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MAJOR ADVANCE IN DIGITISING AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM

Psypioneer is extremely grateful to IAPSOP and NSAC for the update below on an important project.



The literature of Spiritualism, especially its newspapers and journals, is vast and fascinating, but it is also relatively unknown, unavailable, and rapidly deteriorating. Between 1848 and the Second World War there were more than 1,300 journals worldwide devoted to Spiritualism, but many are now either critically endangered or have disappeared entirely. This is the primary material of the history and development of Spiritualism, and as a whole is badly in need of preservation. The major libraries in the world, faced with deteriorating physical copies of journals and books and oftentimes limited funding, are digitizing their collections through archive.org,

hathitrust.org, Google Books, and others, but their collections include Spiritualist material only incidentally, and smaller, more specialized collections are often beneath their notice.

One of the world's finest collections of these journals is at the National Spiritualist Association of Churches (NSAC) library in Lily Dale, New York. This is not an accident. In the late 1890s, W.H. Bach, an early NSAC member, bemoaned in the pages of *The Banner of Light* the disappearance of the early spiritualist journals, and energetically solicited copies of these journals and other early works for the organization's library. The effort was a success, and the NSAC library has copies of more than 70 early journals—often the only issues still in existence. Notable holdings of the NSAC library, in addition to the better-known national journals, include such unique rarities as runs of *The Ohio Spiritualist* (Cleveland, 1868-1869), *The Voice of Angels* (Boston, 1876-1883), *Lyceum Banner* (Liverpool, 1930), and *The Better Way* (Cincinnati, 1886-1893), the latter of which is itself a unique contribution to the research community. And among these periodicals are archived a host of smaller journals, early pamphlets, rare books, spirit slates, rare broadsides, spirit communication apparatus, photographs, and artifacts from the lives of famous Spiritualists.

In October, 2015, IAPSOP, the International Association for the Preservation of Spiritualist and Occult Periodicals (www.iapsop.com), entered into a collaboration with the NSAC to preserve and digitize the NSAC's deteriorating holdings. The partnership is a natural one: IAPSOP has long been devoted to digitizing the literature of the Spiritualist movement and to making these collections available to all, without charge, in a digitized, keyword-searchable, easy-to-use pdfs. The organization has already sought out and digitized a great number of otherwise inaccessible materials from the British Library, the New York Public Library, Harvard University, Princeton University, Northwestern University, and other large repositories, and has retrieved missing issues of rare journals from Spiritualist holdings, including the collections of the Golden Gate Spiritualist Church, with the help of Rev. Del Lauderback of San Francisco. At present, IAPSOP's website already hosts, free for digital

download, over 500 journals and 6,000 books and pamphlets in many languages, amounting to over 22,000 individual documents and several million pages worth of historical data devoted principally to Spiritualism.

With their new partnership, IAPSOP and the NSAC will digitize and make available to NSAC members and to the general public, free of charge, the library's vast holdings and precious literature of Spiritualism that is rapidly deteriorating and badly in need of preservation, and hope the collaboration serves as an example of the sort of cooperation needed in order to preserve and promote our shared history. In many cases, the periodicals digitized were available nowhere else in the world, but selected holdings of the NSAC library at Lily Dale will now be available as a separate collection at nsac.iapsop.com, and the entire collection will be available on the NSAC's website and at the Lily Dale library. This will attract many visitors, both scholars and those curious about spiritualism generally, to the NSAC website and will stimulate a renewed interest in Spiritualism. Both the NSAC and IAPSOP hope that this collaboration will encourage NSAC members and its member churches to contribute copies of their own holdings to the enterprise, and for other organizations to see the value in this type of historic preservation and contribute to it.

At present, IAPSOP attracts approximately 3,400 unique visitors a month and supports approximately 10,000 downloads a month. In addition, its pages are automatically mirrored to many libraries, helping to assure the preservation of these materials. IAPSOP is regularly cited in scholarly literature and in academic papers, and the interest in its work is worldwide: in August 2015 alone it attracted visitors from 83 countries.



Those principally involved in IAPSOP's digitization of the NSAC's holdings are: Marc Demarest, the author of *Chasing Down Emma* (<http://ehbritten.blogspot.com>), a blog devoted to Spiritualist and occult research; John Patrick Deveney, author of *Pascal Beverly Randolph: A Nineteenth Century Black American Spiritualist*, a lengthy study of Spiritualist camps (including Lily Dale itself), and creator of a descriptive database of more

than 4,500 journals devoted to Spiritualism and related subjects; John Benedict Buescher, author, most lately, of *Empress of Swindle*; and Brandon Hodge, curator of <http://mysteriousplanchette.com> and Historian of the Talking Board Historical Society (www.tbhs.org), a group devoted to the physical apparatus of Spiritualism. Inquiries about the work of IAPSOP and information about donations can be addressed to: inquiries@iapsop.com.

Photographs

Image at head of the article: A montage of the NSAC headquarters and library in Lily Dale, New York, and a brief glimpse of its vast and valuable Spiritualist holdings.

Second image: The IAPSOP team takes a rare pause for a photograph while documenting the NSAC archives (left to right): Marc Demarest, founder, Brandon Hodge, Pat Deveney, and John Buescher.

Unfortunately, the cheap paper on which many Spiritualist periodicals were printed is highly acidic and now extremely brittle, stressing the need for digital preservation before these works are lost entirely.

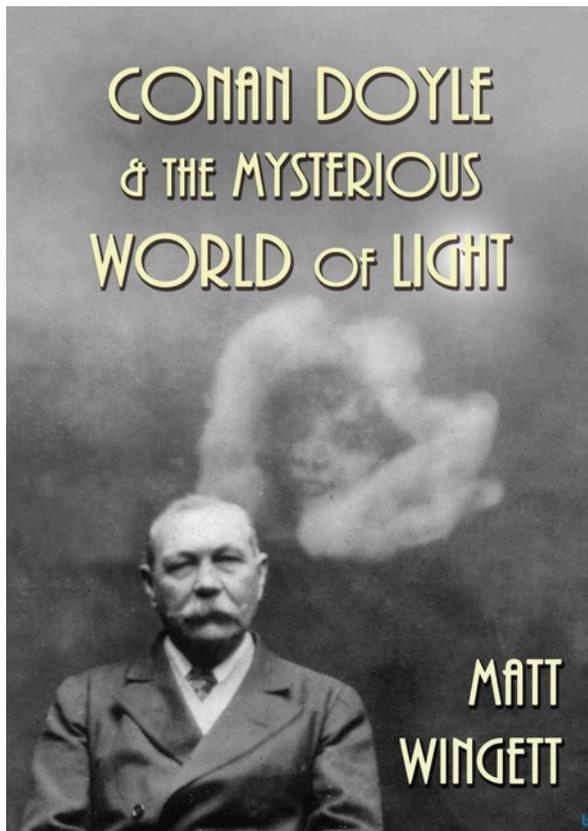


IAPSOP founder Marc Demarest reassembles a fragile document to prepare it for photographing, where it will afterward live on in the digital realm, available to all.

