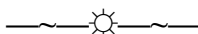




Volume 4, No. 5: October 2017

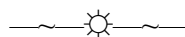
Contents list:



The Pioneer (bi-monthly) is now part of the recommended reading for the Spiritualists' National Union's education courses.

This history journal is presented 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.

Special thanks to Leslie Price and Charles Coulston for their work in sub-editing this issue



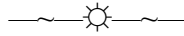
- 150 – British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union – Lyceum Archives moved to Stansted Hall**
- 154 – Spirit Photography – Alfred Kitson**
- 157 – The Case for Spirit Photography – Arthur Conan Doyle**
The Crewe Circle
- 159 – “The Case for Spirit Photography” now republished**
- 160 – Unknown image of possible trumpet phenomena**
- 161 – Letter from Harry Houdini to Dr W. J. Crawford**
- 162 – Dr. W. J. Crawford & the Goligher Circle**
- 165 – Ectoplasm Photographed – John McIndoe**
- 167 – Editor's endnote**
- 170 – 2018 Research – Study dates now available to book**
- 171 – Spiritualist Healers of the Past – Frederick Joseph Jones – Revisited**
- 174 – Early Spiritualist Sunday Services**
Sunday services in Spiritualism – 1877

“Subscribe” free to Pioneer or contact the editor –
pioneer@snu.org.uk

All references to Psypioneer in this issue are archived at <http://psypioneer.iapsop.com/>

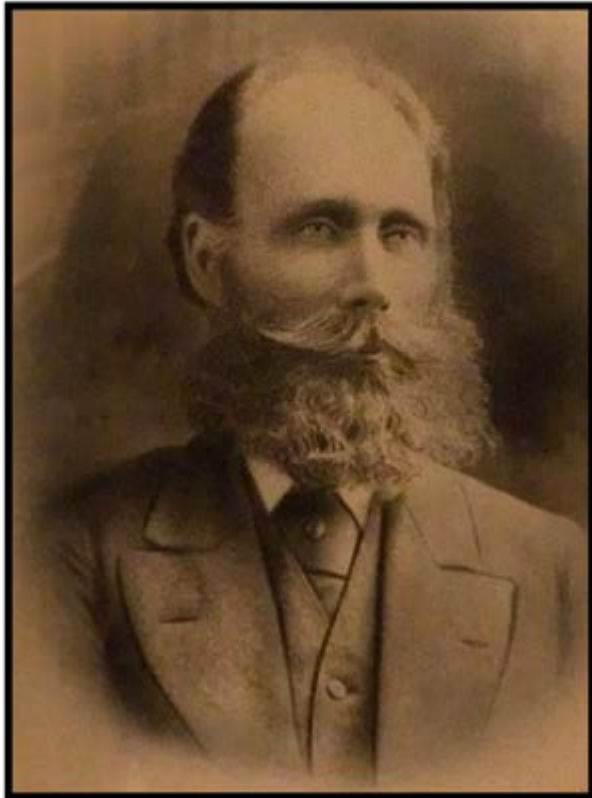
BRITISH SPIRITUALISTS' LYCEUM UNION

Lyceum Archives moved to Stansted Hall



In the last issue of the "Pioneer" it was noted:

"At the last Lyceum AGM it was decided to offer the Britten Museum & Library, housed at the Arthur Findlay College, Stansted Hall, a large part of the Lyceum museum. This was readily accepted, as it holds a valuable part of our Spiritualist history and is a great asset for research. The Lyceum was very closely entwined in the early days of National Spiritualist."



Although much of the material will not be available until the New Year, a glimpse of the items is shown here:

J. J. Ashworth was the Conductor of the first British Lyceum at Nottingham; this striking portrait is already displayed in the Museum. "The Lyceum Banner" for May 1931 recorded this notice:

A LYCEUMIST SINCE 1866 PASSES TO SPIRIT LIFE.

TRANSITION OF MR. J. J. ASHWORTH.

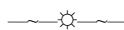
By the passing to the other side of life of Mr. J. J. Ashworth, aged 84 years, on March 29th, 1931, at his daughter's home, 132, Hartley Road, Nottingham, the Lyceum movement loses its oldest member.

Mr. Ashworth was present, and helped in the formation of England's first Lyceum, which was formed in Nottingham 65 years ago.

None of us may realise how much we owe the pioneers of our grand cause, and although Mr. Ashworth was not able to take an active part in the movement during recent years, he has done very useful work in years gone by and retained his membership right up to the last.

P. FARNATH, Sec.

We record our gratitude and appreciation of the pioneer work done by our arisen friend and hope he has found joy in his promotion.—ED.



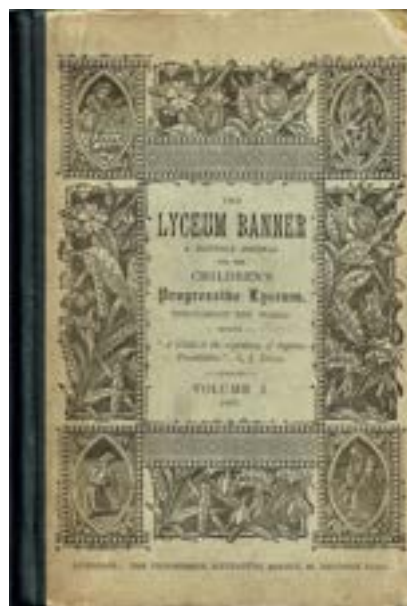
"The Lyceum Banner" was founded and edited by James J. Morse, assisted by his daughter, the trance medium Florence Morse, and it was published monthly on the third Sunday of each month. The first issue appeared in November 1890. We can note in the first issue of the "Pioneer" a valuable article by James J. Morse, "Spiritualism in Great Britain", originally published over two issues of the *Two Worlds*, October 30th and November 6th, 1896, which contained much information on the British Lyceum Union.

It can also be noted in that article:

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.¹



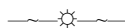
During my absence the paper is in the able care of Mr. Thomas Olman Todd, of Sunderland. It was made the official organ of the Lyceum Union in 1891. Since its establishment over 150,000 copies have been sold. It is the only journal devoted to Lyceum work in the world, and as is usual with most Spiritualist 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.



Morse also states in the article:

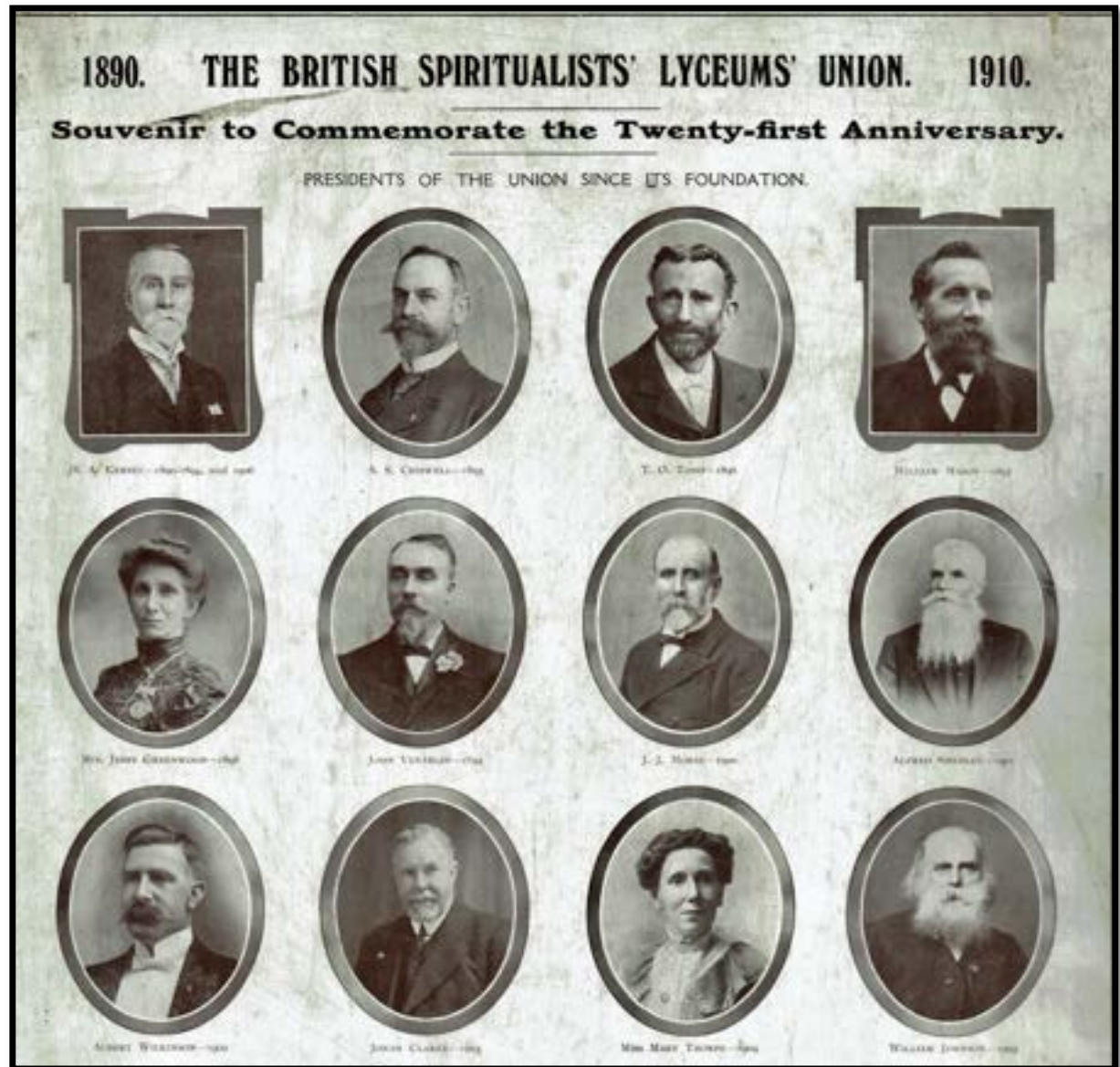
In a line with the course now pursued by the Societies, the Lyceum work has been consolidated, and has its "British Lyceum Union," the formation of which preceded that of the National Federation [Spiritualists 'National Union'], holds its annual Convention, and possesses its monthly official organ. These 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 evangels.

