



PIONEER

Volume.I No.I August 2013



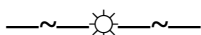
The new “Pioneer” electronic journal is compiled and edited by Paul J. Gaunt, editor of the Psypioneer Journal¹ and curator of the Britten Memorial Museum, which is housed in the Arthur Findlay College, Stansted Hall.

This new history journal will be presented much along the lines of Psypioneer, using original researched material wherever possible. Articles and quotes are taken from original sources as they were published at the time and reproduced by “Optical Character Recognition” (OCR), the conversion of scanned images of handwritten, typewritten or printed text into machine-encoded text. This means that grammar, old English, spelling mistakes, etc. are not usually changed. However, long paragraphs are sometimes split for easier reading; any errors or explanations needed are noted in footnotes.

The journal will primarily cover the history of the Spiritualists’ National Union and its pioneers. This will be especially beneficial to the educational side of the Union and to those who wish to become more acquainted with its long history and its workers.

The foundations of the Spiritualists’ National Union were laid over a long period of time, and its growth ensured by dedicated pioneers, many of whom have been forgotten. Most readers will be unacquainted with their names and the roles they so valiantly played in the building of the SNU, an organisation that today stands firm due to their bold efforts.

This journal is dedicated to those Pioneers.

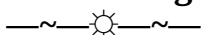


¹.—Psypioneer was begun as a free monthly newsletter in May 2004 by its founder editor and well-known historian Leslie Price. Paul Gaunt took over as editor in July 2005, assuming ownership in February 2006. Leslie is still very much involved with the journal as its sub-editor; the journal is still freely available and is archived in Australia by Garth Willey at the Woodlands Sanctuary Foundation. For further information about Psypioneer or to subscribe please visit:—<http://www.woodlandway.org>

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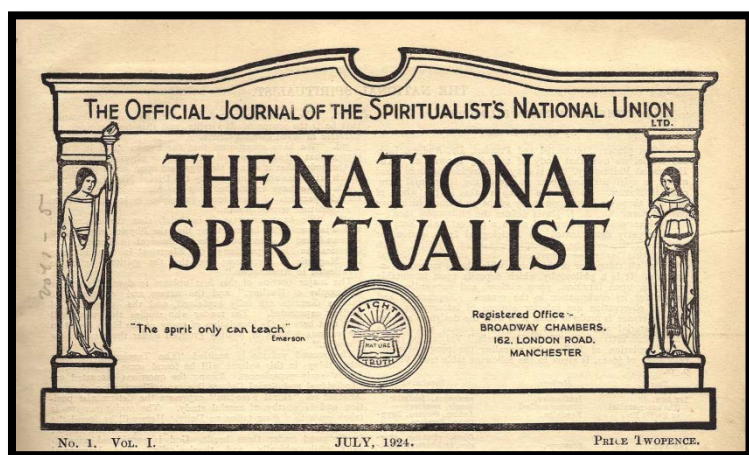


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THE FIRST SNU JOURNAL

July 1924 – December 1932



The first official journal of the Spiritualists' National Union came into being under the presidency of the first female President, Jessy Greenwood, in July 1924. Greenwood was President from 1923 until 1925. Only one other woman has held this position in the Union, Minister Judith Seaman, presiding from 1996 until 2000.

In the opening paragraph of 'The National Spiritualist', dubbed "Our S.N.U. Journal!", Greenwood commented:

"I want to stress the word *Our* and at once secure the interest of every member of the Union to give it their blessing and a send-off worthy the Cause that gives it birth and as each birthday comes round to continue many happy returns.

"It is intended as an open door to all whom it may concern. District Councils will here find a means of ventilating those matters which call for united action in strengthening the means of Government in the Churches, Lyceums, District Committees or Subsidiary Groups; to the S.N.U. it will provide a means of discussing how best to carry on collective propaganda; and also of knowing the personnel of such bodies."

She further states:

"The need for such a journal has been felt for many years, and no one stronger in his claims for articulate expression in the Movement of Spiritualism than the late Hanson G. Hey.² "We must have our own paper if we mean to reach our people," and the need is more clamant to-day."

².—The first Annual General Meeting and Consultative Conference of the Spiritualists' National Union, Ltd., was held on Saturday and Sunday, July 4th and 5th, 1903 at the Spiritual Temple, Heber Street, Keighley. At this meeting under the new constitution of the SNU the first SNU officers were elected under the presidency of William Johnson. The then serving officers were co-opted on from the formerly known Spiritualists' National Federation. Hanson Gledhill Hey (August 30th, 1866 – February 28th, 1921) was elected Vice-President. William Greenwood (Jessy's husband) was elected Treasurer. A year later, at the Conference held at Laisterdyke, Bradford, Hanson Hey was elected Secretary; his tobacconist's shop in Crown Street, Halifax became the first SNU registered office. For more on Hanson Hey see: *Psypioneer*, Volume 6, No 10: October 2010: *Hanson Gledhill Hey – Paul J. Gaunt*; & *The Passing of Mr. Hanson G. Hey – The Two Worlds*. All *Psypioneer* issues are archived at:—<http://www.woodlandway.org>

The SNU monthly journal was printed by Wadsworth and Co., Rydal Press, Keighley and firstly published from the SNU's registered office of Broadway Chambers, 162, London Road, Manchester, and continued after their move.³ A two-volume bound set is held at the Britten Memorial Library at Redwoods and holds a wealth of material, some of which will be republished in this new journal. Throughout the journal's existence it struggled due to financial pressures but kept the price at twopence until its final issue, eight and a half years later, in December 1932. From the early days of the Spiritualists' National Federation (SNF) in 1890, the *Two Worlds* weekly journal had been closely linked. The foundations of the SNF which formulated the SNU were significantly made up with the directors of the *Two Worlds*. On the closing of *The National Spiritualist* the directors of the *Two Worlds* offered "space in their journal for Union matter and views" amounting to one page per week. The editor of the *National Spiritualist* was the SNU General Secretary and former President (1929-1922) George Berry. It is noted in the journals final pages of thanks: "Particularly to Mr. George H. Lethem, who for a considerable period read the proofs of each issue ..."⁴

During its existence it had reported on nine AGMs and four newly-elected Presidents: Jessy Greenwood 1923-1925, Robert A. Owen 1925-1928, Ernest Keeling 1928-1930 and John McIndoe 1930-1938.

Below are brief early biographies of these four Presidents. All the Presidents from the formation of the SNU in 1890, then called the Spiritualists' National Federation,⁵ will be covered in this journal; we will also include the Lyceum Union, which was so closely involved in the growth of the Union:

³.—In July 1931 the SNU's registered office moved to Hollins Chambers, 64a Bridge Street, Deansgate, Manchester. Later in 1948 it would again move, but this time into its first property purchased (mortgaged) by the Britten Memorial Trust, at Britten House, 12 Tib Lane, Manchester. The final move was made to the grounds of Stansted Hall in 1971, firstly to what is today called the Annex (now accommodation for the College), retaining its name, "Britten House"; the plaque at the entrance still remains. Later the Union moved a few yards down the path and the building is now known as "Redwoods".

⁴.—George Henderson Lethem was the editor of the weekly journal, *Light*, who took up the position in 1931 at the age of sixty-three and continued until 1941.

⁵.—Spiritualists' National Federation—Spiritualists' National Union:—A note of general explanation for the various names. On July 6th, 1890 the first Conference (Manchester) was called "The National Conference of British Spiritualists", sometimes referred to as the "National Conference of Spiritualists". On July 4th, 1891, at the second Conference held at Bradford, it was named the "Spiritualists' National Federation" (sometimes reports called it the "National Federation of Spiritualists"). As today the SNU is often referred to as the "Union", its earlier name was referred to as the "National Federation". At the thirteenth Annual Conference on Saturday and Sunday, 5th & 6th July, 1902 at Stanley Hall, Stanley Road, Bootle under the presidency of Mr W. Johnson began the title "Spiritualists' National Union".

Below is taken from *The National Spiritualist*:—⁶

MRS. JESSY GREENWOOD, J.P.

(Chairman Hebden Bridge U.D.C.)

Mrs. J. Greenwood was born at Cawkwell, Lincolnshire May 8th, 1860, and spent all her girlhood's days in these surroundings. At the age of 19, she left home to take a teaching post at Calder, Yorkshire. Here she met Mr. William Greenwood,⁷ and was married two later, settling down at Sowerby Bridge, from which centre and the neighbouring town of Hebden Bridge has emanated all the activities which has made and useful to her.



At Sowerby Bridge, Mrs. Greenwood was attracted to the Lyceum, and in her enthusiasm gave her best efforts successively in all the offices it offered. She was elected President of the Lyceum Union in the Jubilee year 1897–8. Together with Messrs. Kitson, Kersey, Venables, Morse, Mason, Todd, Miss Naylor and others she was instrumental in laying the foundation of the organisation now known as the B.S.L.U.⁸

Mr. and Mrs. Greenwood were indeed both active workers locally and nationally, and in the Yorkshire Federation. Later when the S.N.U. was formed under guidance and activity of Hanson G. Hey, Mr. Greenwood became the Treasurer of the Union, which he held until his passing in 1905. Mrs. Greenwood was elected to the S.N.U. Council in 1906, and served two years. Re-elected in 1912 she served continuously until her retirement in 1925. Elected Vice-President 1922, and President 1924-5. She was granted Honorary Membership in 1928.

The year of her election as President concided with the facts that the Union celebrated its 21st birthday, and elected its first woman president. Mrs. Greenwood's greatest service on the Union was work on the Propaganda Committee.

Outside Spiritualism, Mrs. Greenwood has rendered conspicuous service in many directions. In 1905 she was elected a Guardian of the Poor on the Todmorden Board, and remained for six years the only woman member. From this position she passed to service on the Local Education Committee and has been a Governor of the Secondary School some years, and has occupied the Chairmanship of that body.

⁶.—*The National Spiritualist*, No. 61, Vol. VI, July 1929. The photograph in the article is poor quality; the image shown is from Psypioneer archives, date unknown.

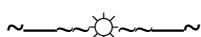
⁷.—William Greenwood, aged only 44, died on Saturday, April 22, 1905. "The Passing of William Greenwood, Treasurer of the British Spiritualists' National Union." See Psypioneer, Volume 6, No 11: November 2010, pages 317-318.

⁸.—B.S.L.U: British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union; the history of this will be given in the next issue.

For 19 years Mrs. Greenwood has been an active worker in the Co-operative Movement, serving on the local Co-operative Society as a Director, and is at the present time Vice-President.