NSAC librarian Marilyn Awtry displays a rare séance slate with original spirit writing preserved. Such objects are documented for future inclusion in IAPSOP's ephemera page at ephemera.iapsop.com.



Introductory Note by Psypioneer: We reprint below the ‘Preface’ written by Leslie Price for the first volume of *Conan Doyle & the Mysterious World of LIGHT*, a three part study of the psychic work of Arthur Conan Doyle, based largely on the weekly newspaper LIGHT.¹



PREFACE

by Leslie Price

(Archivist, College of Psychic Studies,
London)

Modern Spiritualism began in the United States about 1848, and spread across the world, reaching a peak of cultural influence around 1875, when the naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace and chemist William Crookes published influential supportive works. It was based on mental mediumship (communication with those who had died who gave information via mediums) and physical mediumship (the movement of objects by spirits, and the production of ectoplasm, a mysterious substance about which Doyle was later to lecture on the radio.)

The London Spiritualist Alliance, the most reputable Spiritualist body, was formed in 1884; it considered Spiritualism as the preamble to religion, rather than a new religion. The LSA leaders were also involved in the weekly newspaper LIGHT, started in

1881, which Doyle evidently began reading, and to which in 1887 he wrote two letters, (reproduced here) identifying himself as a Spiritualist. In the 1890s, Doyle was a major private donor to LIGHT, and it was primarily to LIGHT and the LSA that he turned in 1916 when he gradually came out as a Spiritualist. To what extent he had retained his Spiritualist convictions in the intervening years since 1887 is a moot point. The accounts he gave of how he came to faith (in this book and elsewhere) are at times conflicting.

In 1882, a number of Spiritualists and independent investigators formed a Society for Psychical Research. Doyle was listed as a new member in February 1893, but never became prominent in its affairs. Its scientific concerns were clearly not central to him. It was the implications of mediumship for religion that moved him.

So, we see him in LIGHT from 1916 assembling the building blocks of his missionary faith. He could have preached just survival and communication as scientific facts, but he went further, making a central assault on orthodox Christianity. This endeared him to the rapidly growing Spiritualist churches, but aroused additional hostility. One wonders if his memory of his boyhood membership of the Roman Church caused him to seek its overthrow.

Since the time of its first president, Stainton Moses, (the medium for the classic book *Spirit Teachings*), the LSA had always favoured a Unitarian² interpretation of Christianity, but had not been belligerent, preferring the diplomatic approach of Sir Oliver Lodge, who was a liberal Christian and keen survivalist. Lodge was a good friend of the LSA, though he did not join this or any other Spiritualist body.

¹ The book is available from Amazon.

² The belief that Christ was human, rather than divine.

There was a palpable hope among radical Spiritualists in that immediate post war era that survival might now be accepted generally, and that orthodox religion could quickly be overthrown. We detect that mood in these pages - the sorrow of the grieving with the hope that a new age was dawning.

National Spiritualism, centred on the churches of the Spiritualists National Union, was also growing in those years. Conan Doyle supported them, especially their leader Ernest Oaten, editor of the weekly newspaper *Two Worlds* published in Manchester. But Doyle wanted the leadership³ of Jesus Christ to be accepted by the SNU. The Union debated this, but shortly before his death in 1930, voted against this addition to their Seven Principles. This significant defeat showed the limitations of Conan Doyle's leadership of the Spiritualist Movement.

From 1916, when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle went public with his convictions, until 1920, he was at the height of his powers in the psychic field. Through Sherlock Holmes, he had earned by proxy a reputation as an astute investigator. He had the energy to lecture persuasively up and down the country. The people in the audiences were in an emotionally heightened state because of the trauma of the Great War. An estimated 7000 attended one event in this work.

Doyle's opponents soon emerged. There were the Rationalists, who usually denied all psychic phenomena. There were the orthodox religious leaders who saw his new revelation as subversive of the old. At least one Christian Spiritualist, Rev. Fielding-Ould became alarmed at the assault by Doyle on the biblical faith. Later in life, Doyle became also critical of the Society for Psychical Research, the non-committed body of which he was a member, but at first it was Lodge, an SPR leader who tried tactfully to restrain Doyle.

Later, Lodge could not dissuade Doyle from his most disastrous case, the Cottingley fairies, which were brought to his attention in 1920 by an LSA friend, Felicia Scatcherd, and which he very publicly endorsed. In the 1920s Doyle was also to be injured by his friendship with the illusionist Houdini, and by another investigator, Harry Price. In his home circle, through his wife's mediumship, Doyle began to be haunted by prophecies of planetary disaster and it is fair to say that his powers declined. But in the years covered by this volume, Arthur Conan Doyle was a commanding figure. LIGHT recognised how he had transformed the prospects of Spiritualism, and supported him in his efforts, while printing the occasional letter of sympathetic dissent. Spiritualists could be forgiven if they could scarcely believe that so famous a name, so energetic a worker, had come to support them.

It is remarkable how Doyle, though lecturing so often, managed to say new things. Many of the questions, such as the problems of mediumship, and how it relates to religion, are with us still. Doyle and those who debated with him in LIGHT and elsewhere, continue to illuminate the issues.

There are many books about Conan Doyle, and a few about the history of Spiritualism. There's even a useful book about the link between the two – Kelvin I. Jones, "Conan Doyle and the Spirits: The Spiritualist Career of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle" (Wellingborough, England: Aquarian Press, 1989.) This new book, however, provides a valuable perspective on the formative years of that link.

In Matt Wingett's book we are able to share in the discussions and controversies in a detailed way that is not possible in ordinary biographies; and it is only thus that we can come to a just assessment of Conan Doyle's thought.