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.



¹ The photograph of Florence Morse is taken from an early *Banner* but the date is not indicated on the page scanned: "Miss Florence Morse is quite well known to the readers of *The Lyceum Banner*, and, without doubt, they will be pleased to see the latest and best portrait of one who has so often amused them by the work of her pen, as she has served the Lyceum work in other directions. She has taken an active and practical interest in this paper from its commencement, has contributed articles upon Lyceum work and other subjects to various English and American journals, besides numerous other articles and stories. She also took active part in the institution of the Liverpool Lyceum. The portrait is now printed in response to the wishes of her many friends on both sides of the Atlantic."

Much of the Britten Museum & Library's richest assets are the Spiritualist journals. The addition of "The Lyceum Banner" is no disappointment, although it appears there is not a full set. (Additionally, we hold the early Minutes Books.) The early Banners cover much early history, for example a series titled "Lyceum Banner Portrait Gallery", which features many of our early pioneers, like Mr John Winning, in the December issue, 1917. Later he became Dr John Winning, a defence witness in the Helen Duncan trial in 1944; in 1965 SNU President; and overseeing the official opening of the Arthur Findlay College in 1966, and its first Principal.



It has been previously noted in the "Pioneer" how the Lyceum Union and the Union were so very closely entwined in the early days of the establishment of National Spiritualism.

Many Presidents of our Spiritualists' National Federation (SNF), reconstituted in 1901, becoming the Spiritualists' National Union (SNU), were also Lyceum Presidents, as can be noted above.

Spiritualists' National Federation President: Samuel S. Chiswell (1891/1892), John Venables (1901), James J. Morse (1899/1900), William Johnson (1902).

Spiritualists' National Union President: Jessie Greenwood (1923/25), Albert Wilkinson 1910/11), William Johnson (1902), Ernest Keeling (1928/30) below.



“Pioneer”, Vol. 4, No. 1, February 2017, stated:

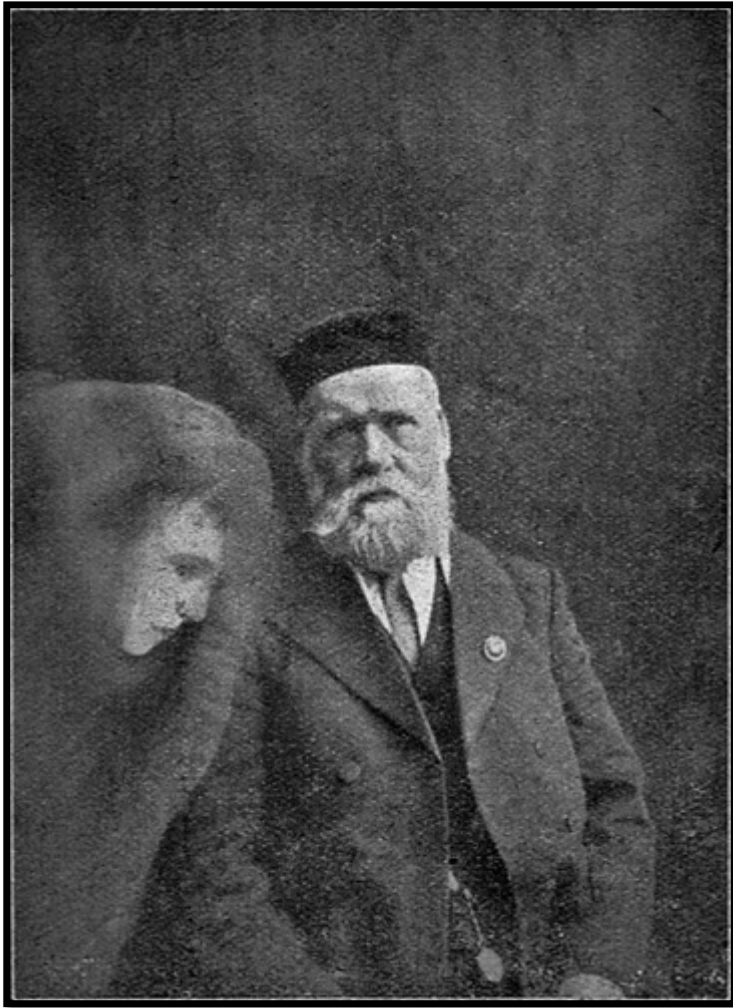
It is often overlooked that our Principles in the original format were in fact being used by the Lyceum Union before the Spiritualists' National Union was founded in July 1890.

Andrew Jackson Davis takes the centre stage on the twenty-first Anniversary Souvenir as founder of “The Children’s Progressive Lyceum” in America in 1863; Alfred Kitson was looked upon as the Father of the British Lyceum and affectionately called “Dad Kitson”.

One notable part of the Lyceum Union collection are the glass slides of psychic photography. The Britten Museum & Library already holds a large collection of this phase of phenomena, which was popularised by William Mumler in Boston, America in 1862. What is unique is that some of the slides, mainly regarding the work of William (Billy) Hope and the Crewe Circle, have information regarding them individually. All these slides are being recorded electronically for safekeeping; an educational PowerPoint is in preparation.

Alfred Kitson was a keen supporter of psychic photography and published various articles; below Kitson tells an interesting story of his experience and the avenues it opened for those involved.

It appeared in “The Lyceum Banner”, January 4th, 1920, front and page 2:



SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY.

BY ALFRED KITSON.

On Monday October 15th I paid a special visit to Mr. and Mrs. Mack, Runcorn, Cheshire. In the evening a special meeting of the spirit circle was held, Mr. Bostock being the medium. During the sitting, special interest was manifested by the spirit friends in my life's labours for the Lyceum, one of the controls giving the number of Musical Readings as being 28, and Golden Chain Recitations as being four which I had contributed to the compilation of the Manual. I had not kept any account of the number, and none of the sitters being able to help me, we decided to consult the Lyceum Manual when the meeting was over.

Jack Bostock

One of the spirit controls spoke in a soft voice something like that of a shy maiden. I thought it was one, and was informed it was the medium's brother Jack. I also learned that he always came in that quiet way. He gave me to understand that he would visit me now we had made each other's acquaintance.

At the close of the circle a copy of the Lyceum Manual was looked up, and its pages in the Golden Chain Recitations and Musical Readings sections examined, when it was discovered there were 28 Musical Readings and 3 Golden Chain Recitations bearing my name; while No. 105 I had composed, but had deleted my name because the subject matter had been too much altered.

A Visit to Crewe.

The fortnight following, Oct. 27th, while returning from Longton. I called at Crewe, by appointment, to try and obtain the photo of my spirit guide, Zela. I was rushed for time, only having an hour and a half from arriving at the station to leaving it for home, as Mrs. Kitson was very-ill and I was anxious to get back home.

Two plates were exposed, and an "extra" was found on one of them, which gave me the impression that I had, at last, obtained the photo of spirit Zela. When they were printed, however, I was doomed to further disappointment, as no one knew the spirit whose face appeared. I submitted copies to friends at Batley Carr, Dewsbury, Middlesbrough and Runcorn, in the hope it would be recognised; failing which I expressed my intention of inserting it in the "Lyceum Banner" in hope it would be recognised by some of its readers and so bring joy into some mourning household.

Our Jack.

When Mr. Mack showed his copy of the photo to Mr. Bostock he exclaimed, “Good Law, its our Jack,” one of the spirit friends who had greeted me at their circle.

On learning of the recognition I immediately wrote to Mr. Mack asking him to supply me with full particulars concerning “Jack,” when and where born, his age at passing over, and how long it was since he passed over, for publication in the “Lyceum Banner.” The following is Mr. Mack’s reply, which I print in full, as evidential value of spirit return; and of the honesty of the members of the Crewe Circle for spirit photography:

The Brothers.

The first time Mr. Bostock came into contact with Spiritualism was when he was living in Manchester. Some eighteen years ago, he was out with a gentleman, and as it began to rain they both sought shelter, and for this purpose entered the first Spiritualist Church he had ever entered—Collyhurst Street. Mr. Bostock had a description given to him, but he failed to recognise it, and so he ruled Spiritualism out of court. About five or six weeks later, he gave the matter a further thought, and another description was given to him, which he recognised. His wife also paid a few visits, and so the matter continued for several weeks, during which time a portion of his past life was described to him. He fully recognised there was something in Spiritualism, but put it to one side as being contrary to his then accepted principles—he was a strong Orangeman.

Mr. Bostock has always seen clairvoyantly, although he did not know what to put it down to. However, the visits to the societies had the effect of developing his clairvoyance, but instead of causing him to throw in his lot with Spiritualism it had the opposite effect and he left it alone.

Jack Materialises.

Although during the following eighteen months he did not attend any meetings, he had many arguments and conversations on the subject of Spiritualism. On going to Durham to work, he had a ticket given to him to attend a materialising seance. He attended, and saw his brother Jack materialise, the medium giving Mr. Bostock’s full name, which no one knew in the meeting. Jack was 6ft. 4in. in height, the medium only being the average in height. The seance had the effect of causing Mr. Bostock to rush out of the place, and to forbid anyone to discuss the matter with him.

This feeling lasted till 1907, when he removed to Runcorn, and there attended the Forresters’ Hall. He was told so often by different mediums (in this place) that he was a physical medium that he took the matter up, joining the society, and developing as a splendid trance speaker and physical medium. He ultimately became President of the Society, Lyceum Conductor and assisted greatly in the scheme for purchasing the Runcorn Ashbridge Street Spiritualist Church.² Later he went out to South Africa, where he developed clairauidence, given by his brother. Here he sat with friends of the Durban Society, giving many tests. Mr. Bostock has been twice to South Africa.

Later he travelled to Egypt, India, Japan and America, completing the circuit of the world, and then home. This brings us to the present “extra” reproduced in this article.

