbrachen’s life and his relations with Gladstone “as interesting as anything I have ever read.” His memoirs were written from 1916 over a long period of time and Kilbrachen was able to look back on his time with Gladstone in a somewhat critical manner. His assessment of Gladstone’s qualities was more balanced than many of the earlier biographies:

_I am strongly of opinion that politics are a profession for which he was not in all respects well qualified, and that they were never really congenial to him. ... As however, he was to be a politician, his sense of duty, which in him was nothing less than a passion, impelled him to put his whole strength into the business, and he did so, with the result that we all know. But in spite of his marvellous Parliamentary gifts and successes, which he no doubt enjoyed keenly at the moment, his heart was never really in his profession. He saw the ugly side of it as plainly as any man could see it; he had long since made up his mind to face it, but it never ceased to disgust him._

Kilbrachen wrote that “Mr. Gladstone was not a good party leader, mainly because he was so utterly unlike the colleagues with whom he had to work, and the

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413 W.L.M.K. Diary, 29 August 1934.
414 King to Mrs. J.A. Spender, 20 April 1935.
415 W.L.M.K. Diary, 7 September 1931.
416 Ibid.
supporters in Parliament on whom he had to rely.”  Although “in opposition and in attack he was irresistible and in office he rose splendidly to every great occasion” but “for keeping his party together when the assault had succeeded and their emotions had cooled down, he was by no means so well qualified.”  Gladstone’s “uncompromising adherence to what he thought was right” was a serious obstacle to his success and “he was accused of being able ... to persuade himself that the expedient course was also the right one; and the charge, though generally unjust, was not wholly without foundation.”  Gladstone, like King, had “the unfortunate power of finding subtle and ingenious reasons for doing the thing that he wanted to do.”

Kilbrachen described an instance of Gladstone doing “what he thought was right, to the despair of Whigs, colleagues, and supporters.”  During the debates about Charles Bradlaugh, the professed atheist returned to the House of Commons as a supporter of Mr. Gladstone, Gladstone took the unpopular course suggested by his conscience and supported Bradlaugh, even though Bradlaugh’s doctrines were probably more offensive to him than to any one of the Tory objectors.  King marked with two vertical lines Kilbrachen’s assessment of this stand - that it demonstrated “the supreme quality of courage.”

As always King was preoccupied with the character of Gladstone and Kilbrachen’s insight from behind the scenes:

But the more I saw of him ... the more amazed I was at the nobility and purity of his character; a character which was thought by many to be complex and obscure, but was in truth (to use a phrase of R. L.

418 Ibid., 96.
419 Ibid., 137, 97.  First quote marked by two vertical lines.
420 Ibid., 96 - 97.
421 Ibid., 133.
422 Ibid., 133.
423 Ibid., 134.  Marked by two vertical lines.
According to Kilbrachen, the essential fact about Gladstone was “the extraordinary intensity and vehemence of his impulses” and “what was equally important was that he possessed, in no less unusual degree, the power of self-control and self-discipline.” Early in life Gladstone “formed his own ideals, which were of the highest and noblest kind, and with a view to their attainment he had laid down rules for himself.” What was remarkable about him, according to Kilbrachen, was that “he strictly observed the rules he had laid down” and “the result of this was that the violent impulses which in so many men bring ruin, were by him tamed and controlled, and turned into serviceable and sustaining forces.”

King shared with Gladstone his “want of interest in all military or semi-military matters” which he left to others: “war in every form was detestable to him.” Canadian military historian, C.P. Stacey has called King “one of the most unmilitary products of an unmilitary society.” To King, “war is all Hell, death, hate, and destruction.” He hated the military service just as, in Kilbracken’s view, Gladstone never showed “the slightest interest in the Navy or the Army except in so far as their cost which he was always anxious to cut down. ... If there ever was a statesman who deserved to be called ‘a man of peace’ Mr. Gladstone was that man.” Earlier, King had noted Morley’s comment on Gladstone’s view of war: “one of the very deepest convictions of his life - that war, whatever else we may choose to say of it, is no antidote for Mammon-worship and can never be a cure for moral evils.”

King enjoyed Kilbrachen’s memoirs, in particular “the part dealing with Gladstone’s
correspondence and habits of work” and “the parts re relations with Gladstone and Granville.” Kilbrachen had served as the principal private secretary to both Gladstone and Lord Granville and King was interested in the details of their working relationships. In the case of Gladstone, Kilbrachen wrote that “it was often a great comfort and relief to him to have someone to whom he could talk quite openly about the things that were on his mind; and talk he did.” As for organizational skills, Kilbrachen recognized that Gladstone was “a supremely good official” and that he was meticulous with the treatment of his voluminous correspondence:

He had thought out numerous methods of saving time and trouble in office work, insisted on their strict observance, and observed them strictly himself. This was part and parcel of his passion for economy in all the departments of life; economy of money, no doubt, but economy of time and of everything else as well.

Unlike Morley, who presented Gladstone, the statesman, Kilbracken recognized that his religion was “the central fact of his existence.” In “the things pertaining to God,” Gladstone was “in a class by himself, and it is as a man, and not a statesman, that all who knew him intimately must always think of him with unbounded admiration and affection.” Gladstone was only thrown into politics by filial obedience: this was the profession in which he passed his life, but not where his heart lay. Kilbracken understood that Gladstone was more interested in the things of the spirit:

His affections were set on another and a very different world, in which he lived and moved and had his being. This fact compelled the love and admiration of the few who were aware of it, but it by no means increased his efficiency as the leader of a political party. ... Often when we were alone he spoke to me strongly of the repulsiveness of some

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432 W.L.M.K. Diary, 7 September 1931.
434 Ibid., 87.
435 Ibid., 144.
436 Ibid., 137 - 138.
phases of political life, and his words came evidently from the heart.\textsuperscript{437}

In Gladstone’s case, “politics were to him a duty” and “his heart was elsewhere.” He wished “to be out of it all and to possess his soul before he died.”\textsuperscript{438} For Morley, politics were all important and he presented Gladstone as a figure mainly involved in and preoccupied with politics. According to M. D. R. Foot, Morley “saw but dared not cite, the introspections in Gladstone’s diary, in which the diarist, having set himself an impossibly high standard, steadily bemoans himself as the chief of sinners because he falls so far below it.”\textsuperscript{439} Morley did not deploy his subject’s struggles with will and flesh nor the war with his own soul. Rather he described a man of moral rigour and claimed that “nobody ever had fewer secrets, nobody ever lived and wrought in fuller sunlight.”\textsuperscript{440}

As Kilbrachen noted, “it was at Hawarden that one saw him at his best.”\textsuperscript{441} And King established a special relationship with Gladstone’s family at that estate. Herbert Gladstone had been deeply involved with politics and became Liberal chief whip after his father’s death. Henry Neville Gladstone had been most preoccupied with family business in India. Gladstone’s daughter Mary, who had revelled in secretarial work for their father, was the wife of Harry Drew, formerly curate at Hawarden. King made his pilgrimage to Hawarden in 1923. He made the “escape” with Arthur Doughty, Canada’s second dominion archivist.\textsuperscript{442} Henry took them on a tour of the library which had been erected as a memorial to his father and contained a great number of his father’s books. King described “the institution for the use of students” as “a most inspiring building.”\textsuperscript{443} King was most impressed with the vault which contained “thousands of letters which had been written by Mr. Gladstone at different

\textsuperscript{437} Ibid., 128 - 129. Marked by three vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{438} Ibid., 129.
\textsuperscript{441} Arthur Godley, Lord Kilbrachen, Reminiscences of Lord Kilbrachen, 139.
\textsuperscript{442} W.L.M.K. Diary, 16 January 1931.
\textsuperscript{443} W.L.M.K. Diary, 11 November 1923.
times, carefully classified and folioed. King found it “hardly conceivable that a single human being could have had a correspondence which this room revealed, with all kinds of distinguished personages and on the most important subjects. One was in the presence of a mind wellnigh omnipotent, so prodigious were the manifestations of interest and every effort on every side.” No doubt during this visit to Gladstone’s estate, King was thinking of the preservation of his own papers. Ian E. Wilson has suggested that “from Doughty, King learned the value of archives, the need to preserve documents and to make them available for research purposes” but Gladstone certainly gave the inspiration.

At Hawarden King also went to “the little church which Gladstone attended. He saw the beautiful sarcophagus with its marble figures of Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone which Henry Neville Gladstone had erected as a memorial to his father and mother” and was “shown the pew in which Mr. Gladstone was accustomed to sit.” King wrote in his diary that “of all the days in England I think this has been the most interesting of any; certainly nothing was more heart satisfying than the visit to Hawarden and the delightful association with Mr. Neville Gladstone and the renewal of a friendship formed with him some fifteen years ago.” On the next anniversary of Gladstone’s birthday, King recalled that “the little gift I got at Hawarden bears inscription Dec 29, 1890 - his 81 year.” The little gift was a paper knife that Henry had given his father. King was also presented with another copy of Morley’s biography of Gladstone and “a quill pen which Mr. Gladstone had used.”

\[\text{\footnotesize 444 W.L.M.K. Diary, 11 November 1923.} \]
\[\text{\footnotesize 445 W.L.M.K. Diary, 11 November 1923.} \]
\[\text{\footnotesize 447 W.L.M.K. Diary, 11 November 1923.} \]
\[\text{\footnotesize 448 W.L.M.K. Diary, 11 November 1923.} \]
\[\text{\footnotesize 449 W.L.M.K. Diary, 29 December 1923.} \]
\[\text{\footnotesize 450 W.L.M.K. Diary, 11 November 1923.} \]
family members and when he was returned to power in 1926, he received a cable from Lord Gladstone (Henry) with the words “Heartiest congratulations from Hawarden.” King rejoiced at the “link between Liberalism of the Past in the Old World & the New Liberalism of the New.”

King followed the painful episode for Herbert and Henry Neville Gladstone begun in 1925 when Peter Wright published his book *Portraits and Criticisms* and revived the fantastic charges of immorality and hypocrisy against the great statesman. The charges concerned Gladstone’s charity work of prostitute rescue, his attempts “to recover for a life of social usefulness women who had sunk into lives of sin.” The sons defended their father in court in 1927 and the jury “completely vindicated the high moral character of the late W. E. Gladstone.” King spoke of the verdict to the Liberal Men’s Association and “cabled both Lord Gladstone & his brother warm congratulations on the verdict, which will give satisfaction the world over.” King continued to correspond with both brothers. When Lord Gladstone died in 1935, King was deeply interested in spiritualism. He felt “very sad to lose so true and good a friend.” He had “greatly looked forward to being with him and lady Gladstone at Hawarden some day.” King wrote that his “last conversation” with Henry had been “on my talk with his father. He will know now the truth of what I told him.”

In 1929, Viscount Gladstone had been so distressed by the recent historical works entirely out of sympathy with William Gladstone’s character and strongly opposed to his policies, that he published *After Thirty Years*, his own partisan view of his

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451 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 18 February 1926.
453 Ibid.
454 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 4 February 1927.
455 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 29 April 1935.
father. King read aloud to his friend, Joan Patteson, the first two chapters and noted in his diary that “the two sons have felt keenly & perhaps more than necessary, the attacks on their illustrious father but they are right in answering them. The book does not betray a great mind on the part of the son, but it gives much information of an intimate kind which one is glad to have.”

Viscount Gladstone was critical of Morley’s comprehensive exposition of Mr. Gladstone because it left little room for the habits and affairs of his private life and did not present “a true and complete view of his personality.” As a result, he wrote that “hostile writers ... have transformed the real man into what is repellent and untrue.” Mr. Gladstone was “judged too frequently as a man by the test of party prejudices, by facile imputation of motives, and by an almost childish belief in unfounded gossip.” Viscount Gladstone was adamant that recent critics who traduced his personality, his character, intentions and motives, did so without personal knowledge nor intimacy. He presented the great man “at home” at Hawarden Castle where he spent the greater part of his mature life. King noted with three vertical lines that “his privacy there ... was hardly ever disturbed.”

Hawarden as a refuge was to Gladstone what Kingsmere was for King. The real truth about Gladstone was “that he was at heart a student, with an intense love of home life and its uninterrupted quietude.” Even when the House of Commons was in session “every day he strove to keep two or three hours for general reading.” At Hawarden, “Mr. Gladstone worked or read in the Temple of Peace all the morning, for a short time after luncheon, and between six and eight.” Lord Gladstone did not touch upon the personal religion of his father except to say “that it was the constant and

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457 W.L.M.K. Diary, 17 August 1929.
458 Herbert Gladstone, After Thirty Years, xiii.
459 Ibid., 25. Marked by three vertical lines.
460 Ibid., 5. Marked by two vertical lines.
461 Ibid., 45.
absorbing passion of his life and the source of his strength."\footnote{Ibid., 12.}

The thesis, put forth by George E. Buckle and André Maurois in their new biographies, that Disraeli stood higher than Mr. Gladstone, particularly rankled Herbert Gladstone.\footnote{André Maurois, \textit{Disraeli: A Picture of the Victorian Age} (New York: Appleton, 1928). In King’s collection at Laurier House. According to his diary, King read this book in 1930. \textit{W.L.M.K. Diary}, 9 November 1930.} These critics presented Gladstone as an insincere, unattractive and unpopular demagogue when in fact “in politics Mr. Gladstone was a dynamic force in the instruction and the direction of public opinion.” The allegation made that Gladstone’s political career was a sequence of errors was regarded by the viscount as a matter of political opinion as “Mr. Gladstone’s serious errors were remarkably few,” and must be weighed “against things achieved in trade and finance, in the Civil Service and legislation, in the promotion of international good will and peace, in the guidance of new and turbulent forces to loyal acceptance of all that was best in the Constitution, and then let judgement be given.”\footnote{Herbert Gladstone, \textit{After Thirty Years}, xxi.}\footnote{Philip Guedalla, \textit{The Queen and Mr. Gladstone} (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1933). In King’s collection at Laurier House. Autographed by the author.} The viscount attacked the way Letters of Queen Victoria (1926) was edited by Buckle to unfairly create an anti-Gladstonian atmosphere. In response he included extracts from his father’s diary and an important exchange of unpublished letters with Lord Balfour in 1885 that shed new light on Gladstone’s relationship with Queen Victoria. King’s library contains two copies of \textit{The Queen and Mr. Gladstone} (1933) which further corrected Mr. Buckle’s one-sided picture.\footnote{King to Violet Markham, 11 December 1933.} King wrote that he “enjoyed ... Philip Guedalla’s ‘The Queen and Mr. Gladstone’. I confess Gladstone’s treatment by the Queen fills me with indignation well nigh overwhelming. I had by the way, the pleasure of meeting Guedalla when he was in Canada and he has been good enough to autograph his books for me.”\footnote{\textit{King to Violet Markham, 11 December 1933.}}
King appeared to resist the criticism of Gladstone and showed an interest in the viscount’s defense of his foreign policy which he claimed was driven by definite principles that gave consistency and strength to his actions. King marked three vertical lines beside the section that suggested Mr. Gladstone’s “constant aim was the avoidance of provocative policy and action, whether by territorial acquisition, disregard of the rights and aspirations of other nations, or by the challenge of competitive armaments. When troubles nevertheless arose, his efforts were always for settlement by international action and agreement.”

In 1932 King turned again to Goldwin Smith’s short volume, My Memory of Gladstone, to read aloud and recalled it as “a gift from dear father to me on a birthday 28 years or more ago.” Smith deferred to Morley’s work, but Gladstone’s achievements and merits as a statesmen, “very great as they were ... never seemed to me quite so great as in Mr. Morley’s admirably executed picture.” When Smith contrasted Gladstone’s “wonderful improvements” to those of Disraeli, he found that his principal rival “gave his mind little to practical improvement, and almost entirely to the game of party and the struggle for power.” On the other hand:

Gladstone filled the nation with a spirit of common enthusiasm and hopeful effort for the general good, especially for the good of the masses, to which there was nothing corresponding on the part of his rival for power, whose grand game was that of setting two classes, the highest and lowest, against the third. Gladstone was ... a man of the people; and the heart of the people seldom failed to respond to his appeal.

Although King’s reading of Gladstone was paramount to his political understanding,
he nevertheless studied the lives of many other politicians. These included many of his contemporaries such as Mussolini, Stalin, Churchill, Truman and the Roosevelts. In 1928 King was reading a “thrilling book” about the life of Mussolini by his mistress, Margherita Sarfatti. His early assessment of Mussolini was that he had “won his way deservedly to his present position.” To King in 1928 Mussolini was “a truly remarkable man of force, of genius, fine purpose, a great patriot.” By 1939 King was reading “a chapter on Stalin’s private life from his biography” and warning “that we must never lose sight of Stalin’s desire for revolution.” In the same month he was also reading Sir Robert Borden’s memoirs and he found “the problems being very similar to his own and his day to day experiences also very much like mine.” He noted in particular “the crisis he had with his French Canadian followers on the use of the French language in the schools of Ontario ... while the war was on.” A similar problem of conscription would plague King. King’s diary records four days before his death that Joan read aloud to King his last political biography, that of Roosevelt’s life by Gunther and despite his grave health, King enjoyed “some very amusing parts on his campaigning.”

However, King’s preference was always for the lives of British politicians though he did not limit himself just to Liberal politicians. His library contains works on Labour leaders such as James Ramsay MacDonald and many Conservatives including

Philip Guedalla, Mr. Churchill (New York: Raymal & Hitchcock, 1942). Marginal markings by King in last three chapters on the war.
Cyril Clemens, The Man from Missouri: President Trueman’s First Biography (Webster Groves, Missouri: International Mark Twain Society, 1945).
473 Margherita G. Sarfatti, The Life of Benito Mussolini, 2 vols., with a preface by Benito Mussolini (London: Thorton Butterworth, 1926). W.L.M.K. Diary, 26 - 27 September 1928. There are two copies of Sarfatti’s biography of Mussolini in King’s library, one signed by Mussolini himself in April 1928.
474 W.L.M.K. Diary, 2 October 1939.
475 W.L.M.K. Diary, 9, 13 October 1939.
476 W.L.M.K. Diary, 15,18 July 1950. Gunther’s work not found in the King collection.
Arthur James Balfour who had a penchant for speculative philosophy.⁴⁷⁷ In the summer of 1938 King was reading aloud to Joan at the Abbey Ruins at Kingsmere Blanche Dugdale’s life of Balfour which the author had inscribed.⁴⁷⁸ King commented in his diary that “he felt very happy in reading this book which I find most helpful - splendidly written - a fine review of politics, etc. I greatly admire Balfour & what I like best is the foundations of religious belief, more significant than all else.”⁴⁷⁹ King noted Balfour’s contribution to religious thought. The Defence of Philosphic Doubt (1879) questioned the view “that everything which cannot be proved by scientific means is incapable of proof, and that everything inconsistent with science is thereby disproved.”⁴⁸⁰ The book was “an attack on the ‘advanced thinkers’ who claimed to speak in the name of science.”⁴⁸¹ It was “an examination of the bases on which belief in science and belief in religion should properly rest, leading to the conclusion that their foundations are distinct, and that neither of them is built solely upon proof or reason. ... the ‘conflict between religion and science’ ... could not exist for Balfour.”⁴⁸² In his later liberal writings, “Balfour makes absolutely clear his belief in the existence of a personal God” and that “the dogmatic differences which divide some Christian bodies from each other are not however considered important.”⁴⁸³

King approached Dugdale’s life of Balfour in much the same way as he approached Morley’s Life of Gladstone. There were lessons to be learned and strengths of


⁴⁷⁹ W.L.M.K. Diary, 10 July 1938.

⁴⁸⁰ Blanche E. C. Dugdale, Arthur James Balfour, 50. Marked by two vertical lines.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid. Marked by three vertical lines.

⁴⁸² Ibid.

⁴⁸³ Ibid., 51. Marked by two vertical lines.
character to be admired. Dugdale’s two volumes were not quite as long as Morley’s work, although they filled almost nine hundred pages, of which a great number were marked by King. In the same form as Morley, Dugdale proceeded with a year-by-year detailed account of Balfour’s political life but she also included much on his private life as well which King enjoyed. The events naturally included clashes with Gladstone’s Liberal Party and much about the Irish Question as Balfour was intimately involved with that very difficult issue. Volume 1 ended with Prime Minister Balfour’s defeat in 1906 and King marked the last page: “Read at Kingsmere July 1-16 1938 WLMK.”

King noted Balfour’s apprehensions at the time of his first speech in Parliament - “his preliminary sufferings were acute” and he deplored his “lack of verbal memory.”

There was need for “constant practise in speaking, to acquire style and mastery in the art of debate.” King also noted that Balfour’s skills improved and marked with three vertical lines that “his parliamentary strength lay in lightning quickness of dialectic and argument, in scorching power of sarcasm, as in the flexibility born of hard practice in preparing the subject and leaving unprepared the phrase.”

King’s diary drew attention to the chapter, “Private Life in the ‘Nineties” and the routine of Balfour’s life at his Whittingehame estate. There Balfour enjoyed the genteel family life and King marked in particular his reading habits: “Nothing ever interfered with his reading. He always had several books on hand at once. ... The table by his arm-chair was always heaped with books of history, or Memoirs” and “his own sitting-room was packed from floor to ceiling, mainly with books on philosophy and theology, and its sofas were heaped with flotsam and jetsam of current publications.” The sum total of Balfour’s advice to the young generation with regard to literature was: “Read everything you find interesting and nothing that

484 Ibid., 36. Marked by three vertical lines. King’s underlining.
485 Ibid., 55.
486 Ibid., 102. Marked by three vertical lines. King’s underlining.
487 Ibid., 188 - 190. Marked by two vertical lines. King’s underlining.
At times of political crisis or when he was tired or discouraged, King often returned to Morley’s *Life* or other readings on Gladstone. In the difficult political crisis of 1925-1926, King “read aloud with Joan the first page of Volume 3 of Gladstone’s life - where Gladstone speaks of being guided - of God’s purpose in his life.” King found after “Looking ... at Gladstone’s retirement in 76, ... much that was parallel in position at time & his lot & mine. That is the reason I must hold on at all costs.” In 1935 King took down Gladstone’s *Life* “to see how often he had been Prime Minister, the book opened at a page headed (page 537) ‘Leader, not follower’.” When King was “beginning to doubt [his] own capacity to lead as [he] ought,” he turned to the pages on Gladstone edited by John Buchan in Lord Rosebery’s *Miscellanies*, which he found “very inspiring, what I most need at this time.” King’s diary indicates that he also read at this time “quite a little of Mrs. Gladstone’s life” by Gladstone’s daughter, Mrs. Mary Drew, who had acted as her father’s private secretary, social organizer and hostess in Downing Street. King found the memoir “not well written, too much detail of children’s affairs & the like. Still it was interesting, most interesting incidents letters & thoughts.” When his neighbours, Joan and Godfroy Patteson came to supper they “read an essay on Gladstone & Lord Acton” also by Mrs. Drew. The essay, which took much from Morley, was about the special relationship between Lord Acton, the ardent Catholic, and the High Anglican Gladstone. Lord Acton (1834 - 1902) was one of the most learned men of the time:

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To him and Mr. Gladstone religion was the most supreme of interests. It was the habit of their minds. It was the guiding star of their lives. ... To both men the past was a thing of profound significance, for they had an abiding reverence for all that was ancient and ordered, though no men could have listened more carefully to the Spirit of the Age. They united a profound reverence for the past with an intense faith in the future. 406

King read the “fine essay on Scott Holland by Mrs. Drew” from the same volume. 497

Henry Scott Holland (1847 - 1918) had been Canon of St. Paul’s Cathedral and Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford. He was interested in social justice and his controversial book, Lux Mundi (1889), argued that Christianity was to be experienced, not contemplated.

Though Mrs. Drew’s work touched on her father’s intellectual friends, it was also based on her own personal relationships and had a social side. The “chapters on Ruskin & Lowe(?), Tennyson & Laura Tennant Mrs. Asquith’s book etc.,” King “found most interesting & restful.” 498 They related the gossip on Ruskin’s marriage and divorce and his ex-wife’s remarriage to Ruskin’s friend, John Everett Millais, who painted the most famous portrait of Gladstone, a copy of which King was so proud to have. They told also of Alfred Lord Tennyson’s attraction to the young Laura Tennant (sister of Margot Asquith and future wife of Alfred Lyttelton). 499 In the last chapter, Drew praised the controversial autobiography of Margot Asquith “as something of the nature of a tonic, of a health-giving breeze. ... It is a real ‘human document’ - literally human nature poured out upon the pages.” 500 The book was assailed for its inaccuracies but as Drew suggested, it was a “memory of emotion” as Margot had been a participant in the events and offered insight into the character of

496 Ibid., 4.
497 W.L.M.K. Diary, 21 January 1926.
498 W.L.M.K. Diary, 20 January 1926. The chapter is “Ruskin and Rose.” There are some errors in the diary transcript as King’s writing could be difficult to read.
499 King read Alfred Lyttelton’s biography by his second wife who was a spiritualist friend. King’s reading on spiritualism will be further discussed in Chapter Five.
500 Mary Drew, Acton, Gladstone and Others, 133 - 134.
King’s library at Laurier House contains Margot Asquith’s *Autobiography.* King “enjoyed it immensely” as he did other memoirs of wives and relatives of Liberal politicians. He confessed to Violet Markham:

You may think me frivolous when I tell you that I have also enjoyed the reading of the Countess of Warwick’s book entitled “Discretions.” What I like about it is the utterly frank way in which Lady Warwick explores some of the conditions which have served to bring about the present antagonism to many of the privileged classes.

King also had “greatly enjoyed” the Countess of Warwick’s *Life’s Ebb and Flow,* and recorded in his diary that it was “Not a great biography, but well written, reveals courage etc. As story of life of a beautiful woman it is most interesting.”

In another book, *More Memories,* by Margot Asquith, her chapter on Gladstone, which was carefully marked by King, declared that Gladstone was “the man of the greatest fame, character, and eloquence” that she had ever known. What interested Margot Asquith and King too was Gladstone’s personality - “his strange mixture of subtlety and simplicity, his rare sense of duty, amazing lack of pettiness, and his curious and original sense of humour.” Gladstone had the qualities that

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501 Ibid., 138.
503 King to Violet Markham, 11 December 1933.
504 Ibid.
505 Frances, Countess of Warwick, *Discretions* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1931). Some passages marked by King. In his diary King wrote that he “greatly enjoyed” *Discretions.* “Her exposure of the false life of the aristocratic circles in which she lived is well & truly done. One wonders if much of it was not due to the criticism of her intimacy with the Prince of Wales.” W.L.M.K. *Diary,* 18 December 1933.
506 Ibid. W.L.M.K. *Diary,* 1 April 1930.
509 Ibid., 92. Marked by two vertical lines.
made him a good speaker “for he was natural, tactful, and, if need be, eloquent, totally without pretension and totally without spite.” He was “a man of great self-control” and what “Mr. Gladstone possessed above and beyond anyone that I have ever known was courage.” It was “courage and character that made Mr. Gladstone not only a political giant, but a dominating influence all over Europe.”

Margot Asquith recounted and King marked the opinion of Prime Minister Arthur Balfour: “he would not hear of Disraeli’s superiority, and said that Gladstone exercised an individual influence in this country greater than any of his Parliamentary predecessors with the exception of William Pitt.”

When King began to have thoughts of retirement, he often turned to Morley’s Life. In 1943 he looked to the chapter “Retirement From Leadership” and “the noble painting of Gladstone” on the opposite page. He copied the quotation under the title into his diary:

I am too old, O king, and slow to stir; so bid thou one of the younger men here do these things.

He also copied into his diary a large part of a letter to Gladstone’s family which gave an account of the final meeting of the cabinet. Then King opened the book again to the chapter on “The Eve of the Battle” in which Gladstone gives Mr. Bright reasons why he should not resume the leadership when the Liberals are returned to power and King lists these reasons in his diary. In 1948 as he prepared his final speech for parliament, King “read over again parts of Morley’s account of Gladstone’s resignation.”

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508 Ibid., 94. Marked by two vertical lines.
509 Ibid., 103 and 104. Second quote marked with two vertical lines.
510 Ibid., 105.
511 Ibid., 95.
512 W.L.M.K. Diary, 2 October 1943.
513 Ibid.
514 Ibid.
515 W.L.M.K. Diary, 29 July 1948.
King’s devotion to Gladstone continued to the end of his life. During an illness in 1947 Joan read to King the account of Gladstone’s funeral by Lady Monkswell in a volume entitled The Victorian Diarist. One of the last books read by King was Gladstone of Hawarden: A Memoir of Henry Neville, Lord Gladstone of Hawarden by Ivor Bulmer-Thomas. From the chapter “A Liberal Without Prefix,” he recorded this passage in his diary:

But the old leaders were passing; and Lord Morley’s death in September left a big gap in the thinning ranks. There was, however, encouragement from across the water. In Canada, a Liberal Government was in office and the Prime Minister, Mr. Mackenzie King, seeking inspiration at the source of his faith paid Hawarden Castle a hurried visit in November 1923.

When King turned to the chapter “Filial Piety” it came as a surprise to him to see the mention of the painting of Gladstone the son planned to give him. The copy of the famous Millais today hangs in Laurier House. He wrote in his diary:

It was all, as I read, like a message direct from beyond, making clear to me the work which above all others must be mine for the remainder of my days - the tribute to those to whose lives and example I owe all that I am that is worthy, and a tribute to my country - Canada - for her part in the cause of freedom and good government over the past quarter of a century at least.

This chapter has examined carefully Mackenzie King’s reading of Gladstone with a view to determining its importance to his political career. There is no doubt that


518 W.L.M.K. Diary, 14 April 1949.
Mackenzie King internalized the model of Gladstone and added emotional links through contacts with Gladstone’s living relatives but it does not follow, as Esberey suggests, that King “looked to the future with a perspective controlled by the past.”

There is no doubt that King accepted many of the principles of Gladstonian Liberalism. He believed in sound financing, economy in government, free trade and the removal of protective tariffs. Although Gladstone was confident that the doctrines of Adam Smith would solve the problem of poverty as a rising economy would mean everyone’s standard of living would rise, his *laissez faire* views were tempered in King by the study of social issues. Gladstonian Liberals were committed to multilateralism rather than imperialism as was King. Gladstone believed that national groups must be allowed to govern themselves and he wanted to awaken and keep alive an English conscience in foreign affairs. He called for a tolerant and pluralistic world in which a sense of community would bind people together. Self-government for each national group, and complete free trade, would be the foundation stones for a stable and peaceful world. King’s charts in *Industry and Humanity* reflected the same idealism and sense of brotherhood that called for the compromises that would eschew violence in industrial relations. King’s charts emphasized the action and reaction of four factors on industry. Discovery and Invention, Education, and Opinion would have been countenanced by Gladstone but the fourth factor, Government would not. King’s acceptance of a degree of social reconstruction through the state was part of the New Liberalism that came after Gladstone. (See Appendix II - VI).

King was a product of the nineteenth century and the hero-worship to which the Victorian mind was so given and Gladstone was his hero. Carlyle’s idea of a hero was a man who stretches across eras and speaks to generations beyond his own. According to Carlyle, a hero is a great man to whom one feels a sense of awe.

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because “there is something godlike in him.”\textsuperscript{521} In them we recognize the greatness all other men strive for. Hero-worship, wrote Carlyle, is “the tap-root, from which in a great degree all the rest were nourished and grown.” It is a noble feeling of admiration “for one higher than himself.”\textsuperscript{522} The greatness of Carlyle’s heroes came from their “spiritual condition” and their thought and Gladstone fit this notion of a hero.\textsuperscript{523} He was a leader who was motivated by the highest Christian ideals and King worshipped his spirituality as much as his political achievements. Gladstone regarded politics as his Christian duty and King shared the same vocation.

The massive \textit{Life of Gladstone} gave King a detailed knowledge of history and politics that served him well. Morley’s biography performed “an educative and edifying function,” as Gladstone was presented as a man of stupendous moral, intellectual and political gifts.\textsuperscript{524} Gladstone offered a vision of public life attractive to King and King learned from Gladstone important lessons in political conduct. He studied the fine details of decision-making and compromise by the master. However, what King most noted about Gladstone were his personal habits, his methods and his faith rather than his specific policies. It was Gladstone’s character and example that drew King’s pencil to the margins. King believed that “what people wanted above all else in a leader was the feeling they could trust & be sure of him.” Political leadership was all about character. A leader with a strong character “could be depended on with certainty for certain things.” It was better than “brilliancy” or “popularity.”\textsuperscript{525}

King admired both the spiritual and secular strengths of Gladstone. The markings in his texts show us that King respected both Gladstone’s ideals and his political acumen. He noted his optimism and his openness to change. Gladstone taught himself self-discipline and trained himself to work efficiently; he had a passion for

\textsuperscript{521} Thomas Carlyle, \textit{Heroes, Hero Worship}, 50.
\textsuperscript{522} Ibid. 13.
\textsuperscript{523} Ibid., 50.
\textsuperscript{524} D. M. Schreuder, “The Making of Mr. Gladstone’s Posthumous Career,” 212.
\textsuperscript{525} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 12 November 1904.
economy and embraced self-improvement and learning. King took Gladstone’s advocacy of self-help and lifelong learning to heart and prepared himself well for the role of prime minister. King deemed Gladstone to be a man of great courage and it was his character and conviction that continued to inspire King. In an age of rising religious liberalism King shied away from Gladstone’s focus on Christian dogma and theology but not his moralism nor his Christian faith. That moralism and faith, as will be shown in the next chapter, was less forceful and more of a private preoccupation of King than the public faith of Gladstone.

Though King regretted that he lacked the personal magnetism of Gladstone and his great ability to move the masses with his speeches, the two did have some common qualities. They both shared a respect for the inherited fabric of society and an openness of mind which allowed development at a time when changing public opinion made rigid consistency impossible. Both were career politicians whose religious sense of duty was the mainspring of their public lives. Their daily diaries recorded some of their struggles with temptation. Both responded to this self-examination with prayer and biblical reading. Both brought a spiritual strength and power to meet whatever was demanded or expected in office. Both were so able and so earnest and so high-mindedly pragmatic. Both understood completely that politics involved both ideals and tactics. Morley’s take on Gladstone fits King:

Hard as he strove for a broad basis in general theory and high abstract principle, yet always aiming at practical ends he kept in sight the opportune.526

This chapter is about King’s search for psychic well-being in the aftermath of his depression in 1916. It examines how reading was part of his treatment. King’s diary provides his responses to both religious and psychological readings. Many of the texts are heavily marked by King, in particular, those by William James. When these overlooked texts in King’s library are examined in conjunction with his diary, they allow King’s reading to be carefully observed over the time period of his recovery and show King to be a consumer of both self-help tracts to train his mind and body and spiritual guides to nurture his soul. King turned to the explanations and remedies offered by psychology to combat the contemporary malaise of anxiety. He also explored the writings of those who applied their understanding of psychology to the study of religious experience such as James and Evelyn Underhill. While King was intellectually engaged with James, one of the most important thinkers of the twentieth century, he also sought the popular religious writings of Underhill and others who described how to sustain a spiritual life in the modern world.

As a young man King had reflected on the lives of English Liberal politicians. In particular he admired the Christian Gladstone as a model for his own political development. When the middle-aged King was defeated in 1911, he entered into a new career as an industrial consultant to the Rockefeller Foundation, which ended in 1918 with the publication of *Industry and Humanity*. King’s views on industrial relations were influenced by his earlier assimilation of the political economy of Toynbee, Ashley and Taussig but also informed by the emerging disciplines of sociology and psychology as well as by his own religious beliefs. The new psychology, of which William James (1842 - 1910) was the leading theorist, focused on the mental growth of individuals. James had harsh words for the
theoretical abstractions of the older psychologies. Though he remained intensely concerned with philosophical problems, James developed a scientific view of psychology that accorded a key role to experience. James’s bête noir was Herbert Spencer who, as Kurt Danziger suggests, had “little use for the interrogation of experience” because his energies were “invested in the construction of an edifice of abstractions from which the answers to psychological questions could be read off.”

James, on the other hand, turned away from abstraction and fixed principles and closely linked psychology to the concepts of functionalism, pragmatism, pluralism and common sense. His project was focused on the individual and was more practical than theoretical in its goals. James made a huge impact on American psychology that is felt even today. He created an atmosphere about the subject that made it seem worthwhile to pursue and he attracted many readers, including King. Jamesian psychology was to have a profound effect on King’s thinking just as he returned to the political arena as the leader of the Liberal Party of Canada.

The year 1916 was a very difficult one for Mackenzie King. His sister’s death in 1915 was much on his mind as was his brother Max’s serious tuberculosis. John King, nearly blind, died on 30 August 1916. King’s college friend, Norman Duncan, died in October and his mother was also ailing. She died the next year. King was also “greatly discouraged” with the writing of Industry and Humanity and the first reaction to it from the directors of the Rockefeller Foundation had not been enthusiastic.

King discontinued his diary in 1916, except for the period of 9 June to 2 July and a few short lines in August. The diary was resumed 13 October, after which the record for the rest of the year is continuous. The exact nature of his illness over the summer remains obscure. King berated his lack of commitment:

528 W.L.M.K. Diary, 2 July 1916.
529 W.L.M.K. Diary, 27 - 29 June 1916.
I am painfully conscious of the extent to which I have let go noble resolves, and sacrificed the main obligations of my work to other and less imperative duties. The will to do has been dulled by failure to do. 530

He “literally fled” to Kingsmere in June “to get back to the quiet of deep thought and peaceful living - fled with the city’s unrest and burning in my veins to seek God and live again with my own soul.” 531 On his return King made reference to his “unsettled state” which caused him to act “impulsively” and “to fret and worry” about his work:

At times I have been depressed and disheartened and unequal to the task. My thoughts have turned away from the ideals I have cherished, and I have found myself in an encounter with my own nature such as I have never known before. It has been at times as though a fire would devour me, and I have been unable to get rest by night or day. 532

It was as if King had begun to perceive a depraved side emerging in his own personality. There was a tension between the impulses of the body and the Christian ideals of the soul and he escaped to Kingsmere in order to forget his anxieties:

Out of this sort of chaos I have come to this little home, come deliberately and prayerfully to win the peace my soul craves, the quiet my mind needs, the force that will requires. 533

King yearned “for a home of my own” and the “domestic joys I have never permitted myself.” 534 He continued “to worry over the nervous condition” which made him "most uncomfortable both alone and in the presence of others.” 535 He

530 W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 June 1916.
531 W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 June 1916.
532 W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 June 1916.
533 W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 June 1916.
534 W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 June 1916.
recognized that these unhealthy feelings were holding him back in his work:

The tendency to worry is something I must guard against. I incline towards it too much and become unduly suspicious that things are against me, when there is no reason for it.\textsuperscript{536}

In July he consulted with a Dr. Chevrier in Ottawa, who told him that he was “simply nervously overwrought and needed something to get my nerves quieted”\textsuperscript{537} though his written statement termed King’s condition “a severe form of neurasthenia.”\textsuperscript{538} It was Dr. George Beard, a late nineteenth-century neurologist, who was responsible for making the term ‘neurasthenia’ fashionable. In his study, \textit{Nervous Exhaustion} (1881), he examined the problem of ‘nervousness’ as a widespread ailment. By nervousness, Beard did not mean hyperactivity but depletion. “Nervousness is nervelessness - a lack of nerve force” and its one predisposing cause was modern civilization.\textsuperscript{539} According to Beard, America led the nations in nervousness because it led the nations in modern civilization which he distinguished from the ancient by five characteristics: steam-power, the popular press, the telegraph, the sciences, and the mental activity of women.\textsuperscript{540} Nervousness beset the most advanced people, the successful people, the people who most fully indulged modern civilization and it was most prevalent in the North-eastern United States. Beard listed “repression of emotion” as a contributing factor: “Constant inhibition, restraining normal feelings, keeping back, covering, holding in check atomic forces of the mind and body is an exhausting process.”\textsuperscript{541} American nervousness manifested itself by a very large number of symptoms of functional debility and irritability which included: “insomnia, flushing, drowsiness, bad dreams, ... tenderness of the teeth and gums, nervous dyspepsia, ... fear of responsibility, fear of society, fear of being alone, fear of fears,

\textsuperscript{536} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 27 - 29 June 1916.
\textsuperscript{537} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 1 July 1916.
\textsuperscript{540} Ibid., preface, vi.
\textsuperscript{541} Ibid., 120 - 121.
fear of everything, ... lack of decision in trifling matters, hopelessness, ... pain in the perineum, involuntary emissions, ... and falling away of the hair. King’s symptoms were typical: he seemed paralyzed by introspection, plagued with self doubt and unable to act decisively and like many others diagnosed with neurasthenia he sought relief in a variety of popular works of self-help.

Self-help is only one of the names given to describe the lifestyle literature generated by rapid industrialization in the nineteenth century. Other names are success, self-improvement, how-to or adjustment literature. In her brief outline of the history of self-help literature, Sue Curell suggests that the earlier improvement manuals based on Christian ethics were replaced by “self-help books that discussed success in terms of the marketplace, influenced by ideas of evolutionary progress based on Darwinian discoveries.” By the 1880s, she claims, “religious and moral precepts that had underpinned many conduct and ‘how-to’ books were being replaced by scientific theories of human potential and self-making based on the new science of experimental psychology.” She suggests that these manuals about how to improve oneself were “increasingly influenced by studies in intelligence and personality undertaken in laboratories to establish qualitative definitions.” The appearance of psychotherapy in the early twentieth century also “shifted the nature of these texts again, creating an adjustment literature that proffered help with the stresses and strains associated with the shift to modernity.” However, Curell’s study is based on her concerns about self-help literature. She finds something disturbing about the persistence of self-help books as they are aimed to adjust people to a new age and she claims that they contribute to “a culture of conformity and self-surveillance that is often quite the opposite of the liberating promises touted on book covers.” In particular, after 1929 the self-help books “persistently

542 Ibid., 7 - 8.
544 Ibid., 133 - 134.
545 Ibid., 132.
indicated that like the economy, the individual was not operating efficiently enough and this was affecting his or her ability to succeed in the modern world.\footnote{546}

The case of King’s reading of success literature seems to run counter to Curell’s description of its trajectory. The self-help field was varied and crowded. Many of King’s choices reflected an overlapping of the religious and the secular, suggesting a more gradual transition from those that were Christian-based to those that were secular in nature. King’s choices certainly generally favoured a strong spiritual component and his markings demonstrate this focus. The New Thought or Mind Cure movement which produced many of these works of self-help tended to combine mental healing with a religious idealism and then to inject it with the scientific dignity of psychology and its jargon. Liberal American Protestants, as Richard M. Huber suggests, were replacing their shelves of theological books with this New Thought literature that asserted that sickness and sin could be overcome by right thinking and religious mind power and this literature continued to flourish well into mid-century when the Reverend Norman Vincent Peale’s \textit{The Power of Positive Thinking} (1952) became a best seller.\footnote{547}

In 1916 King turned to Arnold Bennett’s \textit{Mental Efficiency} (1911) and he liked “his view that the body is servant of the mind, and the mind itself the instrument of a higher something which is the real spiritual self.”\footnote{548} Along with Bennett’s \textit{How to Live on Twenty-Four Hours a Day} (1912), it combined the spiritual and the mundane, providing a recipe for spiritual content and a guide for increasing personal efficiency.\footnote{549} Concentration was a technical process “stirring the mind from its sloth and making it \textit{exactly obedient to the aspirations of the soul}.”\footnote{550} According to Bennett, “mind

control is the first element of a full existence” and “it is the mere disciplining of the thinking machine that counts.” He recommended his readers to “get your mind in hand” and “see how the process cures half the evils of life - especially worry, that miserable, avoidable, shameful disease - worry!” He also advocated “daily meditation upon the immortality of the soul as a cure for discontent and unhappiness.” Constant reflection upon “the same essential force” that is in everyone, produces “that universal sympathy which alone can produce a positive content.”