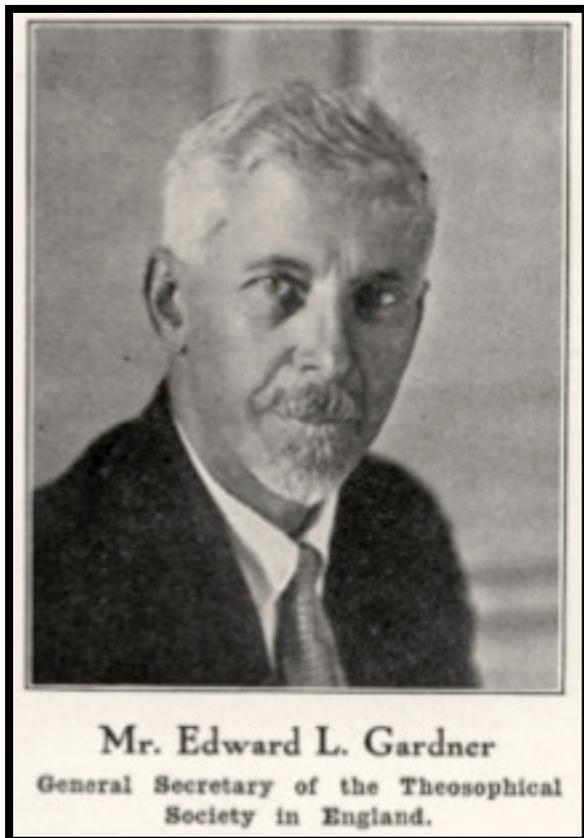
LESLIE PRICE

³ I.e: a recognition of the primacy of Christ as a medium, and the importance of his teachings as recorded in the Gospels.

Introductory Note by LP. In August 2015, we reprinted an account by E.L. Gardner on how he became a Theosophist. The obituary takes us to the end of his career.⁴ Gardner made an important contribution to the study of psychic phenomena from a Theosophical perspective.

EDWARD LEWIS GARDNER

1869 - 1969



The principal inspirer of the movement to link science and theosophy was Mr. Gardner, known by us affectionately as E.L.G. Although he was 3½ months past his 100th birthday, his death on the 30th June 1969, will have been felt by members of the Science Group as a great loss, for he was still giving us the benefit of his wisdom right up to the time of his passing.

He was born at Coggeshall, Essex, 19th March 1869 and is survived by the two sons of his marriage to Clara Beard in 1892. He joined the Society in 1907 and quickly showed evidence of his intuitive powers in the study of The Secret Doctrine. A builder by profession, as a hobby he had taken a practical interest in microscopy. This brought him into touch with the scientific world and he used this in his theosophical studies.

After the death of his first wife, Mr. Gardner married Adelaide Draper in 1922 and both of them worked to encourage scientifically-minded members of the Society "to study and pursue scientific research in relation to theosophical knowledge". Under this object he inaugurated the *Scientific Group of the Theosophical Society in England* in 1922.

In 1925 Annie Besant put forward the idea of a *Theosophical World University* "to coordinate existing theosophical educational activities in various parts of the world". Mr. Gardner was appointed Chairman of the Council and members of his Scientific Group worked with him and Prof. Marcault on a progressive programme of lectures, correspondence courses and research in the field of science, art, education, medicine, psychology, symbology, mythology (Greek and Indian) and philosophy. During part of this time, 1924-1928, Mr. Gardner also held the onerous position of General Secretary of the English Section with many visits to Adyar and a lecture tour of the United States and Canada.

By 1934 it was generally realised that the university idea was too grandiose and Mr. Gardner used his influence to arrange the transfer of its activities to a newly formed *Theosophical Research Centre* of which he was chairman. The T.W.U. thus went into the

⁴ Taken from: Science Group Journal Theosophical Research Centre Vol. XIII No. 3 Autumn 1969 pages 67/68

background as a council only, meeting once a year, as a body to inspire the formation in other countries of theosophical research centres. He continued as chairman of the T.W.U. until his death, although he inspired a change of name to *Theosophical World Trust for Education and Research*, as a more realistic title for this world body.

From its inception he took an active part in the work of the T.R.C. and particularly in the Science Group. He had a special ability to inspire other people to work in a wide variety of branch of modern scholarship, including those of which he was not specially well-informed; he was so interested in everything that could help forward the theosophical movement and was so quick to grasp the essentials of a new subject.

From 1926 to 1940 he founded and presided over a theosophical community at Stamford House, Wimbledon, where members of the Science Group often met him for inspiration and advice. He was also one of the founders of the Tekels Park Estate, Camberley, in 1928 as a theosophical community, and where the T.R.C. has held a study week-end every year in May or June since 1952. The last 16 years of his life were spent in a charming house in Tekels Park. Many of us will retain happy memories of valuable personal and group discussions that we were privileged to have with him there.

Readers of this Journal may be interested to have a list of his principal publications. These are mostly presented as students' notes and will long continue as a valuable contribution to the literature on basic theosophy.

1913 The Fourth Creative Hierarchy (Transactions of Blavatsky Lodge)

1918 Matter is the Shadow of Spirit (Blavatsky Lecture)

1924 Chains and Rounds

1929 Notes on the Secret Doctrine Vo1.III.

1936 The Web of the Universe

1939 The Play of Consciousness

1941 This World and the Next

1942 A Mystery Scroll and its Key

1945 Fairies: The Cottingley Photographs & Their Sequel

1945 The Mysteries

1946 The Nature and Function of the Soul

1948 The Imperishable Body

1951 This Dynamic Universe (T.R.C. Transaction) Chapter III: Fohat and Intuitional Research.

1952 The Heavenly Man (The Divine Paradigm)

1953 This Ordered Universe (T.R.C. Transaction) Chapter V: Man, the Measure of All Things.

1959 Whence Come the Gods?

1960 A Mind to embrace the Universe

1962 The Wider View. A collection of articles previously published between 1944 & 1959 in Theosophy in Action

1963 There is No Religion Higher than Truth

1964 Thyself Both Heaven & Hell (Gods, the many and the One)

V. W. S.⁵



⁵ Victor Wallace Slater, a scientific colleague in the Theosophical Research Centre

Introductory Note by Psypioneer: We are reprinting the short note below because of the sidelight it throws on the medium Madame D'Esperance,⁶ who is to be the subject of a major scientific paper now in the press.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE QUEEN'S HALL MEETING

It is well over forty years ago that, at a hall in the neighbourhood of Oxford Street, a meeting was held to present some of the evidences for a life after death. The speakers were not obscure men: they were well known in their day. They were Mr. Joseph Cowen, M.P., a newspaper proprietor; the Hon. Percy Wyndham, father of George Wyndham who was later the Secretary for Ireland; Alderman Barkas, the geologist, and the Rev. John Page Hopps, a Nonconformist minister, well known as an orator and journalist. The main purpose of the meeting was to give an account of some surprising results gained through the mediumship of a Newcastle medium, who, it afterwards transpired, was the famous Mme. d'Esperance, of whom so much has been said and written of late. Alderman Barkas related that the medium, although a woman of no high educational attainments, answered the most abstruse scientific questions put by experts in various branches of science. The audience listened with little enthusiasm: most of them seemed to regard the meeting as something queer and freakish. Some of the questions put at the close of the addresses revealed not only the densest ignorance but a certain contemptuous jocularly. The event was as a voice crying in the wilderness.