Again in 1921, fresh honours came in her elevation as a County Magistrate, being the first and only woman J.P. to sit on the Todmorden Bench. Four years earlier, Mrs. Greenwood became a member of the Hebden Bridge Urban District Council, and in May of this year the crowning honour was bestowed on her by election as chief Citizen, viz., Chairman of the Urban District Council.

An active life, full of service to her fellow citizens of town and country, and a type of that Spiritualism, which finds religious consolation and inspiration for the daily life of service to humanity.



Below is taken from *The National Spiritualist*:—⁹

MR. R. A. OWEN

(Past President of the S.N.U.)

Mr. Robert A. Owen was born at Bootle, Lancashire, Oct. 27th, 1881. His father was a native of North Wales. Robert was educated at St. John's Church Day School, which he left at the age of 12 years to become a wage earner. When 9 years of age, he was brought into contact with the Lyceum at Daulby Hall, Liverpool and there began the life-long friendship with his colleagues, Mr. E. A. Keeling. In these early years the gifts of clairvoyance and Clairaudience were developed, and helped to conviction to his parents of the reality of a life beyond the tomb.



In 1896, a Spiritualist Society and Lyceum was opened at Bootle, and young Robert transferred his membership to the new Lyceum. Here he graduated in the various offices of both Lyceum and Church. The Church was closed within a few years, and Mr. Owen went back to Daulby Hall, where he remained until his removal to Dublin in 1924.

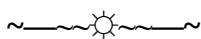
An ardent spiritualist throughout his life, Mr. Owen saw the birth of the South West Lancs and Cheshire Group in July 1904. He was appointed Secretary, a position he held for many years. When the Lancashire District Committee came into existence, Mr. Owen was elected its President, which he retained until his removal to Ireland.

⁹.—*The National Spiritualist*, No. 63, Vol. VI, September 1929. The photograph is taken from the article.

He was elected to the National Council in 1908, and only retired this year after filling in succession the office of Vice-President, 1923–25, President 1925–28, and one year as Ex-President of the Union. He has thus completed 21 years, successive service on the National Council.

His interests have been particularly directed to organisation, propaganda, finance and education. As secretary of the Organisation Committee he was instrumental in getting a census of the Churches and their activities. Out of these labours there came the institution of two-fold membership, the Study Groups Scheme, and re-drafting of Rules for Churches, District Councils, and for the National Council.

He has been no less active in the Lyceum movement. He became District Visitor in 1904, and held all offices in the Liverpool Lyceum District Council. In 1907 he became Secretary of the United Lyceum District Council, and later its President. In 1908 he was elected to the Management Committee of the B.S.L.U. and was Vice-President prior to his election as President in 1911. Later in 1919, he became Treasurer to the Union, holding that office until his removal to Dublin.

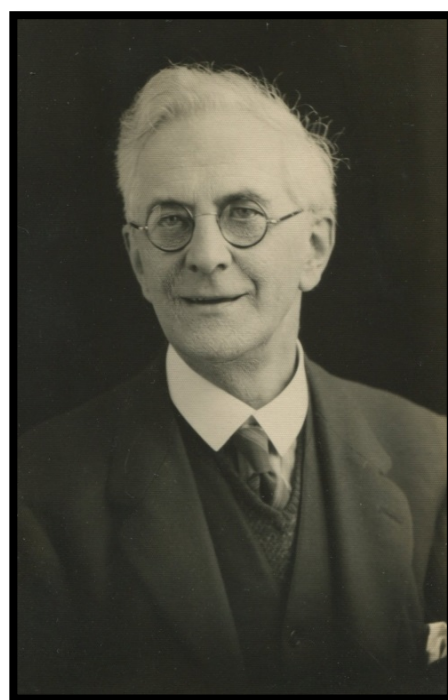


Below is taken from *The National Spiritualist*:—¹⁰

MR. ERNEST ALLAN KEELING, A.N.S.C.

(President: Spiritualists, National Union).

It is with pleasure that this month we present a picture of Mr. Ernest A. Keeling,¹¹ who was re-elected President at the recent Annual General Meeting. Born in 1877, Mr. Keeling was educated at St. Margaret's (Anfield, Liverpool) Higher Grade School, and during his early years attended the Sunday School connected with the Church. His schooling was unfortunately curtailed through the loss of his father whose transition took place in January 1890. Economic necessity made it imperative he should help in maintaining the home and he started to work shortly after his 13th birthday. Within a few months he joined the Lyceum at Daulby Hall, which at that time was conducted by Mr. S. S. Chiswell, to whose training, together with the influence of Mr. Chiswell, much of his past and present usefulness must be attributed. Before long he became an active worker in the Lyceum and after filling several minor offices eventually became



¹⁰.—*The National Spiritualist*, No. 62, Vol. VI, August 1929.

¹¹.—The photograph is taken from the Britten Memorial Museum, Stansted Hall; the article photograph (different image) is poor quality.

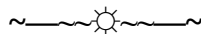
secretary. It was while holding this office that he was cited as a co-defendant with Mr. Chiswell and others in a case tried in the High Court of Justice before the late Mr. Justice Phillimore, as a result of which it was established that a Lyceum is an integral part of a Church and subject to its authority.

While still in his teens he suffered several severe illnesses and was ordered to take a sea voyage, being unable to afford such a luxury he joined the S.S. New England as a steward and for nearly two years sailed between Liverpool and Boston, U.S.A. When in the latter city he paid occasional visits to Mr. A. J. Davis and spent happy and profitable hours in his company.

In 1903 Mr. Keeling was elected to the Executive Committee of the B.S.L.U. and, except during a protracted attack of neurasthenia, has since been an enthusiastic worker on behalf of the Lyceum movement, of which he was President for two years. As time went on he added Church work to his Lyceum activities. He was elected as auditor to the S.N.U. in the year 1925, and the following year was promoted to be Councillor, which position he filled till 1919. He was re-elected in 1925, passed to the Vice-Chair in 1926, and in 1928 followed Mr. J. Greenwood to the Presidential Chair, and was re-elected without opposition this year.

Among other interests which have claimed attention mention should be made of the Workers' Educational Association with which Mr. Keeling was associated for some years, being branch secretary for a brief period. He is chairman of one of the largest amateur sports organisations in the Liverpool district and has been connected with amateur football for upwards of 20 years.

For recreation—oh yes, he does have recreation—Mr. Keeling adopts gardening during the summer months and enjoys an evening with spade or hoe, while for the darker evenings he prefers amateur operatics, in which connection he has successfully played many minor parts.



Below is taken from *The National Spiritualist*:—¹²

MR. J. B. McINDOE



The newly-elected President of the Spiritualists' National Union is a native of Paisley, and is the son of a Free Church Minister. As a young man he felt no desire to follow a ministerial career, preferring the profession of Electrical Engineering. At this period his qualities of leadership were in abeyance. He took no part in public affairs until he went to reside in the City of Glasgow in 1917. In the next year he became a member of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists.¹³ His interest in its management was aroused and, in 1919, he was elected to the important office of Secretary, and continues to fulfil the duties associated therewith.

In his capacity of Secretary, Mr. McIndoe did a full share in the activities that brought into existence the new Church Hall in Holland Street. The official opening in 1923 was the fulfilment of a long-cherished ambition.

When the Area Scheme was adopted by the Union in 1921, Mr. McIndoe became the first secretary of the newly-created Scottish District Council and continued in office until 1925, when he was elected President. He still retains that office. The same year which saw the creation of the District Council carried him to the Council of the National Union as Area Representative. He has now relinquished that office to take on the highest office in the service of the National Union.

Mr. McIndoe is a man of untiring energy and of great force of character. He possesses all the fighting instincts of the Scottish people, never knowing defeat in his advocacy of any Cause he has espoused. As a committee man he is invaluable in his remarkable capacity for details. He has rendered conspicuous service on Trust Property and Pooling Committees, and on Publications and the Finance and General Purposes Committees. On the Pooling Committee he undertook a great part of the work of preparing the Draft Scheme, and watches very closely all pool transactions to safeguard the interests of the Union and the funds deposited by the Churches. Again, on the Publications Committee he brings the business mind to bear. To his indomitable courage in the face of discouragements is largely due the continued existence of the NATIONAL SPIRITUALIST MONTHLY. In the Finance and

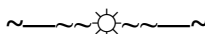
¹².—*The National Spiritualist*, No. 74, Vol. VII, August 1930. The photograph is taken from the Britten Memorial Museum, Stansted Hall; the article photograph (different image) is poor quality.

¹³.—For information see *Psypioneer*, Volume 7, No 10: October 2011 – *The Glasgow Association of Spiritualists – Paul J. Gaunt & Historical Notes (Glasgow Association of Spiritualists) – The Two Worlds*. Also see *Psypioneer*, Volume 8, No 8: August 2012 – *Mr. J. B. Conklin and the Founding of Glasgow Association of Spiritualists – Paul J. Gaunt & Early Glasgow Spiritualism – The Medium and Daybreak*.

General Purposes Committee his aim is ever to secure the utmost efficiency in the organisation with due economy.

These manifold duties occupy a very large portion of his time, and involve frequent absences from home, which would not be possible but for the cordial sympathy and sacrificing encouragement of Mrs. McIndoe and his three daughters. An accident which befel him thirty years ago gravely impaired his eyesight.¹⁴ It is a tribute to his sterling qualities that, in spite of this very serious handicap, he has been able to accomplish so much for the Cause of Spiritualism.

G. F. B.¹⁵



In the *National Spiritualist* for November 1925 we read of a ‘Glasgow Investigator’ achieving astonishing results from a non-professional physical medium in direct voice:

THE TESTIMONY OF A GLASGOW INVESTIGATOR

Experiences of psychic phenomena were related before the Birmingham and Midland Society for Psychical Research on October 1st, by Mr. J. Arthur Findlay, vice-president of the Glasgow Psychical Research Society. The lecture was largely a record of a series of sittings the speaker had had with Mr. John C. Sloan, the Glasgow trance and direct voice medium. Mr. Findlay said in his careful investigations, which had lasted over seven years, he found from his notes of 44 different seances that 77 separate voices had spoken to him, or to personal friends he had taken with him; 271 separate facts had been given to him or to them, 169 of which facts he classed as A1, as it was impossible for the medium or anyone else present to have known them. The other facts he classed as A2, because by means of newspapers or reference books the medium could have found them out.

Mr. Findlay gave examples of the communications which he and his friends had received, and described how, in his opinion, it was possible for the departed to re-materialise their vocal organs sufficiently to communicate with this world. He said his father had given him good evidence of his continued existence on a number of occasions. In relating the communications he had received, the speaker declared them to be fraud-proof and telepathy-proof.