By the fall of 1916 King was in a sufficient degree of emotional difficulty that he agreed, on the advice of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to seek medical help at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. King received the royal treatment at Johns Hopkins and he felt he really benefitted. He first saw Dr. Lewellys Franklin Barker (1867 - 1943), who referred him to a number of others, including the world famous psychiatrist, Dr. Adolf Meyer (1866 - 1950). Paul Roazen has examined the psychiatric data provided by Meyer’s file on King in his fascinating book, Canada’s King: An Essay in Political Psychology. Meyer’s file cast special light on King’s sexual problems and his hallucinatory feelings of electrical influence. Dr. Barker and King established a good rapport immediately and King saw in Barker his “ideal of a physician, a man of fine spiritual cast.” Dr. Barker spoke to King on his “views of sex problems” and said he thought that King “over exaggerated significance of perfectly natural phenomena, that there was danger in so doing by a healthy man” and “he advised reconciling in thought any conflict between the animal and spiritual nature.” After his first meeting King returned to his hotel and wrote in his diary:

551 Arnold Bennett, How to Live on Twenty-Four Hours a Day, 46, 49 - 50. When King was in London for the Imperial Conference he went to Everyman’s Theatre to see “What the Public Wants.” The play was a satire on Lord Northcliffe by Arnold Bennett. W.L.M.K. Diary, 25 October 1923.
552 Arnold Bennett, Mental Efficiency, 117 - 118.
553 W.L.M.K. Diary, 24 October 1916.
554 W.L.M.K. Diary, 26 October 1916.
555 W.L.M.K. Diary, 1 November 1916.
I came back from Barker’s and knelt down and thanked God for the answer to my prayer, to find the means of freeing me from this nervous fear, and for Mr. R. as a friend. I also felt that father and Bell were watching over and helping to protect me and to bring this about. My mind is greatly relieved tonight. It has been a sad torment for a long while past.\textsuperscript{556}

The next day King saw a number of specialists including Adolf Meyer, whom he found “an exceedingly helpful man to talk with, understanding, sympathetic.” Meyer was respectful of King’s idealism and religiosity. King “outlined to him the strain ... the worries & morbid symptoms and ... the conflict in my thoughts between spiritual aspirations and material struggles & conflicts, the fight with myself.” Meyer explained that all King’s experiences were “natural enough” and advised “enjoying more society” and “care as to the food for the mind as well as the body.”\textsuperscript{557} King returned to his hotel and entered in his diary:

... I felt this man had a soul which could understand mine. That he too was a man with ideals & understood the ideal.

... This was one of the really important interviews of my life. A talk with a man of like ideals but with a profounder knowledge of life. It was easy to speak to him of the best that is in me.

... My mind is greatly relieved tonight, and I feel this visit to have been one of the providential events of my life. I had come to the point where I thought my work for the future would be undermined by this nervous dread. Now I believe it will be greater than ever before.\textsuperscript{558}

King returned briefly to New York where he attended two very fine sermons preached by the Reverend John Henry Jowett, pastor at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. As he listened, King felt that “helpful as had been the counsels of the eminent physicians ... this man’s counsel as a healer was greater still. That it is

\textsuperscript{556} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 26 October 1916.
\textsuperscript{557} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 27 October 1916.
\textsuperscript{558} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 27 October 1916.
at the feet of Christ individuals and the world are saved.” This was King’s “fundamental belief” and it was “back of all other beliefs.”

Returning to Johns Hopkins, King remained until 11 November, undergoing several minor surgeries including dental work.

The two relationships which King established at John Hopkins were continued until the deaths of Barker and Meyer. The affinity he had for both these doctors is understandable in the context of King’s general admiration for the medical profession and their intellectual thought. Meyer, a Swiss immigrant to the United States, was committed to the reforming of American mental institutions and responsible for introducing modern European clinical methods and laboratory procedures and he played an important role in the mental hygiene movement which extended the scope of psychiatry into community settings such as the family, the school and the prison. He was instrumental in helping establish the National Committee of Mental Hygiene, an organization founded by Clifford Beers, whose classic autobiographical account of his experiences as a mental patient, published in 1908, helped provide the momentum for a broad program of asylum reform in the United States.

Meyer’s approach to psychology was part of a movement that toward the end of the nineteenth century aimed to provide a naturalistic explanation of mental disease. However, Meyer moved away from an exclusively organic interpretation of mental illness and as Ruth Leys suggests, “emphasized instead the interlocking of structure


560 King went to Baltimore for check-ups with Barker when he felt he needed to. Barker sent King his memoirs and King marked the first chapter “A Quaker Childhood in Canada.” He read out loud to Joan and Godfroy “the chapter on growing old.” W.L.M.K. Diary, 26 April 1942. Lewellys F. Barker, Time and the Physician (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Son’s, 1942). Inscribed: For The Honorable W. L. Mackenzie King with the very high personal regard of one who is very grateful for his upbringing. Lewellys F. Barker April 1942. In King’s collection at the National Library.

561 Clifford Whittingham Beers, A Mind That Found Itself (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1934). Presentation copy in King’s collection at the National Library.
and function in the development of mental disease."\textsuperscript{562} For Meyer psychology became “the study of the behaviour of each individual in his or her total environment.”\textsuperscript{563} By emphasizing the role of life experience, “he broadened the scope of psychiatry to include the personal, psychological, and social experiences influencing the patient and introduced a more dynamic and optimistic attitude toward the possibility of preventing and curing mental disease.”\textsuperscript{564}

In developing this life-history or historical approach to the psychiatric patient Meyer was indebted to the ideas of William James and the related theories of the newly emerging Chicago school of functionalism. As Danziger has observed, James proposed “that psychology should stop pretending that what it studied were entities like the associations between ideas or mental faculties like intelligence. Such creations of the psychologist’s abstraction were never given in experience, and it was experience that psychology would have to learn to start with if it was to be a science.”\textsuperscript{565} As a result of James’s functional approach to mental experience, “psychology studied the mind in use ... in the ordinary practical situations of everyday life.”\textsuperscript{566} Meyer also made use of James’s concept of habit and argued that “the cumulative effect of early faulty habit patterns was to produce abnormal or ‘inefficient’ behaviour in later life.”\textsuperscript{567} Meyer interpreted mental illness as essentially “caused by problems of living” and he sought to stress each individual’s uniqueness or ‘spontaneity’.\textsuperscript{568}

\textsuperscript{562} Ruth Leys and Rand B. Evans, eds., \textit{The Correspondence between Adolf Meyer and Edward Bradford Titchener} (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 39.
\textsuperscript{563} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{564} Ibid., 44.
\textsuperscript{566} Ruth Leys and Rand B. Evans, eds., \textit{The Correspondence between Adolf Meyer and Edward Bradford Titchener}, 45.
\textsuperscript{567} Ibid., 46.
\textsuperscript{568} Ibid. In the Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 26, Reel H - 3035, there is a booklet \textit{A Contribution of Mental Hygiene} (Chicago: Conference on Public Welfare, 1933), which contains an article “Spontaneity” by Adolf Meyer which was copiously marked by King.
King’s treatment at Johns Hopkins included certain recommended readings which King faithfully completed. Dr. Barker “advised studying the habit of rest & repose” and suggested two books by Annie Payson Call - *Power through Repose* and *The Freedom of Life*. In return, King recommended Barker read Hamilton Wright Mabie’s *Essays on Nature and Culture*, “as a helpful study on repose ‘never hasting or resting’.” Barker also recommended daily physical exercise and diet. King began Muller’s breathing exercises and he purchased and read *How to Get Strong and How to Stay So* and *Eat and Grow Thin*. The exercise manual was respectfully dedicated to William Ewart Gladstone who “daily so intelligently trained his body” so that “he was able to maintain a true equilibrium between mind and body; and so to keep both in consummate working-order far on to a ripe old age.”

Meyer recommended the philosophy of William James “as most helpful, though he had been unable to follow him in all his religious views.” King, on the other hand was able to link James’s beliefs in “invisible sources” to religious convictions. In addition, in a letter in December, Meyer provided King with a list of self-help titles which included: *The Efficient Life, Efficiency, The Human Machine, How to Live on*...
Twenty-Four Hours a Day, Why Worry? and The Soul of Spain. King purchased some of these recommended readings immediately in Baltimore, read several during his stay at Johns Hopkins and continued reading them after his departure.

Several of the self-help books that Meyer recommended to King were reflective of the efficiency movement which had both a business and personal dimension. King was well-schooled in industrial efficiency and scientific management but in Industry and Humanity, he emphasized the human factor. No doubt he was influenced by such sociologists as Charles Richmond Henderson whose Citizens in Industry suggested that maximum efficiency required protective “measures for safety, health and comfort” for the labour force. Meyer’s titles were more about personal improvement. Arnold Bennett made an extraordinarily lucrative career for himself writing guides aimed at ambitious office workers who needed to learn to organize their daily life. Luther Gulick’s The Efficient Life, which King finished reading in the spring of 1917, urged that “to live a full, rich efficient life,” the brain worker “must be the master of a delicate, high-grade machine calculated to carry on high-grade work” and “the higher the quality of work, the greater the nervous cost of it, and the more highly perfected must be the machine that does it.” His book attempted “to enable each man to discover and secure for himself the best attainable conditions for

575 Paul Roazen, Canada’s King, 113.
Arnold Bennett, How to Live on Twenty-Four Hours a Day (New York: George Doran, 1910). In King’s Laurier House collection.
Arnold Bennett, The Human Machine (New York: G. H. Doran, 1911). In King’s collection at the National Library.
The title Efficiency may refer to Arnold Bennett’s Mental Efficiency of which there are two marked copies in King’s Laurier House collection.
The Soul of Spain (1908) by Havelock Ellis, a British doctor, sexual psychologist and social reformer, is not in King’s collection. Ellis published the first English medical text book on homosexuality, something that Ellis did not consider to be a disease to be cured or immoral.
577 W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 April 1917.
Luther H. Gulick, The Efficient Life, xv, 9, 7. Last quote marked by two vertical lines. 128
his own daily life.” Each chapter dealt with one of the conditions of life which must be attended to in order to reduce depression and low vitality. King made markings in them all including “Exercise - its Use and Abuse,” “The Business of Digestion,” “The Attack on Constipation,” and in particular “Fatigue,” “Vitality - The Armour of Offence,” and “Growth in Rest.”

King continued to be concerned about his physical and mental health. *Keeping in Condition* was a practical guide that advocated exercise, fresh air, diet, rest and “the control of inner force.” Most of the systems of exercise assumed that “the body and the mind work in unison, and what affects the body deleteriously naturally affects the mind in a similar way.” As part of The Conduct of the Mind series, *Mental Adjustments* promoted a dynamic psychology in which “better self-understanding means better self-control and wiser ordering of one’s actions along the normal paths of happiness.” King reread *Personal Magnetism* in 1929 and again in 1933 “to strengthen my will power on resolutions of the day.” He found it “a simple book but with much good teaching” and “full of useful and helpful ideas, such that explains what is most puzzling about one’s self.” An earlier work on personal growth that was much marked by King was *Poise and Power*. Poise was defined as “that state of conscious being wherein peace and power thoroughly combine. The feeling of power becomes perfectly serene and the feeling of peace becomes enormously strong. When you feel absolutely calm and self possessed, and at the same time

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578 Ibid., 11.
583 W.L.M.K. Diary, 9 October 1929 and W.L.M.K. Diary, 11 April 1933.
feel strong enough to move mountains, you are in POISE." In addition to reading self-help literature King tried other remedies. For example, in 1933 when he was feeling “to be lacking in vitality,” King went “to have treatment in violet ray & electric treatment by Ball ... to energize me a little.” However, it was through reading that King helped himself most.

When King was at Johns Hopkins he acquired William James’s *On Some of Life’s Ideals*, recommended by Meyer. However, this was not King’s first exposure to William James. When he was a student at Harvard, King had met the man himself and had been to his house and discussed “the laboring classes.” *On Some of Life’s Ideals* contained two essays which also appeared in James’s *Talks to Teachers on Psychology* (1899), a book that combined psychology of particular interest to educators with inspirational and therapeutic lectures. Markings in both texts indicate that King studied the work of James very carefully. Much of *Talks to Teachers* was a distillation of James’s earlier important work, *Principles of Psychology* (1890), which developed his theories on the general elements and workings of the mind. King’s markings touched particularly on James’s ideas on habit, memory, the will, and the association of ideas. King noted James’s most famous psychological metaphor, the stream of consciousness, which described the mind in fluid terms. Our inner life is “a stream, a succession of states, or waves, or

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King also had many other self-help books including one from Dr. Wilfred Grenfell. Wilfred T. Grenfell, *Yourself and Your Body* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1924). Inscribed: Mar 1928 Dear King You’ve been a friend so long that I scarcely care to put the number of years, though they have left us thus far little to complain of so far as our changing machines are concerned. Our friendship has been deeper than that of men, whose ties to us are only those of place and even family, except that both of us have the same conceit of the common origin and destiny of the soul within. Affect ever your friend - Wilfred Grenfell.

585 W.L.M.K. Diary, 16 March 1933.


587 W.L.M.K. Diary, 21 July 1898.


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fields ... of knowledge, of feeling, of desire, of deliberation, etc., that constantly pass and repass.” For James psychology entailed the story of dynamic and constantly changing processes.

James’s talk on the importance of habit expressed his faith in the benign effect of routine and the cumulative significance of little acts. In *Principles of Psychology*, he had stressed the enormously important influence of habitual responses for the maintenance of society. Habit was “the enormous fly-wheel of society, its most precious conserving agent.” In *Talks to Teachers* he noted that the laws of habit formation are impartial and capable of producing morally good or bad ideas. Habits can be beneficial or harmful; “our virtues are habits as much as our vices.” James believed that his college-aged audience still had enough “plasticity” left to combat old bad habits and foster new ones. The great thing in all education is to “make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy” and he urged that “we must make automatic and habitual, as early as possible, as many useful actions as we can, and as carefully guard against growing into ways that are likely to be disadvantageous.” In his view “there is no more miserable human being than one in whom nothing is habitual but indecision.” James urged them to decide on some desirable better behaviour and then practice it deliberately and repeatedly:

*Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make, and on every emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain.*

James gave an example from Darwin’s autobiography to stress the importance of

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589 William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology: and to Students on Some of Life’s Ideals* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1958), 28. This edition was used to combine the markings from King’s two texts.
591 William James, *Talks to Teachers*, 57. Marked by two vertical lines.
592 Ibid.
593 Ibid., 58. First quotation marked by three vertical lines.
594 Ibid., 58. Marked by two vertical lines.
595 Ibid., 60. Marked by two vertical lines.
the habit of reading poetry. If Darwin had his life to live over again he “would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week.” He regretted his atrophied taste for music and art for “the loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.” King himself deliberately established the habit of reading good literature every morning to stimulate his mind through the day and for the most part suffered no remission. He sometimes rebuked himself for neglecting certain types of reading but in general he followed James’s advice that “ten minutes a day of poetry, of spiritual reading or meditation and an hour or two a week at music, pictures, or philosophy” would keep his “higher spiritual side alive.”

King marked many sections in James’s talk on the will. In his discussion, James explored the notion of freedom in terms of the relation among ideas, volition and action. Teachers can influence student action by “the stock of ideas” with which they furnished them, by training them in the exercise of “voluntary attending” to the right ones and by habituating them to act on these. James’s psychological approach to freedom changed the understanding of will power by reconstructing choice as a matter of habit and the effort of attending to an idea. The intensity of King’s markings increased as James turned to the question of whether he was a complete materialist or not. King marked with five vertical lines James’s unequivocal statement:

... I will say, in order to avoid all misunderstanding, that in no sense do I count myself a materialist.

It was James’s understanding of “the part played by voluntary attention in volition” that opened the door to “a belief in free will and purely spiritual causation.” His

596 Ibid.
597 Ibid. Marked by two vertical lines.
598 Ibid., 62.
599 Ibid., 127. First quote marked by two vertical lines, the second by four.
600 Ibid., 128. Marked by five vertical lines.
601 Ibid.
psychological theories did not force him to become a fatalist or a materialist. He suggested that teachers should view each student as “a subtle little piece of machinery” that is both “partly fated and partly free.”

The two essays from On Some of Life’s Ideals gave expression to James’s fundamental moralism and his individualistic philosophy. James was an ardent believer in tolerance, in respect for a multitude of ways of life. These commitments are most clearly expressed in “On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings,” which proclaimed the supreme value of those strivings which are unique to each individual and suggested that the common blindness in human beings is their failure to discern the inward significance of other people’s lives. When one sees the inward value of other lives one acknowledges their right to exist, or even exalts in their existence. “On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings” is an essay that “absolutely forbids us to be forward in pronouncing on the meaninglessness of forms of existence other than our own.” It affirms that one’s own point of view is limited:

... and it commands us to tolerate, respect, and indulge those whom we see harmlessly interested and happy in their own ways, however unintelligible these may be to us. Hands off: neither the whole of truth nor the whole of good is revealed to any single observer, although each observer gains a partial superiority of insight from the peculiar position in which he stands.

In Industry and Humanity, King recognized “human blindness” as “the fundamental cause of war” and “the underlying cause of industrial and international unrest.” It is “the blindness with which we are all afflicted in regard to the feelings of creatures and peoples different from ourselves.” Although “this blindness seems a very
obvious and little thing,” wrote King, “the forgetting of it lies at the root of all our intolerance, social, religious, and political. In the final summing up of things, it is responsible for all unrest; for all conflict of nations as well as of men.”

James’s pluralistic solution was reiterated by King in *Industry and Humanity*: “A belief in our fellow man equal to that which we have in ourselves is all that is necessary to remove the human blindness which has so long made us strangers to one another, and oftentimes enemies as well.” In his critique of *Industry and Humanity*, Ramsay Cook viewed King’s reference to James as a mere piece of sentimentalism and he blurred the distinctions between James and the popular preacher, Norman Vincent Peale: “Such a naive faith in the power of positive thinking, revealed how far King had wandered from the disciplined Calvinist heritage of his church.”

James himself anticipated such criticism of “On a Certain Blindness”:

> It is more than a mere piece of sentimentalism which it may seem to some readers. It connects itself with a definite view of the world and of our moral relations to the same. ... I mean the pluralistic or individualistic philosophy. ... There is no point of view absolutely public and universal. Private and uncommunicable perceptions always remain over, and the worst of it is that those who look for them from the outside never know where. ... The practical consequence of such a philosophy is the well-known democratic respect for the sacredness of individuality.

In the sister essay from *On Some of Life’s Ideals*, “What Makes a Life Significant,” James offered a psychological explanation of class relations. James wondered whether the lives of his idealistic students would have any significance. Being college-bred, they were inclined to overvalue culture and refinement and to look down upon, to be “blind” to what might give significance to the lives of the uneducated. James had written the essay in 1896 after he had given a number of

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607 Ibid., 11.
608 Ibid., 153. King’s italics.
610 William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology: and to Students on Some of Life’s Ideals*, preface, 19.
public lectures at Chautauqua, America’s leading adult education summer camp. In the 1880’s and 1890’s, thousands came to the grounds for spiritual refreshment, intellectual stimulation and cultural uplift but the refined atmosphere of this “middle-class paradise” repelled James.611 At Chautauqua there was “no poverty, no drunkenness, no crime, no police. You have culture, you have kindness, you have cheapness, you have equality, you have the best fruits of what mankind has fought and bled and striven for under the name of civilization for centuries ... with no suffering and no dark corners.”612 The ideal was so completely victorious, with no need of invigorating struggle, “the place just resting on its oars.”613 What was lacking, according to James, was “the element of precipitousness, ... strength and strenuousness, intensity and danger, ... sweat and effort, human nature strained to its uttermost and on the rack.”614 King marked with three vertical lines the suggestion that “what our human emotions seem to require is the sight of the struggle going on.”615

There was another America, James reminded his privileged audience, where the heroism of hard work yet reigned. It was “the daily lives of the laboring classes,” in which “the demand for courage is incessant, and the supply never fails.”616 What the middle class wanted in strength, however, the working class lacked in inner ideals. To redeem life from insignificance both were required:

Culture and refinement all alone are not enough to do so. Ideal aspirations are not enough, when uncombined with pluck and will. But neither are pluck and will, dogged endurance and insensibility to danger enough, when taken alone. There must be some sort of fusion, some chemical combination among these principles, for a life objectively and thoroughly significant to result.617

612 Ibid., 172 - 173. Part of this section was also marked in On Some of Life’s Ideals, 34.
613 Ibid., 174. King marked this section by three vertical lines.
614 Ibid., 174. Marked also in On Some of Life’s Ideals, 57 - 58.
615 William James, On Some of Life’s Ideals, 58. Marked by three vertical lines.
617 Ibid., 188. Marked by two vertical lines.
King found “What Makes a Life Significant” to be “a splendid essay on the need for the expression of an ideal in action, to make life significant, wherever found, whether in humble or in lofty circumstances, and the need of struggle to merit admiration in achievement.” King also noted in his diary that it was “a great help to have one’s own faith and belief confirmed by a man like James.

James described the labour conflict as “unhealthy and regrettable” and King marked four vertical lines beside James’s statement that “the unhealthiness consists solely in the fact than one-half of our fellow-countrymen remain entirely blind to the internal significance of the lives of the other half.” When King was rereading this essay in 1918 as he was writing *Industry and Humanity*, he wrote in his diary that James dwelt “on the worth of the common people and reveals Labor in its true light.” King wished he could be the writer that James was and “interpret to the world, the significance of Labour, and help to give it its rightful place in social economy.” In *Industry and Humanity* King quoted a section of the essay which elaborated James’s vision of the heroism of Labour:

> As I awoke to all this unidealized heroic life around me, the scales seemed to fall from my eyes; and a wave of sympathy greater than anything I had ever before felt with the common life of common men began to fill my soul. It began to seem as if virtue with horny hands and dirty skin were the only virtue genuine and vital enough to take account of. ... These are our soldiers, thought I, these our sustainers, these the very parents of our life.

King was reading the two essays from *On Some of Life’s Ideals* at the same time he

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818 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 8 November 1916. King recorded the title of the essay incorrectly as The Significance of Human Ideals.
819 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 8 November 1916.
821 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 19 July 1918. Spelling of labor and labour as in King’s diary.
822 William James, “What Makes a Life Significant,” 176. King’s underlining. This marked section was quoted in *Industry and Humanity*, 487.

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was reading the mind cure teachings of Annie Payson Call who was a disciple of James’s new psychology. James himself was open to the ideas of mind curists and unwilling to stifle any voice or to constrict any domain of attested human experience. Failure to respect a multiplicity of interpretative insights, what King called “many-sided comprehension” in his own work, would be an instance of ‘blindness’ to another’s position. 623 James was critical of the narrow-minded attitudes of the medical professionals who ignored what he believed to be instructive phenomena. He personally pursued mind-cures for his neurasthenia and offered his own therapeutic solutions to perplexing contemporary problems. James thought that Call’s “admirable little volume,” Power through Repose, “ought to be in the hands of every teacher and student in America.” 624 It was in the mind-cure teachings of practitioners such as Call that the striking influence of psychology in American life could be seen and it was William James who gave the movement intellectual respectability.

James regarded the mind-cure movement or what became known as New Thought, as primarily a religious movement with “a deliberately optimistic scheme of life, with both a speculative and practical side.” 625 In his view, “its doctrine of the oneness of our life with God’s life,” was quite indistinguishable from a liberal interpretation of Christianity. 626 The diverse sources of this movement, according to James, included “the four Gospels, Emersonianism or New England transcendentalism, ... Berkeleyan idealism and spiritism, with its messages of ‘law’ and ‘progress’ and ‘development’; ... the optimistic popular science evolutionism ... and finally Hinduism.” 627 Mind-cure was a reaction against the “misery-habit” and the “martyr-habit” associated with Anglo-American Calvinism. 628 It was a sunshine faith that

623 William Lyon Mackenzie King, Industry and Humanity, xvi.
626 Ibid., 95.
627 Ibid., 87.
628 Ibid., 90.
tended to the suppression of “fearthought.” The leaders of this new faith had “an intuitive belief in the all-saving power of healthy-minded attitudes as such, in the conquering efficacy of courage, hope and trust, and a correlative contempt for doubt, fear, worry and nervously precautionary states of mind.” The key to the success of mind-cure, James argued, was the methods deployed which advocated that “passivity, not activity; relaxation not intentness, should be now the rule.” Religion in the shape of mind-cure developed ways of “giving your little private convulsive self a rest, and finding that a great Self is there.” Regeneration by relaxing worked for people whose ears were deafened to the Gospel as it was preached in Protestant churches. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, published in 1902, James concluded that these “regenerative phenomena which ensue on the abandonment of effort” plainly showed “the universe to be a more many-sided affair.” He was willing to say that “mind-cure gives some of us serenity, moral poise, and happiness, and prevents certain forms of disease as well as science does, or even better in a certain class of persons.”

The mind-cure or mental healing movement which had its roots in animal magnetism and hypnotism, was a practical protest against the growing materialism of medical science and embraced a faith in the power of the mind over body. Disease was in essence mental, not physical. It was but an outward or visible effect of inner disturbance and could be healed through right thinking. Its roots being “a wrong belief,” its cure then was to “change that belief.” As Horatio W. Dresser suggested in *A History of the New Thought Movement* (1919), the science of healing made liberal use of the teachings of sixteenth century Swedish mystic,

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631 Ibid., 98.
632 Ibid., 99. Marked by two vertical lines.
633 Ibid., 99, 107. Second quote marked by two vertical lines.
634 Ibid., 107.
Emanuel Swedenborg, “concerning the influx of the divine life into the soul, the relationship of mind and body, the correspondence of all things natural with all things spiritual and the conception of causality as essentially spiritual.” Christian Science was a more formalized group in the mental healing camp, established by Mary Baker Eddy, who declared disease an “error of belief,” and “the frightened, false sense of the patient.” Mrs. Eddy distinguished Christian Science healing from the mushrooming mind-cure movement which preceded New Thought, by constantly reiterating that true spiritual healing did not result from the action of one human mind on another, but from the operation of divine power alone: “Any attempt to heal mortals with erring mortal mind, instead of resting in the omnipotence of the divine Mind, must prove abortive.” The sick are never really healed by drugs, hygiene, or any material method: “The remedy is Truth, not matter, - the truth that disease is unreal.” King believed in “the power of God, thro faith & prayer, over the fears and ignorance of man.” In 1917, when his mother was gravely ill, he wrote that “more and more I am coming to the Christian Science point of view, the doing away with drugs & the like & putting one’s faith in living according to Christ’s teachings in all things. All man can do is to clear away the underbrush, roll away the stones, the door may open, and the breath of life come in.”

Gail Thain Parker has explored the popular faith in mind cure and why the writings were welcomed by so many. She has suggested that the spread of mind cure was “a response to the bloodlessness of the Genteel Tradition as it was embodied in nineteenth-century Protestantism.” A liberalized Protestant theology had softened convictions and promoted ethical confusion. There was a need for an answer to a crumbling faith in the older theology and for relief from the anxiety and the fear

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636 Ibid., 76.  
637 Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (Boston: Trustees of Mary Baker Eddy, 1934), 450, 460. King’s copy is in the library at Laurier House.  
638 Ibid., 459.  
639 Ibid., 229. Eddy’s italics.  
640 W.L.M.K. Diary, 1 February 1917. King’s underlining.  
churning in an increasingly dislocated society seen as the result of urbanization, industrialization and the growing impersonality of economic life. As larger frameworks of meaning weakened, Americans focused on the self and the quest for well-being. This introspection produced intense feelings of guilt and often engendered a diffuse anxiety. Americans were more restless and fatigued; they were anxious, harried and suffering from neurasthenia or “Americanitis” as Annie Payson Call preferred. Jangled nerves were the price of progress. The neurasthenia epidemic - itself a product of secularization - according to Jackson Lears, “led numerous troubled Americans to seek solace and spiritual satisfaction not from ministers but from mind curists and mental hygienists whose cures for nervousness frequently lacked a supernatural dimension.”

Parker has suggested that mind curists may not have understood the subconscious mechanisms enlisted from psychology but their mental exercises taught the anxious to relax and ‘let go’ and their therapeutic techniques helped people lead more satisfying lives. Mind cure enabled its followers “to intellectualize their fears” instead of working them out in the form of symptoms. “Enjoining both self-help and self-abandon,” mind cure enabled its adherents to live more comfortably with their own conflicting impulses.

When King finished Power through Repose at Johns Hopkins, he wrote that he had found Call’s book to be “full of common sense & most helpful counsel, a book that truly helps one to know ‘how to live’.” He regretted that he “did not come to a knowledge of all this sooner” so that he “might have helped father & little Bell. ... So much of their anxiety & worry, which brought them in the end to their graves might have been avoided & spared. The art of living, how few know it.” Call’s simple cure for extreme nervous tension was “a steady, careful obedience “ to the perfect

645 W.L.M.K. Diary, 6 November 1916.
646 W.L.M.K. Diary, 8 November 1916.
laws of Nature that would result in a restored healthful state. On the problem of sleeplessness, she advocated gaining the regular habit of muscle relaxation. Getting to sleep was nothing but a healthy form of concentration. Training the mind to fix attention on “the interesting process of letting-go” enables the restless to more easily drop disturbing thoughts which have interfered with natural sleep. In Call’s chapter on “The Use of the Will,” it was suggested that the will can be trained “by as steadily normal a process as the training of a muscle.” When the will is “truly trained to its best strength,” it is trained “to obey laws of life which are as fixed and true in their orderly power, as the natural laws which keep the suns and planets in their appointed spheres.” Call illustrated that “the will sometimes gains its greatest power by yielding” by her example of a stammering boy who is in need of giving up resistance. Call believed that it is often necessary “to drop all self-willed resistance first, before we begin an action.” She advocated calm emotions, quiescence and a passive mind and urged “training and not straining” as the only way for the will to get its strength. In his diary King noted that “the doctrine of non-resistance” in James “but especially in Miss Call’s books is splendidly brought out.” Call’s introduction to The Freedom of Life opened with that concept of yielding: “Interior freedom rests upon the principle of non-resistance to all the things which seem evil or painful to our natural love of self.” As Call explained, “by refusing to resist the ill will of others, or the stress of circumstances, for the sake of greater usefulness and a clearer point of view, we deepen our conviction of righteousness as the fundamental law of life, and broaden our horizon so as to appreciate varying and opposite points of view.” King regretted his own impatience with his father and “all might have been saved had I known enough ‘not

647 Annie Payson Call, Power through Repose, 13.
648 Ibid., 19 - 20.
649 Ibid., 187.
650 Ibid., 189.
651 Ibid., 190.
652 Ibid., 190. Marked by two vertical lines.
653 W.L.M.K. Diary, 8 November 1916. King also later marked a section on non-resistance in William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, 278.
654 Annie Payson Call, The Freedom of Life (Boston: Little Brown, 1908), ix.
655 Ibid.
to resist’. As he finished *The Freedom of Life*, he “was delighted to see the acknowledgement of Christian teaching as the basis at the end.” For King, Call’s books threw “new light on the scriptural teaching of the non resistance of evil.” Her message of yielding was the same as the New Testament’s command “Resist not evil.”

King read several other recommended titles while at Johns Hopkins including Jules Payot’s *The Education of the Will*, which he found “a truly excellent book.” According to Payot, by dropping their resistances, many people “have gained clear quiet minds, which enables them to see, to understand, and to practise a higher common sense in the affairs of their lives, which leads to their ultimate happiness and freedom.” In an age which was conducive to mental unrest, therapeutic psychology offered to King the means by which complete repose could be found. He found *Why Worry?* by Dr. George Lincoln Walton “most interesting and profitable.” He wrote in his diary that the volume was “full of the evils from which our family have suffered” and he found his “own limitations & faults depicted.” Walton’s aim was to help victims overcome “the habit of worry” by “the gradual establishment of a frame of mind.” Dr. Walton drew on the ethical philosophy of Marcus Aurelius, the stoic philosopher-Emperor, whose classic *Meditations* stressed self-discipline and the transformation of behaviour. Marcus Aurelius “showed by practice as well as precept that the tranquil mind is not incompatible with a life of action.” In order to achieve mental equipoise, he suggested that “he who follows

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656 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 8 November 1916.
657 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 9 November 1916.
659 Ibid.
661 Ibid., 183.
665 Ibid., 30.

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reason in all things is both tranquil and active at the same time, and also cheerful and collected.\textsuperscript{666}

William James, who had suffered all his life from depression, also wrote about the habit of worry and the absence of repose:

\begin{quote}
The American over-tension and jerkiness and breathlessness and intensity and agony of expression are primarily social, and only secondarily physiological, phenomena. They are bad habits, nothing more or less, bred of custom and example, born of the imitation of bad models and the cultivation of false personal ideals.\textsuperscript{667}
\end{quote}

The remedy for this “bottled-lightning fashion” lay in changing “from a race that admires jerk and snap for their own sakes, ... to one that has calm for its ideal ... and loves harmony, dignity, and ease.”\textsuperscript{668} Americans had to learn to let go and James exhorted them to “unclamp ... your intellectual and practical machinery, and let it run free.”\textsuperscript{669} James understood that “worry means always and invariably inhibition of associations and loss of effective power” and King concurred with James that “the sovereign cure for worry is religious faith.”\textsuperscript{670} Perhaps the way in which James integrated the latest psychology with religious faith was why King returned to James over and over again in the next few years.

A later address by James, “The Energies of Men,” also read by King, explored the causes of fatigue and the phenomenon of second wind. James was concerned, as was King, “that few men live at their maximum of energy.”\textsuperscript{671} It was both an individual as well as a national problem and James was interested in how men could be

\textsuperscript{666} Ibid., 35 - 36. Laurier House contains three copies of The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius.

\textsuperscript{667} William James, “The Gospel of Relaxation,” in Talks to Teachers on Psychology, 139 - 140. Marked by three vertical lines.

\textsuperscript{668} Ibid., 140, 142.

\textsuperscript{669} Ibid., 144. Marked by two vertical lines.

\textsuperscript{670} Ibid., 146. Marked by three vertical lines. King’s underlining. In the margin King also scribbled “true”.

trained up to their most useful pitch of energy. When individuals felt “as if a sort of cloud weighed upon us,” it kept them below their “highest notch of clearness in discernment, sureness in reasoning, or firmness in deciding.” When the “sense of being cut off from their rightful resources” was extreme, the result was “the formidable neurasthenic and psychoasthenic conditions, with life grown into one tissue of impossibilities, that so many medical books described.” According to James, the answer was plain: “Excitements, ideas, and efforts, ... are what carry us over the dam.” King marked many of the sections in which James developed the ways in which the individual escaped from neurasthenia and learned “to push the barrier farther off, and to live in perfect comfort on much higher levels of power.”

After leaving Johns Hopkins, King returned to his work with the Rockefeller Foundation and the writing of Industry and Humanity, which was finally published in 1918. During this period he integrated into his work his reading of James and discussed many of his ideas with his brother Max. He had a special reading relationship with his brother. They shared an appreciation for many of the same authors, exchanged books and almost weekly letters and they were both interested in religion and psychology. When King was at Johns Hopkins he had given his brother copies of Annie Payson Call’s The Freedom of Life and The Power of Repose and later in 1918 King sent Max James’s The Will to Believe which had been recommended to him by Dr. Barker. King wrote to Max that these essays were “a little more intricate but I found that my mind licks up thought in psychology like a cat milk from a saucer.” Max in turn had sent him several works by James including Talks to Teachers for Christmas 1916, The Varieties of Religious

\[672\] Ibid., 237 - 238.
\[673\] Ibid., 239.
\[674\] Ibid., 240.
\[675\] Max had sent King The Life of Pasteur which had a great influence on King when he was writing Industry and Humanity.
\[676\] D. Macdougall King to W.L.M. King, 25 July 1918.

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Max and King also read each other’s work in progress. After reading Chapter 1 of King’s manuscript, Max offered some serious criticism. He suggested that King’s “use of scientific analogies” was “a little risky ... for a layman” and he sent him a copy of William McDougall’s Social Psychology which he urged King to read before releasing his manuscript. Max approved some of the changes that King made to this chapter especially “the introduction of the quotations from James.” King was also very involved in editing his brother’s work, Nerves and Personal Power, published posthumously in 1922. During a visit in 1920, the two read over many of the chapters together and discussed revisions. King found Max to be “very matter of fact and direct in his whole approach which is that of science. He places great significance on the natural relations of the sexes as conducive to power ... He is loyal to science in its teachings, but more & more sees a pure religion as the background of everything.”

King continued to make suggestions by correspondence for revision of the work and after Max’s death wrote a heartfelt introduction to Nerves and Personal Power in which he described the heroism with which his brother had faced his illness. King believed that “the seeds of Max’s illness” were sown during the war in South Africa.
where he served in the medical corps. In 1913, when he was practising medicine in Ottawa, he developed tuberculosis and was forced to leave his family and enter a sanatorium at Ste. Agathe, Quebec. Supported by King, he went to a similar facility in Denver, Colorado where he recovered sufficiently that he was moved to a cottage where his family joined him. Using his knowledge as a physician and supplemented by his own experiences, Max dictated from his bed his first book, *The Battle with Tuberculosis and How to Win It*, which King arranged to have published. In the summer of 1919, Max was stricken with a “progressive muscular atrophy,” which left no margin for hope. It was during this final illness that he produced his second book even as he became crippled. King wrote in his diary that “no words could possibly express his heroism, the wonderful fortitude, pinned and bedridden as he is with two frightful diseases.” King drew inspiration from the radiance of Max’s spirit and sought to learn “the secret of his serenity.” Max was the Happy Warrior of Wordsworth’s poem which King quoted in his introduction to Max’s book:

> Who, doom’d to go in company with Pain  
> ... Turns his necessity to glorious gain.

The aim of *Nerves and Personal Power* was “to give to the public a much needed understanding of those factors in every day living which on the one hand tend towards nervous weakness, and on the other make for personal power.” Like many of these popular tracts, it set forth the “secret of happiness” as the author conceived it. Max conveyed the view that religious guidance must take “a scientific consideration of the cause and prevention of mental suffering.” Reflecting the psychology of William McDougall, Max believed that the human body was managed by the instincts, the intellect and the moral self. When there was “nothing

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683 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 18 March 1933.  
685 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 14 November 1920  
687 Ibid., preface, i, vii, ix.  
688 Ibid., xi - xiii.
organically wrong,” the wrong habits of living must be examined and the patient would be cured “just as soon as the intellect understands and the moral self makes the body conform to right living principles.” Max’s psychology, just as that of McDougall, bordered on his religious beliefs. A child being a little animal responded only to pleasure and pain. It was only when it developed “a higher type of feeling tone” of joy or sorrow that its “striving no longer confined itself to an effort to gratify bodily appetite” but expressed itself in “a striving to reach the ideals of his intellect.” However, unless the intellect had the support of the moral self, which exercised its functions of volition and self-control, desire would get in its way. Depressive thoughts and emotions uncontrolled by the moral self can cause interference with the working of the body’s organs. In his diary, King wrote that Max “spoke particularly of ‘the moral self,’” in which he “laid such stress” and “was convinced that was the secret power.”

*Nerves and Personal Power* examined many of the problems that plagued King in 1916 and indeed at times the book seems to directly address King’s particular case. The cure for nervousness was changing the habit of acting on fancy instead of on fact, “the habit of allowing yourself to be ruled by suggestion instead of by truth.” In one letter to King, Max demonstrated that he could be outspoken on personal matters:

> Let me impress upon you again, my dear Will, the necessity for dissociating irrational auto-suggestion with regard to your own health from work toward the great purpose which you have in view. Your statement in your last letter that you “felt so run down physically” as a reason for not doing yourself justice in your speech before the Bar Association is the sort of thing I refer to. You could not find one well-informed and honest physician on this continent who would tell you that you are run down physically, and to suggest such ideas to yourself is

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889 Ibid., 15, 21, Max’s italics.  
890 Ibid., 61 - 62.  
891 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 16 December 1922.  
simply to labour under the handicap of self-deception. 693

As R. MacGregor Dawson has suggested, Max performed an “invaluable critical function” that was removed at just the moment in King’s life when he needed it most. Once Max was gone, there was no one who could take his place. “Many of the habits and idiosyncrasies which MacKenzie King as a lonely bachelor would in time develop might well have perished at an early stage had Max’s judgement and common sense been available as a corrective.” 694

Max advocated rational conduct and developing the self-control “to put into action that which is wise.” 695 He believed that “the oftener we manage to find the true course, and hold to it, the greater is our personal power.” 696 Our personal power “depends on the dominance of the intellect over innate or inborn tendencies, and that dominance is the product of habit. ... The will can do but little more than what it is trained to do through habit.” 697 Worry, according to Max, was “the dominion of fear and apprehension over the moral self.” Worry was simply “the fear of not getting one’s own way” and “some people more than others find it very hard to be denied their wishes.” These chronic worriers were “continually hurting and tiring their bodies by the intensity of their concern in their personal interests.” 698 At the bottom of nearly all these problems of nervousness and worry, suggested Max, was “overprotection at the time of life when the body and mind have the elasticity to acquire the valuable art of adaptation.” He briefly discussed the maternal relationship and the need for mother-love or sympathy to be balanced by careful discrimination, “for it may wreck the lives of those on whom it is bestowed inordinately.” 699 He described Freud’s Oedipus complex as “a result of excessive and misplaced sympathy” which

693 D. Macdougall King to W.L.M.K., 22 September 1921.
695 D. Macdougall King, Nerves and Personal Power, 181.
696 Ibid., 183.
697 Ibid., 254. Max’s italics.
698 Ibid., 156, 274.
699 Ibid., 253.
“appears very beautiful” but was “unnatural, unhealthy and circumscribing in its effect.”

There are no copies of Freud in King’s library, but his diary testifies to the fact that he read Freud when he was editing Max’s book. He found “Freud’s Psycho-analysis ... helpful in explaining personal experiences which I have found difficult to account for.” One might suspect that King was referring to sexual matters. King found him “most interesting, but much too materialistic,” and yet King was able to learn from Freud:

I can well see how a casual philosophy such as underlies its teaching wd drive a nation mad. The truth is one has to begin with the premise that the universe is either spiritual or material and according as one proceeds in thought & belief from the one or the other so will one grow in life. I think Freud brings out a side which I have not considered enough, a truth of which I have not taken sufficient account, but except for balancing purposes I wd not continue the reading of it. It helps me to correct errors in my own thought which have distressed me considerably.

Both King and his brother admired William James. Max, as a physician, admired the scientific side of James whereas King was drawn to the spiritual side. Max was “heartily in accord” with James’s faith in empiricism. Any religious beliefs that James accepted would have to pass through the rigours of scientific scrutiny. King struggled with the challenge posed by science to religion but found in James a suitable alternative. He recommended the essay “Is Life Worth Living” to Max:

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700 Ibid., 250
701 W.L.M.K. Diary, 7 January 1921.
702 W.L.M.K. Diary, 9 January 1921.
703 D. MacDougall King to W.L.M. King, 7 March 1918.
I think you will find it more helpful to you than anything you have ever read. James has all the respect that you have for Science. He realizes however that Science is a mere instrument in the matter of obtaining knowledge and that beyond all that, the physical universe displays a vast order and purpose greater by far than the finite mind can comprehend.\textsuperscript{704}

James’s deep interest in religion was a function of his respect for its practical power. Though not an avowed Christian himself, James, as Gary Dorrien suggests, “possessed a deeply religious sensibility, decidedly of a liberal Protestant kind, and he respected the experience of intelligent religious believers.”\textsuperscript{705} James’s legendary essay, “The Will to Believe,” presented to King “an excellent argument for belief in God” which he incorporated into \textit{Industry and Humanity}, “coming out frankly & strongly for the Christian point of view.”\textsuperscript{706} Responding to an essay, “The Ethics of Belief,” by the English mathematician and philosopher, W. K. Clifford (1845 - 1879), which asserted the immorality of believing anything “\textit{on insufficient evidence},” James’s essay exposed the pretensions of the Victorian positivists and specifically addressed the challenge of scepticism. As David A. Hollinger writes, “these Huxleys and Tyndalls and Cliffords thought themselves a new priesthood, and while telling everyone what to believe, functioned as the thought police of their age.”\textsuperscript{707} James vindicated the right of the average man and woman to resist the directions of the self-appointed spokespersons for science and offered a pragmatic-empiricist “\textit{defence of our right to adopt a believing attitude in religious matters.”}\textsuperscript{708} The rigid absolutism of Clifford’s essay was made to sound silly by the practical, flexible,

\textsuperscript{704} King to D. MacDougall King, 3 August 1918.
\textsuperscript{706} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 22 July 1918. William James, \textit{The Will to Believe and other Essays in Popular Philosophy} (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1915). Signed: Mackenzie King Kingsmere July 20th 1918. King’s copy is marked copiously throughout. There are many multiple vertical lines, underlining, dated sections and a few marginal notes. For example, in the essay “Reflex Action and Theism,” King notes James’s “beautiful writing.”
\textsuperscript{708} William James, \textit{The Will to Believe}, 8 and 1.
down-to-earth James.