We look around to-day and can hardly take in the magnitude of the change. We think of several great public assemblies in the Albert Hall and the Queen's Hall held in recent years, of the meetings continually held in Manchester with audiences numbered by the thousand. Forty years ago such things would have been regarded as impossible. But the meaning and extent of the message has grown with the years; the times have changed and we have changed with them. A subject that was once discussed almost apologetically and with a fearful deference to public opinion is now proclaimed in the greatest public halls by people of eminence in every department of public life, no man making them afraid. The great meeting at the Queen's Hall on Sunday, 11th inst., by the London Spiritualist Alliance is the latest instance in point. In addition to Mr Bradley as principal speaker, it included amongst the speakers such celebrities as Miss Violet Loraine, Sir Frank Benson, Lord Dewar, Mr. Hannen Swaffer, Mr. Shaw Desmond, Mr. Hugh Walpole, Dr. Neville Whymant, Mr. Hewitt K.C., and Mr. Frank Romer.

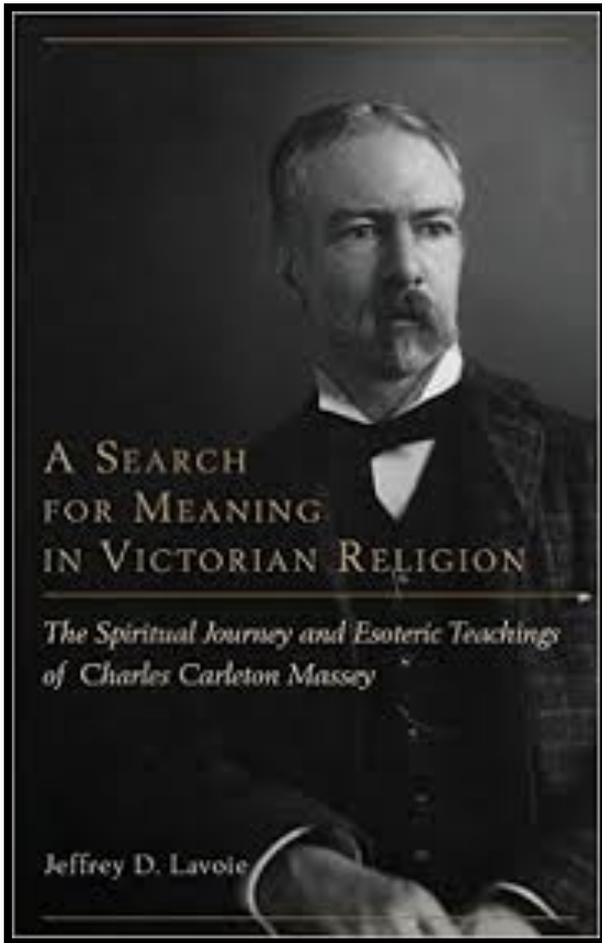
Spiritualism, however, still has its handicaps. It relates neither to Sport, nor to Commerce; it is not a political matter. It deals with the "most important subject in the world," to quote Mr. Gladstone's dictum but the most important subjects are not those held in high popular esteem, as a glance at any daily newspaper will amply confirm. The men who stand for Spiritualism are not actuated by any motive of self-interest. They are moved chiefly by a sense of duty and are responding to a great spiritual urge, a deep underlying impulse, the evidences of which the keen observer of the world to-day can trace in every direction.

⁶ Taken from: LIGHT March 24th 1928 page 138 under the heading "Then and Now"

Mr. Dennis Bradley and his friends have made a new and striking addition to the history of spiritual propaganda, and we may all be properly grateful, never forgetting, however, the labours, the suffering and the sacrifices of the old pioneers who in earlier years bore their testimony to the truth of a life after death. Most of them were obscure men and women who braved the opposition of the Churches, the contempt of the men of Science, and the ridicule and sometimes active persecution of the mob. Let us honour their work in our hearts and let them be in these times freshly remembered. But for them the victories of to-day could never have been won. Meanwhile, it is encouraging to trace the growth of the great Idea behind Spiritualism, by a comparison of the past with the present, by citing the two events – the little public meeting in the ‘eighties, the great public meeting of Sunday, March 11th, 1928, each typical of its period and each inspired by the same motive. All the speakers at the first meeting have long ago passed from the earth, and probably most of their audience likewise. In forty years’ time those who are able to look back to-day may be able to note an even more tremendous change. By that time it may well be that spirit-communication will be as widely accepted as is “Wireless” to-day.



C.C. MASSEY, THE MAN WHO WAS THERE



Have you ever wished you had lived in the golden age of mediumship? One man lived through it, but felt it was a step and not a destination. The London barrister C.C. Massey was in America investigating the phenomena of the Eddy family when the Theosophical Society was formed in 1875; he was the first president of the British Theosophical Society in 1878. He defended Henry Slade's manager when the medium was prosecuted in London in 1876. In 1882, Massey was an S.P.R. founder; as Professor Barrett wrote in his JSPR June 1905 obituary "*It was in his rooms we used to meet for consultation and Committee work, and to his generous hospitality and ungrudging expenditure of time we were constantly indebted.*" Massey was also a stalwart of the London Spiritualist Alliance which opened in 1884, and a frequent contributor to LIGHT, which became its newspaper.

Massey, a retiring person, has now been rescued from obscurity by a scholarly study *A Search for Meaning in Victorian Religion; the spiritual journey and esoteric teachings of Charles Carleton Massey* (Lehigh University Press, Maryland, 2015). The author Jeff Lavoie is already known to students for his study of the early Theosophical Society and its Spiritualist interests,⁷ and to *Psypioneer* readers for his February 2013 paper about Emmette Coleman and plagiarism.

The clue to Massey was his personal mystical experience and aspiration. He was aware that mediumship had many mysteries. However one cannot help feeling regret that he largely withdrew from public work. Thus he was an early vice-president of the British National Association of Spiritualists, but stepped back from experimental work with them in 1879. (p.19) He became disillusioned with Madame Blavatsky and resigned from the T.S.in 1884. His contributions to SPR publications were few after the internal crisis of 1886 (p.22) which was centred on the genuineness or otherwise of the physical medium Eglinton; a number of other Spiritualists, such as Stainton Moses, also moved away from the SPR in that year.

⁷ The Theosophical Society: The History of a Spiritualist Movement:
https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/The_Theosophical_Society.html?id=X1VvIS8AJ0oC&redir_esc=y

Jeff Lavoie provides a considerable sampling of Massey's own thoughts on the psychic and spiritual. Though he made some valuable translations of German metaphysical books, he wrote no major studies in psychical research. An impediment of obscure origin sometimes made his prose difficult to read, though from an early age he was a notable orator, and even more than his father (a Member of Parliament) he could have achieved high political office.