¹⁴.—John Brown McIndoe, who was known as Mac, died on the eve of his 84th birthday in May 1958, then virtually blind, and for the last few years could hear only with the use of a mechanical aid. It was Mac who launched Helen Duncan on her career as a materialisation medium. There is a wealth of information on McIndoe which can be found on Psypioneer – via its online search engine.

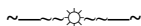
¹⁵.—George F. Berry, General Secretary of the SNU and former SNU President 1920-1922, will be featured in the next issue.

The founder of the Glasgow Psychical Research Society was James Arthur Findlay. Details can be noted below as published in the weekly journal, *Light*, on April 8th 1922 (p. 22):

GLASGOW SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

We have received a copy of the first Annual Report (1921) of this Society. It records the origin of the Society on October 27th, 1920, when, after the reading of a paper on Psychical Research, by Mr. J. Arthur Findlay, a resolution was passed that the Society be formed from those present with power to add to its numbers. A further resolution appointed a Provisional Committee to draft a Constitution, outline a scheme of work, and nominate officers. The proposals of this Committee, together with the Constitution, were adopted at a subsequent meeting of the Society, held on December 14th, 1920.

The Report expresses its recognition of the honour conferred upon the Society by the acceptance of its Presidency by Sir Arthur Balfour, and records the series of addresses delivered to the Society by Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir William Barrett, amongst others,, The generosity of Mr. Edward J. Thomson, one of the Vice-Presidents, Mr. J. McLennan Boyd and other members and friends has resulted in the establishment of a library of substantial size, which is growing daily under the direction of Dr. Knight. Of the work of the Investigations Committee it is stated that it has been so far without substantial results. The Council acknowledges with thanks the services of the Honorary Secretary, Miss Irwin; of Mr. John G. Findlay, the Honorary Treasurer; and of Mr. J. Ronald Young, C.A., for auditing the accounts. The Balance Sheet shows that the financial position is very satisfactory.



We can note from the report that the Honorary Treasurer was Arthur Findlay's brother, John Galloway Findlay;¹⁶ Findlay's investigations with John Campbell Sloan (1869-1951) were featured earlier in an address given at the London Spiritualist Alliance¹⁷ on Thursday, April 3rd, 1924, titled "The Independent Voice. A Critical Examination of the Phenomena." This was published (over a number of issues) in their journal, *Light*, starting on April 19th, 1924; Findlay's typed lecture draft and his handwritten amendments/corrections, etc. are held in the Britten Memorial Museum at Stansted Hall.

John Sloan's mediumship is mostly associated with Findlay through his investigations, lectures and books but in the *Psypioneer* journal for December 2012¹⁸ we find a rare report on Sloan's mediumship in London at the British College of Psychic Science (BCPS).

¹⁶.—John Galloway Findlay died on Saturday, 24th November, 1956 at Bournemouth; his health had deteriorated since an attack of thrombosis five years earlier.

¹⁷.—Arthur Findlay would later become President of the London Spiritualist Alliance; today it is called the College of Psychic Studies, 16 Queensberry Place, London SW7 2EB, UK.

¹⁸.—Volume 8, No 12: December 2012:—*John Campbell Sloan (1869-1951) – Paul J. Gaunt & A Scotch Materializing and Voice Medium – Mrs Hewat McKenzie.*

I received a couple of e-mails asking me if there was another photo of Sloan apart from the rather poor photo normally found (usually with his wife cut off) on websites, which was taken in 1936 and used in some editions of Findlay's books. In one of Findlay's scrapbooks in the museum I found this photograph of Mr and Mrs Sloan, although it is not very detailed. The photograph was sent to Findlay shortly after Sloan's death (May 1951 at the age of 82) by a Mrs D. McLean, Stornoway, Scotland, dated June 19th 1951 (she is in the photograph but edited out).



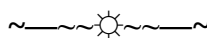
Findlay's relationship with John Sloan would remain until his death. In a letter sent to Findlay on March 14th, 1951 from Miss Jean Logan Dearie, an expert stenographer who recorded much of the communications received in the direct voice through Sloan's mediumship, she mentions her visit to Sloan:

"I was out seeing Mr Sloan last Saturday and passed on your message about sending him on anything he would like to make life a little more comfortable. He replied "That is very good of Mr Arthur. He's an awful nice man, but I canna' think of a thing I need. I have plenty to eat and a comfortable bed, and what more could an old chap like me wish for"."



Dearie later notes she was going to ask the Sloans' daughter, Ethel, for a photograph of her father or where they (Dearie/Findlay) might get one. However, she was advised by a Miss C...,¹⁹ "No; keep the family out of it", asking Findlay what he thought. This may explain why there is only one previously known photo of Sloan and may have resulted in Findlay being sent the photo by Mrs McLean, which shows the younger image of the couple, predating the only other known photograph taken in 1936.

Also in this issue of the SNU Pioneer journal there is another unpublished photograph of Arthur Findlay, taken while giving a lecture on "The Effect of Religion on History" to the Marylebone Spiritualist Association (founded in 1872) on August 27th, 1952. Today this Association is known as the Spiritualist Association of Great Britain – S.A.G.B.²⁰



¹⁹.—Full name removed at the editor's discretion.

²⁰.—The Spiritualist Association of Great Britain:—<http://www.spiritualistassociation.org.uk/>

The Laying of the Oldham Spiritual Temple Corner Stones

This heading is well known to Spiritualists, especially those who have completed the educational courses. It was here, at the laying of the first foundation stone, that Emma Hardinge Britten read a paper titled, “What has Spiritualism taught, and what good has it done for Humanity?” It contained twelve short statements, the last one being a summary of her creeds/principles:

I believe in the Fatherhood of God,
The Brotherhood of Man,
The immortality of the Soul,
Personal Responsibility,
Compensation and Retribution hereafter for all the good or evil deeds done here,
And a path of eternal progress open to every human soul that wills to tread it by the path of eternal good.

Over the many years of Emma’s work as one of the finest pioneers in the Spiritualist movement she had developed a set of principles which she stated were given her through her mediumship by the spirits. Up until this time they had varied in their numbers and wording. A copy of the paper was laid within the foundation. At this time the long struggle for a national organisation to unite Spiritualism across the country was picking up momentum.²¹

Emma freely offered the summary of her principles to the various conferences, for example The Conference of Spiritualists of Northumberland and Durham held on Tuesday, July 31st, 1888 at 20, Nelson Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Again, she offered her principles to the meeting of a Provisional Spiritual Conference to consider the future formation of a Lancashire District Confederation of Spiritualists; this was on Sunday, August 19th, 1888 at a very large gathering of Lancashire Spiritualists in the Assembly Room of the Co-operative Hall, Downing Street, Manchester. Later at the same venue on July 6th, 1890, the Spiritualists’ National Federation would be established at the National Conference of British Spiritualists, leading to the Spiritualists’ National Union twelve years later in 1902. The summary of Emma’s principles given at Oldham would, with some changes and an additional principle, form the basis of the Seven Principles.²² Today they are unchangeable and form the basis of the religion and religious philosophy of the Spiritualists’ National Union.

Little has been told or is known about this historic event, for example who was in attendance at the laying of the corner stones, and when was the official opening of the Oldham Spiritual Temple or its location, or what happened to the Spiritual Temple in the following years, as it disappears from history a few years later.

²¹.—The long arduous history is being told in *Psypioneer*, starting in Volume 8, No. 8: August 2012: The Building of the Spiritualists’ National Union: Pt. 1 – Paul J. Gaunt, page 264. This same issue also includes an article on The Nationalisation of Spiritualism – James J. Morse.

²².—It appears that one of the principles Emma gave in 1871 at her Cleveland Hall lecture, “I believe in the communion of spirits as ministering angels...” (one of her four principles she gave at this time), would not surface again until around 1902 as the possible basis of our third Principle, “The Communion of Spirits and the Ministry of Angels”, although we cannot be completely sure the Union took this from the Cleveland Hall lecture.

Oldham Society of Spiritualists

By 1877 Oldham was reported to be one of Spiritualism's strongholds:²³

"Oldham is one of the strongholds of Spiritualism. Mr. T. Kershaw and Mr. Samuel H. Quarmby have both publicly stated that there are two thousand persons in the town who believe in spirit communion. The latter gentleman, who is secretary to the Oldham Society of Spiritualists has repeated that estimate to me, and furnished me with the following particulars of the society. It has no system of membership and no rules. The committee for the time being institute a course of action which is liable to be altered or confirmed by the next. The fact of attending the meetings and contributing in any way to the expenses, constitutes membership. A committee with chairman, treasurer, and secretary are elected, usually half-yearly. Trance and normal speakers are engaged weekly, physical mediums occasionally, and literature is distributed. The meetings are usually attended by about a hundred persons, but this number is increased to three or four hundred when the meetings are of a special kind.

"Mr. Quarmby speaks strongly in favour of propagandism, if carried on judiciously. He says much injury has been done by foolish undeveloped mediums. A wise intermixture of normal speakers with the best trance mediums, and the distribution of literature, has worked well in Oldham."

Ten years later, on the weekend of July 2nd and 3rd, 1887, the doors to the new Spiritual Temple, situated at the junction of Joseph Street and Roscoe Street, just off Union Street (near the old Society room), under the presidency of Mr H. Eaton were opened. The event was reported in the Spiritualist press²⁴ by James Burns on the front page of his weekly journal, *The Medium and Daybreak*, July 8, 1887.

A short quote is given below:

OPENING OF THE NEW SPIRITUAL TEMPLE, OLDHAM.

The handsome, new, and commodious premises—the corner-stones of which were laid amid general rejoicings on April 9th, and which are situate in Joseph Street (just off Union Sheet, and near to the old room)—were opened on Saturday and Sunday last.

On the former, day, between 150 and 200 persons partook of tea in the new building, the subsequent proceedings being presided over by the genial President of the Society; Mr. H. Eaton. The proceedings were of the most agreeable character being enlivened at intervals by songs, &c, which were rendered by friends; and-appropriate addresses were delivered by Mrs. Wallis and Mr. R. Fitton.

²³.—Taken from a paper given by Mr Richard Pearce at the National Conference of Spiritualists for 1877, published in the *Spiritualist* newspaper, February 16th, 1877.

²⁴.—A similar report was also published in the *Oldham Evening Chronicle*, Monday, July 4th, 1887.