A close examination of King’s marking of the essay “The Will to Believe,” reveals how carefully King followed the particulars of the argument in which James defended the right to believe in that which was intellectually uncertain, when certain conditions were met. James borrowed from science a model of hypothesis-adoption and the decision between two hypotheses was called an option. According to James, options may be of several kinds. They may be living or dead, forced or avoidable, momentous or trivial.\textsuperscript{709} An option is genuine only when it is living, forced and momentous. A live option is one which “appeals as a real possibility to him to whom it is proposed,” while a dead option is one in which he has no inclination to accept.\textsuperscript{710} The choice between belief in God or acceptance of atheism is a live option. A forced option is one wherein there is no possibility of not choosing, there is no middle ground, “there is no standing place outside the alternative.”\textsuperscript{711} A momentous option is one wherein the stakes are large and “he who refuses to embrace a unique opportunity loses the prize as surely as if he tried and failed.”\textsuperscript{712} James’s central thesis is that when an option is a genuine one it cannot be decided purely intellectually. In the case of the genuine option to believe in God or not to believe, James thinks that a man is justified in believing as his passional nature directs. King marked James’s thesis statement:

\textit{Our passional nature not only lawfully may, but must, decide an option between propositions, whenever it is a genuine option that cannot by its nature be decided on intellectual grounds; for to say, under such circumstances, “Do not decide, but leave the question open,” is itself a passional decision, - just like deciding yes or no, - and is attended with the same risk of losing the truth.}\textsuperscript{713}

\textsuperscript{709} Ibid., 3. King marked the list of options with two vertical lines.  
\textsuperscript{710} Ibid., 2. Marked by two vertical lines.  
\textsuperscript{711} Ibid., 3. Marked by two vertical lines.  
\textsuperscript{712} Ibid., 4.  
\textsuperscript{713} Ibid., 11.
James rejected Clifford’s scientific absolutism and his faith in the ideals of “objective evidence and certitude” which cannot be found “in this moonlit and dream-visited planet.” James himself lived “by the practical faith that we must go on experiencing and thinking over our experience, for only thus can our opinions grow more true.”

In his analysis of our duty as knowers, James said there are two great commandments - “We must know the truth; and we must avoid error.” Our inclination toward one or the other stems from our passional nature. Since Clifford regarded the risk of error paramount, he exhorts us only to believe in the face of convincing intellectual evidence. James, on the other hand, argued that knowing the truth is our primary duty and finds it “impossible to go along with Clifford” and his slavish preoccupation with “avoidance of error” which deprives us of the opportunity to gain the truth.

In the case of the religious option, “to preach scepticism to us as a duty until ‘sufficient evidence’ for religion be found, is tantamount therefore to telling us, when in the presence of the religious hypothesis, that to yield to our fear of its being error is wiser and better than to yield to our hope that it may be true.” If the religious option is forbidden, the benefits for oneself and others of acting out of such belief are also forfeited. Why must mankind be thus deprived when we are no more certain about the absence of God than we are about his presence, asked James.

According to James, in the case of moral questions, “we must consult not science but what Pascal calls our heart” for “the question of having moral beliefs at all or not having them is decided by our will.” Furthermore, argued James, there are “cases where a fact cannot come at all unless a preliminary faith exists in its coming.” In his melodramatic closing, James calls upon his readers to envision a decision to believe in God as comparable to worldly action in a life-or-death situation under horrendous
physical conditions. As we stand on a mountain pass, we are obliged to choose our only escape by a terrible leap, our belief that we can successfully make the leap helps its accomplishment:

_... We stand on a mountain pass in the midst of whirling snow and blinding mist, through which we get glimpses now and then of paths which may be deceptive. If we stand still we shall be frozen to death. ... What must we do? ... Act for the best, hope for the best, and take what comes._

James continued his defense of faith in his essay, “The Sentiment of Rationality,” which had been delivered as a lecture in 1880 before the Harvard Philosophical Club. Using the same mountain precipice analogy, James argued that “the truths cannot become true till our faith has made them so.” It was “hope and confidence” that convinced the climber to act:

_Believe, and you shall be right, for you shall save yourself; doubt, and you shall again be right, for you shall perish. The only difference is that to believe is greatly to your advantage._

Scepticism in moral matters has a negative risk “because we may miss by doubting what goods we might be gaining by espousing the winning side.” If James were to doubt his right to risk a leap, he would be actively conniving at his destruction. There is no neutrality in this case, as James argued. When we “dodge or hedge ... we are really doing voluntary military service for one side or the other.”

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720 William James, _The Will to Believe_, 31. First sentence marked by three vertical lines, the last by two.
721 William James, “The Sentiment of Rationality” in _The Will to Believe_, 96. Marked by two vertical lines.
722 Ibid., 97. Hope and confidence were underlined by King. Indented quote marked by four vertical lines.
723 Ibid., 109.
724 Ibid.

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In his lecture, “Is Life Worth Living?,” given before the Harvard YMCA in 1895, James was able to counter the pretension of science to being the sole arbitrator of truth about reality. Instead of seeing science as a disinterested and purely objective account of the world, James suggested that the existence of certain truths is brought about only by the human desire for them. King grasped the crux of this psychological argument about inner needs and marked three critical sections with multiple vertical lines:

*Without an imperious inner demand in our past for ideal logical and mathematical harmonies, we should never have attained to proving such harmonies lie hidden between all the chinks and interstices of the crude natural world.*

and

*But the inner need of believing that this world of nature is a sign of something more spiritual and eternal than itself is just as strong and authoritative in those who feel it, as the inner need of uniform laws of causation ever can be in a professionally scientific head.*

and

*... if needs of ours outrun the visible universe, why may not that be a sign that an invisible universe is there?*

James continued by arguing that “to trust in our religious demands means first of all to live by the light of them, and to act as if the invisible world which they suggest were real” and “that the bare assurance that this natural order is not ultimate but a mere sign or vision, the external staging of a many-storied universe, in which spiritual forces have the last word and are eternal, ... is to such men enough to make life seem worth living.”

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725 William James, “Is Life Worth Living?, in The Will to Believe, 55. King marked this section by two vertical lines.
726 Ibid., 56. Marked by two vertical lines.
727 Ibid., 56. Marked by four vertical lines and the marginal note “It is.”
728 Ibid., 56 - 57.
According to James, science approached reality in an effort to give an account of the world showing particular logical and mathematical harmonies. It sought a particular type of rationality and a particular order and connection in the events of nature. However, the scientific enterprise was only a partial account of reality because man had other interests as well. The privileged status that was accorded to science stemmed from the fruitfulness of its method in answering the questions it asked. The significance of this point for James’s religious philosophy was that if the scientific project was an effort to satisfy demands that the human subject places on the world, there was no reason why these demands must be limited to a world that was scientifically intelligible. James insisted on the right to satisfy the demand for a morally or religiously intelligible world as well. None of this would mean religious claims could ignore the truths established in science but it did not preclude the possibility of accepting beliefs rooted in different kinds of demands. James asked only that the scientific demand not be treated as the only one. James felt that “we have a right to believe the physical order to be only a partial order; that we have a right to supplement it by an unseen spiritual order which we assume on trust.”

The last essay in Will to Believe is “What Psychical Research Has Accomplished.” In King’s copy this essay is well marked though not so heavily as the other essays which defended religious belief. There is no doubt that James had a continuing interest in psychical research. From his youth he had contemplated such phenomena as miraculous healings, automatic writing and crystal gazing without repulsion and with an open mind. In his father’s home one did not laugh at the claims of Swedenborg. One studied them, played with them, tossed them about, rejected some aspects of them, took other aspects more seriously, just as one did with any of the new thought that swept through the intellectual atmosphere. Questions about telepathy or survival were just as reasonable as any other kinds of questions and they deserved rigorous investigations. In 1882 - 1883, when James was in London, he met the men who were founding the Society for Psychical Research

\[729\] William James, “Is Life Worth Living?, 52. King’s underlining.
(SPR): Edmund Gurney, Frederic Myers and Henry Sidgwick. He served as a vice-president and president of the society. He talked some of his Harvard colleagues into founding the American Society for Psychical Research. He served on its Committee on Hypnotism. In his Principles of Psychology, he discussed such topics as mediumship, hallucinations and hypnotism.

One reason for James’s interest in psychical research was that it offered a possible way out of the limitations of scientific materialism and might open the way to a more open-minded assessment of the veridicality of religious experience. While James thought that the topic of religion should be approached empirically, he wanted to extend the domain of what might count as possible evidence for the truth of religious claims. He placed mystical phenomena as “part of the unclassified residuum” which he described as “a sort of dust-cloud of exceptional observations” floating “round about the accredited and orderly facts of every science” which “it always proves more easy to ignore than attend to.” Orthodox psychology turned its back on them and medicine swept them out. Meanwhile, “the phenomena are there, lying broadcast over the surface of history.” James believed that academic and critical minds were best fitted to interpret and discuss psychical facts and he believed it would be “a scientific scandal” to ignore this great mass of human experience. James’s famous analogy of the white crow was a plea that we keep an open mind about reports of “wild facts.” Mrs. Piper, a Boston housewife who demonstrated to James her supernormal powers and constantly produced information from what appeared to be a psychic source was his white crow for “in the trances of this medium, I cannot resist the conviction that knowledge appears which she has never gained by the ordinary waking use of her eyes and ears and wits.” Mrs. Piper’s trances broke down for his mind “the limits of admitted order of nature.” This declaration followed:

730 William James, “What Psychical Research Has Accomplished,” in Will to Believe, 299 - 300.
731 Ibid., 300.
732 Ibid., 302 and 319.
Science, so far as science denies such exceptional occurrences, lies prostrate in the dust for me; and the most urgent intellectual need which I feel at present is that science be built up again in a form in which such things may have a positive place.\(^{733}\)

James contested the impersonal nature of science which identified with a certain fixed belief “that the hidden order of nature is mechanical exclusively, and that non-mechanical categories are irrational ways of conceiving and explaining even such things as human life.”\(^{734}\) James wished to reclaim personality from the world of “mechanical rationalism,” for which it was “an insubstantial illusion.”\(^{735}\) It was “this systematic denial on science’s part of personality” and its failure to deal successfully with “a world in which personal forces are the starting-point of new effects” that James suggested “our descendants will be most surprised at in our own boasted science.”\(^{736}\)

This particular essay from *Will to Believe* was really King’s first introduction to the field of psychical research. He returned to the same essay again in 1933 when he was much more immersed in the subject and when he read it to his spiritualist friend, Joan Patteson, he found it “most guarded and convincing.” King found that “it comforted my mind not a little … in believing that I am right in believing in the spirit influences that are helping me at this time.” When “intellectual & scientific minds” such as William James, “think & speak & believe as they do about ‘spiritualism’ there is the strongest reason why I should not hesitate to believe I am entirely right in continuing to explore the phenomena.”\(^{737}\) In King’s mind, James gave psychical research a certain endorsement, a certain status and a certain intellectual respectability that legitimized his own interest in the subject.

In 1926, King turned to the chapter “Final Impressions of a Psychical Researcher” in

\(^{733}\) Ibid., 320.
\(^{734}\) Ibid., 324.
\(^{735}\) Ibid., 324. Marked by five vertical lines.
\(^{736}\) Ibid., 327. Second quote marked by three vertical lines.
\(^{737}\) W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 10 July 1933.
Memories and Studies, given to him by his brother in 1918. This was James’s last published work on the topic.\textsuperscript{738} King copied into his diary the section on Frederic Meyers which brought Max’s death to his mind:

Myers’ character also grew stronger in every particular for his devotion to the same inquiries. ... The fortitude of his last hours touched the heroic, so completely were the atrocious sufferings of his body cast into insignificance by his interest in the cause he lived for. When a man’s pursuit gradually makes his face shine and grow handsome, you may be sure it is a worthy one.\textsuperscript{739}

After twenty-five years of devoted study, James confessed that he found psychical research “baffling.” The only certainty was that the phenomena of raps and spirit-return and other such things “are always seeming to exist and can never be fully explained away, they also can never be susceptible of full corroboration.”\textsuperscript{740} James never reached a settled conviction on the question of the evidence for survival of personality but, “as to there being such real natural types of phenomena ignored by orthodox science,” he was fully convinced and he constantly insisted on the legitimacy and importance of the inquiry.\textsuperscript{741} In spite of all the fraud and deception detected in the famous medium Eusapia Paladino, in whom James had had particularly high hopes, he found himself “believing” that there was “something in those never ending reports of physical phenomena.”\textsuperscript{742} His final verdict was acceptance of “the presence in the midst of all the humbug, of really supernormal knowledge.”\textsuperscript{743} And James had a hypothesis providing for the facts of experience which he expressed in the metaphor of the mother sea:

\textsuperscript{738} Published first in 1909 under the title “Confessions of a Psychical Researcher” in Atlantic Monthly.
\textsuperscript{739} W.L.M.K. Diary, 18 March 1926. William James, Memories and Studies, 195. King marked this section by two vertical lines and dated it, Mar 18-26.
\textsuperscript{740} Quoted in Ruth Brandon, The Spiritualists (Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1984), 245 - 246.
\textsuperscript{741} William James, Memories and Studies, 197.
\textsuperscript{742} Ibid., 198.
\textsuperscript{743} Ibid., 200.
... we with our lives are like islands in the sea, or like trees in the forest. The maple and the pine may whisper to each other with their leaves ... But the trees also commingle their roots in the darkness underground, and islands also hang together through the ocean's bottom. Just so there is a continuum of cosmic consciousness, against which our individuality builds but accidental fences, and into which our several minds plunge as into a mother-sea or reservoir. Our 'normal' consciousness is circumscribed for adaptation to our external earthly environment, but the fence is weak in spots, and fitful influences from beyond leak in, showing the otherwise unverifiable common connection.\textsuperscript{744}

In his diary King had first recorded reading James in 1902 following the death of his close friend, Bert Harper. After attending two Sunday services that day, he read \textit{Human Immortality: Two Supposed Objections to the Doctrine}.\textsuperscript{745} Although James confessed that his own personal feeling about immortality had “never been of the keenest order,” he did rank it as “one of the greatest spiritual needs of man” and King’s reading on it was “the event of the day”.\textsuperscript{746} The first objection to the doctrine is “the great psycho-physiological formula: \textit{Thought is a function of the brain},” which every scientist thinks cuts off all hope of immortality.\textsuperscript{747} James’s reasoning requires distinguishing three different kinds of functional dependence. There is firstly a productive function, as operates when a hot kettle produces steam. Secondly, there is a releasing or permissive function. “The trigger of a crossbow has a releasing function: it removes the obstacle that holds the string, and lets the bow fly back to its natural shape.”\textsuperscript{748} Thirdly, there is a transmissive function as when light hits a prism and surprising colours are transmitted. Once these distinctions are made, James’s thesis now is this:

\textsuperscript{744} Ibid., 204.
\textsuperscript{745} Not in King’s collection.
\textsuperscript{747} Ibid., 14.
\textsuperscript{748} Ibid., 14.
... that when we think of the law that thought is a function of the brain, we are not required to think of the productive function only; we are entitled also to consider permissive or transmissive function.749

King’s diary comments suggest that he understood James’s arguments clearly:

The argument is that the Pysiological [sic] thesis that thought is the product of the brain, is only one side, a productive theory - that the brain may be permissive, or transmissive and as the later [sic] afford glimpses greater or less of life beyond & about us, according to its physical or other condition. ... I believe the thesis firmly. I have long in my real belief held to the conviction that the reality is the immortal life about us, that all our existence here is a sort of stage play. “That the furniture of earth & chair of heaven” may be but such that when we throw of [sic] the tenement of clay, our real life develops freed from the trammels of the ills & temptations that flesh is heir to and the limitations of finite barriers. I believe my dear old friend Bert Harper, to be more living than I am, to be the sharer of a larger vision of a fuller life, that it is only my own self willed and inherited infirmities & sins that hide more of the reality from me. Bert believed this before. He knows it now. I liked greatly James interpret’n of the truth, that every man has a soul within him bursting for immortal life. This is the basic principle of the whole Labour Movement.750

James challenged the materialist view of science that the mind was dependent on the body and could not, therefore, outlive it. The materialistic metaphor of consciousness as a sort of steam “generated on the spot in its own peculiar vessel” treats the brain’s productive function only.751 James used the metaphor of “a dome of many-colored glass” which lets the beams of consciousness pierce through into this sublunary world.752 If we suppose that this opaque dome at particular times and places “grows thin and rupturable enough” then may "glows of feeling, glimpses of

749 Ibid., 15. James’s italics.
750 W.L.M.K. Diary, 2 February 1902. King’s underlining. King’s quotation is directly from James.
752 Ibid., 16.
insight, and streams of knowledge and perception float into our finite world.” The conception of a rising or lowering of the threshold of consciousness and Swedenborg’s notion of influx of the divine are offered as other examples of transmission: “We need only suppose the continuity of our consciousness with a mother sea, to allow for exceptional waves occasionally pouring over the dam.” James view of mind as merely released or let through has the advantage of congruency with the alleged phenomena of psychical research and did not conflict with a life hereafter.

The second objection to the doctrine of immortality dealt with the issue of an over-peopled Heaven which he saw as “a remnant of the old narrow-hearted aristocratic creed.” James had no fear of an overcrowded Heaven:

If we feel a significance in our own life which would lead us spontaneously to claim its perpetuity, let us be at least tolerant of like claims made by other lives, however numerous, however unideal they may seem to us to be. Let us at any rate not decide adversely on our own claim, whose grounds we feel directly, because we cannot decide favorably on the alien claims, whose grounds we cannot feel at all. That would be letting blindness lay down the law to sight.

James had a tolerance of mankind which was based on the inward felt value of a human life. In industrial relations, King understood that Labor and Capital must “see the other sensitive to that to which it is most sensitive itself” and look to “the sympathy that unites” and recognize “the common sway of like impulses and feelings, of like endeavors and aspirations, then will the way be opened to a better appreciation by each of the many difficulties of the other, and a long stretch be taken on the road that leads to common understanding, mutual forbearance, and enduring peace.”

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753 Ibid., 16.
754 Ibid., 27.
755 Ibid., 43 - 45.
During his recovery period, King was naturally interested in the topic of immortality. He had lost family members and the war was claiming many victims. King found the enormously popular *Assurance of Immortality* (1913) by America’s most popular Protestant preacher, Harry Emerson Fosdick, to be “a splendid work, one of the most inspiring and helpful I have ever read.” Fosdick’s books represented the mainstream of liberal Protestant thinking on nearly every issue of his day. Prefaced by a quotation from William James, *The Assurance of Immortality* demonstrated the inconclusive nature of the arguments commonly urged against a future life and presented the positive reasons for a modern man’s assurance that death does not end all. It cautioned that the absolute essence of a person is his deathless soul, not his mortal body. King noted with three vertical lines that “the denial of immortality leads a man by an inevitable drift toward the affirmation that we essentially are flesh not spirit.” Fosdick questioned the evidence against immortality based on the senses and suggested that “all progress in knowledge of the physical universe has been won through criticism of the senses’ testimony, by going behind the way things look to the way things are.” For example, the sun looks as though it were moving but it is not, the earth looks as though it were flat, when it is round. King marked with three vertical lines Fosdick’s suggestion:

*No more in physical science than in the search for spiritual truth, may a man walk by sight; he must walk by insight. ... So universal is this criticism of sight by insight that the presumption always is that the superficial appearance of anything is inadequate or quite untrue. The analogy of all our other knowledge would be fulfilled, if sight said that man dies and insight declared that he lives beyond the grave.*

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757 W.L.M.K. Diary, 15 July 1917.
759 Ibid., 40. Marked with three vertical lines.
760 Ibid., 60. Marked by two vertical lines. In the margin the word, “note” is underlined with four horizontal lines.
761 Ibid., 61 - 62. Marked by three vertical lines.
The organ of perception fitted to deal with immortality is the mind and not the eye." \(^{762}\)

In Fosdick’s last chapter, which King specifically cited in *Industry and Humanity*, he argued that science and religion employ the same intellectual processes. Fosdick stated that:

*The fundamental assumption of all science is that the universe is truly a universe, consistent in its regularity of procedure, not erratic and whimsical, but uniform, dependable, and law-abiding. Without this faith, which never has been and never can be fully demonstrated, science would be impossible.* \(^{763}\)

and

*Science is grounded in faith just as is religion, and scientific truth, like religious truth, consists of hypotheses, never wholly verified.* \(^{764}\)

and Science assumes that:

*... those propositions are true which are necessary to make the facts of life intelligible and reasonable.* \(^{765}\)

According to Fosdick, scientists and liberal theologians search for knowledge in the same adventurous way. The law of gravitation is “a venture of faith” just as is man’s affirmation of the truth of God and immortality. \(^{766}\) In *Industry and Humanity* King used some of the same arguments that Fosdick developed for belief in immortality, using

\(^{762}\) Ibid., 63.

\(^{763}\) Ibid., 91. King’s underlining. Last sentence marked by two vertical lines.

\(^{764}\) Ibid., 95. Marked by two vertical lines.

\(^{765}\) Ibid., 97. Marked by three vertical lines and the word, “note.” The section marked by “note” appears in *Industry and Humanity*, 156.

\(^{766}\) Ibid., 97.
the same words and phrases, to defend “substituting a spiritual interpretation of life for the materialistic interpretation of the universe.”

King also made the same link between faith in immortality and faith in “a beneficent Deity.” As Fosdick stated, man “cannot reasonably believe in the goodness of God without believing in immortality” for “if God exists at all, He must care for His creation, and if He cares at all, He must care for the crown of creation, personality.”

A just and fatherly God cannot have brought into being children only to annihilate them. Fosdick also made the pragmatic argument that “whenever a man begins to live as though he were immortal, ... he is putting the truth to the test of life and seeking verification of its validity in terms of its practical consequences.” In practical life things are true if they prove useful: “The truth of immortality makes great living.” In his closing summary, Fosdick declared that no man need give himself over to disbelief in personal permanence:

*Immortality is a hypothesis, if you will, but so is gravitation, and around them both considerations weighty and assuring gather in support. The reasonableness of the universe is pledged to the immortality of man: the beneficence of God is unthinkable without it; the verdict of the spiritual seers confirms it; and when it is put to the verifying test of life it builds the loftiest character.*

King’s diary comments on *Assurance of Immortality* show that Fosdick’s particular liberal blend of personal idealism and pragmatism comfortably fit with King’s own beliefs:

To live in the light of immortality alone enables a man to attain his full stature as such. It alone gives the inspiration needed to sustain noble effort, and the solace necessary to adjust the mind to its understanding.

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768 Ibid., 158.
770 Ibid., 121 - 122.
771 Ibid., 123. Marked by two vertical lines.
772 Ibid., 124 - 125.
of death. It makes intelligent existence in terms of rationality and beneficence, and no other interpretation will satisfy.773

These core views of his theological liberalism, faith in immortality and a beneficent God, never conflicted with King’s faith in science.

King acquired Fosdick’s *The Meaning of Prayer* at the beginning of 1917 and was given a copy of *The Second Mile* by his brother, Raymond Fosdick, who was also associated with the Rockefeller Foundation.774 *The Second Mile* (1908) was a fifty-two page meditation on a sentence from the Sermon on the Mount - “Whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two.” This inspirational essay on the ideals of heroism and courage remained in circulation for over a half-century and enjoyed at least twenty-five reprintings. *The Meaning of Prayer* (1915), followed by two companion books, *The Meaning of Faith* (1917) and *The Meaning of Service* (1920), sold millions of copies. These devotional works made Fosdick a major figure in liberal theology and helped him become an effective movement leader in the modernist/fundamentalist church battles of the 1920’s. According to the religious historian, Gary Dorrien, Fosdick’s trilogy acquainted Americans with modern theology and converted more of them to it than any other work.775 *The Meaning of Prayer* was organized as a daily study book for personal devotion; it contained daily readings, commentaries and prayers. The spiritual exercises were designed to help men and women to form “that most transforming most energizing and most highly productive habit - the habit of Christlike prayer.”776 This popular prayer manual became one of many “little books” to which King turned on a daily basis for spiritual health just as he turned to self-help books for physical and mental health. King’s admiration of Fosdick placed him clearly in the liberal/modernist religious camp.

773 W.L.M.K. Diary, 15 July 1917.

165
In 1918 when King was still reading William James and writing *Industry and Humanity*, he was also reading about the Modernist position of the Church of England expressed in *Faith or Fear?* which he viewed as a “courageous” indictment of organized Christianity and its traditions, feelings and principles which were entirely out of date. Modernists wanted to forge a Christianity acceptable to the modern world and purge the Church of England of its dogmas that did not square with modern science. King found the work “in no sense profound” but it was “replete with much needed criticism and advice” and represented “a point of view with which I am wholly sympathetic.” Part II, “The Church and Our Advance in Knowledge,” by William Scott Palmer, was highly critical of the abstract intellectualism of the Church. Since Science was “incapable of interpreting itself and its relation to the fullness of the life of man,” the mission of the Church demanded “a great effort of synthesis.” However the Church had been “hindered from interpreting and fulfilling later and better science in a living synthesis” by its “intellectual arrogance.” Religious men defended “uncriticised traditions” which “did not allow for growth, for advance, in revelation, in the use of reason and in experience.” For theologians, “the sense of change and movement in the world and in man was for them but feeble. The historic sense ... was not born.” King affirmed the liberal modernist position put forth by Palmer:

> We must be very humble before our advancing science, very humble before our changing philosophy, very humble before the revelation of art; but above all, we must be humble before life and the never-ceasing effort of God to communicate Himself through every one of the enlarging avenues of life.

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778 W.L.M.K. Diary, 2, 10 February 1918.
780 Ibid., 72, 65. First quote marked by two vertical lines, second by one.
781 Ibid., 65, 72.
782 Ibid., 73. Marked by three vertical lines.
The chapter “The Church and its Automatism,” noted especially by King, began with a passage from Henri Bergson which King marked by three vertical lines:

> Automatism dogs our steps: the formula crystallises the living thought that gave it birth, the idea is oppressed by the word, the spirit overwhelmed by the letter. Behind all this lies the ineradicable difference between life, which is movement itself, and its manifestations, which it for ever leaves behind.783

The Church of England was condemned because it had “constrained the very spirit of the Church as well as forced its mind into a mould.”784 The Church was reproached for making “intellectual idols, schemes and systems” rather than pledging itself to “the indwelling of the spirit that moves in life.”785 King noted in his diary that “the contrast of spirit & letter, word and idea” confirmed his own view that the organized Church and its dogmas were not what gave him inspiration.786 In Industry and Humanity, King connected, albeit somewhat confusingly, these ideas to his own “spiritual interpretation of the universe” in which “Justice and Mercy are the agencies which make the world one vast brotherhood.” Justice and Mercy are “the most potent of influences” in the establishment of good relations in industry:

> To do justly, and to love mercy; these are living principles; they are spirit and life, not mere letters of a law. Like Truth and Love, they are part of ‘the indwelling of the Spirit that moves in life’, the one incontrovertible manifestation of God in man. How to transfuse this living force is our problem. Let us recognize at the outset that it resides in men, not in things; that it is kept vital, as Bergson has pointed out, only by counteracting the tendency of every formula to crystallize the living thought that gives it birth; of the idea to be oppressed by the word; and of the spirit to be overwhelmed by the letter. Rules of conduct and methods of organization are instruments

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783 Donald Hankey et. al.. Faith or Fear?, 77. Marked by three vertical lines.
784 Ibid., 77. Marked by two vertical lines.
785 Ibid., 81 - 82. Marked by three vertical lines.
786 W.L.M.K. Diary, 3 February 1918.
we are obliged to employ, but they are only instruments. They are insignia upon the face of the dial of human relations, and are useless, save where they reveal the spirit to which they are intended to give external and visible manifestation.\textsuperscript{787}

The chapter “The Church and Labour” had “some very true outspoken passages in it.”\textsuperscript{788} King marked this chapter copiously. The Church was chastised for its “lack of sympathy” and its “relentless opposition” to the labouring poor.\textsuperscript{789} What was needed was “a new spirit” through which “bishops and priests and laity” would strive to “appreciate and absorb the genius of the common people.”\textsuperscript{790} The Church as a corporate institution was alienated from the struggling poor because it was “out of touch with His original preaching of the Kingdom.”\textsuperscript{791} It needed to “strive for a democratic ‘ecclesia’ purged from the taint of the money-power.”\textsuperscript{792} King’s reading on the Church of England demonstrates that King was a serious but faithful critic of the religious establishment.

By 1920 King had achieved political success as the new leader of the Liberal Party of Canada and was soon to be Prime Minister in 1921. During his summer vacation in 1920, he began reading James’s Gifford Lectures published as *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, recording on the completion of Lecture I that “my mind hungers for food of this kind.”\textsuperscript{793} The reading of the twenty lectures can be dated from King’s diary.\textsuperscript{794} King’s intense political activity was surely the reason King was forced to set aside James at times and did not complete *Varieties* until 1928. It was certainly not because King did not find the work intensely important for it is one of the

\textsuperscript{787} W.L.M. King, *Industry and Humanity*, 167 - 168.
\textsuperscript{788} W.L.M.K. Diary, 15 February 1918.
\textsuperscript{789} Donald Hankey, et. al., *Faith or Fear?*, 136.
\textsuperscript{790} Ibid., 144. Marked by four vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{791} Ibid., 140. Marked by three vertical lines and a note.
\textsuperscript{792} Ibid., 145. Marked by three vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{793} W.L.M.K. Diary, 4 July 1920.
\textsuperscript{794} The reading of almost all of the twenty lectures can be dated from King’s diary. Lecture I: 4 July 1920; Lecture II: 5 July 1920; Lecture III: 5 July 1920; Lectures IV and V: 6 July 1920; Lectures VI and VII: 7 July 1920; Lecture IX: 31 May 1926. Lectures XI, XII and XIII: 11 June 1927; Lectures XIV and XV: 12 June 1927; Lectures XVI and XVII: 2 October 1927; Lecture XIX: 2 January 1928; Lecture XX: 6 - 9 January 1928.
most marked texts in his library. Not only are there many markings on almost every page of his own text, but the extensive markings make clear how carefully King followed James’s arguments and that he examined closely the footnotes as well. It appears that King understood and appreciated the subtlety and sophistication of James’s views. On its completion, King noted that James was “the most helpful of all the writers I have read.”

Varieties spoke to King of his relationship with his brother. Much later, in a period of very severe stress in late 1944, during the conscription crisis, King recorded in his diary how he had taken down Pasteur’s Life and James’s The Varieties of Religious Experience, “seeing both gifts were from Max,” and noted that “they speak to me of the assistance that Max himself is sending me. I am sure that both Pasteur and James as well are helping. They are all ministering spirits.”

The Varieties of Religious Experience was published in 1902 but King came to this work much later when James’s reputation as a introspective psychologist was in decline. The idealism of Industry and Humanity was waning now that King was in power and his own religious liberalism was taking a new direction. Although the social side of Christianity had always been important to him and though King always remained a Presbyterian, his religion did not focus on dogma nor exclude influences from other religious groups and it became more intensely personal. It was James’s “open-mindedness and willingness to catch glimpses of truth in all things” that appealed “strongly” to King. In Varieties James was hospitable to supernaturalism and the notion that mystical experience may be as real as any experience can be. King’s reading of Varieties coincided with his growing interest in spiritualism and James’s unorthodox concept of the ‘subliminal consciousness’ for understanding religious claims may have provided the justification for it.

From the very beginning The Varieties of Religious Experience was concerned with
the uniqueness of individual religious experience and the practical consequences of religion for people’s lives. James not only provided a rich and detailed survey of religious experiences but raised questions concerning their spiritual value and moral consequences. In the end he asked whether religious experience provided evidence for the existence of a deity, and concluded that while no demonstration is possible, the common core found in the beliefs of both organized religions and the faith of individuals was objectively true. That core consists in the sense that one’s conscious self is part of a wider self that is the source of one’s moral ideals and one’s religious experiences.

James approached his topic as a psychologist; it was “not religious institutions but rather religious feelings and religious impulses” that interested James. To him institutional religion was “second-hand,” communicated by tradition and retained by habit. He sought “the religious geniuses,” religious originals who were “the pattern-setters to all this mass of suggested feeling and imitated conduct.” These individuals “who have brought forth fruits effective enough for commemoration in the pages of biography,” such as the Quaker founder George Fox, who belonged to a great spiritual tradition of mystical faith, had often “shown symptoms of nervous instability” and had been “subject to abnormal psychical visitations.” In the rather pathological personality of Fox, James found “a religion of veracity rooted in spiritual inwardness, and a return to something more like the original gospel.” The Jamesian view of religious life was not concerned with any particular creed or church; what was important was the divine encounter, “the direct personal communion with the divine.” In keeping with his interest in first-hand experiences, James defined religion as “the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may

[800] Ibid., 25.
[801] Ibid., 42.
consider divine. It is out of religion in this sense that “theologies, philosophies, and ecclesiastical organizations may secondarily grow.” So churches play at best a secondary role, in transmitting and communicating the original inspiration. The locus of real religion is in individual experience and not in corporate life. James devoted much of his book to showing that people actively living by their faiths experienced real effects. He cited reports of healing, lifting of depression, overcoming addictions, radical reordering of priorities and claims for the efficacy of prayer.

In his lectures on the predominant religious attitudes or emotions, James distinguished between the “healthy-minded” and “the sick-souls.” The former undergoes the gradual conversion associated with the “once-born,” and the latter the sudden conversion of the “twice-born.” Each of these religious types accepted “the belief that there is an unseen order, and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves thereto.” However, James judged the optimism of the healthy-minded to be superficial and naive in the light of the extent of suffering and evil in the world. In some cases, this sort of optimism, encouraged by popular science and the doctrine of progress, manifested a “contentment with the finite” which “incases” an individual “like a lobster-shell and shields him from all morbid repining at his distance from the Infinite.” James found the once-born persons “passionately flinging themselves upon their sense of the goodness of life, in spite of the hardships of their own condition, and in spite of the sinister theologies into which they may have been born.” They saw God, “not as a strict judge, not as a Glorious Potentate; but as the animating Spirit of a beautiful harmonious world.” Healthy-mindedness included liberal Protestants and the host of New Thought and mind-cure

803 Ibid.
804 King never recorded in his diary any experience of sudden conversion.
805 William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, 58. Marked by two vertical lines.
806 Ibid., 87.
807 Ibid., 77.
808 Ibid., 78.
movements. They each rejected or liberally reinterpreted the doctrine of sin. Anxiety, pain, worry and conflict were transient and could be overcome by adopting the proper healthy-minded attitudes. The mind-cure message preached that “pessimism leads to weakness.” and “optimism leads to power.” However, according to James, religious optimism could only be sustained by massive denial: “happiness like every other emotional state, has blindness and insensibility to opposing facts given it as its instinctive weapon for self-protection against disturbance.” What was so misleading about healthy-mindedness was that it could not admit the possibility of failure. As James turned to his analysis of the sick-souled religious type, he did so leaving the healthy-minded temperament characterized as incomplete, one that gained its lustre by avoidance, by slipping past the disagreeable facts. Complete religious life did not disdain the range of possible facts, good and evil. If it gained a perspective on the positive side of life, it did so not by ignoring but by granting the reality of the tenuousness of things.

James’s sick-soul was pathological but not out of touch. Indeed he lived a more ‘real’ life than the healthy-minded. Tolstoy, Luther, Bunyan and Saint Paul stood for James as representatives of the sick-souled type, both in their vision of life and in their recovery from the effects of that vision. James’s mind was a mixture of these two types. In his chapter “The Divided Self, and the Process of its Unification,” he suggested that such a discordant personality made existence:

... little more than a series of zigzags, as now one tendency and now another gets the upperhand. Their spirit wars with their flesh, they wish for incompatibles, wayward impulses interrupt their most deliberate plans, and their lives are one long drama of repentance and of effort to repair misdemeanors and mistakes.

King was also conscious of his own interior battleground: “The whole dissatisfaction I

\[809\] Ibid., 97.
\[810\] Ibid., 83.
\[811\] Ibid., 142.
feel is that of the ‘divided self.’\textsuperscript{812} And “I seem always at war with my own nature - the divided self.”\textsuperscript{813} He marked carefully James’s passage that suggested that it was often the “intense and sensitive” who were more “subject to diversified temptations” and that for them the “normal evolution of character” consisted of “the straightening out and unifying of the inner self.”\textsuperscript{814} Those that emerged from this process of self-unification often experienced “a characteristic sort of relief” which “transforms the most intolerable misery into the profoundest and most enduring happiness.”\textsuperscript{815} Religion was only one of the ways to remedy inner discord but the process was the same for all instances - “a firmness, stability, and equilibrium succeeding a period of storm and stress and inconsistency.”\textsuperscript{816} James cited numerous cases of divided selves who were religious and experienced conversion. King seemed particularly absorbed by one personal account of struggle to overcome anger and worry through the practice of Buddhist discipline. He noted the healthy-minded results - “increased energy and vigor of mind” and the “disposition to love and appreciate everything.” For the practitioner, “all at once the whole world has turned good to me.”\textsuperscript{817} King noted in particular that certain fears were eliminated and the participant noticed “the absence of timidity in the presence of any audience.”\textsuperscript{818} King recorded in his diary that James’s writings revealed that “mental states may be transitory and also conquered” and that “it is well to realize that minds are not all cast in the same mould, and that we must continually make allowances, and grow more tolerant.”\textsuperscript{819}

In 1926 King returned to \textit{Varieties} and began with the lecture on “Conversion.”\textsuperscript{820} James first defined the conversion experience:

\textsuperscript{812} W.L.M.K. Diary, 25 April 1923.
\textsuperscript{813} W.L.M.K. Diary, 13 November 1930.
\textsuperscript{814} William James, \textit{The Varieties of Religious Experience}, 143.
\textsuperscript{815} Ibid., 146. Marked by two vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{816} Ibid., 147. Marked by five vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{817} Ibid., 151. Marked by two vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{818} Ibid., 152. Marked by three vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{819} W.L.M.K. Diary, 7 July 1920.
\textsuperscript{820} W.L.M.K. Diary, 26 May 1926.
To be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain an assurance, are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided, and consciously wrong inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right superior and happy, in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities.  

Conversion produced a definite set of changes within the self and King noted these:

The central one is the loss of all the worry, the sense that all is ultimately well with one, the peace, the harmony, the willingness to be, even though the outer conditions should remain the same. ... A passion of willingness, of acquiescence, of admiration, is the glowing centre of this state of mind. The second feature is the sense of perceiving truths not known before. ... A third particularity of the assurance state is the objective change which the world often appears to undergo. An appearance of newness beautifies every object. ... The ecstasy of happiness is produced.

As a scientist of religions, James wanted to formulate a hypothesis about religion to which scientists need not object. As Ann Taves has suggested, James was “the quintessential theorist of the mediating tradition.” He aimed to legitimise the supernatural reading of conversion by describing the distinctive religious event in psychological terms and locating the psychic mechanism that permitted conversion to occur. James explained the conversion experience in terms of the field theory of consciousness. To say that a man is ‘converted,’ wrote James, means that “religious ideas, previously peripheral to his consciousness, now take a central place, and that religious aims form the habitual centre.” James, however went further and suggested that “the discovery of a consciousness existing beyond the field, or subliminally,” as Frederic Meyers termed it in 1892, “casts light on many phenomena

822 Ibid., 199, 203.
824 William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, 162.
Meyers’s theory of the subliminal/subconscious, the result of his psychical research on automatic writing, provided a new psychological framework for understanding religious experience. The concept of an “ultra-marginal life ... liable to incursions” from the subconscious region of the mind into the conscious mind offered a theoretical explanation of how people might experience a sense of an external presence of something they take to be divine. The concept that we are “continuous with a wider self through which saving experiences come,” preserved a contact with the science of psychology, which accepted that the subconscious was a doorway to a world of non physical energy, while retaining the theologian’s contention that the religious man is moved by an external power.

King’s charts appended to *Industry and Humanity* have a deeply spiritual dimension when depicting the action and reaction of factors continuously affecting and being affected by whatever transpires in Industry. Charts V and VI use wave imagery to depict the effects of ideas and influences. An unusual image of wavelets superimposed on a circumference brings to mind the same schematic found in James’s sketch in *Human Immortality* of impressions arriving in the brain. The psycho-physical activity of man is represented by under-waves, being the unconscious, and over-waves and a threshold. These continuous representations are identical to the wave-scheme in King’s charts. Even more unusual is King’s representation of a triangle within a large inverted triangle in Chart VII. There is the image of forces, acting and reacting, in an electrical field with the large triangle extending beyond the circumference of this field. Arrows representing the incursions from perhaps a spiritual realm are directed from the periphery to the centre. (See Appendix V, VI, and VII).

In 1927 King moved to the lectures of “Saintliness” and “The Value of Saintliness.” James wrote that “the saintly character is the character for which spiritual emotions are

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825 Ibid., 188. Marked by two vertical lines.
826 Ibid., 189.
827 Ibid., 388. Marked by two vertical lines.
the habitual centre of the personal energy” and he delineated a “composite photograph of universal saintliness” and the practical value of personal faith. King found these particular chapters “so helpful” and it was “the great common sense of James’s writing” that appealed to him “so strongly.” It was “the fruits of the religious state,” that were of most interest to James. A robust religious life did something for the individual:

The man who lives in his religious centre of personal energy, and is actuated by spiritual enthusiasms, differs from his previous carnal self in perfectly definite ways. The new ardor which burns in his breast consumes in its glow the lower ‘noes’ which formerly beset him, and keeps him immune against infection from the entire grovelling portion of his nature.

When King later turned to the the vital lecture on “Mysticism” he found that “it was a more involved and difficult chapter than the others,” but he “liked James’s sympathetic outlook.” James believed that “personal religious experience has its root and centre in mystical states of consciousness” though he could only speak second-hand. James’s interest in mysticism included its cultivation by Hindus, Buddhists, Mohammedans, and medieval Christian saints, all of which shared what Canadian psychiatrist, Dr. Bucke, called a ‘cosmic consciousness.’ Indian training in mystical insight known as yoga, “the experimental union with the divine,” was based on preserving exercise, diet, posture, breathing, intellectual concentration and moral discipline. In yoga one learns “that the mind itself has a higher state of existence, beyond reason, a superconscious state, and that when the mind gets to that higher

828 William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, 216. King marked all the characteristics of the saintly character outlined in detail by James.
829 W.L.M.K. Diary, 12 June 1927.
830 Ibid., 212. Marked by two vertical lines.
831 William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, 212. King marked this section by two vertical lines.
832 W.L.M.K. Diary, 2 October 1927.
833 William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, 292.
state, then this knowledge beyond reason comes.” The vogue of Eastern religion that swept through North America after the turn of the century was part of a general reaction against positivism. Like the mind cure movement, the turn toward mysticism was a response to the spiritual turmoil of the late nineteenth century. Like mind-curists, mystics employed a kind of self-hypnosis to release the mind from normal waking consciousness. By ‘letting go’, they both produced “an immense elation and freedom, as the outlines of the confining selfhood melt down.” However, according to Jackson Lears, mind cure promoted a more therapeutic orientation, whereas the mystical wave preserved an otherworldly orientation that had genuine religious significance.

For James the question is whether mystical states furnish any warrant for religious truth. To the medical mind the ecstasies of a Saint Ignatius or a Saint Teresa “signify nothing but suggested and imitated hypnoid states, on an intellectual basis of superstition, and a corporeal one of degeneration and hysteria,” but to James “to pass a spiritual judgment upon these states, we must not content ourselves with superficial medical talk, but inquire into their fruits for life.” Because the mysticism of Saint Ignatius “made him assuredly one of the most powerfully practical human engines” and because Saint Teresa learned to be “ashamed ... of her former attachments” as a result of her mystical experiences, the answer about truth is clear. James states:

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\text{Mystical states, when well developed, usually are, and have the right to be, absolutely authoritative over the individuals to whom they come.}
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\[836\] Ibid., 217.
\[839\] Ibid., 317 - 318.
\[840\] Ibid., 323.
They break down the authority of the non-mystical or rationalistic consciousness, based upon the understandings and the senses alone. They show it to be only one kind of consciousness. They open out the possibility of other orders of truth, in which, so far as anything in us vitally responds to them, we may freely continue to have faith.\footnote{Ibid., 324.}

According to James, “if the mystical truth that comes to a man proves to be a force that he can live by, what mandate have we of the majority to order him to live in another way.”\footnote{Ibid.} The mystic is “invulnerable, and must be left whether we relish it or not, in undisturbed enjoyment of his creed.”\footnote{Ibid.} For James, “the existence of mystical states absolutely overthrows the pretention of non-mystical states to be the sole and ultimate dictators of what we may believe,” and “it must always remain an open question whether mystical states may not possibly be such superior points of view, windows through which the world looks out upon a more extensive and inclusive world.”\footnote{Ibid., 327.} King marked with two vertical lines James’s summary of mystical states at the end of his lecture on mysticism:

“They tell of the supremacy of the ideal, of vastness, of union, of safety, and of rest. They offer us hypotheses, hypotheses which we may voluntarily ignore, but which as thinkers we cannot possibly upset. The supernaturalism and optimism to which they would persuade us may, interpreted in one way or another, be after all the truest of insights into the meaning of this life.”\footnote{Ibid., 328. Marked by two vertical lines.}

James’s understanding of mystical states was conceptually parallel to his understanding of the subconscious. From the point of view of “their psychological mechanism,” it was evident that “mysticisms spring from the same mental level, from that great subliminal or transmarginal region of which so little is known.”\footnote{Ibid., 326.}
could not avoid the conclusion that “in religion we have a department of human nature with unusually close relations to the transmarginal or subliminal region.” The subconscious is “the abode of everything that is latent and the reservoir of everything that passes unrecorded or unobserved ... it is also the fountain-head of much that feeds our religion.” And for those “persons deep in the religious life, ... the door into this region seems unusually wide open.”