Massey was a representative figure in the psychic ferment of his time. First he inherited the mainstream Christian faith, which he interpreted increasingly in a symbolic fashion. He had excellent opportunities to witness mediumship, but became aware of its uncertainties. After investigating and discarding the Theosophical approach to knowledge, he remained a keen student of theosophy in the sense used by Boehme and Swedenborg, and his regular letters in LIGHT signed C.C.M. often dealt with mystical matters.

The author deploys some hitherto unpublished letters from Massey, but perhaps Massey is best summed up by an extract published in LIGHT just after his death:

“That love of truth for its own sake carries us certainly to it - into it, into its perfect peace and blessedness, is my profound faith. In the philosophy I follow “truth” is no intellectual abstraction; it is integral, concrete, personal –it is God” (p.139)

LP



Introductory Note by LP: We continue our series of verbatim séance reports with Mrs Duncan from the series held at the London Spiritualist Alliance. Readers will notice that among the sitters was Lord Charles Hope, a wealthy supporter of research into physical mediumship of that era, but about whom we know much less than we would like.

**NOTES OF THIRD
MATERIALIZATION SEANCE
WITH MRS DUNCAN ON
SUNDAY, 2ND NOVEMBER
1930**

MEDIUM: Mrs Duncan
DATE: 2nd November 1930
TIME: 6.45 to 7.50 p.m.
PLACE: 16 Queensberry Place, S.W.7.
NOTES: W. A. Shafto.



Henry & Helen Duncan

ORDER OF SITTERS from left of medium: -

Mrs Baggallay, Mr Baggallay, Lord Charles Hope, Miss Phillimore, Dr Fielding-Ould, Mrs Fielding-Ould, Dr Hector Munro.

Temp: 60° Fahr.

Time: 6.45 p.m.

The preparation for the séance was the same as on the last occasion. Mrs Duncan stripped in the presence of Miss Phillimore and Miss [misprint for Mrs?] Baggallay. She put on the clothes worn at the previous séance, namely stockings, shoes and knickers; over these she wore a new black overall similar in pattern to her old one, but a larger size. She then went into the séance room and was immediately placed in a new bag, or sack made of dark blue net with open meshes. *(Hand Written Note – to avoid discomforture [sic] from head as was occasional by the bag more of thick material)* It was made to exactly the same pattern as her own, the meshes being three-sixteenth of an inch square. The bag was again sealed as before, namely at the neck and to each arm of the chair, by means of the tapes.

The room was darker than at the previous sitting and at 6.50 Albert asked for more light, which was given by Mr Duncan.⁸

ALBERT Will one of the ladies take something from me?

MISS P. What am I to take, Albert? Do you wish me to touch the ectoplasm?

Mrs Duncan's artificial dentures are gently put into Miss Phillimore's hand.

6.55: a mass of ectoplasm showing. Medium is heard to be breathing heavily.

⁸ Garth Willey notes that Mr Duncan was not on the sitters list. Probably he was in his usual position looking after the music, but this reminds us that such lists are not always complete.

Dr Fielding-Ould and Dr Hector Munro see a white patch on the floor.

Albert again asks for more light, says it is a terrible light. Mr Duncan again gives more light.

ALBERT Why are you afraid of the light?

DR F.-O. You can have what you like.

A mass of ectoplasm showing which looks rather like the shape of a figure.

Curtain seen to be opening on the right.

ALBERT (to Mrs Baggallay) You have a nice boy sitting next to you, lady.

MRS B Yes, I have, Albert, he is my boy, thank you for telling me.

The curtains open again in the centre and a mass of ectoplasm is showing about 2.5 feet long.

ALBERT Everything depends on the lady being comfortable.

Albert was asked whether he liked the new bag.

ALBERT Very nice.

MRS B. Is it not too hot?

ALBERT No, it is much better in every way.

MR D. Try to get her out of the bag if you can.

ALBERT I will do my very best.

Whistling heard coming from behind the curtain.

(Pause)

Unshaped ectoplasm showing from the right of the curtain, moving---dropping downwards.

Soft whistling heard again, and then again much more distinctly. Then Albert is heard first whistling again and then singing.

Ectoplasm again showing at the side of the curtain, about three feet in length, hanging downwards---it looks like a half formed figure.

CHILD'S VOICE (whispering) I don't know where I am. What is wrong?

MRS B. There is nothing wrong.

MR D. Come way out and show yourself. Who are you?

CHILD (to Mrs Baggallay) Please don't stare at me like that?

MRS B. I am awfully sorry, I shall not do it again.

CHILD I don't know where my mammy is.

Mr D. Come way out and tell us who you are.

Movement of feet heard behind curtain.

CHILD (to Dr Munro) You look a funny man.

DR F.-O. What is your name?

CHILD Rosie. I am not a girl.

DR F.-O. Are you a grown-up woman?

CHILD No, I am not. Wait till I come out.

A snapping sound heard from behind the curtains.

ALBERT I have pulled the lady a little forward and I think a little of the stuff is broken one side of the chair.

DR F.-O. We are not disturbed about that, that will be all right, there are two other seals.

ALBERT They won't be broken. You see it is from the stretching of the cord.

DR F.-O. Quite.

A sitter asked why the children came.

ALBERT It is to help them forward. They are very good assets and help us later on.

DR F.-O. You are gathering a group to help you?

ALBERT Yes, I always want to get on. I like to do my best.

LORD C.H. It seems a very good best.

ALBERT Are you feeling bored, gentlemen?

The sitters reassured Albert---'not in the slightest', 'most interested'.

LORD C.H. If you only know how we had to sit with other people, and nothing happening.

Another snapping sound heard from behind curtain.

DR D. Could I ask a question? Can you tell me the reason these figures are not coming outside and why they are not building up properly---why cannot these people come outside the cabinet?

ALBERT I will jolly quick bring them out now.

Ectoplasm showing---gramophone playing.

ALBERT Stop.

Gramophone stops.

ALBERT Now I want you to see the reason I am not able to bring them right out. When I get the substance in bulk I can stretch it to enormous lengths. You will notice it is very flat, and it is coming from the ears of the lady.

We cannot see it very well.

Ectoplasm again showing like an arm and a hand, this moves very quickly in and out of the curtain.

ALBERT Look here, I am going to give you one box on the ear with this.

Albert is berating the curtain.

MR D. Can anyone go and feel that hand, Albert?

MRS B. May I, Albert?

ALBERT May you what?

MRS B. Feel that hand?

ALBERT Here is one.

MRS B. Whereabouts?

ALBERT I want to be prepared first. (Pause) (to Dr Munro) Hold out your hand.

DR M. Yes.

ALBERT I see it all right. Hold it down a bit. Hold it as if you were having the strap.

DR M. My word, that was a smack.

MRS B. I wish I could have one. I have never been smacked.

(Pause)

Ectoplasm again seen. Sitters agree with Miss Phillimore who says it looks like a distorted figure in the water.