With regard to the new premises, nothing more suitable could have been devised. The vestibule stands off a little from the main building, with its folding doors in the centre, and a window on each side. The large hall is reached by two steps, has swing doors, and measures 22 feet 6 in. in height, is 19 yards in length by 12 yards in width, and will accommodate 500 people comfortably. The platform measures 20 feet by 12 feet, is three feet in height, and the room is well lighted by five windows on each side, which are of large dimensions. On Saturday and Sunday the acoustic properties were fully tested, and found to be all we could expect. Under the platform a large kitchen is provided, containing boiler and other appliances, so that ample provision can easily be made for coping with tea meetings, social gatherings, &c.

The hall is lofty. The roof is of pitch pine, open to the collar beams, and the iron work in general, having been “done up” in a nice coating of blue paint, the appearance presented is very striking and effective. The contractors are Messrs. Jackson and Randal, and the architect Mr. Spencer Ashton, all of Oldham. The contract for the work was £539 10s., and it is expected that, including furnishing, &c., £600 will not be exceeded. It is pleasing to note that so far the trustees have not been called upon to make appeals for funds outside our own body.

Under the large hall is a room, which when completed will do admirably for Lyceum purposes, when the Society sees its way to form a Lyceum. It is said there is nothing like success, and in the ease of our Oldham friends, it may certainly be recorded that they have made rapid progress during the last few years, and from what we have gleaned, the Spiritualists of this enterprising Lancashire town are making themselves felt amongst a large, wealthy, and industrial community.

Reports of the earlier laying of the new Oldham Spiritual Temple corner stones also appeared in the local press; one was the *Oldham Standard*, on Tuesday, April 12th, 1887, and again in *The Medium and Daybreak* on April 15, 1887. I have published both below respectively, as the *Oldham Standard* fills in the early history of Spiritualism in Oldham:

OLDHAM SPIRITUALISTS.

FOUNDATION STONE LAYING.

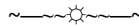
“The Spiritualists of Oldham, who first became organised in 1871, have for some time held their meetings in a room in Union-street, but as the organisation has grown stronger they have decided to erect a building for themselves, and on Saturday the corner-stones of the new building which is situated in Union-street, were laid.

“Mr. J. Lamont, president of the Liverpool Society, presided at the ceremony, and stated that that building was for the purpose of propagating the religion of humanity. They did not wish to come into antagonism with any of the sects, and they did not want to force anyone to believe their religion. He then read an account of the rise and progress of modern Spiritualism in Oldham, stating that the first circle was formed through the instrumentality of Mr. Thos. Kershaw, in November, 1871. The committee of management, with Mr. Kershaw as their president, met with much opposition from individuals connected with the various sects and religious bodies, but in spite of all opposition their cause had progressed, and they saw the result in

that day's proceedings.—Mr. Richard Fitton presented a silver trowel, suitably inscribed, to Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten, of Manchester, who laid the first stone.²⁵ She said Spiritualism had been tabooed by the very persons who would have greatly benefited by it. She contended that their religion did away with superstition and bigotry, and taught the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.—Mr. Walter Glendinning, of Liverpool, who was presented with a trowel by Mr. Henry Taft, laid the second stone, and afterwards briefly addressed the meeting, wishing success to the new venture. Other addresses were delivered, and a vote of thanks was accorded Mrs. Britten and Mr. Glendinning.—Several hymns having been sung, the meeting adjourned to the Regent Street School, where a tea party was held.



Songs were afterwards given by the choir and others, and several addresses were delivered. Mr. Johnson, of Hyde, presided.—On Sunday Mrs. E. H. Britten delivered an address in the Greenacres Co-operative Hall.



SPIRITUAL TEMPLE, UNION STREET, OLDHAM

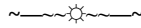
“The Corner Stones of the above place of worship were laid on Saturday, April 9. A procession was formed at our present meeting room, in which about 400 took part, including a very large number of visitors from various parts of the country. Upon reaching the site, Mr. John Lamont was called upon to take the chair. Having sung a hymn, and the invocation offered by Mr. Wallis, the chairman made a few very appropriate remarks, after which a short account of the rise and progress of Modern Spiritualism in Oldham was read. Mr. Richard Fitton was next called upon to present Mrs. Britten with a silver trowel, suitable inscribed, to lay the First Stone, which she did in a graceful manner. Besides giving a sturdy, thoughtful address, she read a paper entitled “What has Spiritualism taught; and what good has it done for Humanity?” a copy of which was placed, together with the *MEDIUM*, *Light*, local papers, &c, under the Stones.

²⁵.—This actual commemorative trowel is displayed in the Britten Memorial Museum, exhibit BMT: 0011, as shown in the photograph.

“Mr. H. Taft presented the second trowel to Mr. Glendinning, who congratulated us on the step we were taking, remarking that what Lancashire thought to-day, England would think to-morrow.

“Addresses were delivered by Mr. Johnson and others, concluding with votes of thanks to the visitors, proposed by Mr. Savage, seconded by Mr. T. Kershaw; and an invocation by Mr. Howell.

“The procession was afterwards reformed, and walked to the Congregational School, where tea was provided; and it was remarked by many that it was surely a sign of the times when we could have such a place lent us. About 400 or 450 were present to tea. Afterwards Mr. Johnson presided. Songs were given by Mrs. Green, Miss Bentley, Mr. Wallis, Mr. Boys, &c. Recitations by Mr. Cronshaw, Mr. J. C. Johnson, Mr. Lawton, Miss Horsman, &c. Instrumental pieces by a Quartette Party: interapered by addresses from Mr. Hopcroft, Mr. J. B. Tetlow, Mr. Howell and others.”



Five years later at the Oldham Spiritual Temple one special event had taken place, which gives us a valuable insight into a Spiritualist wedding over a hundred years ago.

Oldham Evening Chronicle, December 12th, 1892:

THE FIRST MARRIAGE AT THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE

“On Saturday afternoon an event of much interest to the community which assembles to worship at the Spiritual Temple, Union-street, occurred, being the solemnisation of the first marriage which has been performed at that place. The contracting parties were a widow named Frances Howarth and Mr. Chas. Edward Brooks, both of whom are workers in connection with the Temple. Mr. E. W. Wallis editor of the *Two Worlds*, a journal devoted to the tenets of spiritualism, officiated. The form of service read by Mr. Wallis contained the following clause:—“Man is by nature superior to woman in physical force, and in the past he has robbed woman of her rights, and made her subject to his will. He has retarded her intellectual development and spiritual growth by persistently withholding educational advantages, and barring the road to independence by making it difficult for her to earn her livelihood. Man should redeem the past by undoing these wrongs. He should insist that woman should have every right given to her by law which is enjoyed by man, that she may stand by his side his equal in every respect. Both should be bound by love and honour. In the married state there should be perfect liberty controlled by honour. Through educated and enlightened and emancipated womanhood, wifehood, and motherhood the regeneration of the race will be secured. Woman is by nature superior to man in love, grace, beauty, delicacy, intuition, and spirituality, and should, therefore, receive sympathy and tender, appreciative care and protection. Neither man nor woman should rule the other; one should not become master or mistress over the other, but each should bear and forbear, and with mutual confidence and affection patiently and lovingly strive to make each other happy.” “The empire of the mother” should be recognised. Love, not passion, should bless their union, remembering that the coming generation will be what the mothers and fathers, by purity, righteousness, and true

love, make possible, for “hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. Through and by the mother in the true marriage of love and honour there will soon arise a nation of healthier, stronger, sounder, and more spiritual men and women—a nation where justice, morality, beauty, and goodness shall be the prevailing religion of life” The remainder of the service and ceremony was brief, and after the placing of the ring on the bride’s finger by the bridegroom the parties pledged themselves each to the other to live together in this holy bond, &c., “in anticipation of reunion in the spirit world.” Mr. Wallis shortly addressed the congregation, and a collection was taken to defray the expenses of getting the Temple registered as a place of worship and obtaining a license for the solemnisation of marriages. Later on in the afternoon a tea party was held in celebration of the event, and the presentation of an illuminated address was made to Mrs. Brooks.”

However, there were problems at the Oldham Spiritual Temple, resulting in its closure. Below is the report from the *Oldham Standard*, June 3rd, 1895:

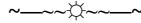
DISCORDANT OLDHAM SPIRITUALISTS

A SPIRITUAL LOCK-OUT. FURNITURE THAT CAN’T MOVE.

“ “Spiritual Temple: Erected 1887.” The foregoing is the inscription above the entrance to an unpretentious edifice in Bridge - street, off Union-street, Oldham. As the name indicates, the structure is a sort of tabernacle, built by common hands and of common clay, as an abode of local Spiritualists. The building, like others, was erected and furnished in the orthodox manner. A committee was formed, the required sums lent on promissory notes, and the raising of the temple entrusted to the ordinary bricklayers, just as if it was a common factory unconnected with the spiritual world, whose avowed object was “divi.” The completed edifice was vested in trustees, who in due course expected to receive the rent. Somehow things did not run smoothly, and a split took place amongst the congregation which the mediumistic power was unable to knit or patch. There appears to have been insufficient space beneath the roof for two leaders, and one perforce had to hire a habitation hard by, which his followers loyally attended. The other section continued their seances in the old temple, and their diminished numbers experienced difficulty, it is said, on quarter day. At last their differences got into the Chancery Court, out of which things somehow don’t come in any great hurry. The remaining leader and his corporeal subjects next quitted the temple, and settled down in a hired room at Mumps. Latterly the ground rent of the ancient edifice became due, and after the bill had travelled from hand to hand the money was eventually raised and the account liquidated.

“Besides leaving the temple behind, the migratory Spiritualists also left in arrear £40 on account of unpaid interest. The trustees, members of the same confraternity, treated the exodus with the utmost serenity of spirit and the greatest latitude of leniency, but drew a line beyond which the furniture was not to be removed. They even consented to permit the services to proceed so long as they continued to be the custodians of the keys, but their generosity was cast like seed on barren soil. There were a few interchanges of locks and unspiritual controversies, until on Saturday afternoon the trustees held the keys which opened the lately affixed locks. These were in turn wrenched from the temple about 11 30 on Saturday night, and the door

barricaded with a portion of the furniture. The trustees broke into these premises, replaced the locks, and on Sunday had a representative on sentry duty in front of the building, evidently to debar intrusion or the removal of the furniture. Members of the committee continued to perambulate about the neighbourhood in preparation for emergencies, but none of the materialised forms were apparent to either believers or unbelievers; at all events, it can with ordinary certitude be asserted that the substantial padlock was visible on the outer door, and that no mortal agency had disturbed the furniture. As we have already stated, the little dispute is engaging the attention of the Chancery Court, and, from what we have stated, it may be reasonably surmised that there will be further legal developments if mediumistic power fails to intervene.”