² Runcorn Spiritualist Church is still going today and is affiliated to the Union. Its website informs us that it was originally built in 1888 by a local chemist who was an evangelist preacher, and in 1908 it was bought by a group of Spiritualists: <http://www.runcorn-snu.org.uk>

The “Extra.”

October 14th, 1919:—The circle welcomed Mr. Kitson; Jack said he would go to Crewe; then to Yorkshire; then come back.

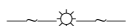
RESULT: He went to Crewe; then to Yorkshire (Photograph); then came back (Photograph now framed).

The photograph is as he appeared at 16½ years of age. All who have seen it who knew Jack in the body have recognised it immediately, and without being told. There has never been a photograph like this taken, so this could not be a copy.

Mr. Bostock has never been in Crewe outside the station and never met Mr. Hope, as far as he knows. Mr. Bostock’s son has a strong resemblance to Jack’s photograph. Jack passed out of the body in 1897 at the age of 16 years and 8 months.



Mr and Mrs Alfred & Mary Kitson





Shown here is one of the glass slides from the Lyceum Union collection. It appears to be one from the Crewe Circle, William Hope and Mrs Buxton. On December 14th, 1922 Hutchinson & Co published "The Case for Spirit Photography" by Arthur Conan Doyle, M.D., LL.D., and others; the book is nicely illustrated. It appears that the book was written to defend William (Billy) Hope from accusations of fraud. The first chapter begins:

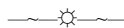
THE CREWE CIRCLE

AN accusation of a damaging, and, as I believe, of an entirely unfounded character, has been brought forward by Mr. Harry Price against Mr. Hope, whose name has for more than seventeen years been associated with the strange phenomenon which has been called spirit photography. I will deal later with this accusation with which the Society for Psychic Research has unfortunately

associated itself by publishing the report of it in their official journal.³ Before touching upon it I should wish to take a broader sweep and to show the overpowering weight of evidence which exists as to the reality of Mr. Hope's most remarkable gift.

If a man were accused of cowardice it would be natural that his defender should not confine himself to the particular case, but should examine the man's whole career and put forward instances of valour as an argument against the charge. So also if a man is accused of dishonesty a long record of honesty would be his most complete defence. Therefore in considering the case of Mr. Hope, and the value of his mediumship, one must not limit one's investigation to a single case, where errors of observation and of deduction may creep in, but must take a broader view which will embrace an account of a long series of cases, vouched for by men and women of the highest character, and incompatible with any form of fraud. If the reader will have the patience to follow my facts and my argument, I hope to make it clear to any unprejudiced mind that there is overwhelming evidence that we have in Mr. Hope a man endowed with most singular powers, and that, instead of persecuting and misrepresenting him, it would be wiser if we took a sympathetic view of his remarkable work, which has brought consolation to the afflicted, and conviction to many who had lost all belief in the independent life of the spirit.

Many speak of Mr. Hope and of the Crewe Circle without any definite idea of what the words mean. Let me explain, then, that Mr. William Hope, who is a working-man, discovered, some seventeen years ago, quite by chance, that this remarkable power of producing extra faces, figures or objects upon photographic plates had been given to him. In the first instance he was taking a fellow-workman, and the plate, when developed, was found to contain an extra figure which was recognised as being a likeness of his comrade's sister, who had recently passed away.



³ Should read "Society for Psychical Research".

If we note the image that heads this page and the previous article's psychic extra, we will note that the alleged spirit face is in an arched veil; this is sometimes referred to as the "psychic arch". Below is taken from pages 30/31, which Doyle explains in further detail:

"Anyone who is familiar with Hope's results is aware that over many of the psychic faces there appears a roll or arch of some peculiar substance which has never been explained upon any supposition of fraud, but is so constant that it would appear to be part of the psychic process. Some of us have always contended that probably this arch represents a formation corresponding to the Cabinet upon this side—an envelope or enclosed space within which psychic forces are generated and condensed. The arch is by no means peculiar to Hope, though the exact form and texture of it is such that one could pick out a Hope photograph among a hundred others. The psychic arch, as it has been named, appears in many forms and many places, some of them very unexpected."

Page 32, Doyle continues:

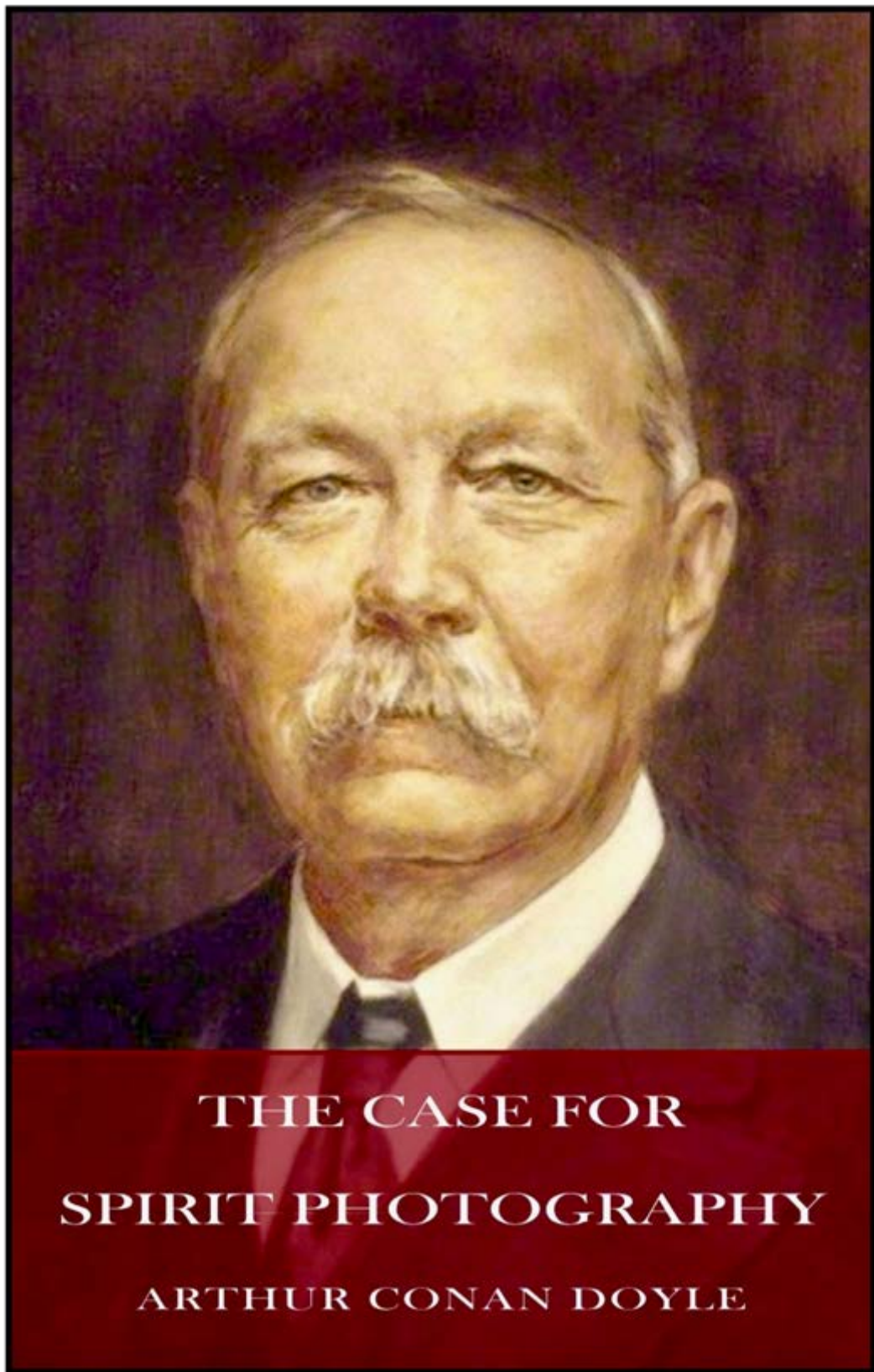
"On one occasion remarkable evidence was afforded that we were right in our surmise that a cabinet of ectoplasm for concentration is first constructed, and that the psychic effect is developed inside it. The result, which is depicted in fig. 12, was got by Mr. Jeffrey, of Glasgow, who was, I may add, the President of the Scottish Society of Magicians, and is therefore the last person to be deceived by any sort of trick. In this case the exposure seems to have been too early so that the ectoplasmic bag is exposed in its complete form, without any contents. In the second picture, fig. 13, taken immediately afterwards, the face of Mr. Jeffrey's deceased wife has appeared, and the bag has split to show it, forming the familiar fold over both sides of the face. This picture seems to me to be quite final in showing us exactly how the matter is worked by the forces which direct things upon the other side."



FIG. 12.—Photograph of Mr. Wm. Jeffrey and his daughter, showing ectoplasmic bag. (See p. 32.)



FIG. 13.—Photograph taken immediately after that shown by Fig. 12. Position of sitters is unchanged, but the ectoplasmic veiling now contains an excellent likeness (slightly distorted) of Mr. Jeffrey's deceased wife.



**First published in 1922. Now republished by SDU
Publications and available at the Arthur Findlay College
and the usual outlets**

Illustrated with 31 images
www.sdubooks.com

The book also gives illustrations of handwriting by Dr W. J. Crawford while alive, and after his death produced by psychic means.

Other items of the Lyceum Union donation include glass slides, including the images shown below of a young man apparently moving a trumpet by means of ectoplasm, in what may be an attempt at producing direct/independent voice. The glass slides are numbered but on this item the corresponding reference has not yet been located, but hopefully it will be found to identify the medium.