The ectoplasm now looks luminous and is over the head of the medium, hanging right down, and disappearing again, the medium breathing heavily all the time.

Ectoplasm again seen to the right of the curtain swaying in time with the gramophone. A fleshy arm showing underneath the ectoplasm.

The rings on the curtains heard as if they are being pulled back.

Ectoplasm seen again in the form like a bandaged hand.

Curious sounds heard from behind the curtain, like the drop of water.

ALBERT Did you see the stuff behind the hand?

Someone says it seems a bluey luminous substance, and that the bag is blue.

ALBERT I am afraid I will have to go.

DR F.-O. No more for tonight, Albert. Can you get her out of the bag?

MR D. I will play some music.

Groans heard from behind curtain. D. Fielding-Ould goes to the medium, who is slowly coming out of trance, and is still fastened securely in the bag in the chair. The seals are again examined by the sitters, who are all quite satisfied with regard to them.



WHERE WAS THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE?



[**Note by L.P.** The LSA, once the most eminent Spiritualist body in the world, for its first decades had no fixed abode. The note below was handwritten inside an old LSA minute book, and is made available by permission of the CPS archivist. In December 1925, the LSA moved to 16 Queensberry Place, London SW7 2EB, when its wanderings ceased! The “Craven Street” text that follows is taken from an advertisement which appeared in an early LSA pamphlet.]

The London Spiritualist Alliance was first established in March 1884 and was incorporated under the Companies Acts 1862 to 1893 on the 19th day of August 1896, under its present title or name of “The London Spiritualist Alliance Limited”.

From March to June 1884 it occupied temporary offices in Great James Street, Bedford Row, W.C., subsequently using the offices of Mr. R. M. Theobald in St. Swithins Lane.

In April 1885 the Alliance opened Chambers at 16, Craven Street, Charing Cross. In November 1888 the Society moved from Craven Street to 2, Duke Street, Adelphi, where it remained till May 1897 when a further removal was made to 110, St Martin’s Lane.

This continued to be the home of the Alliance till March 1918, when the Government requiring the premises for the payment of War Pensions through Parr’s Bank, the Alliance became tenants of Messrs Smith & Brewer architects at 6 Queen Square, Bloomsbury, W.C.1. In June 1920 the Society purchased of Mr Max Clarke the premises No 5 Queen Square for £2500 and paid £300 deposit on the purchase money (£3,750) for No. 4. It moved into No 5 in May 1921.



THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

CHAMBERS: 16, CRAVEN STREET, CHARING CROSS, S.W.

This Society of Spiritualists, founded for the purpose, primarily, of uniting those who share a common faith—known as Members—and then of giving information respecting that faith to those inquirers who seek for it—designated Associates—has now occupied Chambers at the above address. There will be found an extensive Library of works especially attractive to Spiritualists; the various Journals of Spiritualism published in this and other countries; and opportunities of converse with friends like-minded. The Alliance holds periodical Soirées at the Banqueting Hall, St. James’s Hall, where papers on interesting phases of the subject are read, and the Spiritualists of London have a ready opportunity of meeting their friends.

[One or more Members of Council attend on Tuesday evenings in each week, from Six to Seven, to receive friends and answer inquiries]

Minimum Annual Subscription of Members and Associates, One Guinea. Further particulars may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary

Council.

President.

W. STANTON MOSES, M.A.

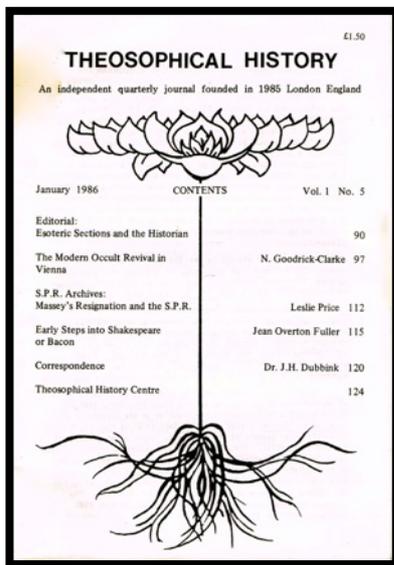
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—~§~—



Leslie Price writes:

The article below appeared in the quarterly journal *Theosophical History* January 1986 Vol.1 No.5 pages 90-96:

Thirty years later little has changed, but some updates are made in the footnotes, and in a note at the end.

ESOTERIC SECTIONS AND THE HISTORIAN

An Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society was announced by Madame Blavatsky in 1888, though attempts at such a section had been made before. Almost all Theosophists believe that this was one of H.P.B.'s personal projects, and that she was carrying through a suggestion of the Brothers. But notwithstanding the publication of some new material in H.P.B. C.W. Vol. XII,⁹ the origins of the E.S. remain obscure, and the whole subject deserves a new, thorough, and impartial examination. The suggestion may in fact have come from Mr. Judge, who then persuaded both H.P.B. and the Brothers to support it.¹⁰ Writing of the E.S. Mr. G.R.S. Mead, who had been H.P.B.'s private secretary, claimed;

“This had been started by Mme. Blavatsky in about 1890. She, however, had not done this willingly, but had been over-persuaded by some of her most enthusiastic and credulous followers. She herself really disliked the idea.” (The Quest April 1926 p.293)¹¹

Mead was writing long afterwards, when his distaste for H.P.B.'s heirs had become great, so his claim is of limited value. Moreover, there is a celebrated mahatmic letter, printed as letter 19 (p. 44-8) of “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom” (First series) in which K. H. warns Col. Olcott to leave occult matters to H.P.B. Mr. Jinarajadasa elsewhere explains;

“Here it can be frankly stated, with no sense of depreciation of the services of the Society's first great President, that Col. Olcott viewed with displeasure the creation in the Society of an *imperium in imperio*, a kind of Secret Society whose *fiat* might dominate the outer Society to its detriment. There arose then a most difficult situation. H.P.B. held that the salvation of the Society lay in the resuscitation of its occult nucleus. But the President of the Society was hostile to such a situation, as he was afraid that such a secret nucleus might try in Jesuitical ways to control the Society.”

⁹ The Collected Writings of H.P. Blavatsky, edited by Boris De Zirkoff, was a major scholarly endeavour See: <http://www.blavatskyarchives.com/collectedwritings.htm>

¹⁰ However William Judge, the American TS leader got into heated disputes with HPB about ES administration. See for example a letter from her published by Michael Gomes, in “Theosophical History” April 1996.

¹¹ For the full text of Mead's article, see *Psypioneer* March 2015

(From his introduction to H.P. Blavatsky “The Original Programme of The Theosophical Society” (T.P.H. 1931 Reprinted 1966) p. XI.)