King noted in his diary James’s discussion of prayer and he shared this section with his friend, Joan Patteson. Prayer too was connected to the subconscious part of our existence. In its widest sense, prayer signified “every kind of inward communion or conversation with the power recognized as divine.” The act of prayer was “the very movement itself of the soul, putting itself in a personal relation of contact with the mysterious power of which it feels the presence.” Studied as an “inner fact ... apart from ecclesiastical or theological complications,” religion, said James, “has shown itself to consist everywhere, and at all stages, in the consciousness which individuals have of an intercourse between themselves and higher powers with which they feel themselves to be related.” In his discussion of prayer the question of authenticity was central for “the conviction that something is genuinely transacted in this consciousness is the very core of living religion.” James quoted Frederic W. H. Meyers to the effect that prayer was not purely a subjective thing; there is “a real increase in intensity of absorption of spiritual power,” and “grace flows in from the infinite spiritual world.” Through prayer the devotee found purpose, guidance, and strength to endure the accidents and hardships of life and “at all stages of the prayerful life we find the persuasion that in the process of communion energy from on high flows in to meet demand, and becomes operative within the phenomenal

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847 Ibid., 366. Marked by two vertical lines.
848 W.L.M.K. Diary, 2 January 1928.
849 William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, 352.
850 Ibid., 352. Marked by three vertical lines.
851 Ibid., 353.
852 Ibid.
853 Ibid., 354. King’s underlining. Second quote marked by four vertical lines.

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The fundamental religious point is that in prayer, spiritual energy, which otherwise would slumber, does become active, and spiritual work of some kind is effected really.\textsuperscript{854} The test of religious experience was pragmatic; prayer produced regenerative effects in the believer. A flow of energy came from the mysterious fountain-head in the subconscious, from “the mystical region, or the supernatural region, whichever you choose.”\textsuperscript{855} The unseen region produced effects in this world:

When we commune with it, work is actually done upon our finite personality for we are turned into new men, and consequences in the way of conduct follow in the natural world upon our regenerative change. ... The universe, at those parts of it which our personal being constitutes, takes a turn genuinely for the worse or for the better in proportion as each one of us fulfills or evades God’s demands. ... God is real since he produces real effects.\textsuperscript{856}

In the spring of 1926 King turned to James’s Memories and Studies as part of his “Lenten resolves” to read good literature every morning to stimulate his mind through the day.\textsuperscript{857} There are fifteen essays, many of which are addresses delivered by James, each of which was marked by King. The most famous probably is “The Moral Equivalent of War” in which James advocated that “the martial type of character can be bred without war.”\textsuperscript{858} In “Peace Banquet,” he acknowledged the excitement of war; “it is the final bouquet of life’s fireworks.” However, as a pacifist, James recommended fostering “rival excitements” and inventing “new outlets for heroic energy.”\textsuperscript{859} Several of the addresses deal with the character and significance of noted intellectuals and the importance of the college-bred. That King was always attracted to biographies and individual experiences has been shown to be true in the case of political biographies such as those of Gladstone. But King shared with

\textsuperscript{854} Ibid., 361. Marked by two vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{855} Ibid., 389. Marked by two vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{856} Ibid., 389. Part of the section marked by three vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{857} W.L.M.K. Diary, 24 March 1926.
\textsuperscript{858} William James, Memoirs and Studies, 292.
\textsuperscript{859} Ibid., 304 and 306.
James, an interest in “human superiority” in any field.\footnote{Ibid., 315.} Particularly laudatory was James’s talk on Louis Agassiz’s scientific career. In his youth, James had accompanied Agassiz on an expedition to the Amazon and he considered him to be “a splendid example of the temperament that looks forward and not backward.”

King noted that this scientist’s view of Nature was “saturated with simple religious feeling, and for this deep but unconventional religiosity he found at Harvard the most sympathetic possible environment.”\footnote{Ibid., 10 and 15.} James’s review of Herbert Spencer’s Autobiography was critical. While he acknowledged that “to Spencer is certainly due the immense credit of having been the first to see in evolution an absolutely universal principle,” he denounced Spencer’s “purely mechanical explanation of Nature” because he found the idea of a universe that consisted ultimately of nothing but matter subject to deterministic laws deeply repellent.\footnote{Ibid., 124 and 132. The first quotation marked by three vertical lines.} King found these essays “very helpful in revealing great truths in human character & laws of life. ... The chapter on a College Educat’n teaching man to know a good man was excellent.”\footnote{W.L.M.K. Diary, 14, 26 March 1926.}

In the address, “The Social Value of the College-Bred,” James advocated teaching humanities by examples in order to give students “a general sense of what, under various disguises, superiority has always signified and may still signify.”\footnote{William James, Memoirs and Studies, 314. Marked by two vertical lines.} He declared that “biographical history” developed “the sense for human superiority.”\footnote{Ibid., 315. The first quotation marked by three vertical lines.} It taught “the feeling for a good human job anywhere, the admiration of the really admirable” and the critical sense for ideal values.\footnote{Ibid., 314.} According to James:

\begin{quote}
Our colleges ought to have lit up in us a lasting relish for the better kind of man, a loss of appetite for mediocrities, and a disgust for the cheapjacks. We ought to smell, as it were, the difference of quality in men and their proposals when we enter the world of affairs about us.\footnote{Ibid., 315. First section marked by two vertical lines.}
\end{quote}
The best claim that James made for higher education was that “it should enable us to know a good man when we see him.”\footnote{Ibid., 316.} James expressed the same admiration and support for higher education in \textit{Talks to Teachers}, which King quoted in \textit{Industry and Humanity} with an adjustment for political leadership. William James wrote that “the renovation of nations begins always at the top, among the reflective members of the State, and spreads slowly outward and downward.”\footnote{William James, \textit{Talks to Teachers}, 21.} King wrote that “the renovation of nations, says William James begins always among the reflective members of the State, and spreads slowly outward and downward. The thinkers, the teachers, the spiritual and political leaders, the practical idealists in business, hold a country’s future in their hands.”\footnote{W.L.M. King, \textit{Industry and Humanity}, 430.}

A thorough examination of King’s marked texts shows that he was much engaged with the work of William James. The marked passages show that he followed the major arguments put forth by James and his diary often suggests that the arguments confirmed his own beliefs. Both James and King struggled to reach some kind of synthesis of the idealist and empiricist traditions that dominated late nineteenth-century thought. Through his psychology, James sought a position between the two which allowed for an element of subjective human experience in science. James rejected the static models of reality and knowledge and opted for contingency and open-ended thought. Only lived experience could provide a solid foundation of knowledge and the pragmatic theory of truth harmonized with this view.

James allowed King to reconcile his faith in science with his religious faith. King admired James for his “many sidedness.”\footnote{W.L.M.K. Diary, 5 July 1920.} The tough-minded tradition of scientific materialism which claimed that science was the exclusive source of truth about the world was one-sided. James protested against both the dogmas of science and religion. By shifting the focus of religious investigations away from the metaphysical and toward internal examination of the nature of religious experience, James
articulated a “deeper way” of thinking about religion that was pervaded by the pragmatic spirit. 872 Experience was to be the test of ideas. He conceived of truth as an unending experiment whose results could be validated only in activity rather than reflection and whose conditions are at best provisional and subject always to further testing in practice. Practical results were important and religion had important consequences for life because it sustained one in the strenuous mood and provided a refuge when one’s moral energies were spent.

Evelyn Underhill (1875 - 1941), the prolific British religious writer King turned to in 1930, like James, brought together psychology, mysticism and religious experience. She addressed the malady of spiritual despair and the need for the contemplative element in the modern world. Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man’s Spiritual Consciousness (1911), introduced readers to the lives of mystics and examined the characteristics of mysticism and the stages of its development. According to Dana Greene, Underhill was “attracted to the mystics because she saw in them a different level of human consciousness which had developed out of relationship with the ’Absolute’.” 873 She believed that “every person who awakens to the consciousness of a Reality which transcends the normal world of sense ... is put of necessity upon a road which follows at low levels the path which the mystic treads at high levels.” 874

Late in 1912, Underhill became aware of the Indian mystic Rabindranath Tagore, who was all the rage in London and who later won the Nobel Prize for literature. 875 She worked on an introduction to an autobiography of Tagore’s father, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, which was an authentic history of “the slow becoming of the

872 William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, 391. Marked by two vertical lines.
soul’ and in the same class as the Testament of Ignatius Loyola or the Journal of George Fox. King marked her introduction which praised Devendranath’s “sane and balanced outlook” which fused “the personal and metaphysical, transcendent and immanent aspects under which the Deity is apprehended by human consciousness.” He was a great spiritual genius because he accepted “unflinchingly the paradox which these opposing concepts represent; for both are needed if the deep experience of his heart is to find expression.” His mysticism never rested “either in a Monism which declares his oneness with God, or a Transcendentalism which insists on the invincible distinction between creature and Creator.”

According to Underhill, there were parallel events in the lives of Eastern mystics and Christian saints. Devendranath’s journey began with “a sudden profound experience of Reality, an abrupt perception of the Eternal World.” He experienced an inner crisis “equivalent to that change of consciousness, that profound transvaluation of all values, which the Christian mystics often called ‘New Birth.’” This interior change was followed by a “passion for poverty” expressed by a renunciation of material possessions that reflected “the dominant tendency of this and other truly mystical lives: the perpetual effort to actualise the Infinite within the finite, to make of life a valid sacrament in which ... a perpetually developing outward sign shall go step by step with the perpetually developing inward grace.”

That state of mind and heart which the mystics called “illumination” - the full and rich loving apprehension of the spiritual universe - impelled Devendranath Tagore to do

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877 Ibid., xviii, xiii. First quote marked by two vertical lines.
878 Ibid., xiii. Marked by two vertical lines.
879 Ibid., xiv.
880 Ibid., xviii.
881 Ibid., xix. King’s underlining.
882 Ibid., xx, xxi. The second section was underlined by King and also marked by six vertical lines. The next section was marked by two vertical lines and the marginal comments ‘beautiful’ and ‘true’.
“something which closely resembled a missionary career, ... he was forced to share with others the truth that he had found.”

In the work of organizing and inspiring the religious movement of the Brahma-Samaj, he found the same outlet for his enthusiasms and love as Fox found in the spreading of Quaker ideals. His achievements, according to Underhill, were the result of his “holding a steady balance between the worlds of spirit and of sense.” Underhill admired this “double life of action and contemplation, of supernal love and of human work.” The aim of Devendranath was the aim of all true mystics - to be “an instrument wherewith the Supreme Artist could do His creative work.” Devendranath Tagore represented that perfect type of “heroic love in action, where every enterprise was filled with God.”

In 1921 Underhill gave the Upton lectures on religion at Oxford. It was the first time that such an invitation had been extended to a woman. The event was remarkable in that Underhill was a lay, self-educated women with no ecclesiastical or academic position but she had a large public following. Those lectures were published under the title The Life of the Spirit and the Life of Today, which Violet Markham sent King. King thanked Markham for introducing him to the writings of Evelyn Underhill and proclaimed “the real help and satisfaction” that her book gave, revealing “so clearly one’s true experiences and beliefs and interpreting them so helpfully in the light of a fuller vision.” According to Underhill, “the central business of religion” is “a finding and feeling of Eternal Life” and “such a participation in eternity, manifested in the time-world, is the very essence of the spiritual life.” The ordinary person could learn from the mystics the importance of a contemplative life of prayer and

883 Ibid., xxv.
884 Ibid., xli.
885 Ibid., xlii. Marked by two vertical lines and a note in the margin.
886 Ibid., xli. King’s underlining.
888 King to Violet Markham, 5 April 1931.
meditation. She was critical of the theology of the Social Gospel which mainly focused on action, obliterating the contemplative side of religious experience altogether. No one can live a spiritual life “who does not observe a due balance between the two.”890 We can only achieve the life of the Spirit when our life is whole, “when work and contemplation dwell in us side by side.”891

King “liked exceedingly” the chapter “Psychology and the Life of the Spirit.” He was “in complete accord with that kind of interpretation. All that is said on contemplation and suggestion was most helpful.”892 Underhill used the metaphor of “a well furnished room,” in which we tend to ignore every aspect except the window looking out upon the street, to underscore her view of the spiritual life as an ongoing double action which on the one hand was an interior and deepening communication with God and on the other an ever-widening outgoing toward the world.893 According to Underhill, “the outward looking mind is the organ of action” of that person who is “always leaning out of the window. ... His thinking is mainly realistic.” When we retreat to the half-lit region of the room, the foreconscious, which is “the organ of contemplation,” takes over. We are dominated by “the inward-looking mind” whose “thinking is mainly autistic dealing with the results of intuition and feeling. ... Here among the many untapped resources of the self lie our powers of response to our spiritual environment: powers which are kept by the tyrannical interest of everyday life below the threshold of full consciousness, and never given a chance to emerge.”894 In his diary King remarked that he found it “odd that in reading this chapter I should have pulled my chair towards the middle of the room with my back to the library window, much the location for contemplation in the parable of the room.”895

Underhill believed that it is in the contemplative experience of prayer that one

890 Ibid., 17.
891 Ibid. Marked by two vertical lines.
892 W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 February 1931.
894 Ibid., 119 - 121.
895 W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 February 1931.
achieves “a mature spirituality.”\textsuperscript{896} Her exploration of the prayerful experience is psychological and includes the closely connected aspect of suggestion which “in conformity with current psychological doctrine” is “the process by which an idea enters the deeper and unconscious psychic levels and becomes fruitful.”\textsuperscript{897} Just as “the controlling factor of life is mind, not chemistry, and mind is plastic to ideas ... so too the life of the Spirit is a concrete fact; a real response to a real universe.”\textsuperscript{898} King marked the conditions under which suggestion works most effectively - quiescence, attention, and emotional interest. Underhill’s intent was to show that suggestion can be used to mould the plastic nature of the human self.

Although King was often critical of organized religion, when he read Underhill’s chapter, “Institutional Religion,” he “liked it exceedingly - the best thing I have read on the subject.”\textsuperscript{899} After examining many forms of spiritual life outside the Christian fold, Underhill became convinced that the soul was best nurtured within institutional religion. The corporate religious life gives the God-desiring individual a group consciousness, discipline and a culture. “Goodness and devotion,” writes Underhill, “are more easily caught than taught; by association in groups, holy and strong souls ... make their full gift to society; weak, underdeveloped, and arrogant souls receive that of which they are in need.”\textsuperscript{900} Communal rituals such as music, rhythmic chanting, symbolic gesture, the solemn periods of recited prayer - all contribute to “a state of maximum suggestibility.”\textsuperscript{901}

When King finished Underhill’s \textit{The Life of the Spirit and the Life of Today}, he wrote in his diary that “it is a book I have greatly enjoyed and which has been most helpful.” Her spiritual guide brought the realization that “there are spiritual realms that I have not glimpsed as yet. I can see that from what I have read, but I shall continue

\textsuperscript{896} Evelyn Underhill, \textit{The Life of the Spirit and the Life of Today}, 122. Marked by two vertical lines.  
\textsuperscript{897} Ibid., 132.  
\textsuperscript{898} Ibid., 137. King’s underlining. Marked by two vertical lines.  
\textsuperscript{899} W.L.M.K. Diary, 24 February 1931.  
\textsuperscript{900} Evelyn Underhill, \textit{The Life of the Spirit and the Life of Today}, 169.  
\textsuperscript{901} Ibid., 173.
to strive to reach them."^902

King’s reading of William James and Evelyn Underhill demonstrates how he sought to enrich his spiritual understanding by looking seriously at how psychology helped to explain religious experience. Both James and Underhill focused on the fruits of the religious life. Though Underhill accepted social service as “the fundamental duty - of the active life,” she believed it was no substitute for spiritual acts “as the search for, response to, or intercourse with God.” She warned against “a purely social interpretation of religion” that if “unchecked" would result in “an impoverishment of our spiritual life."^903 It was through private prayer and contemplation that King would achieve a mature spirituality.

If William James were able to communicate from the other side and comment on the philosophy that inspired Mackenzie King, what would he say? Most of us, as James suggests, “have no very definite intellectual temperament, we are a mixture of opposite ingredients, each one present very moderately."^904 King was not a professional philosopher and perhaps was at times merely “following the fashion,” but he did see things in his own peculiar way and was often dissatisfied with any opposite way of seeing them. James contrasted men’s ways of seeing their universe by talking of the “empiricist” and of the “rationalist” temper. While the rationalists combine an idealistic and optimistic tendency, the empiricists on the other hand are not uncommonly materialistic and their optimism is apt to be decidedly conditional. James distinguished between the mental make-up of the rationalist and the empiricist by calling them “tender-minded” and “tough-minded” respectively:

Rationalism is always monistic. It starts from wholes and universals, and makes much of the unity of things. Empiricism starts from the parts, and make of the whole a collection - is not averse therefore to calling itself pluralistic. Rationalism usually considers itself more

^902 W.L.M.K. Diary, 6 April 1931.

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religious than empiricism ... the rationalist will usually also be in favor of what is called free-will, and the empiricist will be a fatalist. ... The rationalist finally will be of dogmatic temper in his affirmations, while the empiricist will be more sceptical and open to discussion.\textsuperscript{905}

James would probably regard King as having like the most of us “a hankering for the good things on both sides of the line.”\textsuperscript{906} Of course “mixing incompatibles from the opposite sides,” wishing to have all the good things going, without being too careful as to how they agree or disagree, opens King to the charge of “inconsistency and vacillation.”\textsuperscript{907} It would be easy for James to see that King wanted facts, he wanted science and he also wanted religion. He could not content himself with a Spencer “treating the world’s history as a redistribution of matter and motion solely, and bowing religion politely out the front door - she may indeed continue to exist, but she must never show her face inside the temple.”\textsuperscript{908} Neither could he fully take the counsel of the tender-minded school. He would escape the materialism that goes with the reigning empiricism but he would pay for his escape by losing contact with the world of concrete personal experience.

If James sat down with King and looked at the charts appended to \textit{Industry and Humanity}, he might call King “a pragmatist \textit{sans le savoir}.”\textsuperscript{909} King generally accepted the concepts and theories of science, especially evolutionary science, but he struggled as he attempted to fuse his metaphysical idealism which distinguished man as a spiritual being with his faith in science. In the charts King resolved the contradictions between the "empiricists" and the “rationalists” in a way that respected both alternatives, in a pragmatic way. If James were to quickly check out King’s charts, he would find that they begin as simple representations of an eternal perfect universe where progress is assured. As important factors in industrial growth are fed into this model, order is no longer characterized by stability, but by orderly change.

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{905} Ibid., 8 - 9.
\bibitem{906} Ibid., 9.
\bibitem{907} Ibid., 10
\bibitem{908} Ibid., 11.
\bibitem{909} Ibid., 123.
\end{thebibliography}
With the continual expansion of industry, the charts take on its rhythms and oscillations. They become representations of a modern capitalism churning with activity. In the last charts, the messy details of industrial experience are reconciled with the ideals of harmony and balance. If certain methods are followed, if certain problems are considered, if certain groups are placated, industrial peace is achieved (See Appendix II - IX).

Chart II captures the lifeless abstractions of idealism; it presents a highly neo-Platonic quietistic cosmos exclusive of the material historical world. It represents a never-changing static and orderly universe that automatically results in Progress. The order is divinely shaped by the Law of Peace, Work, and Health. Using the symbolic logic of a Venn diagram, three interlocking circles, Labor, Capital and Management, are circumscribed by one large circle representing the Community. Together these elements form an interdependent, co-operative, functional whole. They represent a perfectly adjusted order that resolves all contradictions and unmanageable conflicts in its search for unity. Chart II sanctifies the static One. There is a rational unity of things that is inspiring and would be welcomed by most of us. As James says, “there are moments of discouragement in us all, when we are sick of self and tired vainly of striving.” Like the prodigal son, “we want a universe where we can just give up, fall on our father’s neck, and be absorbed into the absolute life as a drop of water melts into the river or the sea.”

The concentric waves of Charts III and IV signal that the nature of global industry is not static. There is a certain ambivalence in the cosmic model in Chart IV. The twelve spokes imply a cyclical naturalistic view of change whereas the undulating waves convey the impression that the factors Discovery and Invention, Government, Education, and Opinion, as King suggested, continually affect Industry “in a large way ... beneficially or the reverse.” On the other hand there is no uncertainty in Charts V and VI. They are dynamic models of global industry where

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910 Ibid., 128.
911 William Lyon Mackenzie King, Industry and Humanity, 538
change is embedded within industry that is “in ceaseless motion and undergoing continuous change.” These circular models seethe with forces acting and reacting to influences within and without industry. In Chart VII King constructed a world schematized into a kind of electrical energy pattern. There is the sense of both material and spiritual forces working together. What is most unusual is the large inverted triangle now extending outside the circumference. In some sense the triangle reaches out beyond the boundary of the material world into the realm of the spiritual.

Charts VIII and IX are much more detailed than the earlier charts. They exemplify King’s own maxim: “Many-sided comprehension is essential to any intelligent understanding of industrialization, however circumscribed.” Chart VIII is set within an orderly framework of law, development and adjustment depicted as a continually changing kaleidoscope, whereas Chart IX is a more richly textured macrocosm with the complexities of an imperfect industrial order. Both charts contain the moralistic concept of Good and Evil and admit the possibility of War Famine Epidemics and Strikes Lockouts Boycotts. Both harmonize the sensible facts of industrial experience with the abstract ideas of Chart II. The Law of Peace, Work, and Health remains central to King’s world. James might call Chart IX “a monistic-pluralistic alternative” whose progress seems provisional. In any case King proved to be “neither tough nor tender in the extreme and radical sense, but mixed, as most of us are.” The pragmatic way was a mediating way of thinking that allowed King to preserve “as cordial a relation with facts, and, unlike Spencer’s philosophy, it neither begins nor ends by turning positive religious constructions out of doors - it treats them cordially as well.”

King’s reading of William James was part of his search for psychic well-being that

912 Ibid., 33.
913 Ibid., xvi.
914 William James, Pragmatism and Other Essays, 129.
915 Ibid., 132.
916 Ibid., 21.
took him on a spiritual odyssey that led through the healing power of mind cure and psychology to the saving power of faith through pragmatism and opened the door to spiritualism. James and mind-cure literature along with self improvement guides were prescribed by Dr. Adolf Meyer at Johns Hopkins as part of King’s treatment for depression. King found his subliminal self in James’s psychology. When certain kinds of incursions enter from a world of being wider than that of our every-day consciousness, their appearance “actually exerts an influence, raises our centre of personal energy, and produces regenerative effects unattainable in other ways.”

In the theory of the ‘subliminal’, King found a scientific mechanism that lent plausibility to religious life. It also gave justification to psychical research and spiritualism.

At the turn of the century, King’s youthful optimism had easily allowed him to see religion and science as complementing each other and he embraced social service as his vocation. But in middle age when a war and a rapidly changing society threatened his sense of stability, King began to explore new ways to achieve spiritual content. The findings of psychology helped King explore his mental deeps and achieve psychic health and access to his real source of power. James helped King deepen and broaden his faith when others were becoming more materialistic. When the First World War crashed into his comfortable world and King’s work on Industry and Humanity faltered, his reading of William James turned his thoughts inward for assurance and understanding. In a world gone wild, Evelyn Underhill continued to stress the need for a strong devotional life of prayer and meditation. Though for the rest of his life he suffered from anxiety and nervousness, King learned that it was prayer that would bring him the peace that public life denied. As spiritual energy flowed in, Mackenzie King gained strength. Spiritual awareness freshened his vital powers. The resultant outcome of King’s faith in God’s existence was an energized self.

917 William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, 394.
During the 1920s when Mackenzie King was intently reading William James’s *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, he began to dabble in astrology and spiritualism. In the 1930s he commenced the serious study of psychical research and became actively involved with a group of spiritualist friends with whom he frequently corresponded and exchanged books. By 1932, he acknowledged that “certainly the part of my life which may remain from now on will be influenced more by the psychic experiences of the past year than by all else I have known and experienced.” This final phase in King’s intellectual development is the most difficult to understand. The very notion of spiritualism, the belief that the dead communicate with the living, usually through the intervention of mediums, seems to run counter to our conception of modern culture. For many historians, King’s obsession with spiritualism provides evidence of “a limited intelligence.” However, my aim is to understand why King thought as he did and how his views were related to the complex and changing cultural life of that time between the wars when his spiritualism flourished. Nothing in this chapter is meant to suggest that anything like spirit communication or telepathy is an established or likely phenomenon, but I have every intention of persuading the reader that a belief in the supernormal is frequently compatible with sensible human behaviour and that King’s commitment to spiritualism was by no means unusual. As shown in the previous chapter, William James had an expressed interest in spiritualism as did others who studied innovative approaches to the mind. Sigmund Freud, for example, who saw the human mind as a new frontier of scientific discovery, was fascinated by occultism and psychical research in the early years of his career. There were many other notable people on the spiritualism roll call including British Prime Minister Arthur Balfour, and the famous evolutionist, Alfred Russel Wallace. Spiritualism offered many of its followers a reasonable way of resisting the crude materialism of the

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modern world that seemed to erase all meaning and purpose from life.

Historians have tended to treat spiritualism as a Victorian and Edwardian phenomenon. There are excellent works on the turn to spiritualism in this period of religious uncertainty. Janet Oppenheim’s *The Other World* documents the experience of spiritualists and psychical researchers who “perceived the need to bring religion more into line with the teachings of modern science explicitly to reduce the threat that science posed to the fundamental tenets of Christianity.”\(^{920}\) Alison Winter’s *Mesmerized* demonstrates the pivotal role of mesmerism in the transformation of medical and scientific authority in the mid-Victorian decades.\(^{921}\) Alex Owen’s *The Darkened Room* explores the familial and gendered aspects of Victorian spiritualism and *In Search of White Crows* documents the American experience.\(^{922}\) The spiritualism of the Victorian era was part of a broad movement dedicated to a variety of unorthodox spiritual beliefs which included eastern mysticism, theosophy and occultism. Implicit in these movements was “the acceptance of the idea that reality as we are taught to understand it accounts for only a fraction of the ultimate reality which lies beyond our immediate senses.” It is this hidden reality that the psychic medium claims to access. These movements taught the theory of developing “powers that are latent in everyone - and are capable of being developed by those who give themselves to appropriate studies.”\(^{923}\)

Historians have rarely extended their scholarly interest in spiritualism beyond the period of the Great War which arguably left many people desperately seeking to contact the spirits of loved ones killed in that conflict. As Jay Winter suggests in

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Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning, spiritualism captured the religious imagination of soldiers at the Front and in civilian circles bereavement was to become a community activity. Recent research by Jenny Hazelgrove clearly demonstrates that during the Great War and its aftermath, spiritualism once again enjoyed a boom reminiscent of its Victorian heyday. Spiritualism and British Society between the Wars shows the persistence and influence of spiritualist thought in interwar Britain. In this context, King’s study of spiritualism can be seen as part of an alternative culture, which contested a strictly scientific secular outlook, inviting us to rethink the ways in which ‘the modern’ has traditionally been conceived. Similarly, Alex Owen’s interpretation of the ‘new’ occultism in The Place of Enchantment suggests that it was but “one manifestation of a secularizing process that spells neither the inevitable decline nor the irreconcilable loss of significant religious beliefs and behaviors in a modern age.” Her work is “cognizant of diversity and change in the realm of human spirituality” and indicates “the way in which the search for spiritual meaning can renew itself and adapt to the changing climate of a secularizing culture.”

Few have written about spiritualism in Canada. Ramsay Cook provided a chapter in his book The Regenerators, which described the extent of spiritualist activities in the late nineteenth century. Stan McMullin’s recent analysis of the cultural significance of spiritualism in central Canada does offer an important perspective from which to observe King’s interest in the occult. Anatomy of a Seance shows how spirit communication grew out of the nineteenth-century dialogue between science and religion and maintains that by the 1930s, spiritualism was being practised by “sophisticated people” who were open to “alternative responses” to the dehumanizing aspects of scientific materialism. McMullin’s chapter on King in

925 Jenny Hazelgrove, Spiritualism and British Society between the Wars (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).
926 Alex Owen, The Place of Enchantment, 11.
particular, is an attempt to put into context King’s unusual interest in spiritualism that has been exploited by his critics. He highlights King’s visit with Glen Hamilton, Canada’s most successful psychical researcher. While many came to the seance room to affirm an afterlife and thus sustain their Christian beliefs, others such as Dr. Hamilton, used the seance room as a laboratory to explore psychic phenomena. McMullin explores the subversive world of the seance through such sources as the notes that were made by ‘sitters.’ While McMullin made use of the raw material of seance notes and audiotape records generated by mediums, it appears that he did not access the King Papers. He did not use King’s diary nor the recently opened spiritualism files, which confirm King’s deep involvement in psychical research and contain the records of conversations held with mediums in Ottawa, Brockville, Detroit, New York, Toronto and London. However, McMullin does usefully affirm “the integrity of individual practitioners of spiritualism” and focuses on “the ingenuity and vitality of their quest.”

These new approaches force us to accept that a significant constituency of modern-minded men and women were engaged in a dialogue with spirituality that involved the recuperation of modes of thought that empiricism dismisses as irrational. King was only one of many educated and imaginative people who entertained a taste for the unexplained and engaged in spiritualism as part of an intellectual defense of Christianity. He was fascinated by psychological research and interested in the science of magnetism, electricity and radio waves which also constituted unseen yet real phenomena of distant communication and he believed “without question” that the radio had introduced us to “an understanding of the reality of the invisible.” This chapter approaches King’s preoccupation with the unseen world as sympathetically as possible rather than as part of a lunatic fringe. The aim is to place King among members of a secularizing culture who were simultaneously attempting to retain the

928 Although McMullin relied on mostly secondary sources, Neatby, Stacey, Esberey, Whitaker and Keyserlink, he found letters from King in the Hamilton Collection in Winnipeg and the Archives of the British Association for Psychic Research in London.
929 Stan McMullin, Anatomy of a Seance, 226.
930 W.L.M.K. Diary, 6 October 1929.
important elements of their faith while using areas of science to help them establish a basis for a new non materialistic world view.

King and his group of spiritualist friends were devoutly Christian and remained concerned about the place of science and religion in their modern society. Peter J. Bowler’s work questions the neglect of this continuing theme by historians who have generally portrayed the early twentieth century as a period in which the great Victorian debates pitting science against religion had fizzled out and no longer held the attention of the majority of scientists or religious thinkers. Bowler argues that “the apparent lack of interaction between science and religion in the early twentieth century is an artefact of historians’ neglect” and that “the issues were not dead as the lack of historical emphasis might imply.”

What emerges from his survey of an enormous volume of literature by scientists, theologians, and popular writers is a realization that this period saw a concerted effort to bring about a reconciliation between science and religion after the alienation of the Victorian era. Bowler found that “a body of intellectually conservative scientists, liberal religious thinkers, and popular writers sought to convince the reading public that science had turned its back on materialism while religion had become more open to the kinds of changes that were consistent with the new understanding of nature.”

This attempted reconciliation that was promoted actively in the 1920s took place against a backdrop of growing indifference to institutionalized religion and the professionalization of science, and it was sustained by a substantial “middlebrow” literature catering to the public’s vague feeling that there must be a spiritual element to life, one often closely allied to liberal Christianity and its faith in progress. This popular culture in which King and his spiritualist friends were immersed in the interwar period reflected the complex relationship between science, religion and the ideas about the paranormal.

Many late Victorian scientists had been deeply religious and some of the most

932 Ibid., 3.
933 Ibid., 22.
prominent such as the British physicist, Sir Oliver Lodge (1851 - 1940), used their science to study psychic phenomena and spiritualism in order to prove to everyone the hollowness of a materialistic philosophy hostile to the claim of a purposefully constructed universe. Lodge became a firm believer in human survival and the persistence of personality and he played a major role in the revival of spiritualism during the Great War. Lodge’s endorsement of the spiritualist cause was associated in the popular mind with the death of his son in Flanders in 1915. The publication of his best-selling book, Raymond, presented the case for ongoing communication with the fallen. Lodge wrote that “there is no real breach of continuity between the dead and the living; and that methods of intercommunion across what has seemed to be a gulf can be set going in response to the urgent demand of affection.” He devoted several sections to verbatim reports of conversations with Raymond relayed to him through the mediumship of Mrs. Gladys Leonard. Raymond described a spirit world which in many respects mirrored our own. The spirits of the dead continued to eat, wear clothes, work, live in houses and enjoy gardening. They remained themselves except that they were rid of the burden of the flesh. The spirits of the dead were themselves progressing towards higher states and claimed that they could inspire those left behind and help them achieve results.

King first met Lodge in 1926 at the time of the Imperial Conference, at the home of Lord Grey of Fallodon, an elder Liberal statesman, and he related his own recent meetings with the Kingston medium, Mrs. Bleaney. In reply, Lodge told King that he was “very fortunate to have this great help” and that “there were many cases of men similarly helped.” Abraham Lincoln had had “very similar experiences” that “gave him confidence in his work” and “helped him by the knowledge that he was right and working to the right end.” King recorded in his diary Lodge’s expressed belief that “the extent of the ordering and planning of our lives by those who are beyond, is much greater than we imagine.” That Mrs. Bleaney was able to tell King what she did was “due in part to her own powers, but also to [King’s] own faith.”

\[534\] Oliver Lodge, Raymond or Life and Death (New York: George H. Doran, 1916), 83. Not found in King’s collection.
Both were needed: “There is no doubt those beyond are trying to have us know of their presence and their interest in our lives but we have to be receptive, and faith is a means to that end. Even mechanical instruments like wireless can effect nothing without receptivity.”

Such analogies between spirit communication and wireless are ubiquitous in spiritualist literature. One of King’s British mediums, Mrs. Helen Hughes, declared that she could “tune in” to the other world at any time. There seemed to be “something like a series of ‘telegraph wires’, a range of vibrations, along which the messages come.” In 1916, King himself reported to Dr. Barker at Johns Hopkins, feelings that he was “being influenced electrically by others and of influencing others in this way.” Dismissed by Barker as hallucinations, the symptoms were not uncommon at the time. Oddly enough, Phyllis Greenacre, a psychiatrist working at Johns Hopkins during the First World War, predicted that such “sensations of electrical currents” in depressive states can be “related frequently to the type of mystical cravings and credulity which moves people to consult spiritualists, and ouija boards or seek outlets in theosophy and occultism.”

King’s first encounter with Oliver Lodge sparked his interest but political events at home consumed King’s attention and it was not until the summer of 1929 that he

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935 W.L.M.K. Diary, 12 November 1926.
936 To tune in became a standard means of representing telepathic experience. See also Upton Sinclair, Mental Radio, with an introduction by William McDougall and preface by Albert Einstein (New York: A & C Boni, 1930). In King’s collection at the National Library.
938 Paul Roazen, Canada’s King. 73.
found the time to begin reading the writings of Lodge.\textsuperscript{940} King began with \textit{Evolution and Creation}, sharing the experience with his close neighbours, Joan and Godfroy Patteson.\textsuperscript{941} King found that the book contained “just the view of creation & evolution” that he believed in and that it was “most helpful in forming” him in his belief.\textsuperscript{942} \textit{Evolution and Creation}, in characteristic spiritualist fashion, expressed Lodge’s view of the need for the reconciliation of religion and science. Like other works of his, it was a protest against scientific naturalism which contended that the whole of human experience could be reduced to natural phenomena wholly explainable by science. The materialist attempt to explain evolution as a gradual self-acting process in opposition to the old idea of creation as a sudden achievement without intermediate steps “\textit{seemed to lead to the exclusion of mind and purpose from the Universe}.”\textsuperscript{943} Ultimately there must be a recognition that “the book of Inspiration” and “the book of Nature” were both avenues of truth. Such a “reconciliation between the elements of truth in both” or “balance between them” could only be achieved by the extension of the boundaries of science and the rejection of Christian orthodoxy.\textsuperscript{944} The crude old doctrines of creation must be abandoned in favour of “\textit{the underlying essence}” of Christianity.\textsuperscript{945} The Book of Genesis was not a scientific treatise. Rather, the creation chapters must be regarded as poetry which is not limited by reason but open to inspiration. King found “especially helpful ... the placing side by side of ‘inspiration &

\textsuperscript{940} King’s collection at the National Library contains a number of books by Oliver Lodge: \textit{Continuity} (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1914); \textit{Science and Immortality} (New York: Moffat, 1910); \textit{The Reality of a Spiritual World} (London: E. Benn, 1931); \textit{Phantom Walls} (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1929); \textit{Past Years: An Autobiography} (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1931); \textit{Evolution and Creation} (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1926); \textit{Ether and Reality} (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1927); \textit{Demonstrated Survival: Its Influence on Science, Philosophy and Religion} (London: L.S.A. Publications, 1930); \textit{Beyond Physics or the Idealisation of Mechanism} (London: Allen & Unwin, 1930). Inscribed: This ambitious book tries to extend Physics so as to include the beginnings of Life & Mind. It was followed by ‘My Philosophy’ & is sent to Wm. Mackenzie King with respectful regard. Oliver Lodge 3 Nov 1936. Missing is King’s copy of \textit{My Philosophy} which he kept in his spiritual cupboard and recorded reading in his diary.\textsuperscript{941} Oliver Lodge, \textit{Evolution and Creation} (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1926). Two inscriptions: Oliver Lodge with friendly regard to The Prime Minister of Canada and Pamela Grey of Fallowdon November 1926 in memory of a most interesting evening. Last page marked: Read through at Kingsmere June 15-16-1929 WLMK.\textsuperscript{942} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 16 June 1929.\textsuperscript{943} Oliver Lodge, \textit{Evolution and Creation}, 25. Passage marked by King with two vertical lines.\textsuperscript{944} Ibid., 36 - 37, 32.\textsuperscript{945} Ibid., 30.
reason’, the former concerned with things of the spirit, the latter of the mind.”946 For Lodge, evolution was not only a continuous process in the physical universe but applied also to the mental universe where “we find growth, development, increase of value, rise of status.”947 This was a progressivist evolutionism in which death was not the end of man because “there may be infinite progress in store.”948 The evolution of spiritual things “can advance continually through higher and higher stages towards perfection.”949 King liked “particularly” how Lodge disclosed this “spiritual side of man’s being” and sounded “the note of immortality & perfection in the hereafter.”950 King accepted that the evolution of man was far from complete and that it was “a going-on process, a long-continued process of which we only see the beginning; but we have had an indication of what man may become, and of the divine elevation which is within his reach.”951

Victorian physicists were often preoccupied with the imponderables such as light, electricity, magnetism and gravitation, all of which are unseen phenomena occurring in empty space and only appreciable when they enter into relation with matter. Orthodox physics in the late nineteenth century invented ether to account for electromagnetic waves. It was the presumed pervasiveness of the ether that attracted Oliver Lodge and increasingly his writings were dominated by the hypothesis that it was ether which occupied all space and served, as Janet Oppenheim suggests, as “a sort of cosmic glue,” a continuous universal medium which enabled the universe to function as an integrated whole.952 Lodge’s devotion to the concept of ether was reflected in an endless stream of books and articles which linked ether physics and spiritualism into what Peter Bowler suggests was “a religious philosophy that might not have been orthodox Christianity, but offered religion a powerful new way of reintroducing spiritual values into a world dominated

946 W.L.M.K. Diary, 16 June 1929.
947 Oliver Lodge, Evolution and Creation, 98. Passage marked by King with two vertical lines.
948 Ibid., 99. Passage marked by King with two vertical lines.
949 Ibid., 99. Passage marked by King with two vertical lines.
950 W.L.M.K. Diary, 16 June 1929.
951 Oliver Lodge, Evolution and Creation, 150.
952 Janet Oppenheim, The Other World, 383.
Lodge continued to uphold the reality of ether for both scientific and metaphysical reasons long after it had been discarded by his colleagues. He found it “necessary to a philosophical contemplation of the sensory universe.” Ether acted as “the universal connecting link; the transmitter of every kind of force” and “the vehicle or substratum underlying electricity and magnetism and light and gravitation and cohesion.” He was attracted to the hypothetical ether because it served as “the vehicle of Cohesion” and “the unifying and connecting mechanism which welds together the disconnected atoms of matter and makes cosmos out of chaos.

While matter itself was discontinuous, consisting “mostly of empty space,” ether was a continuous force which connected together all the pieces of matter. Ether welded the planets into a solar system and united the parts of an atom. Lodge could not conceive of a universe in which discontinuity was a cosmic law. He could not assume that the universe was irrational, without aim or object, merely a random dance of atoms under the influence of purely chemical and physical forces. Thus ether took on, as Brian Wynne suggests, “a transcendent, unifying role within science. It was simplicity lying behind diversity, coherence behind disorder.” And as Oppenheim confirms, for Lodge “continuity and the ether were the twin pillars of his world view, and he was committed to the latter primarily because it was indispensable to the former.

After his reading of *Ether and Reality*, King was “convinced” that Lodge was “right in Ether being the only Reality.” With its ability to serve as a unifying principle for the whole universe, ether appealed to King who was emotionally

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956 Ibid., 44.
957 Ibid., 35.
959 Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World*, 382.
960 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 12 October 1929.
committed to a vision of cosmic unity that had been so clearly expressed in his industrial charts from *Industry and Humanity*. Those charts, which evoked a sense of organic unity and harmony, emphasized the factors which would heal the wounds of atomism. The paradigm of ether physics was entirely consistent with King’s own vision of a harmonious universe governed by the operation of natural law.

Lodge’s faith in ether as the all-unifying medium was a reaction against certain members of the scientific community who were afflicted with “a materialistic complex” and “unable to open their minds to evidence of any non-material or anti-materialistic kind.” He advocated “a completer Science” that would transcend the world revealed by man’s five senses and recognize the reality of the invisible ether that bound all elements of the physical and psychical world into one perfect continuum. In Lodge’s universe, the Ether of Space provided the bridge between the spiritual and material worlds. In King’s universe, Lodge’s readings confirmed his own belief in “a scientific basis of Reality being the thing unseen, not the thing seen.” Lodge defended a metaphysical science based on the reality of ether against an ideology of naturalism which looked towards rational scientific and secular ideas to solve its ultimate problems rather than towards Christian modes of thought. In his moral and mental universe, ether was used to validate his ideas about life, mind, soul and human immortality.

Turning to the interaction of mind and matter, Lodge did not believe that physics and psychics were entirely detached. The laws of conservation of matter and energy linked physics and psychical research and ether entered into both. The laws of conservation demonstrated the validity of the even larger principle that real things do not go out of existence. Like the existence of ether, the existence of nonmaterial minds that survived death could be accurately inferred from a mass of empirical evidence. Experience had made him aware that there was a spiritual or mental world

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961 See Margaret Bedore, “The Infamous Charts of Mackenzie King from *Industry and Humanity* (MA thesis, Queen’s University, 2003).
962 Oliver Lodge, *Ether & Reality*, 16.
963 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 6 October 1929.
interacting with the world of matter. Mind and Consciousness, and Memory and
Affection, were psychical things that belonged to the Unseen Universe, the universe
which makes no appeal to our senses. Lodge argued for the existence of what he
termed ‘the etheric body’ that existed permanently in conjunction with the mind,
serving as “the essential intermediary” between mind and matter.964 Lodge’s
hypothesis suggested that mind or “spirit primarily inhabits the ether, uses it, and
acts on it: and that occasionally this operated on ether is able to act upon matter.”
This “intervening mechanism is the etheric or spiritual body.”965 It is this co-existent
etheric body that survives the death of the material body and remains with its mind
to ensure the survival of personality. The same ethereal counterpart, by
communicating with the etheric bodies of mediums, allows messages to be
transmitted from the unseen world.

Lodge’s belief in the survival of personality was an outcome of his lifelong study of
physics and acceptance of the concept of ether. His theory of ether, as a
transcendent substance that fused the physical plane with the metaphysical realm,
allowed the strange communications experienced in spiritualistic circles to “take their
place in the orderly scheme of recognised science.” Evidence of communication
from the spiritual world, “a world of help and guidance and sympathy,” could be held
in the face of every denial of the materialists. His hope was that spiritualism would
thus emerge from its dark and difficult period and “familiar intercourse across the veil
or gulf of death [would] become sufficiently common to prove an untold blessing to
the human race.”