After the building had ceased to be used as a Spiritual Temple, it was used as a Socialist hall, cinema, Central Labour Club and the publishing and printing offices of “The World’s Fair”, the showmen’s newspaper. The building today appears to be unused; much of my research was greatly aided with the excellent co-operation and help of Susan Smith of the Oldham Local Studies and Archives and Mal Edward, Vice-President of Oldham Spiritualist Church. Both Susan Smith and Mal Edward have tried to establish whether or not the foundation stone still survives. It appears to be no longer visible; most of the building is covered in cement render. Mal informs me:

“So far, we have determined that the present church has been in here since at least 1958 but as the building is owned by the SNU you may already have a more accurate date.²⁶ The present building was previously a Co Operative store. Interestingly, one of the sites used prior to locating here was also part of or in close proximity to another Cooperative building located on King St near the Starr Inn Public House.”



The photograph is of the Spiritual Temple as it stands today; somewhere within its foundations is a copy of Emma Hardinge Britten’s “What has Spiritualism taught; and what good has it done for Humanity?”, placed, together with the *Medium, Light*, local papers, etc., on April 9th, 1887.

²⁶.—1958 is a significant date. The Britten Memorial Museum holds a programme, exhibit BMT: 1101, which states: Oldham Spiritualist National Church – Founded October 16th 1913 – Affiliated to S.N.U. 157-159 Ashton Road, Oldham. – Opening and Dedication of New Church Building on Saturday, August 30th, 1958 at 3-0 pm (prompt). The opening ceremony will be performed by Leslie Hale, M.P. of London. To be followed by the Dedication Service conducted by Mrs. Edith Guy (President of the Manchester District Council). The Church President was Mrs S. A. Whittaker (Hon. Life President and Trustee).



Oldham Spiritualist Church²⁷ and Shaw Spiritualist Church²⁸ are both affiliated to the Spiritualists' National Union.



²⁷.—Oldham Spiritualist Church:—<http://www.oldhamspiritualistchurch.org/>

²⁸.—Shaw Spiritualist Church:—<http://www.snu.org.uk/community/churches/shaw.html>

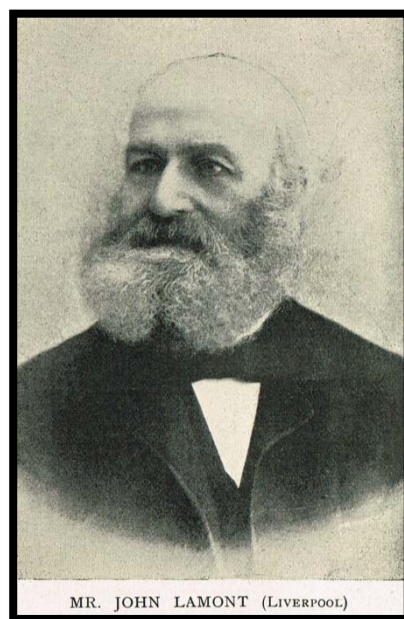
The formation of the Spiritualists' National Union

Shortly after the laying of the Oldham Spiritual Temple Corner Stones, a new weekly journal called *The Two Worlds* was founded, with Emma Hardinge Britten as its editor and E. W. Wallis as sub-editor and General Manager; the first issue was put on sale on Friday November 18, 1887, priced at 1½D. From issue No. 7 (Dec 30) it was reduced to one penny, so becoming known as *The People's popular Penny Spiritual Paper*. Numerous people mentioned in Oldham reports would become the first Directors of *The Two Worlds*.

Later, in 1890, as previously mentioned, a Conference would form the Spiritualists' National Federation (SNF). *The Two Worlds* would play a significant part; a *pro tem* committee was formed to arrange the inaugural Conference²⁹ and consisted of sixteen Spiritualists:

Dr and Mrs Britten, Mr and Mrs Edward W. Wallis, Mrs Margaret Wilkinson, (Emma's sister), James J. Morse, William Johnson, J. B. Tetlow (Secretary), H. Boardman, Peter Lee, Mr Rayner, Mr J. Gibson, Richard Fitton, Mr Thomas Brown, Mr [J]. Simkin (the original report has the incorrect initial and should read [T] (Thomas) Simkin and Mr F. Tomlinson (Treasurer).³⁰

This *pro tem* committee was significantly made up with the Officers and Directors of "*The Two Worlds*" Publishing Company Ltd, Manchester, including its Chairman /President Dr William Britten, Treasurer Thomas Brown, Secretary Edward Wallis, and its editor Emma Hardinge Britten (not a director). Emma had significantly supported a national organisation for a number of years. The *pro tem* committee's work was to agree the agenda for the forthcoming Conference; they formed sub-committees within the group for various tasks, e.g. printing, announcements, instructions for travelling delegates, train times and accommodation.³¹ They nominated the veteran Spiritualist, John Lamont, of Liverpool as their first Conference President/Chairman.³² John Lamont and William Johnson had worked since the 1870s to bring about organisation; they were leading figures in the



²⁹.—"For many weeks past, a party of some sixteen spiritualists have met together at the earnest request of Mrs. Hardinge Britten, to consider a plan given to her by the spiritual guides and friends of the higher life, who have directed her world-wide travels and protected her through the unnumbered trials and experiences of her past thirty years of public spiritual propagandism". Taken from:—*The Two Worlds*, Friday July 18th, 1890, page 422:—National Conference of British Spiritualists. [No.140.-Vol. III.]

³⁰.—It should be noted that in "100 Years of National Spiritualism," by Jean Bassett, 1990, Jean publishes the sixteen members of the *pro tem* committee but the name Williamson has been misprinted and should read Wilkinson. In addition, the name Raynor is incorrect: it should read Rayner.

³¹.—The agenda was published in numerous issues of the *Two Worlds*, for example Friday June 6th, 1890, page 350:—*National Conference of Spiritualists*.

³².—The position of President – Chairman was used interchangeably in different reports to mean the same position.

“Lancashire District Committee” (the title varied over its existence) who had in many ways helped to lay the foundations of the Spiritualists’ National Federation.

The *pro tem* committee and the Chairman, John Lamont, were co-opted as the Executive Committee for the next year’s Conference to be held over the weekend of July 4th and 5th 1891.³³ After a meeting at the Temperance Hall on the Saturday evening, the Conference commenced on Sunday the 5th at the Prince’s Theatre, Bradford, Yorkshire with around 2,000 people present. It should be noted that Emma Hardinge Britten was never the President of the National Federation, as is often assumed. After the 1891 Conference Emma seems not to have attended any other meeting or Conferences of the Spiritualists’ National Federation and in February 1892 she resigned as editor of *The Two Worlds*.³⁴

The thirteenth and last Conference of the Spiritualists’ National Federation met in Bootle on 5th and 6th of July 1902. At this Conference the newly legally constituted “Spiritualists’ National Union Ltd” took over the property, rights and obligations of the Spiritualists’ National Federation. It was decided at the meeting that the Officers of the Federation would be the first Officers of the Union³⁵ with the exception of James J. Morse, who had been engaged by the Victorian Association of Spiritualists of Melbourne to lecture upon Spiritualism in Australia and then to continue on to New Zealand.³⁶

In July 1903 we see the first elected President and Council of the Spiritualists’ National Union Ltd. Below is a brief overview of the proceedings published in *Light*, July 11th 1903. A fuller report was published in the *Two Worlds* but would occupy too much space; if any reader wants a copy, please contact the editor. The photograph (below) shows the first elected SNU Council and President Mr. John J. Parr (1903-1905). This brief overview gives us an informed idea of the Union’s position in its first year:

³³.—“... a resolution was put and carried at the close of the second session, with long and loud acclamations, to the effect that the Chairman, Mr. John Lamont, and the sixteen volunteers who had organized themselves into a *pro tem* committee, should continue in office, and, in consequent effort during the ensuing year, labouring as effectively as heretofore, to carry forward the succeeding deliberations concerning the resolutions of the past, and the prospects of the ensuing year’s Conference. Such, however, was the unanimous vote of the assembled members, friends, and delegates, and the workers had no option but to assume the high responsibility put upon them.” Taken from:—*The Two Worlds*, Friday August 1st 1890, page 447.

John Lamont was unable to fulfil his commitment owing to illness, so the Executive and Bradford Committees appointed Samuel Chiswell (1852-1910) as President. Later he served again as SNF President in 1895; in addition, for that year he was the second President of the British Spiritualists’ Lyceum Union (BSLU). Chiswell was a former chairman on the *Two Worlds* Board of Directors.

³⁴.—**Special Announcement**—“AT the meeting, of the Board of Directors on Monday, Feb. 8th, the following resolution was passed unanimously: We, the Directors of *The Two Worlds Publishing Company, Limited*, expressed our regret that circumstances have arisen which have occasioned Mrs. Britten’s resignation as Editor of *The Two Worlds*, and that we, in accepting the same, desire to tender our best wishes for her future welfare”. Taken from:—*The Two Worlds*, Friday February 12th, 1892, page 78.

³⁵.—*The Two Worlds* July 11, 1902 page 357:—Thirteenth Annual Conference at Bootle.

³⁶.—His trip is covered in *Psypioneer*, starting in issue Volume 2, No 6, June 2006: *Farewell to Mr J.J. Morse and Tien & Australian Letters from J.J. Morse*. For more information on Morse and details of the painting of his control which hangs in the Britten Memorial Museum at Stansted Hall see *Psypioneer* Volume 8, No 10: October 2012 *James Johnson Morse – Paul J. Gaunt, & J. J. Morse – Julia Schlesinger*.

SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL UNION, LTD.

The first annual general business meeting and consultative Conference of the Spiritualists' National Union, Ltd. (really the fourteenth annual conference of the organisation formerly known as the Spiritualists' National Federation), were held on Saturday and Sunday, July 4th and 5th, at the Spiritual Temple, Heber-street, Keighley, under the presidency of Mr. William Johnson, of Hyde.

Owing to the fact that the Conference was the first under the new constitution and that the date of the close of the financial year had been altered, the statement of accounts and the reports of the several committees could not be compared with those of former years.

The general business of the Union was relegated to, and transacted on Saturday, while the Conference meetings on Sunday were devoted to the consideration of questions of a more generally interesting nature, a change which is likely to be beneficial and add to the utility and success of these gatherings.