The mahatmic letter is held to have significantly influenced Col. Olcott to support the establishment of the E. S. but it does not explicitly mention the E. S. and I am not sure if it did have such influence. (A further important question is the relation between the E. S. and the Golden Dawn which emerged at the same time, and on this we hope to have some new data at our July conference!)¹²

Madame Blavatsky died in 1891. At this point, theological differences between Theosophists emerge with full force, since some would claim that when the teacher died the school automatically ceased to exist. The historian however notes that at least an external organisation did continue, and that Mrs. Besant and Mr. Judge administered it in increasing discord, until there was fragmentation. Under various names, esoteric sections persisted under the leadership of Mr. Judge, Mrs. Tingley, Dr. Steiner, Mrs. Bailey and others. But the largest was that led by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater – so far as one can judge, since these bodies do not publish membership figures. The various groups and leaders, did not give mutual recognition to each other, and sometimes repudiated each other's teaching.

The historian is bound to pay attention to such bodies as the E. S. because of their claimed substantial influence on events. Mr. Jinarajadasa, for example, in his presidential address printed in “The Theosophist” January 1953 said;

“Before the beginning of the third seven-year cycle in 1889, a most important event took place, in 1888. This was the creation by H.P.B. of “The Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society”, a year later changed to “The Eastern School of Theosophy”, so that the Theosophical Society might not in any way be involved in the occult organization founded by her. It is this body, known today as “The Esoteric School”, that has been most vital in the development of the Society, because the E. S. has been like the steel framework of the Society” (p. 220)



HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY

¹² See Robert Gilbert “The Golden Dawn and the Esoteric Section” Theosophical History Centre, London 1987. Now available free in digital form via www.theohistory.org

Mr. Jinarajadasa associates a conversation between K. H. and H.P.B. with the decision to found the E. S. (apparently letter 47 in “Letters” cited above)

“It was then that H.P.B. determined on creating the steel framework of the Society.

“It is true that to accept the Theosophical Philosophy does not involve a belief in the existence of the Masters, or in “The Path”. Nevertheless, since H.P.B. founded the Esoteric School in 1888, the staunchest workers for the Society, those who have made the greatest sacrifices for the Society’s sake, have been members of this School. Certainly there are some who do not care for esotericism in any form, and are fully devoted to the study of Theosophy; but on the other hand, the growth of the Society has had definitely as one factor not merely the dissemination of Theosophical ideals, but the personal devoted effort and dedication to Lodges, in maintaining their strength, which has been due to the members of the Esoteric School in various parts of the world. This has been my experience during the last forty-eight years.” (p. 220)¹³

A similar claim was made by Mr. Geoffrey Hodson in an article “The Theosophical Society and the Esoteric Section” (“Theosophy in New Zealand” July-Sept.1979)

“The majority of the most devoted, reliable and effective workers at Headquarters at Adyar, in Section Headquarters, in Lodges and in their family and business lives, are members of the E. S. and for the most part will so remain until the end of their lives.”

Mr. Hodson also suggests that devoted members of the E. S. may attract the attention of the Masters, though without denying that other aspirants may make the necessary inner contacts who are not E. S. or even T. S. members. He compares the E.S. to an ashram in the spiritual help it gives.

“Almost from the beginning, the E. S. has been described as the “heart” of the T.S. and if the above descriptions are accepted it does indeed become for many of its members the very “heart” of their lives in the truest sense. To divide these two – the T. S. and the E. S. – would, I submit inevitably remove a great deal – if admittedly not all – of the mystical and spiritual “heart” from the Theosophical Movement in the world of today.” (p. 59 ff.)

On the negative side, we find an inverse, but equally important role ascribed to the E. S. In the eyes of some old students of H.P.B. it became a political vehicle used to introduce Neo-Theosophy, a spurious teaching quite different from her own “Practical Occultism” and channelled especially through Mr. Leadbeater, not an E.S. member so long as H.P.B. lived, who was briefly head of the E. S. before his death in 1934 and whose teachings had for many years been circulated to E. S. members. For such critics the claim of the later E. S. to be the continuation of the Blavatsky E. S. would be like that of the Roman see to have the teaching and authority of the early Christian church. The quotation we made earlier from Mr. Mead about H.P.B. and the E. S., for example, continues;

“She herself really disliked the idea. And in this her intuition had been right; for this Section speedily developed into a great danger and became the inner rot to the whole movement, seeing that it was based on blind obedience to (so-called) ‘esoteric orders’. In the hands of Annie Besant, later on, this “Esoteric” cabal became a camouflaged

¹³ Mr Jinarajadasa had been outer head of the E.S. since the death of C.W. Leadbeater in 1934.

political caucus, ‘pulling’ every crisis in the Society from within to suit A. B.’s own views and purposes.” (p. 293)

The vehemence of these sentiments – and they could be paralleled with others from persons who stayed within the T. S. – set in contrast to the enthusiasm from the defenders of the E. S., but added in both cases to the immense role ascribed to the E. S. by defenders and critics alike, makes the task of the historian difficult. There are strong feelings on both sides. The historian is interested in charting what happened. He cannot write a history of Theosophy as if the E. S. was not there – that would be fantasy history. It is significant that in her 1938 history, Mrs. Ransom did mention E.S. developments, however briefly – though the E.S. disappears from the index of “The Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Book” which she published in 1950.¹⁴

This brings us to a delicate point. Esoteric bodies do not like their affairs to be discussed, either by historians or anyone else. This is particularly the case when the earlier history of the esoteric school has been racked by controversy, and it is still regarded with suspicion and even hostility by some Theosophists in the wider world. So the discussion of the history of the E. S. is not encouraged in the T. S., either in meetings or in print. Apart from a valuable and long-running discussion in “The Canadian Theosophist” in the mid-1960s, to which the then Outer Head of the E. S. contributed, there are only the incidental and infrequent references in most T. S. journals. One may naturally sympathise with this policy. Any kind of training can be disrupted by controversy, and so can any wider Society. In no time such a discussion may get on to such questions as whether Mr. Leadbeater was a very great occultist or apostate; whether Mr. Judge was fairly treated or numerous other undead issues smouldering in Theosophical breasts. Far better to focus on things that unite.

Other organisations have come up with various compromises to accommodate the attempts of historians to study the sensitive past. Most British public records are made available in the Public Record Office after 30 years. Lambeth Palace Library, which holds the papers of the Archbishop of Canterbury, has a 40 year rule. Even the Jesuits, who have played a prominent role in the history of Theosophy as the alleged inspirers of those who annoyed the leaders of the time, have made changes. J. C. H. Aveling, in his book “The Jesuits” (London, Blond & Briggs, 1981) notes;

“Of recent years the Society has, to some degree, significantly modified its traditional rules of rigid secrecy about its internal affairs. The Jesuit Constitutions, for centuries printed (like the Society’s other book of rules) privately and for limited circulation among members, are now for sale to the public. Today the shelving of all major public libraries contains the fifty large volumes of the continuing series of the Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu. This is a vast compendium of published private records of the early, formative days of the society. An increasing number of Jesuit archives in Rome and elsewhere have recently been opened to outsiders: hitherto they were shut even to the generality of Jesuits.