Although King favoured the comfortable philosophy of Oliver Lodge, he was open
to other more modern viewpoints popularized by contemporary scientists that
supported a spiritual outlook but did not support the outdated ether physics of
Lodge or his defense of spiritualism. King’s diary records that he read works by

964 Oliver Lodge, Ether & Reality, 20.
965 Oliver Lodge, My Philosophy: Representing My Views of the Many Functions of the Ether of
Space (London: Ernest Benn, 1933), 221 - 222.
966 Ibid., 238 - 239.
Britain’s two best-known astronomers, Arthur Stanley Eddington (1882 - 1944) and James H. Jeans (1887 - 1946). They were popular spokesmen for the new physics of relativity and quantum mechanics. Eddington and Jeans linked the new physics to an idealist view of knowledge which demonstrated the mental character of reality. In *The Nature of the Physical World*, Eddington surveyed the importance of modern science on philosophy. Relativity challenged the old idea of a law bound material nature existing independently of conscious observers; it introduced the conception of observers with different points of view. Quantum physics was about probabilities, indeterminacy and uncertainty of knowledge and its abstract mathematical nature allowed Eddington to conclude that “the stuff of the world is mind stuff.” The old model of the atom could be easily visualized; particle-like electrons followed orbits around the nucleus resembling a miniature solar system. But the wave-particle duality of quantum theory could not be pictured at all and could not be described coherently in terms of classical concepts such as space, time and causality. From the wave-particle theory scientists could only predict the probability that a measurement in the atomic or sub-atomic world will have a particular value; they could not predict exact values for a measurement.

Eddington was the first scientist to appreciate the importance of Einstein’s general theory of relativity and he was a life-long Quaker. In *Science and the Unseen World*, he suggested that it was the Quaker spirit of seeking that animated both his religious experience and his scientific work: “In science as in religion the truth shines ahead as a beacon showing us the path; we do not ask to attain it; it is better far that we are permitted to seek.” Fixed religious creeds were “a great obstacle to any full sympathy between the outlook of scientists and the outlook which religion is often supposed to require.” By dispensing with creeds, Quakerism held out a hand to

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568 Ibid., 88.

569 Ibid., 276.

570 Ibid., 23.

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Whereas the dogmatic materialistic model of the mind held that “the dance of atoms in the brain really constitutes the thought” and “that in our search for reality we should replace the thinking mind by a system of physical objects and forces,” the new physics turned its back on such concrete models and “modified the challenge from the material to the spiritual world.” The ultimate reality for Eddington was ‘spiritual’ and his science was no longer tempted to condemn the spiritual aspects of our nature as illusory because of their lack of concreteness as science no longer identified the real with the concrete.

Like Eddington, Jeans attempted to show the general public the metaphysical implications of the new physics. King found his most popular book, *The Mysterious Universe* (1930), “a truly wonderful book.” It sold a thousand copies a day during its first month of publication. Jeans believed that quantum physics demonstrated the mental character of reality and caught the public’s imagination with his claim that his designing God was “a pure mathematician.” The new physics favoured a new idealism which reintroduced the mind into reality. Jeans wrote that “the universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine. Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter; we are beginning to suspect that we ought rather to have it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter.” The new physics was hailed as the nemesis of materialism and was accepted as such by many religious thinkers. However not all scientists supported this position as Ian Barbour has suggested in his discussion of Neils Bohr, a contemporary of Einstein. Bohr emphasized that talk must be about an atomic system in relation to an experimental arrangement: “The interaction between the subject and the object must be considered in every experiment and no sharp line can be drawn between the process of observation and what is observed. We are actors and not merely spectators, and we choose the experimental tools we will employ. Bohr held that it is the interactive process of observation not the mind or

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971 Ibid., 28, 31.
972 W.L.M.K. Diary, 9 June 1932.
974 Ibid., 148.
consciousness of the observer that must be taken into account.\textsuperscript{975}

King continued to read the works of Lodge in the 1930s and after Lodge’s death in 1940. He read “with the greatest interest and profit” Lodge’s autobiography \textit{Past Years}, “especially the last chapter in the book where he shews that Spiritualism really led him to his belief in the life beyond and the significance of Christ’s life.”\textsuperscript{976} Often King found “the technical side” of his books “hard to follow” but he expressed the common view of other spiritualists that “we are only on the verge of understanding ourselves & the Universe in which we are.”\textsuperscript{977} He derived “much pleasure” from reading Lodge’s \textit{Phantom Walls}.\textsuperscript{978} It appealed to his “reason” and was “most satisfying as being the outer edge of a realm that more & more will not only be explored but penetrated with time.”\textsuperscript{979} He believed in everything that Lodge had written on psychical research, and that Lodge was “a pioneer in the next great advance of knowledge.”\textsuperscript{980} Lodge’s \textit{My Philosophy} deepened King’s convictions “on the truth of a spiritual world being revealed through psychical research. Lodge is the most satisfying of the men I have read on Philosophy.”\textsuperscript{981} Lodge came “nearer to the truth in regards to the different forces, material and spiritual, which govern the affairs of the world than any man of our time.”\textsuperscript{982}

In the short work, \textit{The Reality of a Spiritual World} (1931), Lodge reiterated his philosophy of science and religion. “His views of Science and Religion” were held by King.\textsuperscript{983} “\textit{They ought to overlap} ... Reality cannot be divided into exclusive portions any more than a tree can be properly understood by a study of the roots

\textsuperscript{976} King to Oliver Lodge, 29 December 1933, in W.L.M.K. Papers, Spiritualism Series MG 26 J9, National Archives of Canada (hereafter Spiritualism Series): Vol. 7 File 27, Reel H-3032. W.L.M.K. Diary, 12 April 1933.
\textsuperscript{977} W.L.M.K. Diary, 5 October 1929.
\textsuperscript{978} W.L.M.K. Diary, 9 March 1930.
\textsuperscript{979} W.L.M.K. Diary, 23 February 1930.
\textsuperscript{980} W.L.M.K. Diary, 12 April 1933.
\textsuperscript{981} W.L.M.K. Diary, 1 July 1939.
\textsuperscript{982} W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 August 1940.
\textsuperscript{983} W.L.M.K. Diary, 1 July 1939.

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alone, or the branches alone, or the flowers and fruit alone." Lodge defended the
assault on materialist science which was led by physicists like himself and argued for
an enlarged scope for science that went beyond "the visible, the tangible and the
concrete," for "something more" than the study of matter alone, a science that would
accept the idea of "an animating principle" functioning apart from the material body
and a science which could throw light upon the supposed persistence of human
personality beyond the apparent terminus of bodily death. The science that went
beyond its materialistic limitations allowed Lodge to consider the spiritistic
hypothesis as a working guide and conclude:

... that a Spiritual world is a reality, that there are many orders or
grades of being, that the human spirit continues, that there is no
insuperable barrier between different orders of existence, and
that under certain conditions intercommunion is possible. This is
the working hypothesis on which I proceed; and I know it is
true.

The spiritistic hypothesis, called forth to account for a large number of otherwise
inexplicable facts of observation and experiment, in its simplest form is "that we are
spirits here and now, operating in material bodies, being, so to speak, incarnate in
matter for a time, but that our real existence does not depend on association with
matter, although the index and demonstration of our activity do." In other words,
"we are immortal spirits in temporary association with matter." When we quit the
organism our activities go on as before, but now presumably in space; and only
when we manage to re-establish some temporary connection with matter are we
able to make any sign, or supply any demonstration of our continued activity to
those left behind on the earth or have any guiding or helpful influence on them.

984 Oliver Lodge, *The Reality of a Spiritual World*, 4. First section marked with two vertical lines.
This 31 page booklet is in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 6 File 6, Reel H-3041. Copiously marked by
King throughout.
986 Ibid., 12. King marked by four vertical lines.
987 Ibid., 18.
988 Ibid., 22. Marked by four vertical lines.
In 1945 when King was re-reading *The Reality of a Spiritual World*, he found the chapter on Christianity “most helpful, satisfactory, inspiring and comforting of anything I have read for a long time. It has helped to give me the peace and strength which I need for the coming days.”

Lodge accepted only the essential doctrines of Christianity - the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man and the two great commandments - love of God and love of neighbour. All his study of science led him to the belief in a universe, “so beautifully designed” and “the simple but assured conviction that The Great Heart of Existence is most wonderfully kind.” King took this short work of Lodge’s to his bedside for “real comfort the night Pat passed away.”

King found endorsement for the spiritualism of Oliver Lodge in the works of some religious writers who also wanted to purge the church of the old dogmas that were incompatible with the world of modern science. Many churchgoers were attracted to spiritualism because of the evidence it provided for survival and because of the consolation and guidance it offered. *Death Cannot Sever* (1932) by Norman Maclean, Ex-Moderator of the Church of Scotland and Minister of St. Cuthbert’s, Edinburgh, represented a viewpoint “amasingly [sic] along lines I have been thinking, have been saying & have experienced.” It was the first volume “by a Christian minister upholding the reality” of all King had experienced and knew “to be true of survival after death as revealed by Mrs. Wriedt’s mediumship.” What Maclean did was to show clearly how spiritualism was compatible with a liberalized Christianity. He focused on bereavement and immortality and the Church of

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989 W.L.M.K. Diary, 18 March 1945.
990 Oliver Lodge, *The Reality of a Spiritual World*, 30 - 31. King marked this conclusion by two vertical lines.
991 W.L.M.K. Diary, 14 August 1947. Pat was his dog.
992 W.L.M.K. Diary, 18 December 1932.
England’s failure to provide “remembrance of the dead in prayer.” He argued that church doctrine made “too much of death and too little of the heavenly Father,” a Father that would surely not “acquiesce in the age-long sleep of his children.” His God was not “the God that holds you over the pit of hell” but a loving Father in heaven who would not be displeased at his remembering the loved ones who had crossed over. Maclean affirmed the progressivist evolutionism of Lodge in which “at death the souls pass into the next stage of their evolution.” King marked all the passages that accepted Lodge’s concept of ether. Maclean understood ether as “the basic substance of the universe” and “the unifier of the psychical and material worlds.” He agreed that “every individual consists of two bodies, the material body and the etheric body” and that “the etheric body is the real seat of life.” Although “the severance of the etheric body from the material body occurs at death,” the etheric body maintained the physical body “as a unified home of personality.” Maclean deplored the fact that “the gospel of comfort has been left to Spiritualists as their domain.” The result was “that hundreds of thousands were seeking in séances... the comfort the Church denies them. ... No wonder pews become increasingly empty.”

King also read Burnett Hillman Streeter, leading Modernist theologian, whose Reality (1926) celebrated the demise of the old mechanistic viewpoint. New discoveries in atomic physics had shattered the concept of matter as the prime reality. If matter is

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994 Ibid., 55 - 56. Marked with two vertical lines.
995 Ibid., 57, 83.
996 Ibid., 61.
997 Ibid., 95.
998 Ibid., 95 - 96.
999 Ibid., 104.
1000 Ibid., 107 - 108. Last line marked by three vertical lines.
made up of electrons revolving around a proton, it is not solid at all - “it no longer strikes the imagination as being something more real than invisibilities like life or thought.”

The atom, the electron and the like are not things directly observed. They are hypothetical constructions, elaborated by human minds to account for actual data of sense; they “are ‘representations’ of phenomena which do not admit of being directly observed.” In advanced physics, sense data and interpretative inference are inextricably blended and “the difficulty of saying whereabouts (if anywhere) in the act of knowing, the mental ends and the material begins - a difficulty long ago discerned by philosophers - has become a live issue for scientists as well.”

Similarly, as Bertrand Russell suggested, Einstein’s theory of relativity “damaged the traditional notion of substance more than all the arguments of the philosophers.” Einstein’s theory challenged persistence of matter: “A piece of matter has become, not a persistent thing with varying states, but a system of inter-related events. The old solidity is gone, and with it the characteristics that, to the materialists made matter seem more real than fleeting thoughts.”

The new philosophy of Eddington emphasized the limits to the sphere of exact science and led Streeter to a new correlation of Science and Religion.

According to Streeter, “the realm of Science is Quantity,” whereas the realm of Art and Religion is “Quality,” but both are required for a full appreciation of Reality.

The method of Science is “to state,” of Art “to suggest.” Science and Religion are both concerned with truth but quality can be represented only if something can be actually felt. King responded in his diary:

Much is in accord with what I had worked out in my own thought - re materialism, mechanism, science, symbolism, etc - The great new contribution is Art - the ascertaining truth through

1002 Ibid., 17. Marked by two vertical lines.
1003 Ibid., 17.
1005 Burnett Hillman Streeter, Reality, 26.
1006 Ibid., 33.
feeling, intuition etc Christ’s death being the revelation of God’s love not the Price paid for some sin is a conception one can accept - the atonement meaning helping us to be at one with God - one can understand, not a price paid to make God at one with His own creation.  

King was impressed by “what Streeter had written about ‘Telepathy and Intercession’, and each possessing a sort of psychic radio activity of prayer ascending to God and thro’ God to those to be helped thereby.” Streeter was convinced by the evidence for “telepathetic communication between living minds” and that we are capable of influencing others through prayer. He accepted “the possibility of communication with departed spirits” because it was unthinkable that God would permit the mind to perish with the body. King marked the two appendices to Streeter’s book, “Dream Symbolism and the Mystic Vision” and “Instinct and Morality.” The former finds that “the definition of Freud that a dream is the symbolic expression of an unfulfilled wish, is too narrow.” Streeter was more concerned that a person’s religious quest may “on occasion, find symbolic expression in a dream.” “Instinct and Morality” shows how modern Psychology makes a contribution to the field of Religion. Psychology shows why men tend to act or feel in certain ways, and how they tend to act in certain circumstances. It can tell what effect on health certain conduct is likely to produce. However, “Psychology does not decide what kind of conduct is morally best.” That is the realm of Religion.

King’s collection contains many other writings that overlap the areas of religion, science, psychology and spiritualism. For example King was reading in 1934


1008 W.L.M.K. Diary, 24 April 1933.

1009 Burnett Hillman Streeter, 295.

1010 Ibid., 320.

1011 Ibid., 320.

1012 Ibid., 344.
George André’s *The True Light* which suggested that church dogma and creeds needed to be adapted to the needs of the age: “Beliefs which are intellectually impossible can never gain universal acceptance; and they must sooner or later, be entirely swept away by the advancing tide of knowledge.” Modern Spiritualism, according to this text, is a “co-worker with Modern Science,” and its foremost purpose seems to be to meet science on its own ground by demonstrating, by experimental evidence, the persistence of life beyond so-called death.” Chapter Five, “Inter-relations of the Incarnate and the Discarnate,” presupposes that “religion demands unquestioning acceptance of this constant intercourse between the seen and the unseen. ... Inspiration and suggestion from the unseen worlds have always been recognised and taught by the orthodox Christian Churches.”

André’s spiritualist thinking reflects the Victorian focus on character. The influence of the discarnate on the incarnate spirit is related to the character of both. If the discarnate spirit is “more advanced, having rid himself of the lower nature and risen, in a purer body, to the next higher plane of the heaven world,” he will influence the man with a greater power. However, the power of a spirit to influence a man’s conduct is limited to the suggestion of thoughts and the transferring of emotion, and “the potency of these will depend on the character of the individual acted upon. Seed sown in stony ground will not spring up and come to maturity.” The operation of telepathy (the unconscious transfer of feeling) suggests that “every emotion felt, every thought formed, every aspiration outbreathed is a force set in action in the ether and capable of transmitting itself ... to other minds attuned to receive it.” Hence “our influence may reach multitudes in the other life who are at our stage of evolution and therefore more or less in sympathy with us.” André warns us that

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1014 Ibid., 86 - 87.

1015 Ibid., 85. Marked by two vertical lines.

1016 Ibid., 89. Marked by three vertical lines. King’s underlining.

1017 Ibid., 84, 94 - 95. Second quote marked by two vertical lines.

1018 Ibid., 95. Marked by four vertical lines.
we must use judgment concerning every communication from a spiritual source especially “when the message comes to us through the mediumship of another person, whether in spoken or written language. For the medium may be to the message what a translucent body may be to the to light, the rays which it refracts, diverts from their true course, lending to illusion in more or less degree.”\textsuperscript{1019} In other words, “the purport of the communication may be more or less perverted by the bias of the medium’s mental organism.”\textsuperscript{1020} The revelations of Spiritualism which are being made by lower grades of mediumship require greater caution but in any case “spirit manifestation of any kind should be sought only for a spiritual purpose, and then with the reverence and devotional feeling which are the proper accompaniment of spiritual things.”\textsuperscript{1021}

King’s first “Spiritual advisor” was Mrs. Fred Bleaney from Kingston.\textsuperscript{1022} Mrs. Bleaney was not a clairvoyant with an international reputation as King’s later mediums would be. She was more in the way of a fortune teller who seemed to have remarkable psychic powers. She gave spiritual readings and interpreted King’s dreams. The Spiritualism Series of the King Papers contains a record of their correspondence from 1919 until her death in 1934.\textsuperscript{1023} There is also a record of King’s impression of their talks and the dreams that King sent to Mrs. Bleaney and her responses. King considered her interpretations to be “divinely inspired” and that “her spoken and written words” were “a real help ... during a somewhat critical time.”\textsuperscript{1024}

King recorded in his diary “a most remarkable interview” with Mrs. Bleaney at the

\textsuperscript{1019} Ibid., 98. Marked by three vertical lines. King’s underlining.
\textsuperscript{1020} Ibid., 99. Marked by six vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{1021} Ibid., 102. Marked by four vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{1022} Mrs. Bleaney to King, 12 November 1925, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 3 File 42, Reel H-3037. Letter signed: Your Humble friend and Spiritual advisor.
\textsuperscript{1023} C.P. Stacey, with no access to the Spiritualism Series, incorrectly concluded that October 1925 was the time of King’s first contact with Mrs. Bleaney, when King was faced with a general election where the outcome was very doubtful. C.P. Stacey, A Very Double Life, 163.
\textsuperscript{1024} King to Mrs. Bleaney, 7 November 1925.
Belvedere Hotel in Kingston, discretely arranged by his friend Mrs. Fenwick. Mrs. Bleaney held his handkerchief and examined his hands for impressions.  

Previous to the interview, King had sent a recently worn necktie in order that Mrs. Bleaney might “write out what the environment it suggests brings to her thoughts.” He always enjoyed her “prophecies and confidences” and he dictated to his private secretary his immediate responses to her spiritual talks at Laurier House.

One of these typed records went to seventeen pages. King also had Mrs. Bleaney’s letters with her responses to his visions typed for study. An examination of these records shows that King marked them copiously with vertical lines and question marks. Mrs. Bleaney’s impressions and interpretations always included references to the guiding spirits of King’s family, often predicted marriage, more visions and political victories and on occasion were quite humorous. R. B. Bennett was described “as a chicken busily picking up little grains, stretching its neck here and there to take hold of it, and pecking at it quickly, going from one thing to another for the sake of argument and criticism, not being constructive. She doubted if he would remain as leader more than a year longer; he had a certain fulness in his head which would operate against him being successful.”

King put Mrs. Bleaney in touch with his friend Mrs. Mary Fulford in Brockville, widow of Liberal Senator Fulford, whose long-term interest in spiritualism was undoubtedly due to the loss of her young daughter. Mrs. Fulford had been a close friend of Lady Laurier and in 1923, when she was touring the newly renovated Laurier House, she spoke to King:

... of her conversations, through a medium with her husband, Sir Wilfrid & her daughter Mattie, saying she could hear their voices distinctly. Her husband advised her re his will, to write solicitors for changes & she did so & they were acted upon. Sir

1025 W.L.M.K. Diary, 20 October 1925. Mrs. Bleaney used psychometric techniques whereby objects retained the impression of contacts that had been made with them. She gave readings through the feel of the object.


Wilfrid had spoken of being rejuvenated, of enjoying Youth. Senator Joe had come in on the conversation & introduced himself, speaking of the wonder of the life beyond. ‘Mattie’ had spoken of the ravishing quality of the music. Mrs. Fulford spoke of the comfort to her heart & the assurance brought.¹⁰²⁸

King found it “difficult to believe that to a woman of her intelligence it could all have been a hoax.” He speculated that “there may be natures through which influences from beyond can make themselves felt.”¹⁰²⁹ It was Mrs. Fulford who introduced King in 1932 to the internationally known medium, Mrs. Etta Wriedt.¹⁰³⁰ Mrs. Wriedt was from Detroit and had strong connections to both the American and British spiritualist movements and in particular to Oliver Lodge. King’s move to Mrs. Wriedt as his personal medium marked his transition to a more sophisticated knowledge and practice of spiritualism. He acknowledged this change in his diary in response to a letter from Mrs. Bleaney -- “she does not impress me so much - but I do not forget her past help.”¹⁰³¹

Mrs. Wriedt gave King a copy of Arthur J. Findlay’s hugely popular On the Edge of the Etheric (1931). She had found it “quite interesting” and thought that it would also interest King.¹⁰³² This particular book had brought the message of spiritualism to a receptive British public. There were more than twenty-five impressions in the first year alone and it was subsequently translated into nineteen languages. The Reverend Norman Maclean, preaching on this book, referred to it as “a most remarkable book” and recommended everyone to read it.¹⁰³³ King lent his copy to his old friend, Reverend Thomas Eakin, who “read it several times’ and found it “a most

¹⁰²⁸ W.L.M.K. Diary, 29 December 1923.
¹⁰²⁹ W.L.M.K. Diary, 29 December 1923.
¹⁰³⁰ W.L.M.K. Diary, 21 February 1932.
¹⁰³¹ W.L.M.K. Diary, 13 April 1933.
¹⁰³² Mrs. Wriedt to King, 2 August 1932, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 4 File 1, Reel H-3037. Mrs. Wriedt signed the letter: Best wishes from the Unseen World.
¹⁰³³ Arthur J. Findlay, On the Edge of the Etheric or Survival after Death Scientifically Explained, preface by Sir William Barrett (London: Rider, 1932), i. This edition has seventy-five favourable extracts from reviews, including the one by Norman Maclean. King’s copy is unfortunately missing from the National Library.

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entrancing book.” Arthur Findlay was a successful businessman and an amateur physicist, who was a founding member of the Glasgow Society for Psychical Research. He emphasized that spiritualism was scientifically based on “the steady accumulation of facts” and he successfully presented the reality of the etheric world in a sound common sense manner:

The human being is composed of body, soul and spirit. The body is what we see, the soul is our mind, and the spirit is our etheric body which is an exact duplicate of our physical body; it holds our physical body together. Death is only the parting of the etheric body from the material body, and this etheric body carries the mind or soul with it, and then we do not look on the universe from the material standpoint but from the etheric standpoint.  

He carefully drew on those discoveries at the turn of the century with regard to the structure of matter which discredited materialism:

Matter which looks so solid is in reality not solid at all; what we see when we look at a table or a chair, for instance, are the vibrations of a certain number of electrons, which are revolving at immense speed around a centre known as a proton. ... Physical matter is in reality an open network of electrons and protons, and the distance between the electrons and the protons in an individual atom, in relation to its size is immense. ... These protons and electrons in the atoms are ... moving at enormous speed and are linked together by this invisible ether which occupies much the greater space within the atom. Matter is thus constructed of minute electric charges ... not moving haphazard, but freely and orderly, connected together by the invisible ether, which is now believed to be the basic substance of the universe. Though we cannot see the ether yet we infer that such a substance exists, because heat, light and electricity travel through space at a definite rate, and that therefore there must be a medium through which they

1034 Thomas Eakin to King, 12 January 1933, in *Spiritualism Series: Vol. 3* File 15, Reel H-3037.  
This ether theory, increasingly dismissed by younger scientists, supported the spiritualist hypothesis:

The ether of space can now be taken as the one great unifying link between the world of matter and that of spirit; it is the substance common to both worlds.

... Life functions in the ether, and it is just as much able to do so when free of matter as it is when clothed in matter; in fact a fuller larger life can be imagined when the physical body is discarded.

... At death we leave our physical body and function in our etheric body; we pass into the new environment which surrounds us, an environment which supports life, just as water supports life. We on earth here are in this sea of ether, though we know it not, ... We now only appreciate the physical, then we shall appreciate the etheric, ... the only difference being that they of the etheric world can come back to us at will, see us and appreciate us and our surroundings. We can only listen to what is told us and try to imagine.

... We are all bound for another country.

What is called the Direct Voice is the special subject of Findlay’s book. The author relates his experiences in trance sittings with the gifted medium, John C. Sloan, who is controlled by an entity named ‘Whitefeather’. During sittings, voices claiming to be those of deceased people speak and, when replied to, answer back intelligently, occasionally speaking through megaphones or trumpets. The medium’s larynx is used to produce the sound and the voice is conveyed from the medium’s mouth by means of a materialised ectoplasmic or psychic tube to the trumpet, which amplifies the voice so that it can be heard. All the recorded evidence that Finlay accumulated during these sittings with Sloan led to his belief that “there is continuity of...
life, that nothing is lost, and life is no exception. Communication between those now living in bodies covered with physical matter and those who have discarded their physical bodies is not only possible but takes place under suitable conditions.\footnote{1040}

In Findlay’s view, the knowledge gained by the new science of Psychics confirmed the fundamental and essential truths of religion. He was critical of religious orthodoxy and the history of Protestantism reminded him of “an iceberg forever breaking up.”\footnote{1041} By retaining its impossible creeds, the church lost a great opportunity, and forced from it “the thinking section of the population.”\footnote{1042} In the past religion and science were poles apart and “the Church was able to keep within its fold only those whose faith exceeded their knowledge.”\footnote{1043} Faith received no help from science which was looked on by the faithful with dread and fear. But Findlay was hopeful now that science was leading religion forward. Science was “becoming the partner of religion” and he could see the day coming “when science and religion will go hand-in-hand, brought together by the discoveries made by those who have devoted their lives to the furtherance of the knowledge gained by Psychical Research.”\footnote{1044}

By 1933 King found it “quite amazing” how he had “come in touch with so many” who were “closely associated with [Lodge’s] research.”\footnote{1045} It was really quite a remarkable network that included many contacts in Britain and the United States. King corresponded with members of the American Psychical Institute (A.P.I.) and the London Spiritualist Alliance (L.S.A.). In Canada, King’s spiritualism network included doctors, churchmen and psychical researchers outside his political world but all very interested in his political career. In a letter to Homer Watson, the artist from southwestern Ontario, King expressed “how wide one discovers the circle is of

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{1040} Ibid., 31.
\item \footnote{1041} Ibid., 156.
\item \footnote{1042} Ibid., 157.
\item \footnote{1043} Ibid., 18.
\item \footnote{1044} Ibid., 19.
\item \footnote{1045} W.L.M.K. Diary, 12 April 1933.
\end{itemize}
those who have become absorbed in similar studies. King established contact with Dr. Glen Hamilton in Winnipeg who was Canada’s best known psychic explorer. The Reverend Thomas Eakin, President of Knox College at the University of Toronto, attended seances at Kingsmere. However, the spiritualist circles King moved in were dominated by women. In Britain many of these women were attached to other rising movements such as the animal rights group or the peace activists. In Canada many of the seances King attended were hosted by women and most importantly the mediums were women. King was very respectful of their importance and abilities. His spiritualist friends were all strong Christians devoted to the ideals of duty and service. This closely-knit network of spiritualist friends and mediums exchanged correspondence and photographs as well as books and articles. They acted as a family support group for King for the rest of his life.

King soon began to accumulate a lot of materials on the subject of the paranormal. They were kept in his “spiritualism cupboard,” a small dark room used for seances, on the third floor of Laurier House beside his library. Most of the books are now at the National Library along with many of the journals he collected. Many of the pamphlets and booklets along with some journals are on microfilm at the National Archives. It is a remarkable collection representing the spiritualism movement in the interwar years. It includes a wide range of materials from the very sophisticated scientific to the banal. From the breadth of the collection, it is quite clear that as the medium, Geraldine Cummins suggested in 1951, King was “an experienced investigator; he had in hours of leisure studied psychical research over a period of some twenty years.”

1046 King to Homer Watson, 16 November 1933, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 2 File 6, Reel H-3037. Letter signed “Believe me, as always, Yours very sincerely.”
1047 One of King’s earliest acquisitions on spiritualism was in 1923. K. Wingfield, Guidance from Beyond (London: Philip Allan, 1923). Inscribed: To The Prime Minister from [Signature unclear] 1923.
1048 W.L.M.K. Diary, 16 November 1935.
King described his interest in Psychic Research in 1934 as “that of one who is much absorbed in the subject, and who approaches it with a sympathetic as well as open mind.” Though he thought it advisable to keep his interest in these studies “wholly confidential,” he exchanged ideas and information with a number of highly educated persons in various fields of study. As was discussed in Chapter Four, King visited Dr. Adolph Meyer of John Hopkins University at Baltimore in 1934. Meyer had treated King for depression at his clinic in 1916 and King had kept in contact. He had “a most interesting talk with him” during which time he gave King a couple of his essays. Meyer “seemed to be open-minded on psychic phenomena,” and had worked closely with the medium, Mrs. Eileen Garrett, who later sat for King.

Although he found some of her accounts of conversations with William James “disappointing,” he admitted to King that it might be “his own critical & suspicious attitude” which was at fault. Meyer gave King “the names of some of those whom he regarded as sympathetic & wholly scientific in their methods.” He named Dr. William McDougall and J.B. Rhine of Duke University and Gardner Murphy of Columbia. The mention of McDougall made King think at once of “the value Max attached to his writings.”

Meyer spoke of Dr. Anita Mary Mühl of California as being “a most interesting” and “wonderful person” and he showed King a copy of her book, *Automatic Writing*, which he thought would be of interest. King wrote to Dr. Mühl, who had just attended a scientific congress in India at which James Jeans had presided, to acquire

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1050 King to Dr. Anita Mühl, 28 November 1934, Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 26, Reel H-3035.
1051 In the Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 26, Reel H - 3035, there is a booklet *A Contribution of Mental Hygiene* (Chicago: Conference on Public Welfare, 1933), which contains an article “Spontaneity” by Adolf Meyer which was copiously marked by King.
1052 W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 November 1934.
1053 W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 November 1934. Anita Mary Mühl, *Automatic Writing* (Dresden: T. Steinkoff, 1930). King also had copies of Mühl’s articles “Tuberculosis from the Psychiatric Approach” and “Problems in General Medicine from the Emotional Standpoint,” reprinted from *Psychoanalytic Review* 15, 4 (October 1929). King was always interested in these aspects of medicine because of his brother’s condition and work. In 1941 Dr. Mühl was a visiting lecturer in Psychiatry and Criminology in Australia and sent King her latest work which he read with interest. Anita Mühl, *The ABC of Criminology: A Series of Thirteen Lectures Delivered at the University of Melbourne, 1939* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1941). In King’s collection at the National Library.
this work which had been privately published in Dresden in 1930. King was “immensely interested in the typewritten enclosures” which came with Mühl’s letter and book. 1054 They were excerpts from the Garrett-Sveinsson Experiment in long distance telepathy and clairvoyance. In this experiment Mrs. Garrett was invited to come to Dr. Mühl’s home at an appointed time and there under Dr. Mühl’s direction, endeavour to ‘contact’ a person not mentioned before the time of the sitting. In the preparations a letter had been sent to Dr. Thordeir Sveinsson in Iceland. The time had been carefully calculated in advance so that Dr. Sveinsson in Iceland and Mrs. Garrett in San Diego would approach the experiment at the same time. Dr. Sveinsson was requested by Dr. Mühl to go to his library and choose two books, reading a passage in each and noting the page number, the line number and the number of lines of reading matter. He was to make note of his procedure and mail the results to Dr. Mühl who would cross check with Mrs. Garrett’s responses. Mrs. Garrett correctly identified the books by the mystic, Maeterlinck, and James Jeans. It was claimed to be a double projection of the unconscious at a distance because Dr. Sveinsson was aware of the arrangement of furniture and objects in the room in San Diego. 1055 Mrs. Garrett found that it became quite easy to interpret the emotions of people at a distance and feel her way into their environment, and then bring back an objective story. 1056

Dr. Mühl had been trained in medicine and psychology and was at the time, chief of a division of special education in California. She was interested in automatic writing as a means of revealing individual personal problems that had been repressed from early life. It was a dramatic form of revelation which could serve as a guide to disturbing mental mechanisms within. Her book on the subject, according to the medium Mrs. Garrett, was “a valuable aid to this understanding of what can lurk

1054 King to Dr. Anita Mühl, 9 March 1935, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 26, Reel H-3035.
1055 Anita Mühl to King, 8 December 1934, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 26, Reel H-3035.
Enclosed record of the Garrett-Sveinsson Experiment.
below the threshold of the conscious.” Mühl never regarded automatic writing as containing mediumistic messages, telepathically received through the subconscious but considered automatic writing “simply as a subjective phenomenon” that might establish a contact with the spirit world, although she had no experience with this. That did not mean, however, that it could not be so, as Mühl remained “open-minded” to the possibility. King marked only her simple definition of automatic writing “as script which the writer produces involuntarily and in some instances without being aware of the process, although he may be (and generally is) in an alert waking state.”

It was Dr. Mühl who suggested to the publishers of The Journal of Parapsychology at Duke University that they write King. For some time, King then subscribed to this journal founded in 1937 by McDougall and Rhine in order to obtain publication space for research reports on the field of extra-sensory perception. In trying to determine whether the mind could gain information through other than sensory channels (ESP, of which Rhine distinguished three types: telepathy, clairvoyance and precognition) or could influence matter (psycho-kinesis), Rhine conducted experiments using a specially designed deck of cards and statistical procedures that had been given the stamp of approval by highly qualified mathematicians. King read with care the article on these experiments, “Dr. Rhine and the Mind’s Eye,” by Gardner Murphy, one of America’s most respected academics, marking the section in which Murphy lamented that “ours is an age which has learned to see the world one way, and according to that one way there can be no such thing as perception

1057 Ibid., 109.
1058 Mühl to King, 6 December 1934, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 26, Reel H-3035.
1059 Anita Mary Mühl, Automatic Writing, 2.
1060 Telepathy is a form of thought transference in which one mind receives information from another mind. Clairvoyance is the ability to receive information from objects in the environment - in this case cards. Precognition is the ability to foresee a future event and replaces the old word prophecy. Psycho-kinesis is the ability of the mind alone to affect the movement of a physical object - dice for example.
Although King studied the academics named by Meyer, the materials he collected were not always as scientific and technical as the work of Rhine at Duke.

King’s library contains many publications of British and American psychical societies, which do not measure up to the scientific standards of the academic researchers. It was generally British publications that King preferred though he read American materials that were sent to him by his American contacts. In 1933, King met Hereward Carrington, Director of the A.P.I., through the medium, Helen C. Lambert, one of the founding members and a colleague of Mrs. Wriedt. King visited Carrington and his wife in New York on one occasion; they exchanged letters and he received their publications. King’s library contains Carrington’s *The Story of Psychic Science* (1931), *A Primer of Psychical Research* (1932), two copies of *Loaves and Fishes* (1935), *Telepathy and Clairvoyance Explained* (1938) and a well-marked copy of *Psychic Science and Survival* (nd).\(^{1062}\) King read *Psychic Science and Survival* in tandem with Lodge’s *My Philosophy* and found both their views on survival “wholly true.”\(^{1063}\) While King recorded that Carrington’s was “a disappointing work, just a review of some of his research & conclusions, but a useful summary,” he was “increasingly delighted” with the writings of Lodge, “as expressing views in scientific form which I have held for some time past.”\(^{1064}\)

\(^{1061}\) Gardner Murphy, “Dr. Rhine and the Mind’s Eye,” *American Scholar* 7, 2 (Spring 1938): 192, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 6 File 4, Reel H-3041. King marked this section by three vertical lines in the margin. The King Papers contain other material on Rhine’s work.


\(^{1063}\) W.L.M.K. Diary, 26 June 1939.

\(^{1064}\) W.L.M.K. Diary, 4 July 1939. While King endorsed the scientific form of Lodge, he may have been reflecting on Carrington’s weaker scientific background. This is revealed in his very superficial understanding of the new physics, in particular his reference to “Heisinger’s” Principle of Uncertainty. The correct name is Heisenberg. Hereward Carrington, *Psychic Science and Survival*, 24.
Carrington’s *Psychic Science and Survival* was really a defense of psychical research which he called “the Cinderella of the Sciences,” because there was “little interest and no adequate support.” Carrington drew from the works of William James, all of which were very familiar to King, and he also quoted extensively from the classic work of F.W.H. Meyers, *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (1903), which King had received earlier from Mrs. Carrington. King marked most of the references to Meyers. For example, King seemed in accord with Meyers’s concern about the opposition of churches to psychic research when they should “array themselves solidly behind this attempt on the part of science to support their fundamental tenet.” Meyers looked upon psychic phenomena as “the preamble of all religion” for “if the validity of psychic phenomena be established, then indeed the reality of some invisible world must be accepted not as a theory, not as an act of faith, but as a proven fact.” By the end of his career Meyers expressed the strong conviction that his methods of investigation had indeed revealed “a hidden world within us and that this hidden world within us has revealed to us an invisible world without.”

Carrington’s review of recent psychic research in *Psychic Science and Survival* included his own experiments with the English medium Mrs. Eileen Garrett and Dr. Eugene Osty’s laboratory investigations of telekinesis and materialisation with Rudi Schneider. Mrs. Carrington sent King an English translation of Osty’s research findings and King read it carefully. Dr. Osty was a French physician and director of the Institut Métaphysique International in Paris. He developed an apparatus and method for photographing in darkness, using infra-red light, the phenomenon of telekinesis - that is, the displacement of an object at a distance and without contact.

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1066 Ibid., 7.
1067 Ibid., 7. The first quotation was marked by three vertical lines, the second by two.
1068 Ibid., 53. King marked this section by five vertical lines.
1069 King was also sent Bulletin One from The American Psychical Institute, “An Instrumental Test of the Independence of a ‘Spirit Control’: A Report of a Study of the Mediumship of Mrs. Eileen Garrett.”
During Rudi’s trance, “a sort of dense fog” was observed “making its way towards a table, which moved beneath the eyes of all those present as soon as this fog reached it.”\textsuperscript{1070} It was also discovered that “the vibration-rate of the invisible ‘substance’ issuing from the medium’s body was always exactly twice the breathing rate of the medium - which itself was accelerated to a phenomenally high speed.”\textsuperscript{1071} The philosophical significance of these experiments revealed, according to Osty, that “behind the use of the mind in feeling, in thinking, and in acting on matter there is another intelligent plane of being, usually not manifest, which very probably represents the fundamental reality of ourselves and forms part of a plane of life quite different from that in which we experience our ordinary intelligence.”\textsuperscript{1072}

King’s established contacts with the American psychical movement, though discrete, were not without concerns. His correspondence with Mrs. Carrington and Mrs. Lambert contains some of the most astonishingly intimate and unusual exchanges. Mrs. Carrington was “not an ‘educated’ person but [had] a keen insight into psychic phenomena and a gift which is quite remarkable of receiving and expressing confidences.”\textsuperscript{1073} Her letters reveal not only a blatant desire for some sort of relationship with King but also an inside view of how King was seen by members of the American psychical movement and why he may have sought the company of such people. Even though some of her comments seem but mere flattery, King obviously made a deep impression in the single meeting of a few hours. He was seen as “seriously yet sensibly interested” in their work.\textsuperscript{1074} Mrs. Carrington described that work as “searching for the truth - trying to find the meaning and method of Life,” for “if survival of the individual (and continuous growth toward perfection and


\textsuperscript{1071} Hereward Carrington, \textit{Psychic Science and Survival}, 39.


\textsuperscript{1073} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 8 November 1933.

\textsuperscript{1074} Marie Sweet Carrington to King, 3 November 1933, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 1 File 9, Reel H-3034.
harmony) could be a matter of proved fact rather than a belief or hope - we feel that an entirely new philosophy of living would be built on the foundation of this great knowledge.” This new “all constructive philosophy of living,” she wrote, “would rule out greed and selfishness - which would in turn rule out poverty and war and all destructive or negative activities. Imagine an entire human race - conscious and aware of their progress toward perfection and balance and perfect harmony!!!”

King was reluctant to join the A.P.I. but at Mrs. Carrington’s suggestion he joined anonymously as M. K. Venice. She sent King, The Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage, a book on “sex magic” by Dion Fortune, a member of the occult society, Alpha and Omega. Several rambling letters followed, one which quoted The Prophet by Kahlil Gilbran on Love and Marriage and suggested that King not be “fearful or inhibited” as “something unique” had come to them “in the way of nearness and understanding” and that “the intercourse of our mentalities can not but produce growth and enrichen our lives.” An appeal for “a letter of introduction” to help them obtain “the ear of John D. Jr.” forced King to turn to Mrs. Lambert who suggested that Mrs. Carrington was “driven to indiscretion by her feeling of desperation” resulting from the lack of funds since the Institute was doing so badly. Though Mrs. Lambert did contact Mrs. Carrington about the need for restraint, and Mrs. Carrington did acknowledge that King’s “training in politics” helped him to decide “in favor of caution” as opposed to recklessness, the letters continued for some time even though King had definitely pulled back in shock. Understanding that her letters had “frightened” King, she persisted, chiding his failure to reply:

1075 Ibid. Mrs. Carrington’s underlining.
1076 Marie Carrington to King, 11 November 1933, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 9, Reel H-3034.
1077 Violet Firth (Dion Fortune), The Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage (London: W. Rider, 1924). There is no copy of this in King’s collection as Mrs. Carrington requested its return in 1935 and King likely complied.
1078 Marie Carrington to King, 26 December 1933, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 9, Reel H-3034.
1079 Marie Smart Carrington to King, 29 January 1934, Mrs. Lambert to King, 24 February 1934, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 9, Reel H-3034. The reference is to John D. Rockefeller Jr.
1080 Marie Sweet Carrington to King, 15 February 1934, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 9, Reel H-3034.
Where is the liberal point of view you represent? You seem to me a conservative of conservatives!\textsuperscript{1081}

Mrs. Carrington continued to rebuke King’s determination to “curb” his interest and “cease to write in so free and spontaneous a manner” for the sake of “convention.” She explained that her marriage of “convenience” allowed “the close association necessary for the work” but left her “free from all petty restraints.” She proposed tea and talk “alone” at the Prince George Hotel where they would not be “disturbed in any way.”\textsuperscript{1082} No such rendezvous took place. Nonetheless, King remained a paid member and received the Bulletins of the A.P.I. until at least 1940.\textsuperscript{1083}

Mrs. Lambert, an entirely different sort of woman, was a wealthy New Yorker whose work on spiritual healing was combined with anti-communist activities. She sent King Cure through Suggestion (1933), which provided practical hints on the prevention of mental disorder obtained through the mediumship of Mrs. Garrett, along with bootlegged copies of anti-semitic books and leaflets on subversive movements.\textsuperscript{1084} A long letter “telling of her belief in the influences at work by the Jewish element surrounding Roosevelt [sic] and of the control these people had come to have

\textsuperscript{1081} Marie Sweet Carrington to King, 23 October 1935, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 9, Reel H-3034. Carrington’s underlining.
\textsuperscript{1082} Marie Sweet Carrington to King, 6 December 1935, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 9, Reel H-3034. Carrington’s underlining.
\textsuperscript{1083} Hereward Carrington to King, 1 January 1940, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 2 File 15, Reel H-3036.
\textsuperscript{1084} Helen Churchill Lambert, Cure through Suggestion: Practical Hints Obtained through the Mediumship of Mrs. Eileen Garrett (New York: Moss & Kamin, 1933). Inscribed: To W.L. Mackenzie King, with cordial Christmas greetings Helen C. Lambert 1933. The King collection contains two titles by Elizabeth Dilling on Roosevelt and communism which were both likely sent to him by Mrs. Lambert. Elizabeth Dilling, The Red Network: A ‘Who’s Who’ and Handbook of Radicalism for Patriots (Chicago: The Author, 1935). This defamatory work was dedicated to bring to the sound but still sleeping portion of the American public the truth about the Communist Socialist world conspiracy. Elizabeth Dilling, The Roosevelt Red Record and its Background (Chicago: The Author, 1936). A mailing label was affixed to the fly leaf: Prime Minister McKenzie King Canadian Government Toronto Canada. Toronto was scratched out and replaced by Ottawa.
over him” was marked copiously by King. King acknowledged that “there is much in Mrs. Lambert’s letter that is very striking” and he felt “the book she has given me dealing with the Termites has very much to do with it.” Colonel Sanctuary’s book, *Are Things So?: A Study in Modern Termites of the Homo Sapiens Type*, warned of the hideous danger of modern subversive groups and denounced, for example, such Jewish leaders as Albert Einstein for his association with groups that advocated communist doctrines. King’s collection also contains *The Secret World Government or “The Hidden Hand,”* signed by Mrs. Lambert. King also acknowledged the receipt of a copy of Victor Marsden’s translation of the rabidly anti-semitic, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, from the Nilus Documents and “the very enlightening data supplied by the Edmondson Economic Service, showing the effect of minority Jewish radical influence on the Roosevelt Administration.” King had “heard a good deal of this particular influence” but had “nowhere seen such concrete evidence” as afforded by the documents received from Mrs. Lambert. Steeped in conspiracy theory, the defamatory *Protocols* purportedly describe a plan to achieve global domination by the Jewish people. Mrs. Lambert associated with “an inner circle, very small, of men who [had] for years been preparing to meet this present crisis” - the supposed threat of Jewish Bolshevism - and she had been

1087 World Alliance Against Jewish Agressiveness, “Are These Things So?: A Study in Modern Termites of the Homo Sapiens Type” (New York: 1934), 11. This book was referred to by Mrs. Lambert as Colonel Sanctuary’s book.
1088 Arthur Cherap-Spiridovich, *The Secret World Government or “The Hidden Hand:” The Unrevealed in History, 100 Historical “Mysteries” Explained* (New York: Anti-Bolshevist Publishing Association, 1925). Inscribed: Note Gen Spiridovich’s is misinformed[sic] about Bismark. His mother, Alice Whitehead was not of Jewish descent. The German Jews made a great effort to spread the belief that Bismark was part Jewish. H.C.L.
1089 King to Mrs. Lambert, 27 July 1934.
investigated by American Customs for her order for *The French Revolution*, a conspiracy theory work by Nesta Webster. In her letters, Mrs. Lambert continued to deride Roosevelt, communism and Jews and at one point asked King jokingly: “Can’t you manage to drop him down some deep, dark hole while he is in Quebec?” After the election in 1935, King and O.D. Skelton, his friend from the Department of External Affairs, vacationed at the residence of Mrs. Lambert’s son on Sea Island, Georgia. During his visit King had a good talk with Jordan Lambert “concerning his mother’s work re communism and was glad to find he felt she was too immersed in it” and that she should “confine her work to scientific psychic research, & not get drawn into the political side.” Nevertheless, some of King’s responses to the popular anti-semitic propaganda are troubling. The “inside information ... of existing revolutionary organisations and their activities” interested him “immensely.”