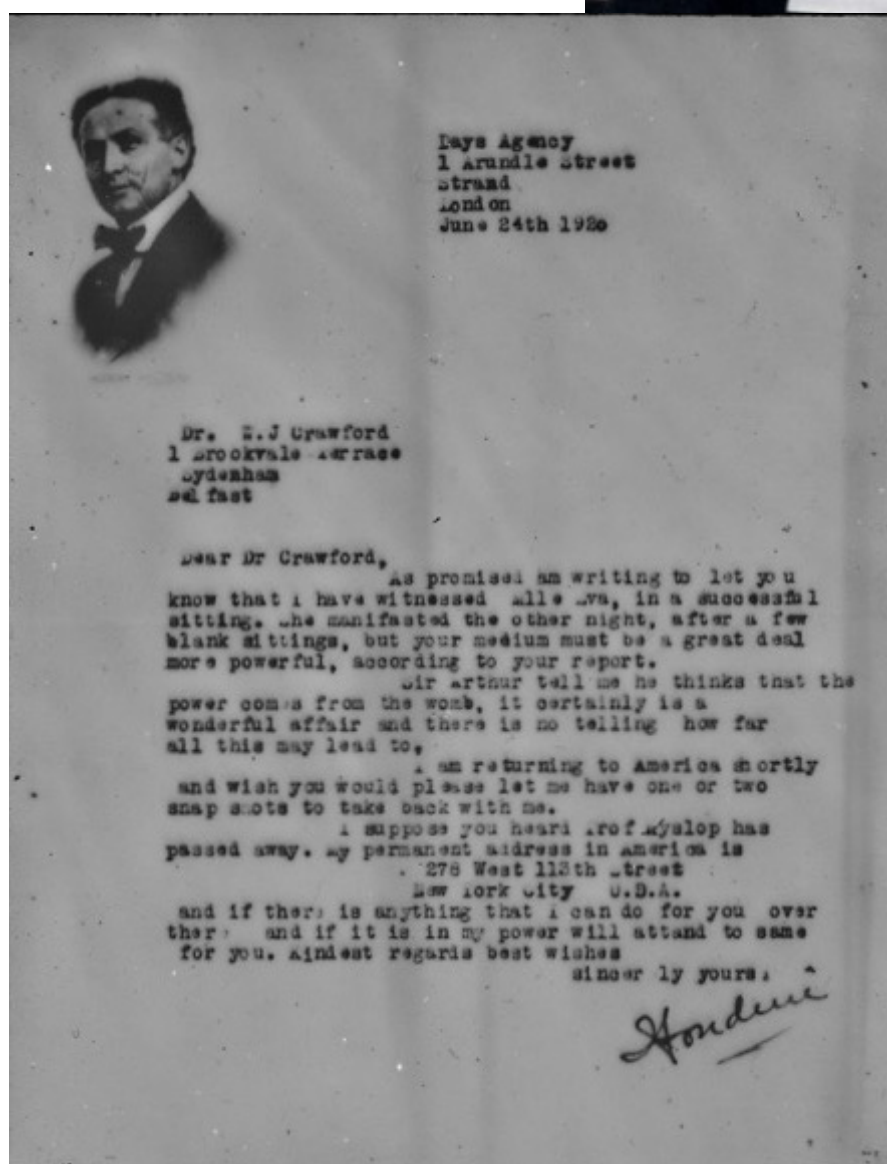


“Pioneer”, Vol. 3, No. 2, April 1916, published “Houdini & Conan Doyle – Story of Strange Friendship and an Historic Quarrel”. It was Sir Arthur’s wife’s mediumship in 1922 that would instigate an irreparable breakdown in the friendship of Harry Houdini and Conan Doyle.

This sent Harry Houdini on a mission for the rest of his life to prove Spiritualism a fraud; he died on October 31st, 1926.

This public hostility, however, was not always the case, as shown in a letter dated June 24th, 1920 to Dr W. J. Crawford, which appears on one of the glass slides.

Below is the glass slide followed by the text:



Days Agency
1 Arundle Street
Strand
London
June 24th 1920

Dr. W. J. Crawford
1 Brookvale Terrace
Sydenham
Belfast

Dear Dr Crawford,

As promised am writing to let you know that I have witnessed mlle Eva in a successful sitting. She manifested the other night, after a few blank sittings, but your medium must be a great deal more powerful, according to your report.

Sir Arthur tell [sic] me he thinks that the power comes from the womb, it certainly is a wonderful affair and there is no telling how far all this may lead to.

I am returning to America shortly and wish you would please let me have one or two snap shots to take back with me.

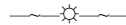
I suppose you heard Prof Hyslop has passed away. My permanent address in America is

278 West 113th Street
New York City U.S.A.

and if there is anything that I can do for you over there and if it is in my power will attend to same for you. Kindest regards best wishes

sincerely yours.

Signed Houdini



Within a month of receiving this letter from Houdini Dr W. J. Crawford was dead. It can be noted in the "Encyclopedia of Occultism & Parapsychology":⁴

Crawford committed suicide on July 30, 1920. Four days before his death he wrote, "I have been struck down mentally. I was perfectly all right up to a few weeks ago. It is not the psychic work. I enjoyed it too well. I am thankful to say that the work will stand. It is too thoroughly done for any material loopholes to be left."

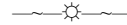
William Jackson Crawford was born in New Zealand in 1881, according to the above publication. He was an engineering lecturer at Queens University, Belfast, Ireland. Houdini's letter would be referring to Crawford's work with the Goligher Circle. Around 1914 he began to investigate the physical phenomena of Kathleen Goligher and the group around her, known as the Goligher Circle. His investigation continued until his death in 1920.

⁴ *Encyclopædia of Psychic Science* by Nandor Fodor, LL.D., prefaced by Sir Oliver Lodge, published in 1934 by Arthurs Press Limited, London. This was later updated in 1966 (The Citadel Press, Secaucus, New Jersey), with the involvement of Leslie Shepard. Thanks were due to Maurice Barbanell and the staff of *Psychic News* for providing research material for the compilation of its Foreword, February 1966, by Shepard. Today it's called *Encyclopedia of Occultism & Parapsychology* and is based on both the *Encyclopedia of Occultism* by Lewis Spence, London, 1920, and Fodor's *Encyclopædia of Psychic Science*, substantially revised and supplemented by new material written by Leslie Shepard.



‘Encyclopedia of Occultism & Parapsychology’ continued:

From his research, he developed a set of speculations on the scientific laws behind the phenomenon of telekinesis (now known as psychokinesis or “PK”), which he presented in his books, “The Reality of Psychic Phenomena” (1916), “Experiment in Psychic Science” (1919), and published posthumously “The Psychic Structures in the Goligher Circle” (1921).⁵ During his research, he converted to Spiritualism, though his theories played down the role of spirits in favour of a psychic force.



Harry Price, in his book, “Fifty Years of Psychical Phenomena”, published in 1939, gives a fair overview on pages 82/3:

THE GOLIGHER CIRCLE

Still another young woman was the centre of a circle formed in Belfast to develop the telekinetic and other phenomena of an Irish family named Goligher. Kathleen Goligher and her three sisters were all mediumistic, and the other members of the family (father, son, etc.) formed the ‘circle.’

The manifestations attracted the attention of Dr. W. J. Crawford, a lecturer in engineering at the Municipal Technical Institute, Belfast, and he decided

to make a prolonged study of the dynamics of telekinesis as demonstrated by Kathleen Goligher and her sisters. The séances were held usually at Mr. Goligher’s house or occasionally in Dr. Crawford’s own home. It is with the utmost difficulty that an investigator can adequately control one medium; but Dr. Crawford considered that he could properly immobilize a room full of mediums and their relatives, in darkness or semi-darkness, and this fact is one of the great weaknesses of Crawford’s many reports of his experiments.

Crawford sat with the Goligher circle for six years until he committed suicide on July 30, 1920. There is no evidence that his death was connected with his psychic investigations. He concluded that the raps, levitation of the table, etc., were accomplished by ‘cantilevers’ made of teleplasmic ‘rods’ or extrusions from the lower portion of the medium’s body, and made many experiments (described in detail in his books) in order to confirm his theory. He also concluded that one end of the teleplasmic ‘rods’ was used for making the raps which were frequently heard, the intelligence behind the raps coming from the medium herself. He even obtained impressions of the ‘pseudopods’ or ‘arms’ in various plastic substances. Finally, photographs of the alleged ‘psychic levers’ were published.

Shortly after Crawford’s death, Dr. E. E. Fournier D’Albe visited Belfast with the intention of continuing and confirming Crawford’s experiments. He had twenty sittings with Kathleen Goligher and duplicated many of Crawford’s tests. His report was

⁵ Available to read on-line or to download, including the illustrations.

published in 1922 and is completely negative.⁶ He stated that all he saw—and photographed—could be explained in terms of normality and his findings created something of a sensation, coming as they did after Crawford’s so very positive results. Miss Goligher (now married) rarely exercised her mediumship after the adverse report, and the case will remain one of the many interesting psychic mysteries.



Dr. W. J. Crawford

Despite Fournier D’Albe’s adverse report Crawford’s findings were acknowledged by Charles Richet, who records some of Dr Crawford’s work in his “Thirty Years of Psychical Research”, published in English translation in 1923. Richet notes on pages 431/2:

“Decisive value must be given to Crawford’s experiments. Next to those with Eusapia and Home, they are the most complete on record. Professor Sir William Barrett, who was present at one of these séances, verified that the table moved without contact and that there were raps inexplicable by usual mechanical causes.”

Professor Sir William Barrett was a founder member of the Society for Psychical Research. His report with the above quote is in the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research (PSPR), lxxvii, page 335.

What is most interesting, generally speaking, is Kathleen Goligher; while in the process of exhibiting ectoplasmic structures, during the whole séance she is not in a trance state but fully conscious throughout and observing the phenomena.

It is stated in the above Harry Price quote, “Miss Goligher (now married)”. Kathleen married psychical researcher and pioneer of infra-red photography in the séance room, Mr S.G. Donaldson.

“Pioneer”, Vol. 4, No. 1, February 2017, “Looking back at infra-red in Psypioneer”, shows the first infra-red photograph of Helen Duncan taken by Donaldson in the séance-rooms of the Belfast Spiritualists’ Alliance, Belfast, on Sunday June 5th, 1932. Price also stated, “Goligher (now married) rarely exercised her mediumship after the adverse report ...”⁷

It can be confirmed in the article which follows that the now Mrs Donaldson had not sat on a regular basis for some years. The article was written by an experienced investigator into physical phenomena, SNU President (1930-1938) John B. McIndoe. See also “Pioneer”, Vol. 2, No. 3, May 2015, “Helen Duncan & John McIndoe – A Scots Materialising Medium”; it was McIndoe who gave the first detailed report on Helen Duncan and brought her to public attention.