For several years past the time of the Conference has been taken up largely with the consideration of various plans and propositions whereby 'legal status' could be secured, and it was eventually found necessary to register the Union under the Companies Act as a 'company limited by guarantee and not having a capital divided into shares.' Membership in this Union is of two kinds—'ordinary' and 'representative'; the fee being 5s. per annum in all cases. Some misapprehension exists in regard to the position of Spiritualist societies in relation to the new Union, and it will, therefore, be well, perhaps, to explain that Spiritualist societies may nominate one, or more, of their members to represent them in the proportion of one representative to every fifty members up to two hundred, and such representatives, when duly nominated, must be accepted by the Council as a matter of course; but the membership of a representative ceases as soon as his appointment by the local society shall have expired or been terminated. Representatives have equal voting power with ordinary members, and when ten representative members shall claim that a resolution is one that solely concerns societies, the chairman must decide that the said resolution shall be voted upon 'by representative members *only*,' so that the interests of societies are carefully safeguarded. How to secure their property to the local societies was a problem which bristled with difficulties, but a way out of the awkward situation was found by giving to the Council powers to appoint trustees to hold and manage in trust property belonging beneficially to any society represented in the Union.

Before the National Federation was extinguished last year there were about eighty societies affiliated with that body, and nearly one hundred associate members, but at the present time there are about fifty societies represented in the Union and eighty ordinary members. It is hoped, however, that there will be a large increase in this direction during the coming year now that the situation is better understood.

There were between seventy and eighty members at the annual business meeting on Saturday evening, who had travelled from London, Liverpool, Bootle, Manchester, Salford, Leicester, Belper, Smethwick (Birmingham), Wolverhampton, Crewe, Leeds, Bradford, Blackpool, Southport, Sheffield, Attercliffe, Blackburn, Darwen, Burnley,

Colne, Nelson, Bury, Bolton, Armley, Sowerby Bridge, Stalybridge and Stockport, so that the gathering was a fairly representative one.

The President, in his opening address, expressed his pleasure at meeting the friends of Spiritualism under the auspices of the now legally constituted National body, and hoped that societies and individuals alike would heartily support the Union and increase its usefulness in every possible way. Referring to the work of the 'Exponents Committee,' he said that it was generally recognised that our advocates should be men and women of good moral character, and that exponents might be acceptable on some platforms who would not be qualified to occupy others, and the committee would deal fairly with all; but it was necessary, if the movement was to be made strong and win respect, that its work should be done by worthy and capable representatives.

After the minutes of the last Conference had been read and confirmed, the general report, the propaganda committee's report, and the Fund of Benevolence report were passed, and the accounts were adopted.

Comparatively little 'propaganda work' had been accomplished owing to lack of funds, but it is anticipated that this branch of the work of the Union will be vigorously taken up during the coming year.

The Fund of Benevolence report, of which fund Mrs. M. H. Wallis is the hon. sec., showed that during the seven months from June 1st to December 31st, 1902, £38 5s. 6d. had been disbursed in sixty-three grants, varying in amount from 2s. 6d. to 30s.; working expenses had been only 12s. 4d., and the recipients of these grants resided in all parts of the Kingdom.

Mr. John Ainsworth, of Blackpool, stated that it had long been his desire to do something to help the Lyceum children, and he now proposed, subject to the decision of the Conference and its legal adviser, to hand over to the Union his house in Blackpool, and the furniture it contained, to be used as a convalescent home for Lyceum children and indigent Spiritualists. He had a strong impression that he would not long remain on this side of life, and he wished to see the transfer accomplished during his lifetime. If possible he would do something also towards its endowment.

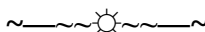
Mr. Ainsworth's kind and generous offer was heartily applauded, and it was decided that it should be referred to the Council, 'with full power to accept a conveyance or deed of gift to the Union of the property referred to, if, after consultation with the solicitor, it should be deemed advisable.'³⁷

The following officers were elected: Mr. J. J. Parr, president; Mr. H. G. Hey, vice-president; Mr. W. Greenwood, treasurer; Mr. W. Harrison, secretary. Mrs. Stair and Mrs. M. H. Wallis and Messrs. J. C. Macdonald, D. Gavin, W. Johnson, J. Pemberton, J. Whitaker, A. Kitson, W. Phillips, H. Holgate, W. Stansfield, A. Wilkinson, S. Featherstone, A. E. Button and C. E. Sibson were elected to the Council. Messrs. J. Briggs and T. H. Wright were reappointed auditors.³⁸

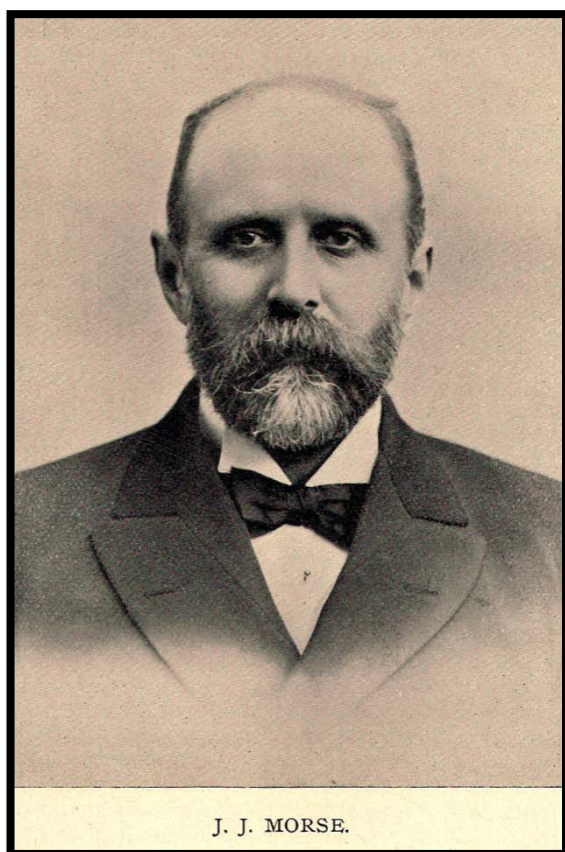
³⁷.—More on John Ainsworth in the next issue.

³⁸.—"The election of officers was then proceeded with. Mr. Macdonald withdrew in favour of Mr. J. J. Parr, and Mr. A. Smedley, the other nominee, felt unable to stand owing to the serious state of his good wife's health. The

The usual votes of thanks to the President, retiring officers and Council, and to the local friends for hospitality, concluded the proceedings.



President (William Johnson) then declared Mr. Parr, elected. ... Mr. Hanson Hey was declared elected Vice President, there being no other nomination. Mr. Wm. Greenwood was re-elected as treasurer. The Secretary (Mr. Wm. Harrison) was re-elected, as were the Auditors for the past year, Messrs J. Briggs and T. H. Wright. Mr. D. Gavin then pointed out that while it had been stated that only 15 members of the Executive were to be elected, the bye-laws stated that 30 should be elected. The President said that Mr. Bateman (the solicitor) had stated that it would be to order to elect only 15. There was a long discussion upon this point, it being very clear that the articles should be adhered to. Mr. Hanson Hey pointed out that only 20 nominations had been handed in, and that as only those were eligible for election, and as it was illegal to appoint less, they might as well appoint only 15, as suggested by the Council. The voting was proceeded with for 15 councillors, as ruled by the Chairman, with the following result: Mr. J. C. Macdonald, 69; Mr. D. Gavin, 66; Mr. W. Johnson, 64; Mr. Star, 62; Mr. J. Pemberton, 62; Mrs. Wallis, 61; Mr. J. Whitaker, 61; Mr. A. Kitson, 61; Mr. Will Phillips, 55; Mr. H. Holgate, 51; Mr. W. Stansfield, 49; Mr. A. Wilkinson, 49; Mr. S. Featherstone, 47; Mr. A. E. Button, 47; Mr. S. Sibson, 46. 74 good papers were returned. Taken from the *Two Worlds*, "First Annual General Meeting at Keighley" issue July 10th 1903, page 349.



James Johnson Morse (October 1st 1848 – February 19th 1919)³⁹ played an important role in so many areas in promoting Spiritualism from 1870 until his death in 1919; at the time of his death he was the Vice-President of the SNU and editor of the *Two Worlds*. He was involved in the parliamentary campaign for the legal recognition of Spiritualism in 1916, instituted by the Union under its President, Ernest Oaten, and provided space for its promotion in the pages of the *Two Worlds* (Oaten took over the editorship upon the death of Morse).

Morse's role under the auspices of the Spiritualists' National Federation and the Spiritualists' National Union has in many avenues gone unnoticed. Morse was a fine lecturer by all accounts and a correspondent giving important historic accounts of Spiritualism abroad and at home for London and the provinces. He worked tirelessly for many years towards a national organisation and was President of the National Federation

for 1899 and 1900. He was closely involved with the formation of The Britten Memorial, founded shortly after Emma's death on October 2nd 1899. He was prominent in many of the early developments and growth of the Union, including its educational scheme. In the early years of the Union it was intended that a hall should be named 'Morse Hall'.

To conclude this first issue, it is fitting to publish an overview of Spiritualism in Great Britain in 1896; the slight drawback is that this was intended for the American readers, so the prices quoted are in US dollars. Below is Morse's paper published over two issues of the *Two Worlds*, October 30th and November 6th 1896. It was written from Hotel Bella Vista, San Francisco, Cal., September 22nd 1896:

SPIRITUALISM IN GREAT BRITAIN

**Harrison D. Barrett, President, American National Spiritualists' Association,
Washington, D.C.**

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,—Very much to my regret, I could not reach Washington in time to attend the Annual Convention of the American National Spiritualists' Association in October, 1895, on my journey *en route* from London to San Francisco, and it is again a matter of keen disappointment to me that circumstances will not permit my reaching Washington until after the Convention of 1896 has been held.

I should have greatly enjoyed being present, not only for the opportunity of meeting many old friends once more, but, also, that I might have seen how the business of so great,

³⁹.—See *Psypioneer*: Volume 8, No 10: October 2012 – James Johnson Morse – Paul J. Gaunt, & J. J. Morse – Julia Schlesinger.

important and representative a gathering of the Spiritualists of the United States was conducted. I could then have reported to your friends in Great Britain what transpired, and given them my impressions of the proceedings, based upon actual observation.

Also, I regret my inability to be with you all the more, because I discover, on examination of the published report of your gathering for 1895, supplied to me by the courtesy of your secretary, that it contains no report from Great Britain, and my excuse for addressing this communication to you is that I may be permitted to prevent a like omission this year. To which end allow me to make this letter into the nature of a communication to the impending Convention, and to ask that you be so good as to submit it to that body while in session, with the fraternal congratulations and respects of the contributor?