In Canada, King wrote, “we have been similarly influenced, though to me the echo thus far has been scarcely audible. It is amazing how blind, as well as deaf, people become to the forces that are destroying the foundations of freedom in their own as well as in other lands.”

King did recognize that Mrs. Lambert’s *A General Survey of Psychical Phenomena* (1928) was “a truly remarkable book” as it was an excellent introduction to King’s new field of interest. King’s copy had been given to him by Mrs. Wriedt and he found that “it was well written and one feels the truth of all that she says. Having a scientific mind & being appreciative of scientific values, her words make an appeal to

1091 Mrs. Lambert to King, 30 July 1934 and 1 May 1935. Mrs. Lambert had all of Nesta Webster’s books smuggled into the country. She also wrote that she had read the work of John Robison, *Proofs of a Conspiracy* and Abbé Barruel’s book on the Jacobins which claimed that plots by the Freemasons and Illuminati produced the tragedy of the French Revolution. Her taste in reading included also the novel by Colonel Edward House, *Philip Dru: Administrator: A Story of Tomorrow, 1920 - 1935*, in which the title character became the sinister dictator of America. House was a top political advisor to President Wilson but his novel displayed a contempt for the democratic process and the reforms of the dictator smacked of fascism.

1092 Mrs. Lambert to King, 8 July 1936.


1094 King to Mrs. Lambert, 20 August 1935.
an intellectual mind.” Mrs. Lambert was particularly well read in European psychical research. She demonstrated her familiarity with Dr. Osty’s deep study of clairvoyance; Gustave Geley’s studies of ectoplasm; the astronomer Camille Flammarion’s work on survival; the experiments with mediums conducted by the Nobel Prize winning French scientist, Charles Richet; the vitalist theory of ‘entelechy’ formulated by the German biologist Hans Driesch; and the anti-materialist philosophy of Henri Bergson. All these thoughtful persons were challenging the materialistic hypothesis and pointing out the inadequacy of classical psychology to account for the subconscious faculties. They all believed in “a directing intelligence throughout nature, governing physical changes of evolution, impelling toward higher forms,” a viewpoint that was “in no way contradictory to the findings of modern science.”

Mrs. Lambert impressed upon her readers “the importance of accurate detail in keeping records” of psychical experiences. That King marked these sections and that his own seance records were meticulous, suggest that he took Mrs. Lambert’s message to heart. Mrs. Lambert also defended “the frequent triviality of incidents recorded,” noting that “often, among these much ridiculed trifles, we are likely to stumble upon something of evidential value.” She also warned her readers that “too great a knowledge of the supernormal is very dangerous if it be not accompanied by a corresponding spiritual development.”

She believed “that an altruistic motive, the desire to be helpful to the discarnate as well as to those on our own plane, and a desire to add to the sum of knowledge which may be useful, are the only safeguards in prolonged and extensive contact with these forces of which

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1095 W.L.M.K. Diary, 9 April 1932.
King’s diary records that at the same time he received from Mrs. Wriedt Health by H.H. Sauders; Life Beyond the Veil by Vale Owen; and two books communicated by W. T. Stead, Communication with the next World and The Blue Island. W.L.M.K. Diary, 17 March 1932.

1097 Ibid., 52.
1098 Ibid., 52 - 53. Marked by two vertical lines.
1099 Ibid., 78. Marked by two vertical lines.
we know so little.\textsuperscript{1100}

When King was again reading Mrs. Lambert’s, \textit{A General Survey of Psychical Phenomena}, in 1933, he commented in his diary that he was “indeed fortunate in having come into touch with her, a woman who is highly intellectual, and spiritually minded as well, who understands the problem of spiritualism in its relation to God.”\textsuperscript{1101} Mrs. Lambert made many reading suggestions on psychical research which King followed. His library contains, for example, Gustave Geley’s \textit{Clairvoyance and Materialisation}, which Mrs. Lambert considered next to Meyers’ \textit{Human Personality} about “the most valuable” of the books she knew.\textsuperscript{1102} It seems that King was very interested in experiments with ectoplasms which could only be seen in photographs.

Mrs. Lambert sent a copy of \textit{The Unobstructed Universe} (1940) by Stewart Edward White which King thought marked “a real advance in the knowledge of psychic phenomena.”\textsuperscript{1103} It was based on the communications received from his wife, Betty, who had died in 1939 and affirms “the intellectual reasonableness of the continuity of life.”\textsuperscript{1104} The purpose of Betty’s “divulgence” of the unobstructed universe was to offer a “new pattern” for individual and social living based on the restoration of faith in not “the thereness” but “the hereness of immortality.”\textsuperscript{1105} The world’s acceptance of immortality would bring back stability and comfort to mankind.” Modern society, she warned, had been drifting towards materialism; “we are emphasizing rights rather than obligations; those obligations that a real faith in immortality must impose.”\textsuperscript{1106} The new age philosophy divulged by Betty, while outlining the great differences between the obstructed and the unobstructed

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1100} Ibid., 78. Marked by three vertical lines.
\item \textsuperscript{1101} W.L.M.K. Diary, 28 May 1933.
\item \textsuperscript{1102} Gustave Geley, \textit{Clairvoyance and Materialisation: a Record of Experiments} (London: T. F. Unwin, 1927).
\item \textsuperscript{1103} King to Mrs. Lambert, 30 July 1934, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 1 File 19, Reel H-3034.
\item \textsuperscript{1104} King to Mrs. Lambert, 1 March 1941, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 1 File 19, Reel H-3034.
\item \textsuperscript{1105} Stewart Edward White, \textit{The Unobstructed Universe} (New York: Dutton, 1940), 17. Marked throughout by King.
\item \textsuperscript{1106} Ibid., 37. Marked by two vertical lines.
\item \textsuperscript{1106} Ibid., 35. Underlinings are White’s italics.
\end{itemize}
universe, nevertheless attempted “to instill into earth consciousness the oneness of the whole. ... There is only one universe. One universe, of which there is an unobstructed as well as an obstructed phase. And as a corollary: unknowing, we already, to some extent, inhabit the unobstructed part.” According to Betty, “the obstructed universe - our physical universe - operates in trilogies.” Consciousness as we know it in the obstructed universe operates through the trilogy of Time, Space and Motion. In the unobstructed universe, consciousness as Betty knows it “operates through the trilogia which consists of the essences of Time, Space and Motion; these essences are Receptivity, Conductivity and Frequency, respectively.”

After a visit to Ottawa in 1946 by Mr. and Mrs. Eisenhower, King “felt a strong urge to do a little more reading on psychical matters.” He began reading The Betty Book (1945), the latest work by Stewart Edward White, which the author called “a practical primer of spiritual hygiene.” This how-to manual described the development of Betty as a trance medium. She started with experiments with the ouija board and quickly moved to automatic writing. At first “the pencil moved very slowly, and it wrote curiously formed script, without capitals or punctuation, or even spacings, like one continuous word.” After a lot of practise, the automatic writing improved in facility and coherence. The next step brought Betty in touch “through the superconsciousness, with realities which she absorbed direct, and with ideas conveyed sometimes in words heard with the ‘inner ear’, sometimes by mental impression. These things she transferred down to her habitual consciousness.” In the next stage Betty’s voice altered in “quality and timbre” and “some third personality purported to be speaking directly through her.” Betty finally achieved

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1107 Ibid., 66, 98.
1108 Ibid., 103.
1109 W.L.M.K. Diary, 15 January 1946.
1110 Stewart Edward White, The Betty Book: Excursions into the World of Other-Consciousness (London: Robert Hale, 1945), 9. All chapters and appendices are copiously marked by King.
1111 Ibid., 14.
1112 Ibid., 17.
“considerable fluency” in direct communication, “a trained intelligent co-operation.”\textsuperscript{1113} She seemed to be able to “tap some wide source of wisdom, some reservoir, some ‘universal mind’; or in this state of divided consciousness she [fell] into harmony with the stored or accumulated experiences of humankind.”\textsuperscript{1114}

The communications received by Betty from the forces which White called ‘the Invisibles’ provided a working philosophy of life. They emphasized that “progress is in your own hands” and that “the thing we are to strive for is a recognition of the spiritual forces about us; a contact with them; and through that contact the establishment of a more balanced proportion between the material and the spiritual.”\textsuperscript{1115} The goal is “access to the great ocean of spiritual influence” and this “spiritual contact and permeation” can be achieved by “voluntarily [throwing] open your spirit to wider influences than those of yourself.” The invisible intelligences recommended learning to “let go absolutely” as James advocated in “The Gospel of Relaxation.” According to them, “our job is to thrust out the busy thoughts of the world we live in, to relax physically, and to strive with a real desire for that wide-hearted receptivity of which we have had a glimpse.”\textsuperscript{1116}

In one sitting King turned to the chapter entitled, “Do it Now,” which insisted on the need of conscious spiritual contact on earth and he recorded in his diary that the chapter “is entirely in accord with my own belief that our future state is made infinitely easier or more difficult according to our attitude in this life.”\textsuperscript{1117} King copied into his diary several lines of text:

The thought is in these words: “We are striving to make you aware in your present life of what you really desire. The free choice is yours. Only choose.” All my strength goes into this plea tonight to arouse you from your world lethargy. Fix firmly

\textsuperscript{1113} Ibid., 18 - 19.
\textsuperscript{1114} Ibid., 21 - 22.
\textsuperscript{1115} Ibid., 26 - 28. Marked by two vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{1116} Ibid., 30 - 33. One quote marked by three vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{1117} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 15 January 1946.
in your mind the things to cling to in times of danger threatening your purpose. The great struggle is not only to conquer our opposing forces but to reclaim and form them into fighters for the truth.\textsuperscript{1118}

In the same sitting, King also read the next chapter, “The Spiritual Body,” and followed the note at the end to Appendix I for a record of experiments demonstrating the actuality of the spiritual body. Appendix I, “The Technique of Communication,” is marked extensively, many sections by two vertical lines. In the experiments, Betty is ‘the station’ and is observed and recorded in action by White who evolved a tentative theory which in many ways reflected the older spiritualism:

\textit{The Invisibles have no direct power to manipulate our physical substance, though at times they may appear to do so. Their ability to levitate tables, for instance; or to move a pencil in automatic writing; or to jerk our limbs about; or to appear to speak by direct control of another all depend on their ability to impress an idea on a portion of the station’s mind. That portion of the station’s mind, in turn, so manipulates the necessary physical mechanism as to approximate the result desired.} ...

\textit{this is accomplished by a projection of what they have named ectoplasm, a physical emanation from the body of the station, capable of considerable extension and rigidity, perhaps capable of carrying force as a wire conducts electricity. By means of this ectoplasm the manifestations occur.} ...

\textit{The portion of the station’s mind with which we are dealing we will have to call the subconscious. That has become a sort of waste-basket word into which we dump everything we do not understand, but it will have to do. It is not a distinctly separate mind from the conscious intellect. They are both one mind. It is the submerged portion, the part below the threshold. In some the threshold is higher or lower than in others; and likewise the threshold can be raised or lowered by effort and development.} ...

\textit{After the impression is received it must be translated.}

\textsuperscript{1118} W.L.M.K. Diary, 15 January 1946. Quotation marks are as in the diary. The lines are from three sections on pages 73 and 72 of \textit{The Betty Book} which are marked by King, one by three vertical lines.
... This matter of translation may be conceived to be one of basic difficulty. A great deal of distortion also comes by what we call ‘colouring’ - the arbitrary though unintentional intervention of the station’s own thinking mind.\textsuperscript{1119}

Betty’s teachings differ from earlier spiritualism in that spiritual contact is depersonalized and dechristianized; the invisible intelligences are not deceased friends and relatives. The focus becomes tapping into a universal mind in order to develop a more healthy spiritual body. The pedagogy of self-improvement is linked to some aspects of conventional spiritualism to produce a counter-cultural lifestyle discourse on spirituality which attempted to rescue the self. King finds some of the text “very difficult to understand” though he is “anxious to complete the book.” He was “continuing reading it only because of getting certain impressions.”\textsuperscript{1120} The last chapters are more about a more secularized philosophy based on pseudo-science, idealism and self-help; references to Christianity are just not there. Conventional prayer becomes “constructive prayer” or “divine companionship” which are “an assembling and offering up of your best self for union with the Overstrength.” The first step of constructive prayer is “spiritual contact and permeation, the reaching for the heights.” The second step is “the conscious assembling of your highest self” and “under the inspiration of prayer each one of us recognizes the wholeness necessary to spiritual harmony.”\textsuperscript{1121} The closing lines articulate ‘the great formula” for a spiritual life:

\begin{quote}
Do not forget how you do it: through strength of desire to serve, through vigorous encircling action, through overflowing faith, through vision of reality, through union with spiritual law and purpose, through understanding of temptation and resistance, through magnifying to each his own soul. Through all these you find your way to the comprehension of the divine life.\textsuperscript{1122}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{1120} W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 12, 15, 24 February 1946.
\textsuperscript{1121} Stewart Edward White, \textit{The Betty Book}, 101 - 102.
\textsuperscript{1122} Ibid., 160.

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In his last letter to Mrs. Lambert, King wrote that he continued “to be interested as ever in studying psychical phenomena.”\textsuperscript{1123} Psychical research represented for King the opportunity to find a philosophy of life that was seemingly both scientifically sound and responsive to questions about the nature of man and his relations to the universe.

Another of the many reading suggestions that Mrs. Lambert had made to King was in response to King’s comments on \textit{The Road to Immortality} by Geraldine Cummins, with its foreword by Sir Oliver Lodge. It had “appealed” to King “as much as anything” he had read so far and therefore Mrs. Lambert thought he might enjoy another of Cummins’ scripts, \textit{Paul in Athens}.\textsuperscript{1124} The medium, Miss Cummins and her associate, E. B. Gibbes, were much more certain about the nature of automatic writing than Dr. Anita Mühl who had written about the phenomenon in 1930. In the introduction to \textit{The Road to Immortality}, Gibbes asserted that “automatic writing has been proved to be a genuine phenomenon in which the hand of the scribe writes matter of which he or she at times may have no conscious knowledge.”\textsuperscript{1125} In \textit{The Road to Immortality}, the famous psychical researcher, the late F. W. H. Meyers, was purported to have communicated information about the stages of a future life, through Geraldine Cummins to Oliver Lodge, proving the survival of human personality. Gibbes described the process: Miss Cummins sits at a table, covers her eyes with her left hand to intensify her concentration on stillness and receptivity. After she falls into a light trance or dream state, her right hand resting on a block of foolscape begins to write rapidly. Messages are conveyed to Cummins from her guide or ‘control’. Cummins described herself as “a mere listener,” who lent her aid to the stranger who was speaking. She felt as if her brain was being used “just as if an endless telegram was being tapped out on it.”\textsuperscript{1126}

\textsuperscript{1123}King to Mrs. Lambert, 12 January 1949, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 1 File 19, Reel H-3034.
\textsuperscript{1124}King to Mrs. Lambert, 27 July 1934.
\textsuperscript{1125}E. B. Gibbes, “Introduction,” \textit{The Road to Immortality: Being a Description of the Afterlife Purporting to be Communicated by the Late F. W. H. Meyers through Geraldine Cummins}, with a foreword by Sir Oliver Lodge (London: I. Nicholson and Watson, 1933), 20.
\textsuperscript{1126}Ibid., 21

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King's library contains a number of other scripts by Cummins, the result of automatic writing communicated through various messengers. In 1923, Cummins received the first few lines of the manuscript that was to be subsequently known as *The Scripts of Cleophas*; they were edited by a number of recognised theologians who cautiously endorsed the authenticity of the so-called parchments. The communicating spirit was 'Messenger' who was in touch with Cleophas, a Christian convert of the first century. Although Miss Cummins never studied theology or made any claims to special knowledge of the Apostolic period, the parchments furnish an account of the early church which supplement the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul. The experiences of St. Paul after his conversion, for example, are set forth with a fullness unknown to the New Testament. King read much of the parchments aloud with Joan and he noted in his diary that they were "most enlightening - they bring a sense of nearness to spiritual reality." He found the book's "inspired writing to be true." Interestingly, *The Scripts* reflect the admixture of Christianity and elements of paganism and acknowledge the magical powers possessed and practised by the Apostles. In the chapter "The Choice of Matthias," for example, a miracle was described when the eleven disciples were gathered together for the purpose of choosing Judas Iscariot's replacement:

The twelve had learned from the master certain practices

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1127 King's library also contains the following works of automatic writing produced by Geraldine Dorothy Cummins: *Beyond Human Personality: Being a Detailed Description of the Future Life Purporting to be Communicated by the Late F.W.H. Meyers*, containing an account of the gradual development of human personality into cosmic personality (London: I. Nicholson and Watson, 1935); *The Great Days of Ephesus* (London: Rider, 1933); *Paul in Athens* (London: Rider, 1931); *The Scripts of Cleophas* (London: Rider, 1928); *Travellers in Eternity* (London: Psychic Press, 1948); *The Resurrection of Christ: an Explanation of this Mystery through Modern Psychic Evidence* (London: L.S.A. Publications, 1947); *The Manhood of Jesus: His Early Years, His Trial and Crucifixion* (London: A. Dakers, 1949); *They Survive: Evidence of Life Beyond the Grave from Scripts of Geraldine Cummins*, compiled by E.B. Gibbes (London: Rider, nd.). There are many markings by King in the preface of this last text which described the process of automatic writing. The book was also inscribed: With best wishes from Geraldine Cummins and E.B. Gibbes November 22/47.


1130 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 5 July 1934.
concerning the invocation of knowledge. He bound them to give these secrets to no man, so they have perished. I can but tell you that they gathered together, and in the midst of them was a table; the Brethren sat about it in silence, and for a space their hands were joined, and they prayed with their whole being for the light. After the loosing of the hands they made certain signs. Of these I may not speak but to say that they were for the freeing of the body of light from each of the Eleven. When all these spiritual bodies were set free they blended with one another, making what would seem to mortal eye a rounded pillar that was pure white and which passed into a mist above the heads of the watchers.

... When a full hour had passed, then did these bodies of the Eleven stir once more; and they trembled and quaked, as when the soul goes out of the body at death. This was the coming back of the Body of Light each to its vessel of clay. And, when the shaking of their bodies was ended, each of the Brethren drew breath within him heavily; and thus were all the binding threads made fast once more.\textsuperscript{1131}

Jenny Hazelgrove has interpreted this same miracle marked by King as being “in complete accord with seance technique and with Spiritualist expectations of the behaviour of psychic phenomena.”\textsuperscript{1132} The participants were seated around a table, they linked hands to form what Spiritualists called the psychic circle and they boosted the power by prayer. When the psychic energy generated by the circle began to take effect, the etheric bodies rose above their physical bodies and combined to produce a denser kind of etheric substance visible to all.

King was not only fascinated by the religious scripts of Miss Cummins but read many other popular works produced by automatic writing. When these writings conveyed some message which could afterwards be traced to a deceased person, and were of a nature entirely unexpected and foreign to the thoughts of the

\textsuperscript{1131} Geraldine Dorothy Cummins, \textit{The Scripts of Cleophas}, 15 - 16.
\textsuperscript{1132} Jenny Hazelgrove, \textit{Spiritualism and British Society between the Wars}, 57.
automatist, spiritualists interpreted them to be of great evidential value in establishing the existence of a spirit entity, and a discarnate mind. In the King Papers and in King’s library there are many other samples of automatic writing and King himself tried the ouija board, in which the fingers resting on the ‘traveller’, a heart-shaped piece of wood, are pushed by the communicating spirit from letter to letter and the words are spelt and recorded by the investigator.

In Canada, Dr. Glen T. Hamilton (1873 - 1935) was also observing the phenomena of automatic writing in his work with the medium, Mrs. Elizabeth Poole. During a trance, the hand of this almost illiterate woman “would be activated by some unknown power and write in a blind sort of fashion.”1133 Her writings were apparently dictated by Robert Louis Stevenson, David Livingston and W.T. Stead. In Anatomy of a Seance, Stan McMullin describes Hamilton and his group as “composed of well-educated, socially prominent and committed researchers.”1134 Dr. Hamilton served his community through his Presbyterian Church and his medical work and he also served as a member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly from 1915 to 1920 and was President of the Manitoba Medical Association from 1921 to 1922. One of his group, Dr. Bruce Chown, was medical director of the Children’s Hospital in Winnipeg and travelled to Boston to meet Dr. Crandon, who was professor of surgery at the Harvard Medical School. They discussed a joint venture in cross-referencing seances in Boston, Winnipeg and London.1135 Dr. Crandon’s wife was the celebrated medium, Margery, whose reputation was called into question by a committee of Scientific American which was investigating her in connection with their magazine’s contest for the first legitimate ‘psychic photograph’.1136 Despite the controversy, the Hamilton group maintained close ties with Crandon and experimented with his direct voice mechanism in an attempt to

1134 Stan McMullin, Anatomy of a Seance, 212.
1135 Ibid., 190.
establish the voice as being entirely independent of the medium’s larynx.  

In 1929, the Hamilton group joined Dr. Gustave Geley and studied ectoplasm, or as Hamilton called it, teleplasm. They photographed the ectoplasm streaming out of the body of mediums by using a red light that Geley had discovered did not affect the material. Their investigative methods involved complete co-operation with the trance personalities. Singing during the seances was regularly practiced because it was requested by the control, ‘Walter’. He also requested that hands be held in chain formation, not only as a contrafraudulent measure, but because it also assisted in the production of teleplasm. The alleged Walter also requested a bell box and established a signal which would determine when the photographs were to be taken. The results were startling - face-bearing teleplasm.

Dr. David A. Stewart, medical superintendent of the Manitoba Sanatorium, suggested to King that he meet with Dr. Hamilton and take a look at “some of his strange photographs.” King received a letter from Mrs. Hamilton when he was in Banff in 1933, inviting him to lunch when he passed through Winnipeg. King felt this invitation to be “the reward of all my journey, to see the photographs of the Doctor’s ‘materializations’ - with the possibility even of seeing something which may reveal one of the dearly loved ones, mother or Max or father or Bell, - Whatever comes it will be one of the really great experiences of life & will be another milestone mark in psychic research.” King did meet informally with Hamilton for a few hours. Both appreciated the visit and King was seen as having “a deep and sympathetic and understanding interest” in Hamilton’s work. They began an exchange of reading materials. King sent Dr. Hamilton a copy of his brother’s book, Nerves and Personal Power. King read “with exceptional interest” Hamilton’s two articles published in

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1137 Glen T. Hamilton, Intention and Survival (Toronto: Macmillan, 1942), 85. There is a photograph of the direct voice mechanism in use. In King’s collection at Laurier House.
1138 Ibid., Chapters “The ‘W.E.G.’ and ‘Raymond’ Teleplasms” and “The ‘Doyle’ Face Minatures.”
1139 David A. Stewart to King, 25 July 1933, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 2 File 4, Reel H-3035.
1140 W.L.M.K. Diary, 13 August 1933.
1141 Mrs. G. Hamilton to King, 25 September 1933, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 4 File 21, Reel H-3039.
*Light* dealing with teleplasmic phenomena in which the miniature faces resembling the great Baptist preacher C. H. Spurgeon, a contemporary of Gladstone, were embedded within the materialising substance falling from the medium’s eye in one case and issuing from her mouth in another.\(^{1142}\) King’s Papers contain some of these very unusual photographs of ectoplasm. One in particular shows a countenance of W. E. Gladstone in the white substance emanating from the medium’s nose.\(^{1143}\) (See Appendix I).

King also enjoyed Dr. Rennie Swan’s presidential address, “Immortality - An Adventure in Faith,” delivered at Manitoba Medical College that publicly recognized Hamilton’s work as a student and investigator of psychical research.\(^{1144}\) This address, sent to King by Hamilton, is remarkable for its consonance with the philosophy of Oliver Lodge. Its advocacy of the reconciliation of religion and science and its hostility towards materialist science demonstrates clearly that those ideas, also espoused by King, were by no means ‘on the fringe’ but were embraced by many in the medical profession at that time. Dr. Swan reiterated the earlier argument put forward by Harry Emerson Fosdick in *The Assurance of Immortality* (1917). Dr. Swan believed that science had not disproved immortality and that “the belief that human personality survives the dissolution of the body is neither confirmed nor discredited by Science.”\(^{1145}\) The theme of mind/body dualism was still alive and Dr. Swan expressed his view by describing man as “a sort of duplex being:"

> In a word, man is not simply made up of flesh. ... The real ‘I’ is something within, invisible, intangible, imponderable, which directs, controls, and governs this physical frame. That thinking,


\(^{1143}\) In *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 4 File 23, Reel H-3039.


\(^{1145}\) Ibid., 6. Fosdick wrote in *The Assurance of Immortality*, 6, that “while immortality may not be proved, it certainly has not been disproved” and King marked this section by two vertical lines.
feeling, willing something is the real ‘I’. ... Some scientists have tried to make out that this something within is merely a brain function, in an attempt to explain man in terms of matter alone. Without much doubt or controversy, the brain is the instrument of thought. ... But it does not follow that these brain movements are the source and cause of thought. ... Behind the thinking is the thinker. ... The real relationship between ‘I’ and my brain must be something like that between an organist and his organ. The organist uses the organ to express what a Mozart or a Mendelssohn has conceived for him. The organ does the organist’s bidding and gives utterance to what he desires.  

Man as a duplex being thus expressed Dr. Swan’s quarrel with materialistic Science which cut man in half and left out personality, which Fosdick called “the regal part of Man.” In a letter to Homer Watson, King quoted extensively from this address, including the section on man as a duplex being. He found that “what it expresses in another way parallels so exactly your own thought.” King actually marked only one section of the address - that which summed up the ethical argument for Immortality:

*Man’s life here is incomplete, and the more lofty his aims, the more lofty his labors, the more incomplete it appears. The man who lives for fame, wealth or power may be satisfied with this life, but he who lives for the ideals of Truth, Beauty and Goodness lives not for time but for eternity, for his ideals cannot be realized, and his life fulfilled this side of the grave.*

Stan McMullin has attempted to explain why Dr. Glen Hamilton escaped serious critical attention from his community. In the first place, Hamilton presented mostly to medical groups. He addressed the Manitoba Medical Association, the Canadian Medical Association and the British Medical Association when it met in Winnipeg in 1930. Also, his photographic evidence produced under the watchful eyes of other

\[1146\] Ibid., 6 - 7.
\[1147\] Ibid., 10.
\[1148\] King to Homer Watson, 16 November 1933, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 2 File 6, Reel H-3037.

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doctors and lawyers was “persuasive” and there was the belief that the camera didn’t lie. McMullin also suggested that the education of physicians was a factor. Those trained before 1920 were more likely to be “meta-physicians than scientific researchers.”

That these medical men might accept Hamilton’s research and Dr. Swan’s references to spiritualists such as William F. Barrett, Oliver Lodge and Lord Balfour, a man who was not only a great statesman but a man with a fully acute philosophic mind, is therefore not surprising.

In addition to the formal research based seances, Hamilton conducted his own ‘home circle’. His son Arthur who died at three years often came through. After Hamilton’s death in 1935, the family circles continued and Mrs. Hamilton reported to King that Dr Hamilton had come through and claimed to have met “over there” - Doyle, Crooks, Stead, Stevenson and others, one of whom was King’s brother, Max. Mrs. Hamilton sent King an excerpt from this particular sitting.

Like many in the general public, King viewed the medical profession with a certain awe. Doctors were his cultural heroes as they combined a faith in science with the values of religion. Part of King’s admiration for medical men was rooted in their dedication to service. He was inspired by the commitment to science and service to humanity displayed by Louis Pasteur, Sir William Osler, Sir Wilfrid Grenfell and certainly his brother.

King’s relationship with Dr. J.E. Hett (1870-1956) also reflected this idealistic view of medicine, though Dr. Hett did not enjoy the acceptance and support of many of his colleagues. It was the friendship of Mrs. Wriedt that brought the two men together in 1933. At that time, Dr. Hett pledged his

1150 Stan McMullin, Anatomy of a Seance, 204 - 205.
complete discretion:

Our friendship has been bound together by its spiritual bands of Truth and Love which will be secretly guarded for all time to come - We both have a great work to do in different lines but all for the benefit of Canada and Humanity.\footnote{1153}{Dr. J.E. Hett to King, 5 July 1933, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3034.}

Dr. Hett recognized “how lonesome” King felt and how he “dare not speak” to anyone about a “psychic problem” that turned up in his mind. He understood the need for precaution and warned King not to take chances and not to buy books on spiritualism directly and also to “keep them hidden.”\footnote{1154}{Ibid.} He offered to purchase any books King might desire and forward them to him.\footnote{1155}{Hett did send King two unsolicited books on prophecy. Wing Anderson, \textit{Seven Years that Change the World}, 1941 - 1948 (Los Angeles: Kosmon Press, 1940). Wing Anderson, \textit{Prophetic Years}, 1947 - 1953 (Los Angeles: Kosmon Press, 1946).} Dr. Hett had been the last mayor of Berlin and was quite politically astute. He understood both the Catholic church’s view of spiritualism as “the work of the devil and evil spirits” and King’s need for “their friendship and co-operation.”\footnote{1156}{Dr. J.E. Hett to King, 5 July 1933, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3034.}

Along with many other doctors in Canada, Dr. Hett joined in the search for a cure for cancer by challenging “the orthodox methods of Surgery, X-Rays & Radium” which looked upon cancer as a “local disease” rather than a “constitutional” one.\footnote{1157}{Shelley McKellar, \textit{Surgical Limits: The Life of Gordon Murray} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 107.} These conventional treatments endorsed by the medical profession cured very few people.\footnote{1158}{Viral infection has been proved the cause of a few cancers and remains an area for cancer research today.} Along with Frederick Banting, Dr. Hett subscribed to the viral theory of the causation of cancer which led him to search for a vaccine or serum.\footnote{1159}{Dr. J.E. Hett to King, 5 March 1947, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3034.} In the 1930s, both he and Dr. Hendry Connell of Kingston, each produced a ‘questionable’ anticancer serum but it was Dr. Hett who was viewed by the profession as more of a
‘quack’. In her fascinating study of the clash of cancer cures, *Negotiating Disease: Power and Cancer Care*, Barbara Clow has suggested that Dr. Hendry Connell’s favourable connections within the medical community served to curtail criticism of his work despite the deaths in the United States attributed to his Ensol therapy. On the other hand, in 1937, Dr. Hett was investigated and struck off the register of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario because he would not divulge the formula of his cancer serum. Hett’s intransigence raised doubts about his motives as well as the merits of his therapy. He enclosed numerous supportive press clippings in his long letters to King and claimed that Mrs. Wriedt’s control ‘Dr. Sharpe’ and all his guides had warned him repeatedly not to hand over his secret formula. When Dr. Hett requested a meeting with King to talk over the situation, King diplomatically advised “a talk together over the telephone” as more effective:

You will appreciate the reasons which make it desirable that I should not be drawn in any way into the controversy between yourself and the Medical Council.

I shall, of course, be only too ready and happy to lend what good offices I may be able to, but, for more reasons than one, I shall have to be very careful to see that no possibility of misunderstanding could arise in any quarter with respect to any communication we may have together. This, I know, you will be the first to understand.

When Dr. Hett announced his intention to petition the provincial legislature for reinstatement, he was criticized by Premier Mitchell Hepburn, whose government was funding Connell’s research despite mounting evidence against Ensol. In response to Dr. Hett’s appeal to King to use his influence with Premier Hepburn in the matter of the on-going case, King carefully replied:

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1161 Dr. J.E. Hett to King, 8 July 1937, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3034.
The more I think the whole matter over the less I feel equal to advising you as to the course you should take. Unfortunately, my relations with Mr. Hepburn are not such as would make any reference to my name helpful to your cause in negotiations with him. If, as I gather from your letter, you have in mind seeking redress through the Ontario Government, it would be preferable in every way for you to do so through the members whose names are mentioned in your letter, or others, but carefully avoid any mention of my name one way or the other. 1163

The saga of Dr. Hett’s troubles with the medical authorities continued as did his correspondence with King. In 1942 he was arrested for supplying two cancer patients with some morphine but was found not guilty by a court. However, in the end Dr. Hett managed to outsmart the Cancer Commission in Ontario and in 1947 he applied to the federal Department of Health and Welfare for a charter for a cancer foundation. He wrote King to explain his application and declared that he did not want to make money out of the foundation but just wanted to carry on his work “for a suffering humanity.” He would not carry on “under the men connected with the National Cancer Institute.” 1164 He thanked King for speaking to the minister, Paul Martin, but there were really no legal grounds to refuse the application especially after Hett’s lawyer pointed out that Hendry Connell had been granted a charter more than ten years ago. Hett named his new clinic in Windsor, The Hett Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation. 1165 King was pleased that at last matters had been worked out:

It has been, as you say, a long uphill struggle. I sincerely hope

1163 Dr. J.E. Hett to King, 4 August 1937, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3034.  
1164 Dr. J.E. Hett to King, 3 March 1947, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3034. This letter explaining his application to the foundation was carefully marked by King and there was an arrow in the margin in the cited section.  
1165 After his death in 1956, Hett’s niece took over the management of the Windsor clinic and continued to dispense Hett’s serum until 1968 when the clinic was closed down and a guard was posted to ensure that she did not try to resume her work with cancer patients.
that, like Pasteur, you may be able, as a result of your persistent endeavour and scientific knowledge, to render a great service in the field of medicine which has baffled the profession over so long a period of time.\textsuperscript{1166}

That King appeared to support Dr. Hett’s challenge to the official medical establishment is most interesting. Was King influenced by public opinion which sided with Hett? Did King’s spiritualism foster an open-minded attitude towards alternative medicine or was King merely ‘taken in’ by Hett as were many of his patients? There is no doubt that King continued his letters to Dr. Hett because he received many communications from Mrs. Wriedt through him. Dr. Hett visited Mrs. Wriedt every Sunday until her death in 1942. Later he made a pilgrimage to the Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp in Indiana “where they have only first class mediums ... no less than thirty trumpet mediums .. materializations .. and splendid speakers.”\textsuperscript{1167} Chesterfield was also associated with alternative medicine.\textsuperscript{1168}

King’s strongest support network was in England where his circle of like-minded friends looked after his needs on every visit. They were educated people of means who were active in the world. They corresponded on a regular basis and provided King with most of his materials on spiritualism. His circle of friends included the Duchess of Hamilton, an ardent anti-vivisectionist and President of the Animal Defence Society, a forerunner of the modern animal rights movement. She introduced him to the medium, Mrs. Gladys Leonard, at a gathering which was held at her country home at Ferne in Dorset during King’s 1937 Coronation visit. Mr. and Mrs. Patteson accompanied King on this visit and met Sir Oliver Lodge when he dropped in for tea. Present also at this gathering were several ladies from the L.S.A., including their President, Miss Lind-af-Hageby, another member of the Animal Defence Society, who had also attended with the Duchess of Hamilton, the Disarmament Conference in 1932 in Geneva, where both had met King. On this

\textsuperscript{1166} King to Dr. Hett, 22 July 1947, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3034. 
\textsuperscript{1167} Dr. J.E. Hett to King, 31 August 1947, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3034. 
\textsuperscript{1168} Today Camp Chesterfield is the home to the Indiana Association of Spiritualists and a centre of healing and prayer.
same trip, King and the Pattesons also visited his old friend, Lady Aberdeen, in Scotland. She was then the President of the International Council of Women and was the first to interest King in psychical research.\footnote{Geraldine Dorothy Cummins, \textit{Mind in Life and Death} (London: Aquarian Press, 1956), 111. King told Miss Cummins on their first meeting in 1947 that Lady Aberdeen was the first to interest him in psychical research.} The Coronation visit was also when King acquired from Partridge & Sons in London, the crystal ball that now stands on his mother’s piano in his library at Laurier House.

The Duchess of Hamilton was a very active speaker and defender of causes.\footnote{King had several of her pamphlets. One was based on an Address given in Trinity Church, Glasgow, 13 May 1934. Duchess of Hamilton, “Christian Ethics and the Animal,” in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 6 File 6, Reel H-3031.} Her address delivered at the Spiritualist Community Service in London in 1937 was published in \textit{Light: A Journal of Spiritualism, Psychical, Occult and Mystical Research}.\footnote{Duchess of Hamilton, “The Letter Killet but the Spirit Giveth Life,” \textit{Light: A Journal of Spiritualism, Psychical, Occult and Mystical Research} 62, 2945 (17 June 1937): 369 - 371, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 6 File 3, Reel H-3041. Hereafter this weekly journal is referred to only as \textit{Light} even though the subtitle changes.} Many of her ideas on the interdependence of Science, Religion and Spiritualism were shared by King’s circle of friends. According to the Duchess:

\begin{quote}
Spiritualism, I think we would all agree, denotes primarily that we are aware that we are spirits here and now, that our deeper selves are rooted in a spiritual universe, and that we act through our material bodies in matter, which can be and is moulded by spirit into divers forms and shapes. In other words -- that spirit is supreme in the Universe and that Spiritualism is the exact opposite of Materialism, which plumbed the depths of degradation in the last century, when scientists held that matter evolved itself and that brain secreted thought.\footnote{Ibid., 369.}
\end{quote}

Echoing William James, the Duchess spoke of all religions having been “founded upon mystic experiences and psychic phenomena.” She found it “extraordinary” that Religion should “despise that from which she has sprung.” In accord with King’s circle, she expressed that “all I have learnt through Spiritualism has but strengthened

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{cummins} Geraldine Dorothy Cummins, \textit{Mind in Life and Death} (London: Aquarian Press, 1956), 111. King told Miss Cummins on their first meeting in 1947 that Lady Aberdeen was the first to interest him in psychical research.
\bibitem{king} King had several of her pamphlets. One was based on an Address given in Trinity Church, Glasgow, 13 May 1934. Duchess of Hamilton, “Christian Ethics and the Animal,” in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 6 File 6, Reel H-3031.
\end{thebibliography}
my belief in Christ by giving one an understanding belief.”1173 The contribution of Spiritualism was “no doubt, the knowledge - instead of a hope - that our beloved ones who have passed on are as near as ever and that they can still help us, if we do but know how to open the communicating door.”1174

Miss Lind-af-Hageby also lectured on Spiritualism in terms that would have been agreeable to King. The principle purpose and object of Spiritualism, she said, was “to destroy Materialism, which has made men blind, to shed new light on religion, to explain the origin and nature of voices, visions and ‘miracles’, to show that religion and science, rightly understood and practised, are not hostile to one another.”1175 She railed against the modern materialism of H.G. Wells, who disseminated “mental poison,” and the best biographies that were “debunking” and “taking down” the great Victorians. Her anti-modernism extended to “the strange evolution in art,” the great interest “in the odd, the revolting, the misshapen” and “the indiscriminate approval of anything appearing in the guise of science.” The challenge of Spiritualism was “a challenge to thought, to the thought that creates and shapes the character of mankind and the moral feeling of the race.” Spiritualism “teaches the importance of suggestion, the power of the will for good, the ministry possible to each individual in making his life in the physical world a contribution to the advancement of the planet.” Her Spiritualism was a form of idealism that “urges you to live fully, to work and serve” and “above all, it teaches that brotherhood, compassion and cooperation are the things to strive for in national and international life.”1176

When King was in England, it was Miss Mercy Phillimore, Secretary of the L.S.A. at Queensberry Place, who often arranged his sittings and went out of her way to

1173 Ibid., 370. Duchess of Hamilton’s italics.
1174 Ibid., 371.
1176 Ibid., 771. King shared her distaste of modern art.
obtain rare and out of print materials.\footnote{1177} For reading on his return voyage in 1936, Miss Phillimore sent to his hotel copies of \textit{Light}, along with a number of books and pamphlets. She retained some of the larger books for the purpose of obtaining the autographs of the authors. Two parcels were soon dispatched to Canada and they included additional titles sent by Reverend C. Drayton Thomas, Oliver Lodge, Stanley De Brath and Geraldine Cummins.\footnote{1178} King particularly valued “the inscription placed in his books by Sir Oliver Lodge, in one of which he genuinely refers to me as his friend.” Miss Phillimore also sent a copy of a volume by Henry Thibault entitled, \textit{Letters from the Other Side} and a special smaller work \textit{Life after Death} communicated to Miss Felicia Scatchert through “Philemon” believed to be the late Basil Wilberforce, Venerable Archdeacon of Westminster.\footnote{1180} In return King sent Miss Phillimore a copy of his biographical sketch, prepared by Norman Rogers, at the time of the last general election in Canada. Miss Phillimore realized “what a precious thing it is for one in authority in the State to receive direct inspiration from the Unseen.”\footnote{1181} In 1948, Miss Phillimore presented King with a rare copy of \textit{The Earthen Vessel}, the story of Lady Glenconner’s communication with her son through Oliver Lodge’s medium, Mrs. Osborne Leonard, for which he was very grateful.\footnote{1182} Lord and Lady Glenconner’s son employed the curious phenomenon of Book Tests

\footnote{1177}{In \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 2 File 1, Reel H-3035, there is a schedule sent to King by Miss Mercy Phillimore listing four appointments on four days with the mediums Mrs. Livingston, Mrs. Helen Hughes, Mrs. Ruth Vaughan and Mrs. Pamela Nash, and their respective fees. An evening party hosted by Miss Lind in King’s honour was scheduled for 28 October 1936.}

\footnote{1178}{There are three autographed works by Stanley De Brath in the National Library collection as well as V. C. Desertis, \textit{Psychic Philosophy as the Foundation of a Religion of Natural Law}, with an introduction by Alfred Russell Wallace (London: W. Rider, 1909). Inscribed: To Mr. W.L. Mackenzie-King with kindest regards and best wishes from Stanley De Brath October 1936. This book was written in India in 1893 and published in 1895 I gave the copyright to the [?] and they published an edition so full of nice prints that I substituted this original for the defective one. Charles Drayton Thomas, \textit{Life beyond Death}, with an introduction by Viscountess Grey of Fallodon (London: W. Collins, 1933). Autographed by the author.}

\footnote{1179}{W.L.M.K. \textit{Diary}, 20 November 1936.}

\footnote{1180}{Henry Thibault, \textit{Letters from the Other Side} (London: J.M. Watkins, 1919).}

\footnote{1181}{Miss Mercy Phillimore to King, 19 October 1936, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 2 File 1, Reel H-3035.}

to get messages through, thus eliminating alternative explanations such as subconscious activity or telepathy.\footnote{1183} The method consists of specifying the number of a page in a book, itself indicated only by its numbered place on a given shelf in a book-case in a house to which the medium had in the past no access. The idea is that a sentence is subsequently found on that page which conveys an intended message. One of the messages from Lady Glenconner’s son came from \textit{Poems of Matthew Arnold} - “God knows it, I am with you.”