Kathleen (née Goligher) Donaldson

⁶ *The Goligher Circle*: May to August, 1921, London, 1922. [This is available to read on-line or to download illustrated]

⁷ Kathleen Donaldson 1898-1972, died aged 73.

ECTOPLASM PHOTOGRAPHED

A RECENT SITTING WITH KATHLEEN GOLIGHER

BY J. B. M'INDOE



John B. McIndoe

MRS. DONALDSON (Kathleen Goligher), whose phenomena were the subject of prolonged and thorough investigation some twenty years ago by the late Dr. W. Crawford, of Belfast, has not sat regularly for a number of years; but she has not lost her powers, and there can be little doubt that with regular sitting the phenomena witnessed by Crawford would be repeated, and perhaps amplified.

The adoption of recent scientific discoveries to Psychic Research make possible investigation on lines not open to Crawford, and would certainly confirm his conclusions as to the reality of the phenomena, and probably throw a flood of light on the nature of ectoplasm and psychic structures.

In recent years I have sat twice with Mrs. Donaldson, and the main phases of the phenomena recurred. The last occasion was on April 10th, 1936. The sitting was at Mr. and Mrs. Donaldson's house, near Belfast, where I was a guest, and was a more or less impromptu affair, arising out of a conversation on infra-red photography at the dinner-table.

An hour or two later, Mrs. Donaldson, with her husband and myself, went to an attic-room, where Mr. Donaldson had rigged up the apparatus for infra-red photography. The source of the infra-red rays was a 1,500-watt lamp inside a box, with artificial-silk reflectors, and infra-red screens, so arranged that only reflected rays were projected towards the medium. The rays were focused on the floor, in front of the medium's chair. The infra-red rays source was on the floor, so that the rays were horizontal, the box being about 5 feet from the medium's chair. The camera was at right angles to the path of the rays, about 4 feet away. Focusing of rays and camera was done on a white handkerchief on the floor, placed where the psychic structure was expected. Ilford infra-red plates were used.

Two photos were taken. No. 1 had 8 seconds' exposure, and is reproduced here. No. 2 was taken a few minutes later, and had only about 5 seconds' exposure, a creaking floor-board having been mistaken for a signal to stop. It was insufficiently exposed.

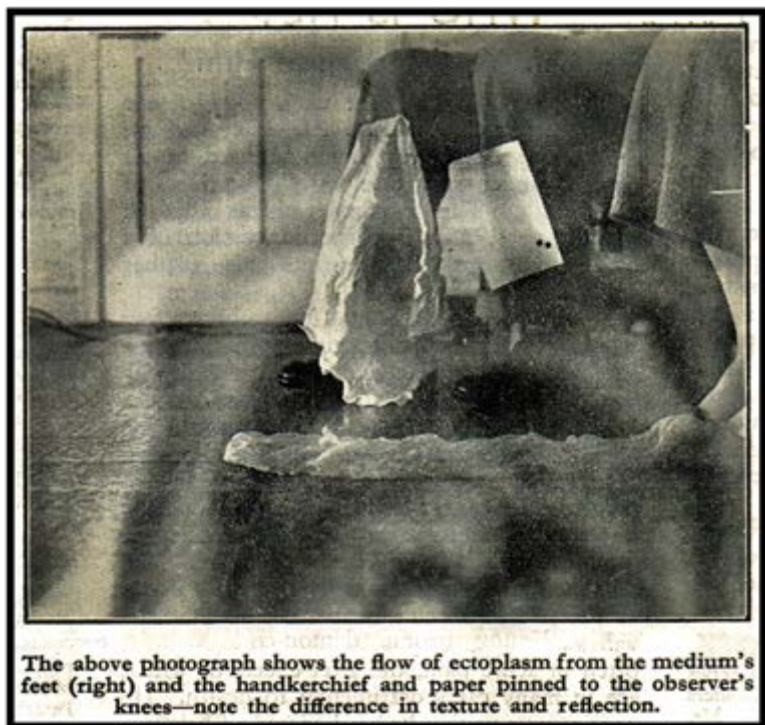
Mrs. Donaldson sat in a wooden chair, her feet firmly on the floor. At no time did she show any sign of trance.

Mr. Donaldson operated the camera and the infra-red apparatus.

I sat facing the camera, my chair at right angles to Mrs. Donaldson, on her right hand, and close to her. During most of the sitting her hands rested on her knees, and my left hand rested on them, so that I should have been able to detect any muscular movement of arms or legs. I observed none, nor could I detect any muscular reaction when knockings occurred, either in hands, feet, or head of the medium.

The knockings, however, were very faint. They were the signals by which communications came, and directions where to take photos. In order to get some possible basis for comparing the texture of any psychic structure which might appear I had pinned a white handkerchief and a sheet of white notepaper to my knees. These are plainly seen in photo.

The sitting was in the dark. A certain amount of light, however, came when the infra-red rays were in use. Soon after the sitting began faint taps were heard. They sounded to me as if from below the medium's chair. They indicated that photos could be attempted where this signal was given. This came a few minutes later. The result was a photo of a psychic structure emanating from the medium's feet, and fully 18 inches long. (The second photo shows a similar but shorter structure.)



Two nebulous irregular bands will be noticed near the left of the print, apparently rising from the floor and curving over in the direction of the medium. Somewhat similar formations appear in the second photo, but in it they are not as distinct (perhaps due to under-exposure), but they appear to originate from or near the medium, curve downwards along the floor, and then upwards, finishing in a vertical direction. But it should be observed that the vertical height represented in the photo is little over 18 inches.

What those curves mean I cannot say. I can find no normal explanation for this. Those

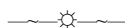
familiar with Crawford's work may remember that in the first photo of a psychic structure which he obtained, it appeared to emanate from the body of one of the circle, Mr. Samuel G. Goligher, and terminate in the medium, Kathleen Goligher's, chest. (Obviously, the terms emanate and terminate may be reversed.)

After the photos had been taken I put my right hand, palm upwards, on the floor, and asked for taps on it. None occurred. I placed a sheet of notepaper on my hand, still on the floor, and requested taps on that. Still no taps came, but something which gave me the impression of having a blunt, rounded end, about an inch in diameter, gave a decided horizontal push against the side of my hand nearest the medium. Whatever it was it felt warm, which surprised me. I immediately felt the toes of the medium's slipper; they were colder than what had pushed my hand, and seemed to me to be more pointed. I am positive the medium's feet did not move; my left hand on her knees would have detected it had they done so. Then I placed two half-crowns, one on top of the other, on the floor, and asked that they be struck together or displaced. Neither took place.

Later, I placed a handkerchief over them and asked for it to be removed, while keeping my hand in contact with it. Nothing appeared to happen. Soon afterwards the sitting concluded, having occupied little over half an hour. When the light was turned up, the handkerchief was found about 5 feet from where I had placed it, apparently tossed there.

At no time was the psychic structure visible, though the rays coming through the infra-red screen allowed the white handkerchief to be seen.

The above account has been checked and agreed as correct by Mr. S. G. Donaldson, so far as it concerns matter of which he was personally cognisant.

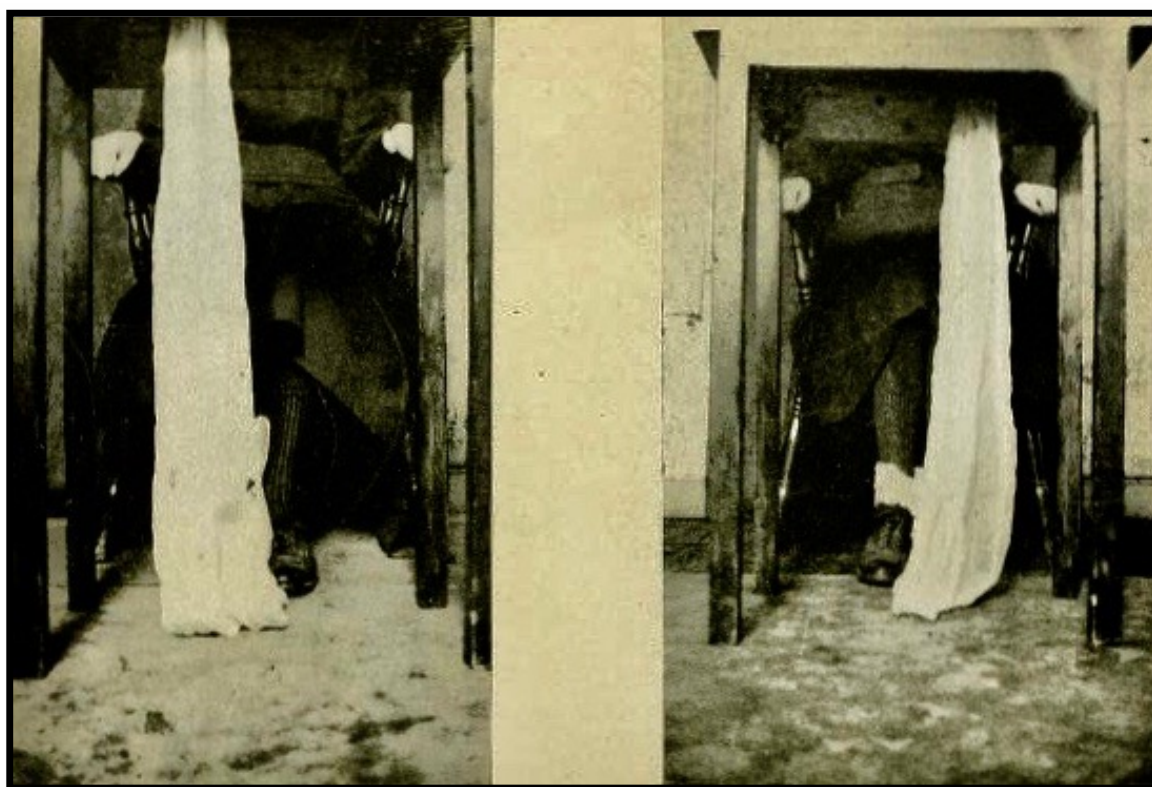


Editor's endnote:

There appears to be a more balanced conclusion of disagreement between researchers than may appear on the surface. Dr Crawford was criticised for having inadequate controls and lack of precautions against fraud and accused of self-deception, and it is claimed that his experiments were not convincing. Criticism was also made of Crawford's reluctance to admit other researchers into the Goligher circle. A researcher of note is Hereward Carrington, who had researched Eusapia Palladino and Mina Crandon (Margery). He added to the criticism of Crawford, although he did not sit in the Goligher circle.