As human progress ignores territorial boundaries and ocean wastes, and as the Spiritualists of the two great divisions of the Angle-Saxon race are largely of one common blood-stock, as well as being closely united in purposes common to both, in either country, all that concerns the growth and consolidation of our holy Cause into one united whole, either under the starry banner of the United States, or the Union Jack of Great Britain, is, and must always remain, of deepest interest to all Spiritualists, no matter on which side of the broad Atlantic their homes may be. If the United States is the pioneer of Modern Spiritualism, the United Kingdom has proved itself no unworthy co-partner in spreading the gospel she has received from this land, nor has she played any less important part in its upbuilding than you, who first received it from the angels at Hydesville, in 1848. I am proud of our share in this work, and am bold to say that the two foremost nations of the world to-day are the leaders in a cause which has for its object the spiritual redemption of the world from ignorance, superstition and mental darkness where ever existing, and against which we wage an unceasing strife. I am confident that we shall succeed, and feel sure that in this case, we may yet live to see, in the words of the poet:

“That peace hath her conquests
No less renowned than war.”

If, then, I may thus be permitted to greet you, in Convention assembled, brother and sister Spiritualists of this great Republic, as one from across the seas, a British brother and co-worker and well-wisher, as one who for twenty-seven years has borne his part in the good fight as best he could, under the guidance of the angels, whose message he has been proud to bear up and down his own land, and on three several occasions now, across this broad Continent, I shall esteem your permission an honour to be proud of. I feel assured that you will accept the greetings I send you in the same spirit of fraternal affection which prompts me write you, so let me add thereto the greetings of my brethren at home, and say, as I am sure I may, for them, that we in Britain join hands with you, rejoice at your success, admire your devotion, esteem your labours, and wish you God-speed in all your present and future undertakings for the welfare of our Cause within its own ranks, and for the extension of its operations and influence on the community at large. May the fraternal bonds that now unite us never be sundered. So much by way of greeting; now for matters of more general importance.

Having referred to the fact that your last year's report contained no statement of the condition and position of Spiritualists in Great Britain, it may be acceptable to the Convention that I endeavour to supply that material for the report of your proceedings for 1896. To that end, “I will a round unvarnished tale deliver,” trusting that it will prove alike

useful and interesting, as well as serving to show that we are steadily making progress along the lines that lead to success, and we hope, to the ultimate triumph of our facts and principles.

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE CAUSE IN GREAT BRITAIN.

My first consideration shall be directed to offering you a bird's-eye-view of the present condition of the Cause in Great Britain. To afford you a clear idea of the matter, let me point out that 30 years ago the number of organised societies could have almost been counted on the fingers of one hand! Now we have 190 meeting places in active work. Of that number 69 societies are affiliated with our National Federation. At a rough computation, it may be safely said that for rents, speakers' fees and travelling expenses, advertising, etc., not less than 1,500 dollars are expended by these bodies every Sunday. I do not think I at all over estimate when I put our total working expenditure in these directions at 20,000 dollars a year. An army of at least 200 mediums and speakers engage our platforms, and in nearly all cases our meetings partake of a quasi-religious nature. The meetings use a National Hymn Book, which contains 747 selections. Most of the meetings are hold twice each Sunday, and the aggregate attendances cannot be far short of 40,000 persons every Sunday. This estimate by no means represents the total number of Spiritualists in the United Kingdom, which may be safely placed at 150,000 and then be well within the limits. As in this country, so in my own, many of our people, from various reasons, still hide their light under the proverbial bushel!

The orbit of British Spiritualism, to use an astronomical simile, may be described as an ellipse, of which London and Manchester are the foci. As London is the Metropolis, I may be excused for dealing with it first.

The leading Society in the capital city is the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited—it has recently been Incorporated by the Board of Trade. It is, socially, the premier organisation of the country. It possesses the most complete Library of Spiritualist literature in the Kingdom, and, I am inclined to think, in the world. The Alliance does not hold Sunday services, nor does it enter actively into propaganda work. But during each winter it holds a series of Fortnightly Meetings. During the season it gives several Public Receptions, which are largely attended by our best people. Its president, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, is a gentleman of culture, leisure, and means, who is, in all respects, an honour to the position he so worthily fills. The Alliance has a lengthy roll of members, is financially strong, and socially notable. Mr. B. D. Godfrey is the courteous secretary, which post he has held with credit for a number of years.

The next prominent Metropolitan body is the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists, the oldest existing organisation in the metropolis. After innumerable struggles and vicissitudes it has now become the most active London Society. It has a membership exceeding 300, and supports the best Sunday meeting in the city, for which it engages the very best and highest talent available. It holds occasional social meetings, and ever extends a cordial welcome to all worthy and well recommended workers from other lands. Its president, Mr. Thomas Everitt, is one of our oldest Spiritualists, and the husband of one of our most remarkable private mediums, a lady who has generously devoted her marvellous gifts to the service of the cause, literally, "without money and without price," for over thirty years. The Vice-president, Mr. T. W. Cooper, is a most amiable and courteous gentleman, who holds an important position under our Poor-Law Administration. He is devoted heart and soul to our work, and his labours, therefore, are truly indefatigable and unselfish. The Honorary Secretary, Mr. Leigh Hunt, completes the trio of Executive officers, and justly enjoys the confidence and esteem of his *confreres* in the Society, and on its directorate alike. The Sunday services of this Society

are held in a handsome meeting place known as the Cavendish Rooms, the finest place of assembly used by our people in London, and only equalled by that used by one other Society, the Spiritualists' Union, of Birmingham.

Another important effort is the Spiritualists' International Corresponding Society, which also has its home in the Metropolis. This society was formed by Mr. J. Allen, who has succeeded in establishing correspondents in nearly all parts of the world, among whom is your present vice-president, Mrs. C. L. V. Richmond.

A fourth establishment of note in London, is what is known as "Morse's Library and Reading Rooms," the proprietor of which is the present writer. The active librarian is Miss Florence Morse, who has in her care some 600 volumes of our literature, with a regular supply of all our periodicals in the English language for the use of the members. During the winter season, regular public meetings are held every Friday evening, at which various mediums attend, and the writer also gives courses of lectures under control. Several social receptions are also held during the winter, and welcomes are given to visitors from afar, as occasion may arise. Connected with this undertaking is Morse's Spiritualists' Hotel, the only establishment of its kind in the United Kingdom, if not in the world. It is under the management of Mrs. Morse, and is frequently patronised by visitors from this country. Indeed, as a social centre, these undertakings have proved a marked success.

While last, but by no means least, it must be noted that London is the home of that excellent periodical *Light*, so admirably edited by Mr. E. D. Rogers, whose name has been previously mentioned. This journal is one that is a credit to our Cause, and is thoroughly high class in every particular.

There are numerous other efforts in full and useful operation in the Metropolis, including that of Mr. Long at Camberwell, and the Society at Stratford, but considerations of space forbid a detailed enumeration of them. But enough has been said to show that London is a vigorous and healthy centre of activity, and that it stands well to the front in our work.

The City of Manchester is the other focus of our Spiritual orbit, and most worthily it fulfils the duties of its position. Within the Mancunian territory there are no less than fourteen active societies, the oldest being the Manchester Society of Spiritualists, one of the oldest, if not the oldest of the existing societies in the Kingdom, if I mistake not. Within a radius of a dozen miles of this important city some twenty other societies exist in the densely populated area named. Manchester has always been known as a centre of progressive thought, from and before the great Chartist agitation of fifty years ago, right down to the present time. Indeed, it has passed into a proverb: that what Manchester thinks to-day, England does to-morrow! Hence, it is quite in the natural order of things that this city should afford fertile soil for our great and progressive gospel.

It is in this city that the second of our papers has its home, second in age only, for in all other respects it is fully abreast of the times. It is some years younger than its metropolitan contemporary, but it exceeds it in circulation, while it exercises a great and constantly-increasing influence upon the growth and importance of our Cause, as its tenour is always in harmony with the needs of our work, within and without our ranks. It is ably edited by my old and valued friend and co-worker, Mr. E. W. Wallis, who is a speaker of proved ability and power, and a man of most excellent repute. Since his occupancy of the editorial chair, which was previously filled by Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten, he has almost succeeded in placing the

paper on a sound financial basis, and is making it a thoroughly representative journal. This paper, THE TWO WORLDS, is the property of a Joint Stock Limited Liability Company, composed entirely of Spiritualists, and is managed by a Board of Directors, under the efficient presidency of Mr. S. S. Chiswell, an eminent worker in the neighbouring city of Liverpool, where he occupies the responsible position of manager to a large business Corporation. As a matter of fact this paper and the National Federation owe their existence largely to the initiative and enthusiasm of Mr. E. W. Wallis, so it can be readily surmised that he is highly esteemed, and possesses the confidence of the Cause at large, while Mrs. M. H. Wallis, his wife, a very able and cultured speaker and estimable lady, proves an admirable co-partner with him in all he does for the Cause they both have so much at heart.

There are numerous media practicing in the city, with satisfactory results to the Cause. But last year the experience of Philadelphia was that of Manchester, in the matter of police prosecutions. But the “fortune telling” cry was the peg the authorities based their action upon.

Among the various towns where Spiritualism flourishes with ever increasing vigour may be mentioned Leicester, Nottingham, Belper, Liverpool, Huddersfield, Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, Keighley, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Macclesfield, Oldham, Sowerby Bridge, Burnley, Accrington, Sunderland, North and South Shields, and Rochdale in England, Cardiff and Newport in Wales, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen in Scotland are the places that are most noticeable. The foregoing are all large centres of population, but in many smaller towns and villages the Cause has a firm root and flourishes well. From this, which is, as premised, but a bird’s-eye-view, you can judge that the Cause generally is doing well. It is a curious fact, upon which I make no comment, that we have not a single society in Ireland!

SOME SPECIAL FEATURES OF OUR WORK.

It may prove of interest and value if I now present you with an account of some of the special features of our work in the United Kingdom. By so doing you may be able to get an even clearer idea of the position we have reached in the matters of effective effort for the sustaining of the Cause within its own ranks. As to my mind the question of organisation is ever paramount in this connection, I will first deal with our National Federation. Various efforts to form a National body have been made, from 1864 downwards. Nothing of particular value to the Cause resulted until 1872, when, at Liverpool, was formed a body called the ‘British Spiritualists’ National Federation.” The promise of that attempt did not realise the expectations of its friends, so, after a few years of more or less useful life, the organisation changed its name, character, and original purposes, and entered upon a more modest phase of existence as the London “Central Association of Spiritualists.” It was not until 1890 that the hope of national unity reappeared, when, on Mrs Britten's initiative, a “call” was issued for a General Conference of British Spiritualists to meet in Manchester. In response thereto a large and representative gathering assembled in the above named city. A Committee was appointed and instructed to act in drafting a constitution, and in any other way that would assist in forming a National body, and to report at the next meeting in the following year at Bradford. This was done, the Constitution was submitted and adopted, but it was not until the following year’s Conference, at Burnley, that the Constitution assumed its present formal and accepted shape, in which it now governs the Federation, the full title of which is: The Spiritualists' National Federation.