King’s many letters of acknowledgment, though always very complimentary, do offer some insight into how much King valued his contacts with authors of psychical research. On his return from London in 1936, King wrote Stanley de Brath (1854-1937) to thank him for the small booklet \textit{Farewell} and the autographed copies of \textit{How to Make the Best of Life} and \textit{The History of the Bible} as well as to express the privilege he felt on making his acquaintance.\footnote{1184} In response, de Brath wrote to King to thank him for his kind remarks which he found “so inspiriting” for “when a statesman in your position feels so strong an interest in matters as yet so little understood by the general public and so liable to distortion by superstitious minds, it is most heartening to those who have devoted their energies to practical ends.”\footnote{1185} De Brath sent to King his own copy of \textit{The Drama of Europe} in which he tried to show the operation of the Law of Spiritual Consequences as the prime cause of the rise and fall of empires.\footnote{1186} In thanking de Brath, King wrote:

\footnote{1183} There was an ongoing debate in the field of spiritualism as to whether messages were communicated by the dead to a medium or was it merely mental telepathy on the part of the medium.
\footnote{1184} King to Stanley de Brath, 20 November 1936, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 2 File 16, Reel H-3036.
Stanley de Brath, \textit{’Farewell’}; to friends who have written me expressing gratitude for my publications (Bristol: Grovenor Press, 1936).
Stanley de Brath, \textit{The History of the Bible} (Manchester: Two Worlds, n.d.).
Stanley de Brath, \textit{How to Make the Best of Life}; being letters from an old man of eighty to young people of twenty (London: Rider, 1934).
\footnote{1185} Stanley de Brath to King, 4 December 1936, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol.2 File 16, Reel H-3036.
\footnote{1186} Stanley de Brath, \textit{The Drama of Europe: or The Soul of History} (London: A.H. Stockwell, 1930).
There is no doctrine I so completely abhor as that of this world being controlled by blind material forces. There is none in which I believe more strongly than that of a Divine order which pervades the universe.

... I am looking forward, with an interest beyond words, to the reading of the book. I shall never look at its pages without thinking of you, and being grateful for the Guidance which brought my path into contact with yours.

I am glad to sit as a humble student at your feet, and shall always welcome any and every word which comes from you. Your book comes to hand at a critical moment. In that too, there is no element of chance.  

King’s sentimentality and thoughtful detail were typical of all his letters of acknowledgment. His letter to Reverent C. Drayton Thomas upon receipt of the copies of Life Beyond Death and Beyond Life’s Sunset also expressed “the great privilege as well as honour” at making Drayton’s acquaintance:

In thanking you for them [the books], I should like, however, to express my gratitude for what I know the account of your own research and experiences will mean to me, and the help as well as inspiration they are certain to afford along life’s way.

Drayton Thomas also sent King a copy of An Amazing Experiment and the Spiritualism Series contains one of his small books, The Mental Phenomena of Spiritualism.

1187 King to Stanley de Brath, 31 December 1936, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 2 File 16, Reel H-3036. King’s underlining.
Charles Drayton Thomas, Beyond Life’s Sunset (London: Lectures Universal, n.d.).
Charles Drayton Thomas, Life Beyond Death, with an introduction by Viscountess Grey of Fallodon (London: W. Collins Sons & Company, [1933]).
1189 Charles Drayton Thomas, An Amazing Experiment (London: Lectures Universal, [1936]).
King placed orders for books with many sources and received catalogues from various publishers. His Papers contain copies of many of these sources, such as, “The Two Worlds Catalogue of Books on Spiritualism, Psychical Research, Hypnotism, New Thought, Occultism, Theosophy and kindred subjects.”

He was a member of The W.T. Stead Borderland Library which was run by the daughter, Estelle W. Stead. In 1932 King received from Miss Stead a copy of her work, Communication with the Next World, and he ordered on her recommendation, three more of her books, Lessons from Beyond, My Father, Faces of the Living Dead, as well as After Death by her father.

King also received another work communicated by W.T. Stead, The Blue Island, from Mrs. Wriedt. Miss Stead’s father had passed from the earth to the spirit world with the sinking of the Titanic in 1912 but only a fortnight after the disaster, at a sitting with Mrs. Wriedt, her father came through. Other sittings followed with Mrs. Gladys Leonard and other mediums in which a series of messages were given to Pardoe Woodman through automatic writing. These experiences in the new land formed The Blue Island. A photograph on the frontispiece, taken in 1915, showed W.T. Stead’s face beside his daughter. Joan read aloud parts of the small book which King found “most interesting, but needs a

190 In Spiritualism Series: Vol. 6 File 5, Reel H-3041.
192 Pardoe Woodman, The Blue Island, given by W.T. Stead through automatic writing to Mr. Pardoe Woodman in sittings with Miss Estelle Stead, with an introduction by Arthur Conan Doyle (Los Angeles: Austin Publishing Company, 1924). King had two copies. He also wrote to the Austin Publishing Company to obtain The Blue Island and a copy of Trails of Truth from the pen of Jenny O’Hara Pincock of St. Catherine’s, Ontario. It contains a collection of evidential material obtained in sitting with Mr. William Cartheusen, a medium for the direct voice. His gift was thought to be that of a Human Radio, bridging the gulf between Etheric Intelligences and our own physical plane.
master hand to give the significance it should have.”\textsuperscript{1193} King also received the sequel to \textit{The Blue Island} from Estelle Stead. \textit{Life Eternal} was communicated by W.T. Stead to the automatist, Mrs. Hester Dowden, in order to more fully explain some of the mysteries that surrounded him in the Great Beyond and how communication could take place.\textsuperscript{1194}

Another of King’s British friends was Dame Edith Lyttelton. She was a gifted and vigorous reformer, a Balfour, and like the former Prime Minister, Arthur James Balfour, she moved in aristocratic, political and spiritualist circles. After a visit to South Africa, she helped establish the Victorian League in 1901 with King’s long-time confidant, Violet Markham. Dame Lyttelton served on the executive of the National Union of Women Workers, as chairman of the Personal Service Association, a voluntary body set up in 1911 in an effort to relieve the acute underemployment in London and she was a British substitute delegate in Geneva to the League of Nations. After the death of her husband in 1913, she turned to spiritualism and writing and from 1933 to 1934 she was President of the council of the Society for Psychical Research. In 1937, she sent King her latest publication, \textit{Some Cases of Prediction}, which King “read with quite exceptional interest.”\textsuperscript{1195} This work published many corroborated cases which were sent to her after her B.B.C. radio broadcast, “Inquiry into the Unknown,” in 1934. Dame Lyttelton ascribed to these cases the categories of coincidence, telepathy between living minds and precognition which displayed knowledge of a future event not in the content of a human mind.\textsuperscript{1196} On her suggestion, King ordered Tyrrell’s \textit{Science and Psychical Phenomena} on extra-
sensory perception and Miss Phoebe Payne’s *Man’s Latent Powers*.\textsuperscript{1197} She also brought to his attention Zoë Richmond’s *Evidence of Purpose* and Saltmarsh’s *Evidence of Personal Survival from Cross Correspondences*, which she had helped edit. Of the two, King found the latter “much more valuable and helpful and indeed most interesting and stimulating.”\textsuperscript{1198} Dame Lyttelton was particularly interested in the evidence for personal survival afforded by cross-correspondences, which occur when the scripts of two or more automatic writers, writing independently, contain certain references to the same topic, or phrases which are meaningless when taken separately, but are found to be complementary when put together. King had an arrangement with her publisher, G. Bell and Sons, to send him notice of any book that Dame Lyttelton thought he would be glad to know of.

In Laurier House there is a copy of Lyttelton’s *Faculty of Communion* which supports a pluralistic and progressive religious attitude in a society where there may be “more elasticity in doctrine, a greater freedom for the mind of man, and new ventures of his spirit.”\textsuperscript{1199} Each generation worships “*a conception of God adjusted to their own development*” and builds round this conception “a walled bulwark of doctrine.” She argues that “the knowledge of God should surely be progressive and not static.” It is not “blind faith” that will lead us into the right way of development but “*the mental attitude which admits that we see through a glass darkly, very darkly, and works always for more light*.”\textsuperscript{1200} Dame Lyttelton is critical of past church reforms which endeavoured to sweep away “the possibility of a future development of intercourse with the dead on sane spiritual lines.” She applauds the changes owing to the Great War that admitted prayers for the dead and reminds her readers that “prayer for souls of those whose bodily death is commemorated implies the possibility of

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{1198} King to Dame Edith Lyttelton, 22 September 1938, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 1 File 23, Reel H-3034.
\bibitem{1199} Zoë Richmond, *Evidence of Purpose* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1938).
\bibitem{1200} Herbert Francis Saltmarsh, *Evidence of Personal Survival from Cross Correspondences* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1938).
\bibitem{1199} Edith Sophy Lyttelton, *Faculty of Communion* (London: Longmans, Green, 1925), 14.
\bibitem{1200} Ibid., 22, 24, 27.
\end{thebibliography}
some kind of influence on the fate of the dead and permits the faithful to feel that they can still help or try to help those they love.”

And this influence is reciprocal for Lyttelton believes “that we are surrounded by discarnate beings at a fuller stage of development than our own, who are continually affecting our thoughts” and that “we must learn to understand and value the help and the teaching that comes to us.”

In dealing with the proper conditions for satisfactory communication, Lyttelton emphasizes “calmness and stillness of spirit.” Passionate grief or yearning seem to damage “the open receptive calm” which is essential. According to Lyttelton, there must be “complete self-surrender and harmony.” The mind or spirit must not dwell upon the physical loss but must resolutely fasten its yearning upon the spiritual:

> When in all humility the stricken heart is ready to surrender, to accept, to renounce all passionate claim, all self-pity, then indeed it may be possible for a few moments to experience and endure the vibrations of a wider life, and unresisting, uncomplaining, be raised to a sudden realisation that he who loses his life does literally find it, and that underneath us are the Everlasting Arms.

> ... if only we will understand and obey the laws of surrender, purity, and selfless love.

C. P. Stacey mocked what he called “King’s cult of anniversaries - birthdays, death-days and others.” Lyttelton suggests that “the universal custom of celebrating anniversaries has a deeper cause than is perhaps generally realised.” She argues that these periodical occasions may have psychical significance; “the spirits of our dead know that on certain days we shall surely think of them, and it is while we think of them, while for a moment the din of life is silenced for us, that they have the best

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1201 Ibid., 39.
1202 Ibid., 54.
1203 Ibid., 95.
1204 Ibid., 96 - 97.
1205 C. P. Stacey, A Very Double Life, 161.

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chance of making their presence felt.”

Anniversaries may call up memories, and those who take cognizance of them may reach the departed spirit and thoughts from that spirit may reach the living.

In 1940 King received from Miss Lind-af-Hageby, *My Psychic Life*, by Marianne Bayley-Worthington, with introductory notes by the Duchess of Hamilton. The symbolic visions in this book range from the most commonplace objects to involved and complicated combinations, of persons, things, action and colour. The first thing to interpret in a symbol, according to Mrs. Bayley-Worthington, is colour. In his thank-you letter King expressed that he was amazed how closely his “interpretation of some of the symbols and colours” in his own “distinct and vivid visions” accorded with those set out in this volume. King found that his study of psychic phenomena added “immensely to the interest of all that is transpiring.” Within a psychic perspective, the war seemed to King:

... essentially a conflict of totally different concepts of life, the one material to the last degree; the other, a spiritual concept. They are irreconcilable. Of course, there can be in the end, but one result. Matter is destructible; the spirit indestructible. We may be called upon to witness a condition as near to Armageddon as anything this world had known before inheriting the higher plane of thought and understanding which surely will be the outcome of the travail of our times.

Another British spiritualist with whom King was acquainted was Nandor Fodor who King met in 1929 by accident on the special train that carried him from Le Havre to Paris for the signing of the Kellogg Pact. Fodor was a journalist then and it was not until 1936 that he wrote to King inviting him to visit the International Institute for

1206 Edith Sophy Lyttelton, *Faculty of Communion*, 105.
Psychical Research in London, where he was a research officer. Fodor sent King copies of the three bulletins which the Institute had issued. In 1938 King requested an autographed copy of Baron Erik Kule Palmstierna’s *Horizons of Immortality*, which he read “with quite exceptional interest.” King found “the parts of the book which had to do with evidences of personal survival, also of teachings, appealed very strongly to me, and were in the nature of confirmation of experiences of my own concern, of which there can be no doubt whatever.” The book had been forwarded to King through Macmillan Company of Toronto and King wrote to thank the President, Hugh S. Eayrs:

I hold strongly to the belief that this time of unrest throughout the world is a period of transition, the outcome of which will be an enlarged view and belief in the things of the mind and the spirit as contrasted with the materialism of recent years, in our own age, in particular. Books of the kind Palmstierna has written are therefore of special interest to me.

Eayrs was well aware of King’s “interest in well-done materials of this kind” and promised his people would “put before” King, “anything along this line” that might possibly interest him. During the war, Dr. Fodor joined Hereward Carrington at the American Society for Psychical Research. He continued to send King his work on telepathy, including “Telepathy: Truth and Untruth,” in 1940, “Telepathic Dreams” in 1942, and “Telepathy in Analysis,” in 1947. King wrote to Fodor that he found that “psychical study affords me considerable relaxation. It is a field of research to

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1210 King to Hugh S. Eayrs, 30 April 1938, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 2 File 22, Reel H-3036.

1211 Hugh S. Eayrs to King, 2 May 1938, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 2 File 22, Reel H-3036.

which I would devote much time, had I the time to spare."

*Horizons of Immortality* (1937), recommended by Nandor Fodor, is one of King’s most carefully marked texts on spiritualism.\(^{1214}\) The markings are also more varied than his norm in that they include question marks; short, often one-word annotations in the margin, for the most part illegible; underlining, which was quite uncommon; and many sections marked with many vertical lines, as many as seven in one case. These markings suggest just how important the study of spiritualism had become for King. As Palmstierna explains, *Horizons of Immortality* is not a scientific work, though scientific terminology pervades the text. Rather it is a narrative of the experiences and revelations which have “arisen from a contact with the world of reality, that contact which is the desire and aim of human souls eager to attain the active and progressive inner harmony which is imperishable life.”\(^{1215}\) The selection of spiritual messages published is “mostly concerned with the great religious problems and the conduct of life which is of vital importance for all of us.”\(^{1216}\) The purpose of the sending of these messages, King noted with four vertical lines, is “not the widening of intellectual knowledge; rather it is an inspiration, an awakening to a life which carries within itself the solution of our most urgent problems.”\(^{1217}\)

King was both interested in the spiritual messages themselves and the techniques used. The messages which occupy the main part of the book reached Palmstierna and his fellow seekers through the instrumentality of Adila Fachiri, a violinist who “possessed the rare gift of transmitting spiritual waves in a waking state and fully conscious, never falling into a trance.”\(^{1218}\) Letters were placed in circular alphabetic order on the ouija board and a glass pointer with a smooth-running edge was put in

\(^{1213}\) King to Nandor Fodor, 21 September 1942, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 2 File 18, Reel H-3036.

\(^{1214}\) Every chapter is copiously marked except oddly, “Concluding Remarks,” which is followed by the last chapter, “Retrospect,” which is copiously marked. King dated three pages 7 -7 -1938: 298, 335, and 366, giving an indication of the amount of text read in one day.


\(^{1216}\) Ibid., 346. Marked by two vertical lines.

\(^{1217}\) Ibid., 366. Marked by four vertical lines.

\(^{1218}\) Ibid., 334.
the centre and very lightly touched by the spiritually sensitive. After a while, the incoming flow of wave-vibrations is felt by the sensitive and causes the pointer to move towards one letter after the other spelling out words. The letters are recorded as they come. This method was similar to that used by King and Joan Patteson at Laurier House. However, the messages published in the text are much more sophisticated.\textsuperscript{1219}

Like much of the literature on spiritualism, \textit{Horizons of Immortality} lamented the “\textit{wave of unrelenting materialism}” sweeping over an anxious society that had lost its stability and in which there was little room for individual liberty:

\begin{quote}
From the remotest corners of the earth events set events going and world-wide repercussions unsettle mankind. Individuals are reduced to cogs in an over-powering machinery and they cannot free themselves. ... \textit{The noise on earth has become deafening, and speed - whatever the cost - is the aim of man.} ... There is no stillness, there are no sheltered, quiet places.\textsuperscript{1220}
\end{quote}

Mechanisation produced the effect of “\textit{stamping uniformity on our thoughts and clipping the wings of beauty by forcing it to obey the regulations of the machine}.”\textsuperscript{1221}

King marked four vertical lines by the section in which Palmstierna decried the banality of modern culture:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Music, the child of the spheres, is broadcast through machines which leave little room for individual inspiration, and art is on the move from one exhibition to another to be seen a fleeting moment by the crowd.}\textsuperscript{1222}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{1219} There are a few records of simple words received using the ouija board at Laurier House in \textit{Spiritualism Series: Vol. 7  File 27, Reel H-3042}.

\textsuperscript{1220} Erik Palmstierna, \textit{Horizons of Immortality}, 3. Indented quote, p. 4, marked by two vertical lines. Sections underlined by King.

\textsuperscript{1221} Erik Palmstierna, \textit{Horizons of Immortality}, 6. Marked by two vertical lines.

\textsuperscript{1222} Ibid., 6. Marked by four vertical lines.
Palmstierna’s anti-modern dissent called for a reconsideration of “the whole range of problems facing mankind, re-examining the very foundation on which we have built.” He wanted “a revaluation of so-called progress” and a retrieval of “our individual selves again.” Horizons of Immortality claims that “idealistic thought seems to be gaining ground amongst thinking people.” The ideals of self-sacrifice and service are found in the surprising fact that “the less self-centred a man is, the more of his own personal interests he gives up for the advancement of the higher values, disregarding himself for others, the happier he becomes.” King marked with seven vertical lines the statement that “this fact ought to be registered just as carefully as any sense data. The supreme values delight, raise and free us.” These beliefs have the potential to “conquer the misery of life and sail gaily above the doubts and vacillations caused by an argumentative brain.”

King appears to have embraced the spiritual idealism of Palmstierna which questioned the nature of reality: “Truth is different from knowledge of facts.” Horizons of Immortality reflected a Jamesian view which suggested that the “Truth is probably of a special nature, pragmatic and - like life - becomes richer and more varied in growing unceasingly.” Palmstierna approached reality “on the wings of the inner awareness.” He accepted from “the sensitive poets and the intuitive thinkers and the divine composers from all ages” and especially from “the great religious teachers,” the wisdom which arises from “an awareness of the unseen, needing neither proof nor logical reasoning.” This inexplicable spiritual awareness “or function of knowing as William James might have expressed it, constitutes the axiom for accepting spiritual life as a reality.”

1223 Ibid., 6 - 7. Marked by two vertical lines.
1224 Ibid., 34 - 35. Marked by four vertical lines.
1225 Ibid., 35. Marked by seven vertical lines.
1226 Ibid., 35. Marked by four vertical lines.
1227 Ibid., 40. Marked by three vertical lines.
1228 Ibid., 40.
1229 Ibid., 44. Marked by four vertical lines.
1230 Ibid., 46. Marked by three vertical lines. King’s underlining.
1231 Ibid., 47.
Palmstierna embraces a vision of “a Supreme Being of love and light acting, upholding and magnetically drawing all towards Itself.” It is a vision linked to “the modern conception of the universe consisting of waves, operating in magnetic fields.” These vibrating waves “carry special influences to mind and body.” As Palmstierna explains:

A human being is constantly exposed to impacts and influences from this vast field of wave currents, and the most sensitive of us are occasionally aware of impulses from the unknown, feeling unsettled or harmonious for reasons which escape our search. We are ourselves ... a receiving wireless station, and the magnetic field about us is often disturbed by waves which affect us in varying ways. This holds good for our whole being, the soul as well as the body.

The messages from the beyond informed Palmstierna “that a law of affinity prevails all through the spheres, like drawing towards like.” As Palmstierna explains:

Highly sensitive souls may become fully aware of this affinity and feel, without words or deeds, the presence of individuals akin to themselves. They may even reach above the level of earth, effect a contact with souls in other places, and have intercourse with departed friends, registering the messages arriving from them in those cases where their bodily structure permits such transactions. Qualities of this kind are often found amongst those devoted to the arts.

The received messages published in Horizons of Immortality are mostly concerned with the great religious questions of the day and the conduct of life which is of vital

1232 Ibid., 57. Marked by three vertical lines.
1233 Ibid., 56.
1234 Ibid., 56. Marked by two vertical lines.
1235 Ibid., 64 - 65. Marked by two vertical lines. King’s underlining.
1236 Ibid., 66. Marked by two vertical lines.
1237 Ibid., 66 - 67. King’s underlining.
importance. The answers delivered from the other side emphasize the responsibility of the individual, the nature of God, suffering and evil and the activity of souls in the life beyond. For example, it was suggested that the sombre doctrine of the atonement based on the view of God as a severe sovereign needed to be fundamentally changed in order to become reconciled with a God of love. A great deal of teaching and advice was tendered on how life on earth is viewed from above and the instructions impart practical hints as to conduct:

The instant you drift towards evil influences, you prepare yourself for a condition of encasement either on earth or elsewhere and when this happens, your spark or spirit is isolated and the material or perishable begins to dominate you. In one word you become for the time being the instrument of evil and allow that spark which is your eternal self to be dormant, as God can only talk through and in you when you are free. Nevertheless you can open that encasement and through listening to high voices allow the influence which is ready to nourish you.1238

Much of the advice harkens back to the self-help literature King had read earlier, but the answers given by the high voices are definitely not secularized responses. On the tragedy of self-doubt and worry, seekers are reminded that:

... if you trust in yourself, you admit God in you and so you allow your soul to progress. Doubt is an alliance to defeat. Your own free will is the weapon to win over evil. ... Live in love and light ‘today’, the ‘morrow’ shall bring its delight also. Keep to this and you shall live in peace.1239

If you are continually tormenting yourself, “you are training your soul to copy the pattern of evil and the condition you nurse will follow you to the hereafter.”1240 The voices caution that “those who sit at home continually praying for salvation of their

1238 Ibid., 263. King’s underlining.
1239 Ibid., 267 - 268. Marked by two and three vertical lines.
1240 Ibid., 272. King’s underlining.
souls, souls filled with selfishness, will have a very hard time up here where exclusiveness is non-existent. They admonish egotism, malice and jealousy because “it is those sins which ruin and create waves which destroy beauty and goodness.” The main thing in one’s daily life is “to keep under a balanced control.” It is important to “lead a healthy life. Never be abusive of materials which are for the improvement of the body. Drink and eat moderately. Excess of both numbs the soul and gives chances to evil for using the body for evil purposes.” Individuals must avoid at all cost vulgarity which is encouraged by money. King marked with four vertical lines that vulgarity “tempts mankind to all sorts of vices, pushes them to show off and prevents the development of the soul.” In daily life the seeker is encouraged to “go always by ... intuition and cast away the advice of others. ... Build up, each of you, the cathedral where your very own God dwells. ... Do not follow the influence of men who drag you down, but talk to the voices of your guardians in the cathedral of your souls, where God alone is your true Friend.” The final advice for daily living in the fight against evil rests on individuality:

Life must grow from within and our fate is shaped by ourselves. Each individual stands by himself, listening to the advices poured into his soul, freely building and decorating the mansion he wishes to enter in his return to the world of reality.

Horizons of Immortality, a text that appealed so much to King, described a Christian spiritualism, in which King’s Protestant faith demonstrated a flexibility and openness to the other side. Christian ideals were endorsed by those high voices that sent their messages about the reality of the beyond.
What is very clear from King’s relationships with British spiritualists is that he was becoming a well-read proponent of psychical research in all its aspects; he sought the most current and best literature that provided recorded evidence of the survival of personality after death. He also developed his broad knowledge of spiritualism from such comprehensive works as Lindsay Johnson’s *Does Man Survive?* (1936), which was given to him by Mrs. Fulford and read during his trip to her family’s Florida estate in 1937.  

*Does Man Survive?* collected almost four hundred pages of evidence to endeavour to convince the reader of the existence of a future life and that “communication between the two worlds has continued all through the centuries from the earliest times up to the present moment, in every country, both savage as well as civilized; and that at no time in the world’s history has it been more in evidence than at the present day.”  

King found this holiday reading “most interesting” though “rather superficial - (tho’ true)” because it brought his knowledge on “psychical data etc. .., up to date.”  

Johnson’s text covers a wide range of topics of interest to spiritualists, including Dreams, Telepathy, Supernormal Photography, Direct Voice, Reincarnation, Prophecy and Automatic Writing - all in relation to his Christian beliefs and culminating in an interpretation of the Resurrection “in the light of recent scientific psychic experience.”  

According to Johnson, “there can be no doubt, if anyone will take the trouble carefully to examine the story of Jesus’ resurrection, and subsequent appearance, and final ascension, that he will find recorded a perfect picture of materialization.”  

King’s diary draws attention to the chapters on “Prophetic Dreams” and “Miracles of the Bible,” the latter “containing significance of numbers.”  

Certain numbers were assigned a mystical value by the Bible and these numbers, three and seven for example, always held an importance.

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1248 George Lindsay Johnson, *Does Man Survive? The Great Problem of the Life Hereafter and the Evidence for its Solution* (London: Harper & Brothers, 1936). Signed: Mackenzie King Laurier House Ottawa 1937. This is one of the most copiously marked books in King’s collection. On the title page King marked the quote by L. Chevreuil: Je n’imagine pas, je constate.

1249 George Lindsay Johnson, *Does Man Survive?*, 27.

1250 W.L.M.K. Diary, 1 December 1937 and 3 December 1937.

1251 George Lindsay Johnson, *Does Man Survive?*, 362.

1252 Ibid., 156.

1253 W.L.M.K. Diary, 7 December 1937. King’s underlining.
During his 1937 holiday in Florida King met another graduate of Harvard, Dr. C. A. Waterman. As an attending physician he had taken care of Professors Taussig and William James and "had a great practice in brain surgery, neurology and psychology." They discussed telepathy, mediums and conversations with Dr. MacDougall and Professor Rhine of Duke University. King gave Dr. Waterman an account of some of his own interesting experiences which he had noted in his psychic records. He felt that Waterman clearly went "beyond the view that the subconscious mind contains what is disclosed, and that this rather comes from the appreciation of the universal." King felt his talk was "a wonderful experience" and "came away feeling that he was the type of man I had been wanting to meet for years past, and that my researches on psychical lines were to go much further as a consequence of meeting him."

Dr. Waterman suggested that King read *Cosmic Consciousness* (1901) because the author, Maurice Bucke, had "come to the real truth which was that there were individuals in all generations who were more highly developed spiritually than others, and who came to share a knowledge of the future as well as the present and the past. ... He believed as the race developed, though it might be generations, an understanding of this universal knowledge or cosmic consciousness would be shared in a larger measure." King not only read this classic but other older works. For example, in 1947 he read *Swedenborg: the Savant and the Seer* (1912) by Sir William Barrett, an important late nineteenth century professor of physics and one of

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the original sponsors of the Society for Psychical Research. Swedenborg (1688 - 1772) is known for his distinguished contributions to both science and philosophy. The first part of his life was “devoted to the pursuit of science and the investigation of almost every aspect of the natural world.” In this he was far in advance of his age. After his “spiritual quickening” he gave up active scientific investigation but unlike most mystics he carried into all his religious writings “the calm, unimpassioned air of science.” For nearly thirty years this “clear-sighted philosopher and savant” asserted that “he held daily converse with angels and with many of the departed spirits from earth.” To this mystic, the spiritual world seemed more real and open to view than the world of sense and outward things and King wrote in his diary that it had been “a real gain to come to know this great soul and his beliefs.”

It was Swedenborg’s religious beliefs that seemed to interest King the most. His amazing experiences were secondary to the mission to which he believed he had been called:

That mission was to expound the inner or spiritual sense of the Word of God, whether that Word is expressed in the inspired writings or in the evolutionary processes of nature. For all nature, all human wisdom and love, is but the progressive revelation and inspiration of the thought of God, unfolding and expressing itself in the worlds and lives around us.

King could certainly identify with much of Swedenborg’s thought. The Seer believed in “an Infinite Unseen Mind” to which our mind is related. His doctrine of correspondence declared that there was a mutual relation between the natural and

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1260 Ibid., 33.
1261 Ibid., 34.
spiritual universe, a relation of cause and effect between spirit and matter. William Drummond referred to and expanded this doctrine in his *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* (1884), which King had found so close to his own convictions in 1899.\footnote{1264} Swedenborg declared that “the change we call death is not an abrupt transition from the ordered mystery of life and law we know here to a nebulous and unimaginable realm from the present; but that the other life is a continuation and development of the present.”\footnote{1265} The lesson which Swedenborg taught with the confidence of assured conviction was that “the law of continuity from the least to the greatest remains unbroken when we pass into the spiritual world.”\footnote{1266} This great law of continuity between matter and spirit, earthlife and afterlife was later espoused by Sir Oliver Lodge.\footnote{1267} According to Barrett, the great value of Swedenborg’s teaching is that “it produces a more vivid and true realisation of the immanence of the spiritual world and of the larger life beyond.”\footnote{1268} Barrett closed his lecture with a quotation from scripture that abounds in the literature of spiritualism:

*The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are unseen are eternal.*\footnote{1269}

King’s interest in spiritualism not only favoured the visionary path of Swedenborgism, the faith of William James’s father, but also led to an examination of Eastern religions and the Victorian theosophic movement. Although most spiritualists rejected the secrecy of the Theosophical Society, there was an overlapping appeal. Theosophy spoke to both moral order and spiritual progress, the essential unity of science and religion and claimed to pose an alternative to the strictly materialistic assumptions of western science. To Theosophy and spiritualists nineteenth-century science had only narrowed further the range of accepted human
inquiry. Both agreed that the boundaries of the natural order encompassed the material and spiritual, the seen and the unseen, the finite and the infinite. Theosophy also formed part of the revolt against the authority of American Protestant churches. Like spiritualism, Theosophy rejected predestination and original sin. The mastery of church doctrine became unimportant, and the experience of the power of religious belief in one’s life became everything. King’s library includes the work of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, the enigmatic and charismatic founder of the Theosophical Society. His library also includes the classic work of Dr. Anna Bonus Kingsford, The Perfect Way (1881) which connected spiritualism and Eastern mysticism.

King dabbled in the spiritual philosophy of Jiddu Krishnamurti who was groomed by Annie Besant and other theosophists. Many spiritualists were, like the late Victorians, culturally preoccupied with comparative religion and fascinated with the Orient. For example, King read Canon Streeter’s comparison of Buddhism and Christianity which brought a new appreciation of the Christian faith to the reader.

In Laurence Moore’s discussion of the overlapping appeal of Spiritualism and Theosophy in In Search of White Crows, he has suggested that when people believed as did the spiritualist that their most important ideas had been rejected out of hand, the temptation arose for them to make common cause with the champions of other rejected ideas. Certainly King knew something about Theosophy, the Rosicrucians, New Thought and Faith Healing and Christian Science.

As Moore


King to Ralph M. Lewis, 12 December 1933, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 3 File 22, Reel H-3037. There are two letters to King from the Rosicrucian Brotherhood which refer to materials sent to King and a letter of reply from King declining membership in the Rosicrucian Order. King’s collection at the National Library also includes a text on the subject. Max Hendel, The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception; or, Mystic Christianity (London: L. N. Fowler, 1925).
suggests, “marginality in various historical contexts may encourage associations that make little sense on strictly intellectual grounds.”

Perhaps this explains to some degree King’s interest in Ivan Panin’s “profound researches” in Bible Numerics which he considered “a valuable contribution both to science and religion.”

Ivan Panin (1855 - 1942) was a Harvard graduate and “a marked man in Boston in the days of Philips, Brookes & President Eliot ... who was his special friend.” After his conversion he devoted his life to uncovering the complex system of numbering beneath the very surface of the original Bible text. He found the frequent appearance of sevens, elevens, thirteens, etc., in the text to be numerically significant and believed that these numeric phenomena had been designed and were therefore evidence of “the finger of God.”

King was first brought in touch with Panin’s work in 1935 by correspondence from Miss Ethel M. Ambridge who lived in the Panin household, just outside the city of Hamilton. King was receptive. He wrote that he had “an open mind” and was “far from being sceptical concerning the internal evidences of the inspiration of the Scriptures and of the scientific value of research such as that involved in Bible numerics.”

Panin sent King many of his booklets and pamphlets over the years until his death in 1942. The octogenarian was a strong political supporter of King and set apart a special hour of prayer for King’s physical health. King acknowledged the receipt of the two lectures given by Panin at Caxton Hall on Bible Numerics and wrote that his writings “on the Bible as a masterpiece of mathematical art and artistic creation” revealed a “mature”

1276 King to Ivan Panin, 22 August 1942, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3035.
1277 Miss Ethel M. Ambridge to King, 12 February 1935, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3035.
scholarship.\textsuperscript{1281} King received Panin’s booklet, *Genesis I:1*, on the numerical significance of the first sentence of Genesis and read it “with the greatest possible interest.”\textsuperscript{1282} King considered the little publication “a quite remarkable statement of the inspiration as evidenced by numbers, the number ‘17’ figuring very prominently.\textsuperscript{1283} In 1939 King received two publications: *Once in Grace, Always in Grace* and *Bible Chronology*, each of which King pledged to continue to peruse from day to day.\textsuperscript{1284} The last work received from Panin was a copy of *Astounding New Discoveries* by Karl C. Sabiers. King “found the phenomena disclosed in its pages truly amazing.”\textsuperscript{1285} In 1948 King received a letter from the Reverend Mr. Taylor which had to do with some of his writings on numerics and he mentioned a letter King had written to Panin. King found the mention of the letter “evidence of how greatly I am being pressed at this time with the reality of psychic phenomena and of how helpful these influences may be, when I get on with my memoirs.”\textsuperscript{1286}

King maintained his correspondence with many British spiritualists until his death. One of these spiritualists was Miss Norah Lodge, the daughter of Oliver Lodge, who King met briefly during his Coronation visit in 1937. Their correspondence seemed to follow the same direction and setback as that between Mrs. Carrington and King. Miss Lodge’s letters became more personal and flattering, especially after the death of her father in 1940. The two exchanged photographs and books. King also sent her a picture of his mother and suggested that Miss Lodge address him as Rex, a privilege reserved only for close acquaintances such as Violet


\textsuperscript{1282} King to Ivan Panin, 6 May 1938, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3035.

\textsuperscript{1283} W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 6 May 1938.

\textsuperscript{1284} Ivan Panin, *Once in Grace, Always in Grace? A Review of First Principles* (Lowestoft, England: Green, 1937). In King’s collection at the National Library.


\textsuperscript{1285} King to Ivan Panin, 22 August 1942, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 1 File 28, Reel H-3035.


\textsuperscript{1286} W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 29 November 1948.

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Markham. Miss Lodge sent King an article by Sir Hugh Dowding and later his spiritualist work, *Lychgate*. In 1945, Miss Lodge’s letters reached the summit of admiration and affection but there developed some “misunderstanding” about the nature of their friendship and this can only be inferred from her letters because some of King’s are missing. She writes:

I should like to believe that our friendship which I value so deeply, is on firm ground - & that I may continue to express my genuine feelings without causing you any embarrassment.

There was still some uncertainty for a few letters:

I am still not quite sure how much you in your great position have to guard the conventions.

... I still do not know whether we can have the talk together alone - as I should like.

... I am afraid that I am careless of conventions ... but then I do not stand in the Vanguard of a great Nation - so I must fall in with your wise council on this point.

... How I would love to sit in your study - and just listen to what you have to say. ... I used to adore evenings like that with Father.

Characteristically, planned meetings do not take place despite Norah’s request for “priority.” After an obvious inquiry from King, Miss Lodge assures him that his letters have been destroyed but “the thoughts conveyed belong to me & are treasured in my heart.” A new understanding develops and the letters continue to


1288 Norah Lodge to King 14 November 1945, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 1 File 22, Reel H-3034.


1291 Norah Lodge to King 4 June 1946, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 1 File 22, Reel H-3034.
1950 but on a less intimate note. Miss Lodge sends him more books, one on the future life with a foreword written by her father, and another small book by “a lady of great charm” who “gets her communications thro’ her two dead sons.” Her last letter was about King’s health: “It is essential that you get strong and well - for the World awaits your memoirs.

While educating himself in the field of psychical science opened King’s mind to new values and to the acceptance of the possibility of unusual faculties, it also aided his communications which as Mercy Phillimore has suggested required “intelligent goodwill.” In other words, if you were more knowlegeable and accepting, you would likely have a better chance of reaching those who had passed over. However, more was required for successful psychic activity; its true functioning “depends upon the integrity of the Sensitive.” A person who in his ordinary life endeavours to live in accordance with right principles creates a state of mind more favourable for accurate psychic work. Medium and Sitter alike need to prepare themselves for “such a privileged experience,” by “sustained striving to live in the light and knowledge of moral and spiritual ideals, which alone determine the quality of the essential character upon which good conditions depend.” For King and his circle of sensitive friends, integrity was important and Christian principles set the tone for the seance experience, the focus of the spiritualist’s life. While in London, New York and Toronto, King often fitted a sitting into his busy schedule and he also set up a ‘home circle’ in Ottawa to which he invited Mrs. Wriedt and like-minded friends. King’s seance activities formed a significant part of his life in the 1930’s and indeed until his death. He valued the mediumship of Mrs. Wriedt; she was “one of the most remarkable persons” that King had ever had “the privilege of meeting.” However,

1292 Norah Lodge to King 26 October 1948, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 22, Reel H-3034.
1295 Ibid.
1296 Ibid., 115.
1297 King to Sir Oliver Lodge, 29 December 1933, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 7 File 27, Reel H-3032.
his most intimate spiritualist friend was Joan Patteson: “Joan & I share a spiritual world ... She sees as I see & feels as I feel on the great spiritual realities. Much would be lost if it could not be shared.”

As a serious psychic investigator, King kept careful records of all his experiences. It was only by the accumulation of evidence and record that King would be able to reach some kind of synthesis. He hoped that some day he would have the opportunity to work out “the plan of Purpose” that was becoming increasingly clear to him. Some of these accounts are in King’s diary but the more complete minutes of the seances were kept separate and are in the Spiritualism Series of the King Papers. Here we have a most remarkable record of his spiritual talks with Mrs. Bleaney, the seances with Mrs. Wriedt beginning in 1932, his foreign seances and those of his private circle right up to 1950. Some, especially the earlier records, are handwritten and difficult to read, but many have been typed for study, circulation and verification. From almost the beginning, the seance records were kept according to a certain format. Each session was dated, the exact time was noted and those sitters present were listed and finally all those who came from the other side and the conversations with them were recorded. For the marathon session held at Laurier House on Easter weekend 1933, King prepared a special three-page index to the seance notes, listing the times of the twelve individual sessions and seventy numbered communicators (some repetitions), which included Mrs. Wriedt’s ‘controls’, Dr. Sharpe and Red Sky, King’s mother, father, grandfather and brother and the parents and relatives of his spiritual partner Joan. Joan’s little girl also came through and several of King’s political friends who had passed over - Andrew Hayden and Peter Larkin. Some of the more illustrious voices were those of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Goldwin Smith, Senator Fulford, Sir John A. Macdonald and Lady Laurier.

Mrs. Etta Wriedt was a direct voice medium who had been investigated by several

1298 W.L.M.K. Diary, 4 February 1934.
British psychical researchers. Direct voice means that because the spirits cannot speak so as to be heard by their own mechanisms since the vibrations are attuned to a much higher pitch than earth vibrations, they use the voice mechanism of the medium. Ectoplasm from the medium and the sitters forms a voice mechanism which will respond to earth air vibrations, and so cause an audible voice. This voice can be heard all over the room in favourable conditions and can be in any language unknown to the medium. When the voice is weak a trumpet can be used and the voice conducted through it. Vice-Admiral Usborne Moore attended twelve sittings with Mrs. Wriedt in 1912. His book, *The Voices*, reported that dogs materialised and barked.  

George Lindsay Johnson wrote also about his private seances with Mrs. Wriedt in 1920. Luminous forms were seen in the dark and voices sometimes spoke through a metal trumpet that floated in the air and touched his ear.  

King was so elated by his first seance at the Fulfords’ home in Brockville that he invited Mrs. Wriedt and Mrs. Fulford to Laurier House the same week. Three seances were conducted between a caucus meeting and a reception and a speech in the House of Commons. Joan joined them in the little room beside the library where King kept his books on spiritualism. The room was dark and the only appliance was a trumpet on the floor. The seance commenced with the saying of the Lord’s Prayer and shortly afterward there came a strange sound very similar to the radio before it becomes quite “heated up.” The first voice was King’s mother who told Joan that her daughter, Nancy, was in kindergarten with the little children and that they were “taught about their parents and to love them.” When Nancy came through Joan felt “her brush my cheek,” and when she put her hand on her knee, Joan felt it as distinctly as if Nancy were with her. Joan’s mother spoke of a certain gold brooch and Joan saw this as “indisputable proof” of her presence and “remarkable proof of the truth of immortality.” In her recollections of the seance, Joan  

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1302 George Lindsay Johnson, *Does Man Survive?*, 129.
dwelt on her family rather to the exclusion of the loved ones who appeared to King but the words of his brother were most significant. Max spoke to her “of such sacred tender things” and thanked her for everything she had done for his brother.1303

The seance was primarily a kind of ‘domestic happening’ which celebrated the family, “an experiential event with old friends tuning in via the psychic party line.”1304 Stan McMullin has described the seance as “another kind of social interaction very close to a family reunion.” He explains “the banality of the seance notes” by suggesting most family reunions would produce equally banal notes should anyone bother to record them. The personal messages often dealt with the trivia of daily life; the information which they produced was rarely of any value. What appears to have been just as important as the content was “the process of confirming the continuance of family ties beyond death.”1305 For King, the seance was not only a reunion with his lost family but also a confirmation of their support. He participated not only in these reunions at Laurier House and Kingsmere but on occasion visited Mrs. Wriedt in Detroit, joining another circle there.

Among those who attended King’s early seances with Mrs. Wriedt were Norman Rogers and King’s college friend, Thomas Eakin, who officiated at the funeral service of King’s mother.1306 “The unusual experiences” left Rogers “with a sense of peace and security about what lies beyond us.” He found that “to have help and sustenance from beyond and the consciousness of spirited support from those we have loved and lost,” was “a comfort and encouragement beyond compare.” However, he cautioned that “we cannot abdicate our judgement nor escape our responsibilities here.” The lesson for Rogers was “that perhaps it is enough to know as we face our tasks that we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses and upheld by

1304 Stan McMullin, Anatomy of a Seance, xiii.
1305 Ibid., xiv.
Reverend Eakin’s initial response to the psychic experiences was “a feeling of reserve.” Eakin believed “that we begin over there where we left off here and go up in cycles” and he found it “reasonable that those who have passed on see us, have an interest in us and that they desire to communicate with us.” He could not “think that there is an impenetrable wall between this state of being and the next.” However, he questioned whether the communication might not be due to telepathy and the reading of the subconscious mind. Although he thought “the experiences ... were wonderful,” Eakin questioned the voice of his father, Laurier’s grammar and Pasteur’s French pronunciation. To Eakin, Mrs. Wriedt seemed “ingenuous and honest and quite incapable of deceit” and despite his reservations, he had “an open mind with a strong desire to believe that genuine communications are possible.” Another session left him “almost persuaded” and “enabled me to forget a good many of my worries and to make me determined to put them out of my mind.” He wanted to accompany King to Detroit as he was “greatly interested” and would like to have some more “light” and he longed “to be fully convinced.” One of his letters included an interesting discussion of the book sent by King by Meyers. It left Eakin “puzzled” as it did not seem “to accord in some features with the messages already received.” According to Meyers, “the method of communication is not what we have been taught to believe, with him there is no reference to ectoplasm or anything of that kind” as described in The Edge of the Etheric also sent by King. Eakin was concerned about which was right, “the direct communication through the subliminal consciousness or through the medium of some Etheric substance.” For Eakin, there was “more assurance in Mrs. Wriedt’s Communication and the conditions.

1307 Norman Rogers to King, 1 July 1932, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 4 File 3, Reel H-3037.
1308 Thomas Eakin to King, 22 August 1932, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 4 File 3, Reel H-3037
1309 Thomas Eakin to King, 12 January 1933, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 3 File 15, Reel H-3037. Thomas Eakin to King, 10 April1934, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 3 File 28, Reel H-3037. Eakin’s principalship at Knox College was in dispute at the time.
1310 Thomas Eakin to King, 6 May 1934, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 3 File 28, Reel H-3037.
1311 This undoubtedly was F. W. H. Meyers, Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death. 278
described by those who have spoken to us are more natural.”

King also had other spiritualist friends in Toronto. One of these was Ellen Elliott who worked for the publisher, Macmillan Company of Canada. She wrote King about her communications from the beyond which contained messages couched in religious terms about the present war situation and King as leader:

Tell him not to think for one moment that he is alone, but surrounded continually by ‘a cloud of witnesses’ and in his hours of great decisions, in matters of urgent importance, they are there with him. ... Tell him he must continue to be strong and have no fear. He is bound down with the weight of worry and anxiety, but he must throw that off as a prisoner would throw off his shackles, and he must cast out all fear from his heart and press forward and follow the principles of the Great Teacher.

King met Miss Elliott in 1942 and “was greatly surprised at the extent of her interest in psychical phenomena. She [had] been giving study to the matter for 18 years.” They discussed the “book of photography,” Intention and Survival, by Dr. Hamilton of Winnipeg that Macmillan was about to publish. A sitting was arranged the same day with the medium Alma Brash. Florence Nightingale spoke to King about the importance of colour for purposes of health. Miss Elliott visited Laurier House the next year at Easter and again in 1947. She found “the psychic vibrations” very strong. ‘White Brother’ suggested that King’s own “psychic powers of perception [were] not inconsiderable.”