Carrington noted that the photographs taken by Crawford looked "dubious in appearance". This is currently found under the heading, "Critical evaluation", in the entry for Kathleen Goligher on Wikipedia! This is an example of how we must use these websites with caution and as a dubious guide only. Carrington did say, as referenced by Wikipedia, that the photographs taken by Crawford looked "dubious in appearance" but if another quote was used from the same article, it could act in the positive! "Genuine phenomena were probably seen here also, and were observed and studied by Dr. Crawford."

To read in context all research, I believe, is of upmost importance to evaluate what is actually meant. The photographs below of the ectoplasmic structures are taken from "The Psychic Structures at the Goligher Circle" by Crawford, published in 1921 and not part of Carrington's book. The quotes are taken from "The Story of Psychic Science", published in 1930, "The Case of Kathleen Goligher (W.J. Crawford's Investigations)". Carrington concludes:



We have not, unfortunately, space to enter into the details of this theory of Dr. Crawford, and describe the many tests he devised in order to demonstrate its correctness. His books are filled with diagrams and figures, and are of extreme theoretical interest. The theory was also advanced that ‘raps’ were frequently made by means of this psychic arm, which tapped the floor or other object upon which raps were heard. Dr. Crawford placed trays of clay and putty on the floor of the room, and asked that raps be made upon this, in order that impressions might be obtained of the psychic structure doing the rapping. These impressions were obtained, and a number of photographs of these impressions have been published in Dr. Crawford’s books.

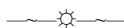
Shortly before his death, Dr. Crawford succeeded in obtaining a number of flashlight photographs of the ‘teleplasm’ issuing from the body of the medium, and supporting the table. These were published in his posthumous work, *Psychic Structures at the Goligher Circle*. It must be admitted that they are dubious in appearance; at the same time, we do not know what curious forms genuine ectoplasm may take, and many of these have a striking resemblance to the photographs obtained in other cases—Eva C., Margery, etc.



In estimating the value of Dr. Crawford’s work, two facts must not be lost sight of: (1) That, with rare exceptions, no other investigators had an opportunity to check-up his results, since outsiders were rarely admitted to the sittings. (2) That all the members of the family sat in the circle, and the medium did not sit alone with her investigators, as has been the case with practically all other mediums in the past. Because of these facts, doubt must always exist as to the validity of Crawford’s conclusions. Further, Dr. E. E. Fournier D’Albe obtained a long series of sittings with the Goligher Circle, in 1921, and arrived at a completely negative result (see his book, *The Goligher Circle*). His conclusion was that no supernormal phenomena had occurred in his presence, throughout the entire series of sittings. It must be stated, on the other hand, that the methods of investigation and conclusions arrived at have not met with complete approval even by skeptical critics of the evidence. And there the case stands—for

after the publication of Dr. Fournier D’Albe’s book the medium refused to give any more sittings, and the case is apparently closed.

What may be the ultimate truth regarding it, we shall probably never know. Certain it is, however, that Dr. Crawford’s tests are among the most ingenious ever undertaken, and I think it may be said that, in view of the undoubtedly genuine phenomena witnessed in the presence of Home, Palladino, and other mediums of this type,—genuine phenomena were probably seen here also, and were observed and studied by Dr. Crawford.



This article started with a letter from Harry Houdini in apparent conviction of mediumship sent to Dr William Jackson Crawford, to whom he wrote to affectionately as a friend. In 1924 Houdini published “A Magician Among the Spirits”⁸ and on pages 173/4 (Ayer Co. Pub. reprint, 1998) Houdini states:

While at Mr. Feilding’s⁹ home in London I had the pleasure of meeting this Dr. Crawford and talking with him for several hours. During the talk he showed me pictures of what he claimed was ectoplasm exuding from different parts of Kathleen Goligher’s body and told me he was going to use them in a forthcoming book.

“Do you honestly believe that everything you have experienced through your contact and experiments with the girl is absolutely genuine?” I asked him.

“I am positive in my belief,” he answered.

After he had gone Mr. Feilding turned to me and asked:

“What do you think of Dr. Crawford?”

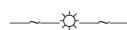
“He seems mad to me,” I answered.

“Houdini, you are mistaken,” he replied.

Nevertheless I do not think that Dr. Crawford was the right man or had the right sort of a mind for an investigation. To me his credulity seemed limitless. E. E. Fournier d’Albe’s report of Dr. Crawford’s seance with the Goligher Circle coincides with my judgment. In a communication addressed to “Light” in August 1922 d’Albe referring to his own tenth seance says:

“I found to my surprise that I could myself with some little management, produce the phenomena with my feet exactly as I had observed them.”

Dr. Von Schrenk-Notzing charged d’Albe with entering his investigation with “prejudice against the genuineness of the Goligher phenomena.” This d’Albe denied, ...



Finally, two interesting articles appeared in Psypioneer, Vol. 9, No. 12, December 2013: “Five Experiments with Miss Kate Goligher by Mr. S. G. Donaldson” and “The Confession of Dr Crawford – Leslie Price”.

The five experiments were undertaken in 1933 and the images recorded by infra-red; please consult the article for the reports.

⁸ This is available to read on-line or to download illustrated

⁹ Hon. Everard Feilding



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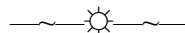
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SPIRITUALIST HEALERS OF THE PAST



Last October "Pioneer", Vol. 3, No. 5, reported on the healing work of Frederick Joseph Jones – the article states:

"Frederick Joseph Jones was claimed in the Spiritualist press in 1933 as "the most remarkable psychic healer known to Spiritualism in recent years". Jones died on October 13th 1933. He was still young, around 48 years old."

I personally had always connected Fred Jones with the Marylebone Spiritualist Association (MSA), one of the oldest

societies in London, founded in 1872; later, on February 24th 1960, the MSA changed its name to the Spiritualist Association of Great Britain (SAGB). During the research for the article it was found that Fred Jones worked also in Stansted, coming into contact with J. Arthur Findlay. Findlay records in his 1955 autobiography, "Looking Back", that it was a meeting with Fred Jones that created his interest in psychic healing; in 1936 Findlay wrote his only novel, "The Torch of Knowledge", which also records the psychic healing of Fred Jones. Please see the "Pioneer" issue cited at the start of this article.

I later received some correspondence regarding the article from a Mr John Mainwood writing of behalf of Fred Jones' daughter, Sheila Jones; I was informed by Mr Mainwood that Miss Jones was a trance medium and she had some of her father's healing notes. These have been kindly passed on to me for the Britten Museum & Library. These notes are valuable, as little is known today about the healer Frederick Joseph Jones. Sheila has kindly given me permission to publish the handwritten notes left by her father; albeit brief, they add to our knowledge of the foundation of Jones' healing ministry and we can now appreciate and note the fuller scope of his expanding work and helpers:

Report of Commencement of Healing by F. J. Jones

In 1919 I was working with Mr G. Larkworthy of 7 Kings Rd Wimbledon, as builder and decorator. I had been a trance medium for 12 years, and at this time was in charge of a circle for development at a house in Colliers Wood, S.W.

One evening, after the circle was over, I was informed that a North American Indian, by the name of "Quiverfoot" had controlled me, and requested that he be allowed to use my body for the purpose of healing. I agreed to do this on the condition that "Quiverfoot" showed himself to me, so that I could see the "Light" with him. After he had done this I consented to his wish and a week later he controlled my body, and the first actual healing circle was held. The first case was that of the Lady at whose house we were holding the circle. When I went "to sleep" she was suffering from a bad ankle and could not walk. When I awoke, she was walking about the room, handing coffee to the sitters. She told me that she had received such benefit from "Quiverfoot" as to be able to walk.

These circles continued to be held for about 18 months, and then, in addition we started healing at the Wimbledon Spiritualist Church on Tuesday Evenings: We were there for about 6 months during which as many as 50 people received treatment in one evening – some of which were very bad cases.

It was during this period that my partner's wife – Mrs. E. Larkworthy, who had been a patient under Quiverfoot for some considerable time and been cured of Epilepsy, was selected by him to be a helper, and was given the name of Sunshine.

We learnt from Quiverfoot that the chief of the band of spirit healers, of which he was a member, was an African who was known as the “Medicine Man”. This spirit could not speak a word of English, and when new cases came along, he would control my body, diagnose the case, and instruct Quiverfoot what to do.

Finding that the work was growing so large and that difficulty was being experienced in dealing with the patients in an allotted time, Mrs Larkworthy kindly placed a room in her house at 7 Kings Road at our disposal so that the pressure could be somewhat eased.

So in 1923 we commenced holding a healing circle at Kings Road – making three – Colliers Wood and the Wimbledon Spiritualist Church circles still being carried on.

The circles at Kings Road were held in an upstairs room, and often so many people endeavoured to get in that they overflowed out of the room and down the staircase.

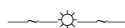
I was now beginning to find the work so much of a draw on my time that my partner – Mr Larkworthy told me to carry on with the healing and to leave the business of builder etc for him to manage. “Sunshine” was now my right hand helper – and had actually been told by Quiverfoot that she was to be the chief helper, and would go out into the world as such, and that her name would be known all over the earth plane.

We now gave up the circle at the Spiritualist Church and held a circle at a Forest Hill Church instead. The work now began to branch out and very soon the following circles were being held:– St Lukes Church, Forest Hill: Twyford, Berkshire: 7 Kings Rd; Wimbledon: Woking, Surrey: Marlborough, Wilts: Stansted, Essex: these places being reached by car.