The objects of the Federation are succinctly set forth in the introduction to the published Constitution, which reads as follows: "This organisation consists of affiliated Spiritualists' Societies and Associate members, Its objects are to unite Spiritualists and strengthen the movement by annual movable Conferences, by propaganda work in new districts, by cooperation with existing Societies to spread the truth, by the distribution of literature, by public and semi-public meetings, and by such other methods as may be found necessary." The *per capitata* tax for Societies is two cents per member, and the fee for Associates is 60 cents per year as dues. The annual assembly is composed of delegates and Associates, all of whom have one vote on every question. This year the Conference met at Liverpool, and was attended by 28 Associates and 55 Delegates, representing 3,500 people.

In 1895 the Conference appointed an Organising Secretary, which position was most admirably filled by Mr. James Swindlehurst. During the nine months covered by his labours he held 183 public meetings, addressing, it is estimated, over 23,000 people. His work was very nearly self-supporting from the collections taken up. He also strengthened the Federation by obtaining 51 new Associates, forming four new societies, restoring several to the National roll, and he travelled over 4,300 miles. When the limited area of Great Britain is considered, I venture to aver that the foregoing results will compare most favourably with the work done in this country.

Financially, too, our Federation is doing well. Its income for the past year was 365 dollars—a dollar a day,—and there was a credit balance of 30 dollars when the accounts were audited. Not a large income, it is true, but it maintains no office, does not yet pay its president, gives its secretary but a more honorarium, for its officials are not required to give their whole time to the duties of their offices.

Among the pressing questions discussed at the late conference was a proposal to establish a Board of Examination for aspirants to the Speakerate, and the possibility of what is known to us as the "Legal Hundred" question, *i.e.*, the obtaining of an Act of Parliament to incorporate the Federation as a legally constituted body, so that it can become the National Trustee of the entire movement, as regards property, donations, bequests, etc. The Conference appointed committees to consider and report on those matters next year. As our laws are, a Spiritualist Society, as such, cannot hold property, nor can it be incorporated. It must declare itself as a religious body, with definite religious principles, before the law will recognise it. When we are incorporated it will then be impossible for our buildings or funds to be diverted from the purposes for which they have been obtained.

The Federation, in conjunction with the TWO WORLDS Publishing Company, has this year issued a National Spiritualists' Hymn Book, for use at our meetings. This is a very fine collection of about 750 selections, suitable for all kinds of gatherings. In addition, it contains a very admirable short service Suitable for interments. The book is neatly and substantially bound in cloth, and sells at the remarkably low price of 25 cents, a better bound copy coating a trifle more. Mr. E. W. Wallis was again the moving spirit in securing this valuable addition to our literature.

SOME OF OUR WORKERS

A word or two may now be in order as to the workers engaged in furthering the cause in Great Britain, truly servants of the angels, and evangelists of human progress. While, of course, their numbers are not as great as those of this land, yet, in zeal and earnest devotion, I am

sure they are unequalled by any personally known to you here. We may not have an Edgar Emerson, a John Slater, an E. K Earle, a Maud Frietag, a Joseph D. Stiles, or a Mrs. J. J. Whitney, or an Ada Foye, but we have, nevertheless, many excellent platform mediums for tests, psychometry, clairvoyance, etc., who are well fitted to grace any platform. I may mention Mrs. M. H. Wallis, Mrs. Groom, Mrs. E. Green, Mrs. J. S. Stansfield, Mrs. V. A. Bliss, Miss A. Rowan Vincent, Miss McCreadie, Mr. J. J. Vango, and Mr. James B. Tetlow, as each being eminent in the above-named phases of mediumship, and who have each afforded conviction to innumerable sceptics, and consolation to hosts of the bereaved. While, as speakers of proven ability and long-trying service, there are Mrs. E. H. Britten, Mr. and Mrs. Wallis, Mr. James Swindlehurst, Mr. W. E. Long, Mr. J. Veitch, Mr. H. Hunt, Mr. Wm. Johnson, Mr. G. Featherstone and others, whose names are literally "as familiar as household words" all over the country. The writer has also done his part during the past twenty-six years. It may also be mentioned that Mr. W. J. Colville, Mr. J. Clegg Wright, Mr. Walter Howell, and Mr. T. Grimshaw are each products of English Spiritualism, though now residents of this country.

THE CHILDREN'S LYCEUM.

The next item of our special work is that of the Children's Progressive Lyceum. Of the importance of this branch of our effort, there can be no two opinions, nor is there in Great Britain, which as doubtless you are all aware, is the birthplace of the "Sunday School" movement in connection with our brethren of the orthodox churches. Thirty years ago there was but one Lyceum in Great Britain, meeting in the town of Nottingham. To maintain it was more than difficult. Spiritualists in those days were not awake to its importance, and money to support it was hard to get. It was only by the dogged perseverance of the early workers, and their undaunted enthusiasm, that the effort was kept alive. Now all that is changed. Lyceums dot the land, as do the stars the sky. Indifference has given place to interest, the work is enthusiastically supported, means are readily obtainable, and ultimate and great success is well in sight.

In a line with the course now pursued by the Societies, the Lyceum work has been consolidated, and has its "British Lyceum Union," the formation of which preceded that of the National Federation, holds its annual Convention, and possesses its monthly official organ. These satisfactory results have largely been attained through the indefatigable zeal and unstinted devotion of Mr. Alfred Kitson, the Secretary of the Union, who, though a man of humble circumstances, was undoubtedly selected by the angels for the important work he has accomplished. Once again we find the old truth re-emphasised, that all reforms spring from the people, are born in suffering, nurtured by tears and trials, and only grow strong on the unselfish devotion of their original evangelists.

At the present time there are 84 Lyceums in full operation in the United Kingdom, while as a proof of the fact that they appreciate the benefits of organisation, I rejoice to say that 74 of these bodies are in affiliation with the Union, and that the Union is in affiliation with the National Federation. The Lyceum in San Francisco is a member of our Lyceum Union, and I hope that example will be emulated by other Lyceums in the United States before very long. In conducting our Lyceums there are over 800 officers engaged every Sunday, and there is an average of 5,000 members enrolled on the registers. It is no small tribute to the workers to say that, in all cases, their services are given without other reward than the consciousness of doing good can confer upon them.

The development of our Lyceum work has been most markedly assisted by the publication of four invaluable works, first in order being the "British Lyceum Manual," issued by Mr. H. A. Kersey, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, in the compilation of which he was assisted by Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten and Mr. Alfred Kitson. Though issued at the price of 23 cents, it is supplied to Lyceums in quantities at a merely nominal rate. It is now in its fourth edition, of which 3,379 copies have been sold. The second work is "The Spiritual Songster," also issued by Mr. Kersey. This is a handsome book of words and music, and is sold for 1 dollar, but lower prices to Lyceums. Since its appearance 955 copies have gone into circulation. The third work is "The Book of Words," which contains all the pieces in the "Songster." It is sold at 6 cents per copy, and is also published by the before-mentioned gentleman, and of which 3,385 copies have been sold. Mr. Kersey generously donates a moiety of the profits of these works to the Union's funds. The fourth work is the "Outlines of Spiritualism," written by M. Alfred Kitson, but now issued by the Union. The price of this book, handsomely bound in cloth, is 30 cents, and over 780 copies of the present edition have been sold. The "Manual" and the "Songster" have entirely displaced all the earlier works in our Lyceum teaching, since they are better adapted to our needs.

As already mentioned, the Lyceums possess their official organ, *The Lyceum Banner*, which periodical was founded under Spirit impulsion by the present writer six years ago, and who, in conjunction with his daughter, Miss Florence Morse, as assistant editor, has been editor and publisher down to the present time. During my absence the paper is in the able care of Mr. Thomas Olman Todd, of Sunderland. It was made the official organ of the Lyceum Union in 1891. Since its establishment over 150,000 copies have been sold. It is the only journal devoted to Lyceum work in the world, and as is usual with most Spiritualist papers, it has been issued at the personal loss of its proprietor, though there is evidence that the proverbial corner has now been almost turned! All the labour involved has been entirely gratuitous.

One special feature of the paper is deserving of notice. Each month it contains a tabulated Lesson Plan, accompanied by a Synoptical Syllabus of all the lessons in the schedule. This feature has proved invaluable to the Conductors and Leaders, as it provides them with a lesson plan for every Sunday. This plan is almost generally in use.

Another feature of a special nature is a department called "The Golden Group," conducted by Aunt Editha," the object of which isto unite the children of Spiritualists in a society for the promotion of "Kindness, Temperance, and Purity." There are upwards of 1,000 names now enrolled upon the "big book," as the register is called, each member receiving a pretty certificate. The young people of the United States are invited to join; some 30 recently did so in San Francisco.

The journal has a circulation in the United States, and is taken in the last-named city as well as at Boston and New Bedford, Mass. We are greatly indebted to Mr. Alonzo Danforth, of Boston, Mass., for a valuable series of "Golden Chain" recitations, which he has supplied us for many months, and which regularly appear in the paper. We also send a copy for file to the Library of the National Association, at Washington, D.C. Many of our friends desire that we make this an International organ, and there is no valid reason why such a result should not be achieved.

A SPIRITUALISTS' BENEFIT SOCIETY.

The last special feature pertaining to our cause in Great Britain that I will call your attention to is "The Order of Progressive Spiritualists' Sick Benefit and Pension Fund," an association originated by Mrs. M. H. Wallis, and to which she is the honorary secretary. This effort has its headquarters in Manchester. For the past year it has disbursed over 200 dollars in sick relief and pensions. It is the first and only Society of the kind ever established for our people in Great Britain, and is in every way well deserving of support, and its promoter deserves every praise for her endeavours.

From what has been stated in the preceding pages, it will be seen that, all in all, as a movement, Modern Spiritualism is in a healthy, vigorous, active, and growing condition in its Island home across the Atlantic. While as to its organisations, its platforms, its press, its mediums and speakers, we have every reason to congratulate ourselves upon the stability, service, efficiency, and ability displayed in each and all of those departments. A state of affairs that, I venture to think, will excite your cordial congratulations? So with this I leave my review, or really bird's-eye-view, of Spiritualism in Great Britain in your hands, trusting it may receive a place in the proceedings of your Convention.