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1312 Thomas Eakin to King, 6 May 1934, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 3 File 28, Reel H-3037.

Communication on the Eastern situation and defences for the West Coast. Spirits of the next world were spoken of by St. Paul as a great cloud of witnesses, a description that appears frequently in spiritualist literature reflecting the crossover of spiritualism and religion.

1316 Ellen Elliott to King, 18 May 1943, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 12, Reel H-3034.
King read the autobiographies of two of his mediums, Mrs. Leonard Osborne and Mrs. Eileen Garrett.\textsuperscript{1317} Mrs. Leonard's memoirs, \textit{My Life in Two Worlds}, received the endorsement of Oliver Lodge who personally had found that she was one of the best mediums that he had known and that “her trance utterances had proved of help and comfort to thousands.”\textsuperscript{1318} Her own personal experiences impelled Mrs. Leonard to show others “\textit{how to grasp the truth of personal survival}” and “\textit{to face calmly - even hopefully - the apparent tragedy called Death}.”\textsuperscript{1319} Spiritualism, according to Mrs. Leonard, had “\textit{helped to ‘fill the pause’ for thousands of people, giving them back their lost faith, their hope of Eternity, and reunion with those they love.}”\textsuperscript{1320} King found Mrs. Leonard’s book “true enough but too much of the little things.”\textsuperscript{1321} In the later chapters she focused on the skills of mediumship and offered advice on the most minute details of the operation of a circle. For table sittings:

They should sit, male and female alternately, and if the sexes are not represented in equal numbers, a man who is of a negative, sensitive temperament may take the place of a woman, or a woman of a strong positive type take the place of a man. The light should be dim. The chairs should be plain wooden ones, windsor or bentwood. A musical box will help, but is not indispensable so long as you keep up a vibration by singing when nothing is happening, and especially at the commencement of the sitting.

... After placing your hands upon the table, it is a good thing for one of the sitters to say aloud some simple prayer for protection, guidance and help in assisting the Spirit.

\textsuperscript{1317} Gladys Osborne Leonard, \textit{My Life in Two Worlds}, with a foreword by Oliver Lodge (London: Cassell, 1931). Inscribed: To W.L. Mackenzie King With sincere good wishes - from Gladys Osborne Leonard July 20 1939. Unfortunately the markings in this book are so very faint that they appear as almost to have been erased.


\textsuperscript{1319} Oliver Lodge, “\textit{Foreword},” \textit{My Life in Two Worlds}, viii - ix.

\textsuperscript{1320} Gladys Osborne Leonard, \textit{My Life in Two Worlds}, 3.

\textsuperscript{1321} Ibid., 4. ‘Fill the pause’ was a reference from a poem by E.B. Browning.

\textsuperscript{1321} W.L.M.K. Diary, 17 August 1939.
Communicators to manifest their presence to you.  

The success of the seance was dependent, in part, upon the collective power of collective participation. Sitters around a table often linked hands to activate the psychic flow.

According to Mrs. Leonard, when the circle determines to sit for Direct Voice a trumpet made of aluminum or cardboard should be placed on the floor in the centre of the circle and the trumpet (if a metal one is used) should be rinsed out just before sitting.  

"Tho' interesting & true - coming from her," King found her comments "a little tiresome." What he needed in his reading was "more what Lodge gives."

This statement in his diary was followed by a different conclusion as King mused about his involvement in spiritualism during this critical period in 1939:

I should give up altogether for a time at least the reading psychical books, or troubling with the little table, - substituting therefor reading current news, & books re world conditions. I know that the reality exists, that others are guiding me. I fear I have become too introspective & that one cause of Toronto speech being the failure it was, was that I had been living too much with my own thoughts, and not enough with the world in which I am. There are 'the two worlds'. As Asquith has said, I am not sure we were intended to know too much about the other here and now, - the principles of conduct - yes - etc., but my job clearly is to recognize I am Prime Minister of Canada, the leader of the Canadian people & bend every energy to that end. - Time will make the necessary changes, for the present my task is to be the Leader in every sense of the word.

But King did not give up the reading of psychical books. In 1942 he was enjoying

1322 Gladys Leonard Osborne, My Life in Two Worlds, 212 -213. 
1323 Ibid., 207. 
1324 W.L.M.K. Diary, 15 August 1939. 
1325 W.L.M.K. Diary, 17 August 1939. 
1326 W.L.M.K. Diary, 17 August 1939. King's underlining.

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Mrs. Leonard’s latest work about her out-of-the-body experiences. *Brief Darkness* tells of her deceased husband’s assurances that spiritual, moral and social improvement will follow the material devastation of the war.  

Mrs. Leonard compared the war to death itself which only means that “we are passing under a covered bridge, and no matter how dark it may seem while we are under it, it is only a brief darkness.” She believed that “we shall come through into the light of peace again, armed with a deep understanding of ourselves, of our neighbours, of God and His purpose.”

However, it does appear that King, not surprisingly, read much less during the war and as C.P. Stacey has suggested, King “denied himself the pleasures” of the spiritualist community of London for the duration of the war. However, he continued to correspond and received many lengthy letters from Mrs. Leonard. She gave King repeated assurances that he was “being protected” and would be given the strength needed for the difficult times ahead. King appreciated her impressions from the Beyond and marked sections of her letters, especially those which made reference to his mother or his friend, Bert Harper who had died in 1901:

29 December 1940

*I know your friend Bert is helping you. He tells me that his naturally idealistic and spiritual nature has been greatly re-enforced since his passing. ... I can feel his spiritual strength very much.*

20 October 1941

*I feel that Bert has been very near you recently*

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1328 Ibid., 218.
1330 Mrs. Leonard to King, 15 June 1940, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 1 File 21, Reel H-3034.
1331 Mrs. Leonard to King, 29 December 1940, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 1 File 21, Reel H-3034. Mrs. Leonard’s underlining.
... Such strong forces are operating around you for protection and guidance. ... I feel that your mother and Bert send their love. You have been given a great deal of power and healing from them and they can give it so easily in your country home which is a kind of spiritual retreat.\footnote{1332}

\begin{center}
21 June 1942
\end{center}

I feel your mother and Bert and your father, too. He seems to come to me unusually strongly - and I sense from them that you are being specially guarded, guided and helped just now. ... The shepherd’s crook you told me about is symbolical of the rather lonely leadership which is yours.\footnote{1333}

\begin{center}
25 September 1944
\end{center}

All I feel ... is that you are being surrounded by protection and are being given guidance as you need it. ... you are always helped when the time comes.\footnote{1334}

King acknowledged the “guidance, comfort, strength, healing and blessing” that he had received throughout this “frightful period.”\footnote{1335} He found Mrs. Leonard’s interpretation of the shepherd’s crook as relating to his rather lonely leadership “significant” as he had “become very much alone in much that I have to do.”\footnote{1336} When they finally met again after the war, King found their talks “memorable and helpful, indeed, truly marvelous. They brought great comfort to me, great strength and much of guidance as well. I do thank you with all my heart.”\footnote{1337}

The letters continued after the war and until his death. Mrs. Leonard felt that she was

\footnote{1332} Mrs. Leonard to King, 20 October 1941, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 1 File 21, Reel H-3034. Two vertical lines in margin. Mrs. Leonard’s underlining.
\footnote{1334} Mrs. Leonard to King, 25 September 1944, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 1 File 21, Reel H-3034. Mrs. Leonard’s underlining.
\footnote{1335} King to Mrs. Leonard, 21 November 1943, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 1 File 21, Reel H-3034.
\footnote{1336} King to Mrs. Leonard, 13 July 1942, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 1 File 21, Reel H-3034.
\footnote{1337} King to Mrs. Leonard, 28 October 1945, in \textit{Spiritualism Series}: Vol. 1 File 21, Reel H-3034.
“in real touch” with King even though he was in Canada - “the spiritual link is there just the same.” Mrs. Leonard continued to assure him that he was being “guided by those on the Other Side” and that he would be guided on two further matters that lay ahead - “one of those two - means breaking fresh ground.” King’s return letter reveals the heavy burden of office:

From what you will have read in the press or heard over the radio you will have realized that between what I have had to carry of ‘atomic bomb’ secrets and of secrets of another order, not so far removed perhaps, I have been in need of all the protection which you assure me those on the other side are giving me in such measure. I feel very conscious of this. I have certainly been ‘breaking fresh ground’. 

Mrs. Leonard’s correspondence provided repeated assurances that King was being guided from the Beyond and as Blair Neatby suggests, “with this assurance, he was invulnerable to the slings and arrows of critics or outrageous fortune.” With such constant confirmation, King was able to withstand the strain of office. Nevertheless, in 1947 retirement was on King’s mind and Mrs. Leonard addressed the issue:

I feel strongly impressed that you are needed just where you are for some time to come - unless you yourself feel differently about it. I think the plan is to keep you there but to ease conditions for you in some way.

Their last meeting was in 1948 when King was laid up during his visit. His last letter to Mrs. Leonard was written on the anniversary of the day on which Harper had been drowned and reflects the sadness that pervaded his last months:

1342 Mrs. Leonard to King, 1 July 1947, in Spiritualism Series: Vol. 1 File 21, Reel H-3034. King marked this section with two vertical lines.
Strangely enough, I have found it very difficult to make much headway with anything since my breakdown in London. ... I shall never forget the remarkable meeting we had in London at the Dorchester. How quickly it all came about, and how remarkable the results were! ... I believe my heart is in better shape than it was, I nevertheless suffer considerably from sleeplessness. That, I am praying, will pass ere long.  

King also read the memoirs of Irish-born sensitive, Eileen Garrett (1893 - 1970). From the beginning, her life was riddled with tragedy and death. Both her parents had committed suicide shortly after her birth and she lost three very young sons. Psychic experiences were a part of her childhood; she lived in her own world of visions; she sensed the movement of colour and light and communicated with unseen children. She saw people not merely as physical bodies but “set within a nebulous egg-shaped covering.” It was these nebulous “surrounds” of living things, and her “growing capacity to visualize forms and sounds in space” that kept her absorbed. The young Eileen experienced the process of separation when she visited the room of her cousin, within a few hours of her passing, and saw “rising above Ann’s body, a curling, shadowy grey substance.”  

Mrs. Garrett was an unconventional women. On two occasions she “wriggled out” of marital states. She joined the Fabian Society where she met Edward Carpenter, the militant socialist, who introduced her to the spiritualist movements of the day. He pointed out to her the possession of a cosmic consciousness which should be preserved and guarded and asked her to study Emerson and Walt Whitman, and the Sacred Books of the East, the Bedas and the Upanishads and the Song Celestial. Mrs. Garrett opened a home during the first war for wounded soldiers, was in Spain during the civil war helping the children who were victims and in 1940

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1343 King to Mrs. Leonard, 6 December 1949, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 1  File 21, Reel H-3034.  
1345 Ibid., 52.  
she was in occupied France quietly working for the Resistance. After the first war, she operated a workers’ hostel which was a favourite meeting place for the leaders of the Labour Party. She mingled with the avant guarde - James Joyce at the Cafe Royal and William Butler Yeats at the Survival League. She met Hewat McKenzie, founder of the British College of Psychic Science, and it was under his careful guidance that her mental mediumship developed. She found in herself the powers which gave her the ability to see clairvoyantly, hear clairaudiently, and sense telepathically what took place around her. When Mrs. Garrett came to the United States in 1931, she worked for six months in New York under the auspices of the American Society for Psychical Research but was disappointed because the majority of its members were spiritualists whose only interest was in communicating with the dead. They were not in the least concerned with the objective investigation of mental phenomena. Hoping that scientific testing might explain her powers, Mrs. Garrett subjected herself to intense physiological, psychological and biological experimentation under the direction of such recognized professionals as J.B. Rhine, Anita Mühl, Adolf Meyer, William McDougall, Hereward Carrington, Oliver Lodge and the well known English psychiatrist, William Brown. In the 1940s Mrs. Garrett owned Creative Age Press and published the works of Robert Graves and Thomas Mann, who had been strongly impressed by psychic literature and work. In the 1960s she took LSD for research purposes.

Although Mrs. Garrett participated in many experiments with experienced investigators, none of them was able to offer her any new understanding of the nature and mechanisms of her mediumship. The general attitude of medicine and psychiatry towards those who had any form of mediumship or special sensitivity was “to place them in the category of neurotics, hysterics or even schizophrenics, and then consider that this has finally classified and disposed of them.” Mrs. Garrett rejected “these false appellations of abnormality” from those scientists who

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considered themselves “objective and open-minded but met the investigation of mediumship and other supernormal phenomena with an attitude of negation.”\footnote{Eileen J. Garrett, My Life as a Search for the Meaning of Mediumship, 188, 194.} In Part VI of her book, “I Discover for Myself a Meaning to Mediumship,” she presented her own compelling explanation of mediumship.\footnote{King marked Part VI copiously and many sections with two vertical lines.} That explanation was based on her repeated contention that the phenomena of mediumship is neither “an extra sensory or abnormal perception, but rather that it is simply due to the intensification and refinement of the activity of the five senses of touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing, combined and carried to a higher pitch or awareness than most people ever reach.”\footnote{Ibid., 177. King marked the section by two vertical lines.}

Garrett’s work with J.B. Rhine in 1933 at Duke University involved testing for clairvoyant and telepathetic ability by simply guessing at the symbols on his ESP cards. The purpose of Rhine’s experiments with Garrett was to compare her results, as an established medium, with those already carried out with volunteers but Garrett performed poorly. The cards lacked “an energy stimulus” which she believed radiated from people and objects in the right circumstances. “Affirmation, faith and desire are,” she wrote, “the energy stimulus needed to produce results in science as well as in art and life.”\footnote{Ibid., 177.} She criticized Rhine’s control over the experimental procedures and his unwillingness to take into account the empathic conditions she considered necessary. She was convinced that “many an investigator has confused a negative attitude toward an experiment with objectivity, and has thereby closed the doors on the necessary energy stimulus needed by the sensitive, engaged for the experiment in supernormal sensing.”\footnote{Ibid., 177.}

Mrs. Garrett understood the fear and negation of scientists who resisted any pressure which drew them away from familiar paths to those less known, as part of the same struggle taking place in education and government “against the new...
implications of greater personal freedom and wider social responsibility for all men. Such changes are resisted because the old order has served in the past.\textsuperscript{1353} She not only rejected the explanation by modern psychology that the nature of clairvoyant vision was a form of extra sensory perception but she also rejected the notion of trance mediumship as consisting of “a passive and sleeplike state” which denied her own agency and control. She had carefully observed that “an active as well as a passive principle” was at work.\textsuperscript{1354} By means of “the control of the tempo of breathing,” she could shift at will into the clairvoyant, the clairaudient or the precognitive state.\textsuperscript{1355} By consciously accelerating her breathing she was able to increase her power and intensify its action. By careful study of the breathing processes in both Yoga and the ritual of dance, Mrs. Garrett discovered that she controlled her supernormal states in exactly the same way as an athlete or dancer controls his body.\textsuperscript{1356} She also had learned from her experiences in clairvoyance, telepathy and projection that it was not concentration and meditation that were needed. Best results were obtained by nonchalance, an absence of directed thinking and what she called a mood of “high carelessness.”\textsuperscript{1357}

Mrs. Garrett described “seven states of consciousness” during the process of clairvoyance culminating in “the attainment of a new state of being.” It is “at this moment of the crescendo of my clairvoyance that precognition, clairaudience, projection and vision-at-a-distance occur simultaneously.” On this level of consciousness she could reach out and “be aware at will of the cycle of life of any human being.”\textsuperscript{1358} At the base of all supernormal sensing was a “hypersensitivity”

\textsuperscript{1353} Ibid., 195.
\textsuperscript{1354} Ibid., 198.
\textsuperscript{1355} Ibid., 196. King marked all the sections on breathing and quoted section by three vertical lines.
\textsuperscript{1356} Mrs. Garrett showed an interest in Eastern spiritualism as did King. She met Rabindranath Tagore in the early thirties when he came to London to deliver the Hibbert lectures. King’s library at Laurier House contains three of Tagore’s works. Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, \textit{The Autobiography of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore} (London: Macmillan, 1914). Marked copiously by King.
\textsuperscript{1357} Eileen J. Garrett, \textit{Many Voices}, 204.
\textsuperscript{1358} Ibid., 205.
created by the fundamental synthesis of the five senses:

‘Supernormal’ sensing is really nothing, therefore, but a refinement of that dynamic power which propels all life through its own incessant growth and evolution.\(^{1359}\)

Mrs. Garrett came to know that her own states of superconsciousness could be constructive and helpful to others. She stood firm in her belief “that the superconsciousness is not a condition of illness and unbalance, but rather one of vitality, harmony, and completeness, a state of realisation from which all the great creations and profound illuminations of mankind have been derived.”\(^{1360}\) The Mind is “the true force that creates all things in the Universe” and “thought is an active force going forth from man’s mind like a flash of lightening, which strikes and affects other minds as it moves and travels thorough space.”\(^{1361}\) All her supernormal experiences convinced her that “the past, present and future are but aspects of one continuous process in the Universe. In such an evolution, birth and death fall into place as necessary phases of an eternally changing cycle which strives towards the perfection of man’s soul.”\(^{1362}\) King was in accord with Mrs. Garrett’s view that “phenomenal mediumship is not so much supernormal as an extension of latent powers. All things will ultimately be found to be one, and that without beginning or end.”\(^{1363}\) Although King read much of Mrs. Garrett’s study of mediumship aloud to Joan and marked many passages, he wrote in his diary that he could not say that he found the book “inspiring” but that he “found it interesting and throwing much light on existing phenomena.”\(^{1364}\) To his mind, Mrs. Garrett did not “represent by any means the highest type of medium” but he found her “scientific analysis of mediumship, most instructive, and along rational and sound lines.”\(^{1365}\) When he visited her “beautifully

\(^{1359}\) Ibid., 207. Marked by three vertical lines.
\(^{1360}\) Ibid., 215. Marked by two vertical lines.
\(^{1361}\) Ibid., 220 - 221. Marked by three vertical lines.
\(^{1362}\) Ibid., 224. Marked by four vertical lines.
\(^{1363}\) W.L.M.K. Diary, 17 August 1942.
\(^{1364}\) W.L.M.K. Diary, 17 August 1942.
\(^{1365}\) W.L.M.K. Diary, 16 August 1942.
furnished and well lighted sitting room, overlooking the corner of Madison Avenue” in 1935, he made more than fourteen pages of notes of the messages from her control, Uhvani. 1366

The Spiritualism Series contains King's notes on the sessions with many other British mediums, Mrs. Sharplin, Mrs. Helen Hughes, Mrs. Hester Dowding as well as Mrs. Leonard, during his visits in the 1940's. In one session with Mrs. Dowding, who used a planchette board with a little pad to spell out the names of those who wished to speak to King, Lady Aberdeen was followed by Max who talked about King’s health and Peter Larkin who spoke about how well King was getting on in politics. Although King felt that a good deal of the material was “perhaps mind reading,” he found the conversation “most interesting and well worthwhile” and that there was “quite a lot that was certainly very evidential about it.” 1367 The next day in a session with Mrs. Sharplin, President Roosevelt sent his warmest greetings and King asked him about Russia and the espionage. Roosevelt told him to “have no fear” for “the greater One has placed a cloak of protection around you.” King pressed the espionage issue and Roosevelt assured him that “the facts that are not good will never affect you ... and never touch you.” 1368 In another session King, obviously troubled, again pressed the espionage matter. He asked about the need for an enquiry, whether the Russian Ambassador to Canada should be recalled and whether they should be given the secret of the bomb. King was advised to keep “as calm as you can” and “know that Right will triumph in the end.” 1369 A sitting with Mrs. Helen Hughes took place in London during the same visit. Mrs. Hughes had come from the North where she had given one of her many public demonstrations. She offered a little prayer and then went into a trance during which Max spoke to her. He said “keep your shoulder at the wheel and we will help you to carry on.” His

1366 W.L.M.K. Diary, 4 December 1935.

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father advised him to take a tonic and carry on for “in another 4 years, a great job will have been completed.”

By the time Mackenzie King first met Geraldine Cummins in 1947, he was as she described in her memoirs, *Unseen Adventures*, “an experienced investigator” and was “no credulous fool.” Miss Cummins was one of the most confident of the interwar mediums. The daughter of Professor Ashley Cummins of Cork, she had achieved distinction both in sport and the literary world. She had played hockey for Ireland and was the author of a novel of Irish peasant life, *The Land They Loved* (1919) and two plays that were produced at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. She treated her mediumship like a profession and regularly submitted her cases for rigorous scientific examination by one or more members of the Society for Psychical Research. Miss Cummins was an automatist, as distinguished from the trance medium who speaks the communication. In their first meeting in November, automatic writing was her method of transmission. King participated by reading and removing the foolscape sheets as they were rapidly filled with writing, occasionally addressing a remark to the communicators. According to Miss Cummins, King “saw no wrong in seeking to obtain communications from the spirits of the dead. For he was following the example of Christ, who, on the mountain, spoke with the spirits of Moses and Elias, and they had been dead for many years.” Miss Cummins and E.B. Gibbes “were not merely captivated by his charm,” but were also “deeply impressed by his wisdom and by a sense of his rare spiritual integrity.” King had brought with him several books and Miss Cummins autographed them for him at his request. As he was leaving, Miss Cummins received “the very unpleasant impression that he would soon become an invalid” and she suggested that he take a holiday and asked if he didn’t “sometimes get bored with politics.” King’s response was that he found “the game fascinating - so full of interest.” When King left the

1373 Ibid., 111.
sitting, he took with him the notes as a precaution. He promised to have a transcript made but he would insist that it be destroyed after reading so that it was not retained among any records other than his own.  

King regarded the transcript of this first sitting “as most remarkable - as evidential indeed as any sitting could be.” He received communications from both Laurier and Franklin Roosevelt on subjects such as his “continuance in public life, the use he might wish to make of Laurier House, the tendencies arising out of the economic relations between the United States and Canada” and the policies of the British Government.  The conversation with Roosevelt is both very informal and flattering:  

Franklin: Say, Mac, it is kind of you to come. I am most uneasy. You can put my mind at rest. I learned that you might consider retiring. I beg of you at whatever cost to continue in public life. It is wiser from the point of view of health to retire but I feel it is your duty not merely to your country but to the world to stay on.

.. There is a bunch of rednecks in finance in the U.S.A. They would like to get hold of Canada through economic penetration. It is not a visible merging of the two countries but an invisible one behind the scenes they are after. ... I may be wrong but you want capital development of your country. In that respect, your care and foresight will prevent any encroachment on your independence and liberties.

King’s conviction that he obtained a message from F.D.R. was principally due to his feeling that “the phraseology and views expressed on persons and politics” were presented in a manner that he believed to be “characteristic of this distinguished

1374 King to Miss Gibbes, 1 December 1947, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 6 File 6, Reel H-3041. C. P. Stacey notes that he was given copies of the two automatic writing scripts produced by Geraldine Cummins in 1947 and 1948. The originals are in the Cummins Papers in the Archives of County Cork. Presumably she did not destroy the copy she received from King.
1375 King to Miss Gibbes, 18 April 1948, in *Spiritualism Series*: Vol. 6 File 6, Reel H-3041.
world statesman.”

The most unusual arrangements were made for King’s second meeting with Miss Cummins and two other mediums, when on his last visit in 1948, he became ill and was confined to the Dorchester Hotel. Many frantic letters and telephone messages were exchanged before Miss Cummins and Miss Gibbes arrived at the hotel. On this occasion Miss Cummins wrote rapidly for about fifty minutes. King was greatly surprised by a statement by F.D.R. that strongly argued attention be given to the Far East. Although King showed deep interest in this part of the communication, he said “that he made it a rule to ignore advice volunteered at sittings; he trusted solely to his own and his advisors’ judgement.” In view of the outbreak of the Korean war, within two years, perhaps the F.D.R. statement was a correct forecast.

The newly opened Spiritualism Series contains many records of seances and psychical experiences and private correspondence with spiritualist friends but no so-called spiritualism diaries. However, there is a remarkable diary record of King’s activities and thought on the eve of the 1945 election which appears in the Spiritualism Series and may have been part of a spiritual diary or merely removed from his regular diary. It begins with a statement of King’s faith:

In the quiet of this Sunday morning, let me write out what I do believe. God has guided me throughout this campaign. His hand has been plain all along the way. In thought I have failed on more than one occasion I have not been able to restrain all my feelings as by now I should have gained power of will sufficiently to do. God knows my heart, He knows my nature, He knows that I have fought earnestly and bravely every inch of the way and sought to be true in everything to the highest and the last. My failures have only made me more conscious

1377 Geraldine Cummins, Mind in Life and Death, 118.
1378 In Spiritualism Series: Vol. 7 File 27, Reel H-3042, there is a statement of account for services rendered by Miss Geraldine Cummins, Mrs. Sharplin and Mrs. Edith Thomson dated 27 October 1948.
1379 Geraldine Cummins, Mind in Life and Death, 112.
than ever of the love and mercy of God. He has a purpose in my life and that purpose will be fulfilled. ... But most of all I have sought after purity and righteousness and the fruits of these endeavours are beginning to be apparent. So I feel that all I want, all I desire in the outcome of tomorrow’s voting, is that God’s will may be done, that His purpose in my life may be fulfilled. I shall be happy whatever the result. Happy for my party and its cause, if we win, though it means to be personally buckling a heavy burden on my own back for some time to come. Happy for the new lease of life and freedom and peace if the decision is the other way.\footnote{1380}

King remained convinced that his government would win a majority. In the morning King first turned to “the little book,” \textit{Daily Strength for Daily Needs} for the guidance for 10 June and recorded the words: “The Lord thy God will enlighten thy darkness” and “He sees thee through the Gloom during which thou shall not see Him.”\footnote{1381}

Having chosen Revelations for the month, he read Chapter 10 ending: “And he said unto me Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, many nations and tongues and kings.”\footnote{1382} Before waking “a vision of receiving a banquet in Kitchener - old Berlin” seemed to be “a symbol of victory tomorrow.” During his morning walk with Pat, he “knelt & prayed at the stone for God’s forgiveness, His continued guidance, with thanks for his mercy & his love, remembering little Pat - the other little dogs, not asking once for victory but my last words ‘Thy will be done.’” When they reached the far gates which were closed, it was seen as “a symbol of end of long journey of campaign & place in public life up to present” but he told Pat that “tomorrow they will be open” and “larger vistas will unfold ... with wider

\footnote{1380} W.L.M. King, Diary, 10 June 1945, in \textit{Spiritualism Series: Vol. 7 File 14}, Reel H-3042. In his regular diary there is no entry for 10, 11 June 1945. There are five single-spaced typed pages for 10 June 1945 and three for 11 June 1945. Selections have been chosen to best represent King’s thoughts and include some slight errors in his quotations. The Spiritualism Series also contains several diary entries for 1942 but these are also in the regular diary. For example, W.L.M. King, Diary, 28 March 1942, in \textit{Spiritualism Series: Vol. 7 File 11}, Reel H-3042.

\footnote{1381} W.L.M. King, Diary, 10 June 1945. King’s underlining. Mary W. Tileston, \textit{Daily Strength for Daily Needs} (Toronto: Musson, 1939), 162. Quoted in his diary and marked in this copy. King had several copies of this book: one (1905 edition) given to him by his sister Bella and his mother’s copy (1901 edition) inscribed to her by King. The little book of verse and scripture was intended for a daily companion and counsellor.

\footnote{1382} W.L.M. King, Diary, 10 June 1945.
opportunities.” On the way back, King “looked into the clear sun & with my stick - like a shepherd’s crook in hand prayed ‘Lead thou me on’ & then returned to my own house, breakfast in the sun by the window.”^1383

After breakfast King returned to his little books. They revealed victory:

... the nation will express its confidence in me, and that I shall be returned as well as member for Prince Albert. I shall see that my faith has been rewarded, all that I may the better come to prove the reality of the moral order which controls this world & all the universe - and make this better known to men. - God grant that in all this I am right. ^1384

King asked God to bless all those who had helped him through the years:

... God bless them all, Father, Mother, Bell and Max - grandparents on both sides - Sir William Mulock - my old colleagues Norman Rogers (taken away 2 years ago today) Skelton, Dandurand, Lapointe, and many many more - not forgetting Roosevelt - a dear true friend. They and many others Grey & Gladstone & Asquith - all I believe have been helping in this campaign - a great and noble company. - There are many many more whose names are in my heart & memories in my mind, Mrs. Wriedt, Oliver Lodge, Professor Wm. James, Charles Eliot Norton, Goldwin Smith - may God bless them all. ^1385

King retired that night on the eve of the election taking three books with him. One was an unrecognized title with “very beautiful pictures of This England, standing for St. George slaying the Dragon.”^1386 The second title was All Dogs Go to Heaven by
Beth Brown and the third was *The Man Born to be King* by Dorothy Sayers.\(^{1387}\) When he opened *All Dogs Go to Heaven* to the chapter in which he had seen the name Rex, a clipping on Sir Oliver Lodge and his dog fell out and this “seemed” to tell King that he “was going to receive something from his spiritualist friends.”\(^{1388}\) King recorded the opening words from page “223=7” and other pages:

> It was very quiet. It was moonlight. In a little while, it would be dawn ... There seemed to be a deep and secret communion between the earth and the sky, between the light and the darkness - one world gave way - and the other came to be.

> It was the same with life and death. The curtain was very thin. At times it was so thin there was no curtain between.\(^{1389}\)

From “page 224 re- the two worlds,” King recorded:

> ... of inner retrospect - world of travel - via the magic carpet of swift thought ... There was no death as such.

And from page 225 King recorded a line which made him think of the outcome of the elections:

> ... and so would the future be, his heart told him quietly - broad, bright and beautiful.\(^{1390}\)

More reading and “Harper came much to my thoughts, it was as if he too were

\(^{1387}\) Beth Brown, *All Dogs Go to Heaven* (New York: Frederick Fell, 1944).

\(^{1388}\) Dorothy Sayers, *The Man Born to be King: A Play-Cycle on the Life of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ*, written for broadcasting (London: Victor Gollancz, 1944). Inscription: Inscribed for Mr Mackenzie King in gratitude for the past present & hope for the future. Dorothy L. Sayers 12-5-44 *They shall come,* He said, ‘from East & West’.

\(^{1389}\) W.L.M. King, Diary, 11 June 1945.

\(^{1390}\) W.L.M. King, Diary, 11 June 1945. Copied from Beth Brown, *All Dogs Go to Heaven*, 223.

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watching & waiting for me & now speaking.”\footnote{1391} And from page 227 and 234 reference to the vote and the verdict:

But I did take a vote ... What’s the count?
The verdict ... For or against?
In your favour, of course.
Yes, in your favour Rex.\footnote{1392}

King had transformed his reading into predictions which he found “truly amazing” and “proof of its all being revelation” which he believed would come true before the end of the day. That evening King “wanted his last thoughts to be of my Master” and so he turned to Dorothy Sayers’ radio play on the life of Christ, *The Man Born to be King*. He was too tired to read much but “enough to know that His life has meant everything to this world. ... My prayer as I went to sleep was to become more & more worthy of His love.”\footnote{1393}

Though King’s interest in spiritualism was known to his intimate friends, not all of them approved. Violet Markham in her own book, *Friendship’s Harvest*, wrote that King’s spiritualism “was a line of thought in which I was unable to follow him, but friendship would be a dull affair if friends in all matters thought alike. So I listened to his views with interest if without conviction.”\footnote{1394} She used the analogy of a set of Chinese boxes to describe “the contents of a many-sided mind, each being wholly distinct from that of its fellow” and “spiritualism had a box to itself.”\footnote{1395} And as she suggested, “it did not in the least affect his religious beliefs or practice, but it was a special interest, apart from his practical life as a statesman.”\footnote{1396} Markham who was “often puzzled by the apparent contradiction that a man so acute and cautious as a politician could draw such tremendous conclusions from evidence that seemed ..

\footnote{1391} W.L.M. King, Diary, 11 June 1945.  
\footnote{1392} W.L.M. King, Diary, 11 June 1945.  Copied from Beth Brown, *All Dogs Go to Heaven*, 227 and 234.  
\footnote{1393} W.L.M. King, Diary, 11 June 1945.  King’s underlining.  
\footnote{1394} Violet Markham, *Friendship’s Harvest* (London: Max Reinhardt, 1956), 162.  
\footnote{1395} Ibid.  
\footnote{1396} Ibid.
trifling," suggested that "his belief, as a Christian, in personal survival was so strong that communication with the dead presented no difficulties to him." Markham granted King freedom here believing that "it is not necessary to ridicule spiritualism because of the dark underworld of superstition and fraud that admittedly exists side by side with serious enquiry." She concluded:

Of one thing I am positive, Mackenzie King’s interest was purely a personal matter, largely determined by deep family affections that after the death of dear relations lacked any expression in daily life. His conduct of public affairs was never remotely influenced by communications, real or imagined, from the other side. He sought no advice from any such source respecting the Government of Canada.

And King himself expressed concern about certain errors in communications received during seances, particularly when they gave directions for which he felt “an intuitive resentment.” He recalled after a session “the advice of one book ... never to allow the spirits to direct.”

Perhaps credence should be given to King’s trusted confidante for she was one of his few intimate friends and had corresponded with King regularly since 1905 when she met the young King in Ottawa and described him as “a charming young man with all the right ideas.” They shared a liberalism “filled with dreams for the regeneration of mankind.” They saw “in the new British Government a powerful influence in the field of social reform which might turn some of these dreams into reality.” She understood that “Rex had so little personal life and lived wholly and completely in

1397 Ibid.
1398 Ibid., 163.
1399 Ibid.
1400 W.L.M.K. Diary, 28 July 1934. King’s underlining.
1401 Violet Markham, Friendship’s Harvest, 143. Markham recorded this slightly priggish comment in her diary in 1905.
1402 Ibid., 152. Markham is an interesting social reformer. She supported The National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage.
and for his work.”¹⁴⁰³ So few people knew him as she did and she believed “that is why the misrepresentations about him and his motives were often gross.”¹⁴⁰⁴ King confessed that he wrote to Markham as he did because to her “better than to any other person in this world have I been able to express what there is of spiritual reality in my nature.”¹⁴⁰⁵ And he told Markham that “Did I not feel that I had some hold on a spiritual world that was real, unchangeable, and unshakeable, I should not wish to be in the public life a day.”¹⁴⁰⁶

For many people today Spiritualism is an outmoded belief that is irrelevant to the secular preoccupations of an enlightened twenty-first century. In keeping with this assumption, historians have found in King’s religious beliefs and his communication with his deceased loved ones a rationale for ridicule. The mundane messages from the spirit world are an affront to modern sensibilities. C.P. Stacey seized upon the freakishness of King’s spiritualism but ignored its intellectual aspects. He ridiculed the rappings of the little table but failed to understand King’s spiritualism as a form of protest against the tide of modernist materialism. Stacey was offended by the overly sentimental nature of King’s mourning for his loved ones and remained unsympathetic to the changing religious landscape in which King’s religious faith was diverted into spiritualism. King’s belief in immortality easily morphed into a deep interest in the supernatural world. King’s commitment to spiritualism was by no means unusual. The movement experienced a substantial revival following the Great War. The surge in the popularity of spiritualism revealed how great was the public desire to believe in something more than a material world. *Industry and Humanity* showcased King’s philosophy based on the three pillars of Reason, Faith and Progress. While he celebrated industrial progress, he lamented “the unconscious drift towards the material in all things” and advocated “substituting a spiritual interpretation of life for the materialistic interpretation of the universe.”¹⁴⁰⁷

¹⁴⁰³ Violet Markham to F. A. McGregor, 16 August 1950.
¹⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.
¹⁴⁰⁵ King to Violet Markham, 2 January 1918.
¹⁴⁰⁶ King to Violet Markham, 23 August 1935.
spiritualism of King’s later years grew out this deep concern and reflected the loneliness of a man burdened with office who craved support and the comfort of the unseen world.

My careful perusal of King’s library has shown that King studied spiritualism seriously and had a sophisticated understanding of psychical research. However, spiritualism was more than just a field of interest for King. It brought the emotional comfort and reassurance that he was guided by his spiritual friends just as he was guided by God. At times, however, King clearly just “let go.” He sometimes allowed his intellectual and practical machinery to run wild. He abandoned reason for the irrational and sometimes indulged in the foolish.
Mackenzie King was a deeply spiritual man; he lived in a religiously conceived world. In his diary he “proclaimed that life was an endless search after God.” King read to confirm and deepen his faith. He also read for information as well as for inspiration. Reading was not a form of entertainment; it was for spiritual uplift and self-improvement. He habitually set aside time in the morning for prayer, reading the Bible and his ‘little books’ of devotion. He prayed earnestly to become a better man and “to live a true & noble life.” He prayed for strength, purpose and “divine guidance.” He prayed “that at the end of life my countenance might reveal a man who had been true to the faith, and sought to be a follower of His Lord and Master Jesus Christ.” He also wrote that “no one knows better than I do how my countenance has lacked this touch & how deservedly so, but it too can be changed by the power of God.” In his diary he pledged to read good literature every morning to stimulate his mind through the day and rebuked his failure at times, “particularly in not reading more history and literature and studying politics closely, and perfecting myself in different aspects of public life, speaking, writing, etc.”

Self-improvement was both a secular and religious goal. He longed for a regeneration at once physical, moral and spiritual. One day he might read “a book on Control of nervousness” followed by “the reading of Bishop Greer’s book on the Historic Christ & Moral Force.” Another day he would begin with William James followed by the physical exercises prescribed in *The Culture of the Abdomen*. He read aloud to family and friends; he read on vacations, when he was travelling and a
great deal at Kingsmere. His father was a Victorian gentleman and scholar who raised his sons to love literature and learning and King received a superb education for his time. As Norman Rogers has suggested, King never regarded his education as ended. Like Gladstone whom he greatly admired, King was a learner all his life. More importantly King inherited a liberalized view of Christianity which influenced all his thinking all his life. To whatever King read, he brought a powerful religious perspective, whether it be economics, history or science. He yearned for a life of moral worth in a material world.

King’s early reading had a strong British bias. King loved the romantic poetry of Wordsworth which exulted the passionate intuitive side of human nature and celebrated the spiritual unity that bound every individual to society, nature and to the divine. He loved the high ideals of Tennyson’s The Idylls of the King. Matthew Arnold’s Rugby Chapel was a favourite of King’s, “pointing, as it does, a noble useful view of human duty.” Arnold’s The Buried Life was one of the most hopeful and moving poems that King ever read. As many of his poems, it appealed to the innermost recesses of being as the ultimate refuge against the disruptive factors in modern life.

King diligently studied British politics and interacted with many British politicians. In particular, he read the detailed lives of many British Liberals. He revered the political leadership and Christian life of Gladstone and held this learned model in full view throughout his entire career. Although King moved forward in directions not taken by Gladstone and accepted a social Christianity and a greater role for government, he looked to Gladstone and the other great Liberals as models. He understood the need to be connected to the past in order to move forward. As he walked up the stairs of Laurier House, he derived a sense of continuity from the gallery of Liberal portraits hung on the oak walls. It was these great men, these Liberal heroes of the past, who inspired his political leadership. He knew what they thought, how they felt,

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and how they managed their particular problems. They demonstrated all that he most prayed for and needed - “religious strength & moral force and courage.”

Their example offered him the kind of public life he most desired.

However, King’s British bias was supplemented by the cultural giants at Harvard where he joined the prestigious circle of Charles Eliot Norton at Shady Hill and was favoured by President Charles W. Eliot. Though the political model of Gladstone remained before him, King also explored the views of the American pragmatist, William James, who raised questions concerning the spiritual value and moral consequences of religious experience. He attained a broader education than most of his contemporaries and rubbed shoulders with many of the great minds of the day in both Britain and North America. King was successful in politics because he was sagacious but he also systematically applied himself to the task of learning. Texts were to be studied and important sections marked. He brought to the table his superior intellect, knowledge and training along with a will to lead.

King’s reading spanned the nineteenth-century fascination with ‘great men’ and individual political lives which focused on character, through the social sciences which considered the forces acting on society, to the realm of psychology which focused on the development of personality and the moral self, and finally to the examination of spiritualism which reinforced his earlier idealism and condemned modern materialism. As a student, King approached the social questions of the day with the mind of a scholar combined with the practical outlook of the man of affairs. He even approached spiritualism in the same studious way. He studied psychical phenomena in all their aspects simply and methodically like he had studied economics and industrial relations and he felt the tilt of the table and the thrill of the seance.

When King read he sought information but he also sought spiritual sustenance and took into account the character of those he studied for he believed that “character is...”

W.L.M.K. Diary, 22 February 1918.

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the determining factor in all things.”

When he passed judgement on what he read, that which was “inspiring” trumped that which was “interesting.” He felt “the need of inspiration, as well as help.” He accorded priority to high ideals and religious beliefs over information and methods because they would make him a better man. The real King found solace in spiritualism and more importantly strength and vitality in religion. Politically, King was well-educated and as astute as Gladstone and he profoundly believed in a spiritual universe “for it is spirit, not matter, that gives meaning to ‘the sum of things entire’; and the import is slight or momentous as spiritual vision is dim or clear.”

In one of the last books King read, he marked the author’s concern about the “spiritual lack or emptiness” of modern man. King noted that “our central problem is moral and spiritual” and that “what Western man needs more than anything else is a restoration of faith in something which will dignify his existence.”

In an age of religious liberalism, King’s beliefs grew more diversified and his convictions increasingly private. His religion was not of the Calvinistic variety focusing on sin and damnation but about individual duty, personal morality and learning to live as a good man. King worked very hard to reconcile faith and reason and the psychology of William James helped him do this. His faith was not strengthened by doctrine but by prayer and devotion. Faith was the source of Mackenzie King’s security, confidence and power. Religion allayed the intolerable stress and strain of office and gave him “the chance to be a real leader among men.”

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1418 King to J.A. Spender, 4 November 1931.
1421 Ibid., 19, 23. First quote marked by two vertical lines, second by three.
1422 W.L.M.K. *Diary*, 22 February 1918.
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APPENDIX I

The Face of Gladstone in Ectoplasm

Spiritualism Series: Vol. 2 File 4, Reel H-3035
APPENDIX II

CHART II

CHART ILLUSTRATIVE OF PROGRESS IN INDUSTRY
APPENDIX III

CHART III

DISCOVERY AND INVENTION—GOVERNMENT—EDUCATION—OPINION
MAY AFFECT FAVORABLY OR ADVERSELY
ON
AN INTERNATIONAL SCALE
OR OF
A NATIONAL SCALE
OR OF
A STATE SCALE
OR LOCALLY

THE WORKING OUT OF

THE DISTRIBUTION
IMPLICATIONS ON
EXTENSIONS OF
CAPITAL & LABOR
MANAGEMENT
AND THE COMMUNITY
WITH RESPECT TO
THE LAW OF WORK

THE FLOWING TO
THE TREES OF

CHART ILLUSTRATIVE OF
IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTING
FACTORS IN INDUSTRIAL
RELATIONS

NOTE:
Industrial Relations May
Similarly Affect
Discovery & Invention,
Government, Education, Opinion

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APPENDIX IV

CHART IV

CHART ILLUSTRATIVE OF NATURE AND SCOPE OF IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTING FACTORS IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
APPENDIX V

CHART V

CHART ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE LAW OF PEACE, WORK, AND HEALTH IN RELATIONS WITHIN AND WITHOUT INDUSTRY
APPENDIX VI

CHART VI

CHART ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE ACTION AND REACTION OF DISCOVERY, INVENTION, GOVERNMENT, EDUCATION AND OPINION IN RELATIONS WITHIN AND WITHOUT INDUSTRY
APPENDIX VII

CHART VII

CHART ILLUSTRATIVE OF FACTORS INFLUENCING RELATIONS WITHIN AND WITHOUT INDUSTRY
APPENDIX VIII

CHART VIII
APPENDIX IX

CHART IX
APPENDIX X

CHART X

MARGINAL MARKING by KING

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separated areas as the Sahara, London, the Congo, and China, and Greenland."

We can understand, then, that there may well be many variations in the accounts which we receive of life in the next world. But, as our author truly says, "if the critic would read enough of these books he would find that certain essential points were in agreement, and that it was only the details which varied."

What are the essential points? This, for one, that life in the next world is a life, not a state. There is movement in it, effort, action, change, growth, decay, ascent, descent, progress, relapse; but there, as here, the general trend of the movement is towards the unfoldment of spiritual life. There is rest for those who need rest, and prolonged rest at the outset for those who are worn out by their life on earth. But there, as here, rest prepares the way for renewed activity. The changeless heaven of orthodox theology is as non-existent as the changeless hell. And the next life is purgatorial only in the sense in which this life is—in the sense that there are abundant opportunities in it for the purification of the soul through suffering. A famous traveller and writer, from whom communications were received after his death, when asked by his wife (a Roman Catholic) if he was in "the Prison