And now the present day meetings are as follows:– We are attached to the Marylebone Spiritualist Association & hold two circles per week at their headquarters in Russell Square: The Battersea Spiritualist Church, Bennerley Hall, one circle per month: 5 weekly circles at 7 Kings Road Wimbledon: 1 weekly circle at Sutton Surrey: 1 monthly circle at Reading: twice monthly at Woking Surrey: occasionally to Oxted Surrey.

A census of treatments given, taken from July 29th to the 3rd May was 16,000.

There are a number of helpers who assist at these circles, there being 17 of these attached to the Wimbledon Centre, the majority of whom give all their spare time to helping.



Fred Jones, entranced by his healing guide “Medicine Man”, treats a patient at the MSA

Mr Mainwood further sent me some information on Miss Sheila Jones, informing me that one of Sheila's guides is called Marcus. Miss Jones was a well-known trance medium at the SAGB and an interview was published in "The Spiritualist Gazette": I understand this paper was active in the 1970s. The two-part article is titled "The Astonishing Mediumship of Sheila Jones" but the date and the reporter's name is not given.¹⁰ The quote below is from a trance lecture held at the SAGB:

"PLACING" THE GUIDE

I was however rather tired and thought I would go to the next lecture a few weeks later as I considered no one could possibly emulate the psychic power of Mrs. Nason. An inner voice however, persisted. Go! Was the order, so with reluctance I went.

I knew no one with whom to discuss the coming lecture and was agreeably surprised by the person of Miss Jones, and the apparent ease with which she went into trance.

Her Guide proceeded to give a straight, sensible talk on a moral subject. I had the impression that this was a young man of stature, good family and education. He spoke excellent grammatical English with a distinct flair for oratory. He would, I considered, be a godsend to any political party and may have been a University Lecturer for the grasp he had of his subject and the ready clarity and style with which he answered the questions which followed the short lecture. He showed the same patience and careful consideration to the naive and tentative questions as to the more penetrative ones. I just could get no impression whatsoever as to the Guide's former condition in this life and was too shy to ask for fear of a possible "set down" for impertinence!

After the meeting, when the remarkably fresh and attractive looking young medium had left the rostrum and was chatting to friends at the doorway, I was overcome by curiosity at my failure to "place" the Guide and asked my neighbour, an elderly gentleman, "who was the Guide with the excellent delivery?" "Oh," said he, "that was Marcus." "Marcus," I replied, Marcus Aurelius, Marcus Antonius, or what?" "He was a Roman Centurion, martyred at the time of Jesus Christ, and knew St. Peter," was the startling reply.

"Good heavens," I said, "To think of all the questions I could have asked had I known that." With which I hurried over to Miss Jones to ask if Marcus would object to answering questions about his life and times. I explained that my brother was a Roman archaeologist and would be most interested. I too had been on these "digs" but was more interested in pre-history.

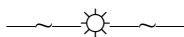
Sheila was most generous. She explained that she could never guarantee who would "take over," but that I could ask whatever I liked, take notes, or bring a tape recorder: all of which I thought very remarkable as tapes were marketable, and pamphlets printed from tapes could be a source of income! Sheila laughed at this and I thought this is a true medium, this is what Spiritualism and Christianity are all about.

I learned later that Sheila was the daughter of Mr. Fred Jones who had several Guides of remarkable ethnic disparity. Medicine Man, a gifted Zulu in his lifetime here, and still more remarkable during his presence at the lectures; Quiver Foot, a Red Indian Guide, I have not yet had the pleasure of hearing, and the splendid Marcus, all bequeathed by Mr. Jones on his promotion, to his remarkable daughter, who also breeds Labrador puppies. Many years ago, my own psychic experiences – some of them quite startling – led me to consider that there must be an explanation of these phenomena.



¹⁰ A PDF of the full interview is available; please contact the editor: pioneer@snu.org.uk

Early Spiritualist Sunday Services



It is difficult to say when the very first Spiritualist Sunday Service took place but we know that the first successful attempt took place in London. The founder editor of the “Medium and Daybreak”, James Burns, with the American medium James Martin Peebles (1822-1922), established Sunday services in London. Burns states in his journal on January 30th, 1874:

“During the autumn of 1869 I was strongly impressed with the necessity for the establishment of a free platform for the advocacy of Spiritualism in London on Sunday evenings. I was on the outlook for a suitable hall, and would have made the attempt had my health permitted. It appears that the impression was a true prophecy, a habit of mind which is usual with me; but I was not to be the chief actor. About Christmas-time Mr. Peebles returned from the East, and he was impressed with the same necessity. We strolled out together and found the Cavendish Rooms a suitable place for making a commencement.”

It was during these Sunday services that Mrs Emma Hardinge Britten delivered four of her Principles; please see “Pioneer”, Vol. 1, No. 4, July 2014: “How Many Principles Made up Emma’s “Creed of The Spirits”?”

It can be noted in “The Spiritualist”, May 25th, 1877:

SUNDAY SERVICES IN SPIRITUALISM

The rate of progress of Spiritualism in the provinces has been increased in several towns by means of regular Sunday services, and the question may well be raised why some not be started in London. The last which were carried on in the metropolis with any success were those at the Cleveland Hall, in which Mrs. Honeywood took such an active and creditable part;¹¹ the admission was free, there were collections at the doors, the moderate balance of expenses was covered by subscriptions, and a variety of speakers occupied the platform.

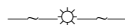
The next attempt failed, partly because free admission was prohibited, and the English public will not tolerate enforced payments for admission to religious services; another source of failure was that the same speaker was engaged night after night, till the listeners were wearied by the sameness; a third source of failure was that normal speakers were shut out, and that the expenses were heavy because every meeting was carried on under the auspices of a paid speaker.

The success of the Sunday services at Liverpool for so many years has been due to the alternation of good normal with good trance addresses; the former being delivered free of charge considerably lightened each expenses of the meetings. In some respects trance addresses are not equal in quality and interest to those delivered in the normal state by intelligent and cultured men and women; but trance addresses are sometimes superior in ideality.

Several intelligent Spiritualists would give Sunday evening addresses if invited. Mr. D. H. Wilson, who is now on his way back to London from Biarritz, once offered to deliver one; Dr. Maurice Davies, Mrs. Lowe, and others, might be invited to do the same; sometimes Mr. Morse and Mr. Colville might be engaged to give trance addresses. Collections at the doors would more than clear the expenses, because now London

¹¹ Mrs Honeywood was a well-known Spiritualist who sat and reported on D.D. Home and was involved with the early psychic artist Georgina Houghton. She helped financially to support the Sunday Services.

Spiritualists can accommodate a good audience on their own premises without going to the expense of hiring a hall. At present metropolitan Spiritualists attend the church of Mr. Haweis more than any other,¹² there being no Sunday discourses in connection with Spiritualism at all approaching his in quality; still, we have all the materials among ourselves for good Sunday services: why should they not be used?



James Burns later wrote, shortly before his death, in his journal, "Medium and Daybreak", May 4th, 1894:

SUNDAY SERVICES

The Institution originated and carried on Sunday services for ten years. They began in 1870 at Cavendish Rooms, with Mr. Peebles. Then came Mrs. Hardinge in Cleveland Rooms, and Mrs. Tappan in St. George's Hall and elsewhere. In those days these were great events, but they would not amount to much now. At the end of a series Mrs. Tappan and other workers fell away, and I was left with a debt of £30, which I made up by phrenological weekly meetings.

A year later the Spiritualists' National Federation, reconstituted in 1901 and becoming the Spiritualists' National Union, addressed some of the issues of presentation, for example:

Too long have we been satisfied with dull and dingy rooms in the back streets of our towns and cities; too long have we tolerated totally unqualified speakers and improperly conducted meetings, that cast a reflection upon our cause and discredit their promoters

The paper published below is taken from the "Two Worlds", July 19th, 1895:

*Prepared to be read before the Spiritualists' National Federation Conference, Walsall, 7th July, 1895, by A. J. SMYTH. Hon. Sec., Birmingham Spiritualists' Union, and published by request of the Conference.*¹³

The Best Mode of Conducting Sunday Services

RESPONDING TO YOUR REQUEST for a paper on this subject, we, in the midlands, are not insensible to the compliment, nor, indeed, to the responsibility of discharging this task under the penetrating rays from such a galaxy of northern lights. We are not slow to discern the worthy and invincible characters of so many Lancashire pioneers, nor the great significance of this representative, gathering, to which we extend the heartiest welcome, and readily join in your deliberations. Though divided by space in our respective spheres of action, we are united in purpose and sympathy. Urged forward by the same potent truths on the one side, and met by a bold negation or cankering error on the other; repelled, discredited, and thwarted in our efforts, we have often felt how lamentably inadequate have been our means and methods, in proportion to the work that remains to be done. From our several fields of labour, and, at least, of partial conquest, we now meet to combine our forces, mature our plans, and strengthen the bulwarks of our movement, whereby our position may be more secure, and our future operations more extended and effectual. Our "Sunday services" constitute, perhaps, the most important

¹² Haweis was a clergyman who strongly supported Spiritualism from the pulpit, as did Rev. C. Maurice Davies, who had repeatedly, on the platform and in the press, certified the reality of the phenomena. It is reported that neither of them had the slightest degree of ill-treatment by their ecclesiastical authorities.

¹³ Mr A. J. Smyth was President of the National Federation in 1896 and died in October 1913, aged 60.

factor in our organic development. The “best mode of conducting” them is the special theme to which we invite your consideration. The title implies that there are several modes, and the “platform records,” as well as recent discussions, plainly show that a variety of methods are employed, and a still greater variety of opinions exist.

These differences are not only natural, but essential, to all reformatory, healthy and progressive movements, and although we shall press, and continue to press hard, for the adoption of method, order and consistency (summed up in the one word “organisation”) we would not, if we could, eliminate this diversity of opinion. Hopeless, nay contemptible, is that movement, that church or sect, religious, social or political, that would seek to enforce a rigid compliance with final and authoritative standards, and I take it, that nothing would more dangerously jeopardise our position, close the source of our strength, blight inspirational genius, and check spontaneous action than to enrol all mediums, speakers and workers into one monotonous conformity. The peculiar nature of mediumship, with its ever evolving originalities and unexpected manifestations, coupled with the complex and comprehensive problems of Spiritualism, cannot be narrowed and contracted into an *arbitrary* mould, or mode, without frustrating its aims and crippling its outspreading branches of growth and power. Let me then crave your indulgence, while indicating the general bearing and manifold objects of Spiritualism.

Had we a special doctrine to formulate, a creed to establish, our task would indeed be comparatively easy. But the subject, for the presentation of which you are seeking the best mode, deals with nothing less than the principles of life and the source of being. Spiritualism traverses the arcana of Nature and penetrates the archives of eternity; from science, with its crucibles for matter, to divinest spirit essence. Our seers behold a spiritual universe of unspeakable splendour, while our devotees labour for the elevation of our down-trodden race from a brutal and degrading slumdom. It is iconoclastic and revolutionary, yet it is constructive and peace-making. It is a sworn foe to blind belief and superstition, yet it proclaims a gospel of the unseen. It fights despotic powers with an unyielding tenacity, yet it cherishes love for all humanity. It seeks to dethrone false gods, and expose sham religions, yet is profoundly reverential and exalts goodness. It opens wide the portals of freedom of thought and cosmopolitan associations, yet is most exacting in its psychological requirements. The superficial and half-informed, who cannot read between the lines, declare its pretentious an incongruous medley, without rhyme or reason, but here lies the secret of its strength. While it baffles and eludes the grasp of its adversaries, its own plan is being unconsciously outwrought, and withal it is amenable to an orderly, consecutive, and harmonious presentment.

Could we but recognise and apply Nature’s divine principles of unity and diversity in their true proportions we should then establish organisation combined with liberty, which, thus rightly balanced, would ensure perfect harmony. Here lies the cause and the means of removal of many troubles.

Too much unity of organisation excludes diversity and liberty, while excess of the latter dissipates our strength and runs our efforts to waste instead of fruit. Or to put it in other words:—

1. Our *ideals* should embody *distinctive principles*; 2, Our principles should be formulated in definite methods; 3, Our methods should be consistent and practicable.

We may rail against formula, creed, and organisation, but we cannot move a step without them. We want, however, to reverse the old order and make our creeds subordinate to our ideals! To refuse organisation and ignore method for fear of being enslaved is at once a confession of weakness in yourself, and a mistrust of others. Are our ideals too big for our brains, that they are quite unmanageable? Are our teachings at

such a grandious pitch of superlative splendour that they cannot be reached by constructive methods? The point at issue is: Shall we have well ordered and fully equipped societies, with well-appointed officers, committees, stewards, specified objects, rules, and business regulations, with pre-arranged programmes of the several sections of work? Or, shall we rejoice in what we choose to call “individual freedom” and personal independence, relying upon the all-sufficient (?) resources of our own consummate skill and foresight, kick over the harness of discipline and constitutional procedure, and leaving the duties of societary work to haphazard and chance? As well might we ask which will wield the greatest power and influence, a disorganised mob or a well-trained army?

Spiritualists as a body are at present irresponsible and unprotected. Societies and speakers stand almost singlehanded and unsupported. The ranks, aye, eve our platforms, are open to the unscrupulous designs of all sorts and conditions of men. But, if I mistake not, we are on the eve of important changes. The time is ripe for a bold and decisive step, with added powers, to our *national organisation*, and notwithstanding the qualifying conditions I have advisedly set forth, I urge upon you, the *representatives of societies*, with all the emphasis I can command, the imperative necessity for the *unification and elevation* of this Spiritual movement.

Too long have we been satisfied with dull and dingy rooms in the back streets of our towns and cities; too long have we tolerated totally unqualified speakers and improperly conducted meetings, that cast a reflection upon our cause and discredit their promoters. While we encourage the humblest effort in the private home, where true sincerity and devotion prevails, let not the half-developed medium nor the coarse pretender be flaunted in public; but let the grovelling quack who fishes for fees, and the mercenary trader who seeks to puff his wares and nostrums from a spiritual platform, be effectively routed out. Let honest, earnest, and cultured speakers and mediums who devote their time and ability to the cause at the sacrifice of other prospects be properly paid, and a wholesome standard of efficiency be maintained; aye, let us respect our cause and esteem our truths so highly that we decline to sully them by permitting their presentation in any other than such fashion as will command the respect and confidence of all thoughtful and well-intentioned people.

Since writing, thus far, I have received a letter from Mr. Frazer Hewes, president of the Nottingham Spiritual Evidence Society, in which he says:—

I certainly think it ought not to be any longer possible for a medium, because he or she *is* a medium, to walk upon our platforms and give us away in the eyes of the public, as *many of them do* at present. There are a number who are developed neither morally, intellectually, nor physically enough to occupy such an important position, and I think the suggestion recently made to me by a worker, a very good one, viz.—that spiritualists of known good character, experience, and good judgment, should act on a committee of inspection, and report upon the qualification of every medium in the land, and publish a list of those who pass muster.¹⁴

With this I quite concur, as an immediate remedy, but something more searching, and a surer guarantee of actual knowledge and fitness, is needed. An examination on the lines of the Fowler Institute, might meet the case, before a Spiritual University has become a fact.

¹⁴ This was mooted at the next 1896 Conference - please see “Pioneer”, Vol. 2, No. 4, July 2015: “Early S.N.U Education History”.

The “Ideal Religious Service,” recently sketched by Mr. Wallis, has deservedly met with general approval. It was admittedly “less concerned with the *method* than the *spirit* of the service.” To us is given the work of supplying the machinery, and I fear our time has hitherto been too largely occupied in excavating and clearing the foundation in order to fix the plant. The methods of an established society would scarcely be applicable to propaganda meetings, whose speakers and plans should be adopted according to the calibre of the people and requirements of the locality.

To a “stiff necked” people, without a sense of spirituality and freedom of thought, let such iron-willed veterans of our fraternity as friends Johnson¹⁵ and Swindlehurst¹⁶ open their cannonade, followed by questions and discussion to break down the orthodox conventionality let the chairman supply a few well-selected incontrovertible facts, and in due season let the gentler influence of some such trance speakers and clairvoyants as Mrs. Green and Mrs. Groom be brought to bear, and the whole capped by a magnificent oration from such speakers as Mrs. Britten, Mr. Morse, or Mr. and Mrs. Wallis.

But you are anxious to know of the best methods that might be approved in the “best-governed city of the world.” I shall suppose that your society is thoroughly representative, vigorous, and progressive (therefore aggressive), keenly alive to its duties and obligations from every standpoint; that it possesses a general Information Department, worked in sectional order, offering facilities for all classes of inquirers, conducted by responsible officers of society, consisting of:—

1. Investigators’ circles that deal with all the several phases, with only well-developed mediums.
2. Circles for the development of mediumship.
3. Courses of explanatory lectures.

Your Sunday services would then be relieved from the overstrain and confusion that so often arises through trying to crowd too much into it. It is impossible to cater for all and everything in one meeting; to give a reading, personal experience, invocation, trance address, psychometry or clairvoyance, questions, and discussion is to give a surfeit rather than an appetite. Let there be a little less, and let that be better done. Sunday services should be specially arranged for a family congregation, where husband, wife, children, and friends could mutually participate in the proceedings in a reverential and orderly manner. The noisy, demonstrative, and irrepressible members are best with an assembly of agitators, for they do not enter into the true spirit of a religious service as do the quiet and reflective, who are repelled by discordant discussions. An open service for sundry speakers may not be out of place occasionally on a Sunday morning, or written questions with a really competent speaker.

These several modes have done, and are doing, good service in their way, but for the most part we are reluctantly obliged to say are rough, bald, irregular, uncultured, and slipshod, and at this present moment are shutting out many worthy people who would gladly join our ranks, and bring their family, if the conduct and tone of our services were compatible with our principles. I have no original or startling scheme to spring upon you that will revolutionise the movement. I abhor conventionality, yet I do like order. Religious services the world over are interspersed with music, singing, and exhortation,

¹⁵ William Johnson, an early pioneer for National Spiritualism and organisation amongst Spiritualist Societies, and a founder of the SNU. Johnson was the last National Federation President and the first SNU President responsible for adding our Seven Principles to our constitution in the changeover of Federation to Union in 1901.

¹⁶ James Swindlehurst, an early pioneer of National Spiritualism, holding various executive positions in the National Federation. At the 1895 Conference he was appointed Organising Secretary and frequently engaged in propaganda work for the Spiritualists’ National Federation, etc.

and you scarce need me to tell you how many minutes to occupy for each, or what you shall sing and say. You know that your speakers should be engaged and advertised in advance; that your programme should be judiciously blended and balanced with normal and trance speakers of both sexes; that your stewards should be at their posts quite fifteen minutes before the commencement of service, to see that everything is in order; to conduct strangers to their seats, supply them with hymn books, monthly printed programmes of all meetings, to display and sell the literature. That the speaker should have a chairman to his liking, and the organist play his voluntary until the platform is occupied. A full choir fills the hall with a melody of music. The chairman, who will always be necessary with trance speakers, gives a well-selected and effectively rendered reading, and here, by the way, the movement could do with a specially compiled book for Sunday lessons. Another hymn, followed by invocation, and address of forty minutes' duration, chairman's announcements, comments, the collection, hymn. If clairvoyant descriptions are given, and in my opinion they should not be oftener than once a month, and then only with thoroughly developed mediums, the address should be shortened so as to close the service at eight o'clock.

Your Lyceum meetings in the morning or afternoon, so eloquently pleaded for by Mr. Kitson, should find a place in connection with every society, where all that is beautiful, bright, poetic, and invigorating should be taught.

However, there were other issues with the Sunday services. Mediums like Emma Hardinge Britten, James Morse and Mrs. Tappan – better known as Cora L. V. Richmond – were trance mediums and did not demonstrate evidential mediumship at the Sunday services. Some considered that evidential mediumship like clairvoyance should not be demonstrated at Sunday Services.

to be continued