This new attitude of openness, and the effects of the training of some Jesuit historians in the spirit and techniques of modern research, has started to produce marked changes in Jesuit historical writing. In the past, with few exceptions, their historians, were untrained and had very little access to archives. The superiors had what then seemed to be excellent reasons for a distinct distrust of history. The calls on their manpower were so great that historical writing came very low on the official list of priorities. Archives were primitive, dirty, uncatalogued storerooms. Their contents were

¹⁴ Since the foundation of the E.S., all presidents of the TS have been ES members.

frequently scattered or lost when persecution of the Society led to confiscation of its houses and expulsion of the inmates. Moreover the old Society had long been accustomed to, even trained to, a posture of defensiveness. Ordinary prudence seemed to dictate locking up archives and using Jesuit historians largely as defenders of the good name of the Society from calumnies. Hence Jesuit historians automatically worked within the narrow bounds of officially-approved traditions. Today they are emerging from the old catacomb. It is not surprising that some still shrink from the unaccustomed glare of the light of day, and others are enebriated by it and launch out into radical reassessments of Jesuit history, treating tradition as so much legend.

At present the Esoteric School for Adyar T. S. members is a good deal more secret than the Jesuits in its history. In fact, it has preserved secrecy more effectively than the Golden Dawn in many respects. Sometime members such as Mead and Ernest Wood, (“Is This Theosophy?”) were careful even in their critical comments to respect undertakings of secrecy, especially about methods of training.¹⁵ The historian, as I have said, sympathises with this wish to preserve confidentiality, but cannot be expected to avoid discussion of events of decades ago because of their controversial nature. Let us therefore suggest for discussion some things to be desired. (Our remarks apply firstly to the Adyar E. S. but could be extended to other esoteric bodies in the Theosophical world, from California to New York to Dornach.)

1) There should be some public one-volume histories of the E. S. written by members and non-members of the E. S.

2) There should be a rule of a certain number of years, say 50 years, before which archival material is normally made available.

3) Letters from historians to the E. S. should receive replies, even if the reply is (as it is sometimes bound to be) “No”. Mr. Tillett’s claim (in “The Elder Brother”) that some of his letters were not answered is disquieting.¹⁶

4) It would be useful if there were a public statement, even if only a few hundred words, of what the E. S. today is: a school for yoga; a school of initiation; under the Inner Headship of H.P.B.’s Mahatmas or just the humble Headship of the senior Theosophist who at present has to bear that heavy responsibility? This will help historians to place the E. S. in context.¹⁷

Meanwhile, the attitude of this journal is one of neutrality between the critics and defenders of the E. S. as a factor in Theosophy. We do believe however that it is a factor

¹⁵ When this article was published in 1985, it was not publicly known that the Mahatma K.H. had warned in a letter of 1900 “Misleading secrecy has given the death blow to numerous organizations.” This was one of several sentences censored by the then head of the E.S. when he published it for the first time. In 1987, what purported to be the uncensored text was published – see for example <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/lastkh.htm>

¹⁶ Geoffrey Farthing, a leading English Theosophist, called for the closure of the E.S. in 1976. I am not aware that he received any reply. See <http://www.blavatskytrust.org.uk/html/articles/to%20outer%20head%20adyar%20es.htm> When Geoffrey saw my draft 1985 article on the E.S. he advised me not to publish it, as he feared it would jeopardise the newly started TH journal. However TH survived, and has recently celebrated 30 years of publication. See www.theohistory.org A recent vociferous criticism has been made by a Brazilian Theosophist. <http://www.helenablavatsky.org/2014/09/the-fraud-in-adyar-esoteric-school.html>

¹⁷ In recent years, Adyar TS journals have carried several explanatory articles about what the E.S. does, for example, “Quest” in the USA <https://www.theosophical.org/publications/quest-magazine/2951>

that, because of its importance – extending even to the belief sometimes expressed that the E. S. has de facto control of the T.S. – must have a place in historical discussion.

LESLIE PRICE

Update for Psypioneer (2016)

If you are chiefly involved with the study of pioneer Spiritualists or psychical researchers, you may well wonder about the wider relevance of these Theosophical matters. Of course disagreement over subject matter is not unknown. What J. B. Rhine considered fell within parapsychology was rather narrower than many parapsychology bodies would admit. And Christian Spiritualism has some distinct differences from, say, National Spiritualism.

That there are varying kinds of Theosophy is not surprising. What is distinctive in the Theosophical bodies has been the existence of special groups, often controlling significant archival remains (important for studying such pioneers as Madame Blavatsky, William Judge or Annie Besant), which recruit from the wider membership, but which are outside the control of the wider body.

It is not surprising that an elite group of members should exercise power in such bodies. But in the Adyar Society, lodges have considerable autonomy in national Sections, and Sections within the international structure. Moreover the power of the international president is limited by a general council. But historians may ponder if the Adyar TS is controlled by its ES, especially when the TS president is also outer head of the ES [not currently the case] or when a person who has served as head of the ES goes on to be president of the TS too, as has happened at least three times, and may do so again. LP.



Introductory Note by LP: Interior experiences sometimes have dramatic political consequences, seldom more than in the case of Joan of Arc. We reprint below evidence that Joan influenced one of her modern biographers.¹⁸

JOAN OF ARC AND DR. LAMOND

*A witch in life, a saint when dead,
And those good folk are strangely blind,
Who see the halo round Jeanne's head,
Yet ban and persecute her kind.*

ONE AFTERNOON, IN THE LATER TWENTIES, I WAS WAITING for a friend to join me in the public room of the London Spiritualist Alliance, when the Rev. John Lamond, D.D., flopped down into an easy chair by my side. After a brief greeting, he sat for a few moments silently regarding me with a quizzical, speculative smile on his broad, benevolent, old face. I could see that he had something to tell, but that he was not quite sure about trusting a comparative stranger, such as I was at that time.

“Mr. Moffat,” he ventured at last. “I am wondering if you will think me mad when I tell you that I have just come from having an hour’s talk with Joan of Arc?”

I sat up! Spiritualism was comparatively new to me then, and every fresh phase of its phenomena that I encountered was apt to give me a jolt. Such a statement coming from this hard-headed old Scottish minister was startling enough in all conscience.



“Well,” I replied, “if you had asked me that question two years ago, before I had experience of Spiritualism, I would certainly have thought that you had gone a bit crazy in your old age, but I would have done my best not to hurt your feelings. Now, however, I am quite prepared to take your word for it.”

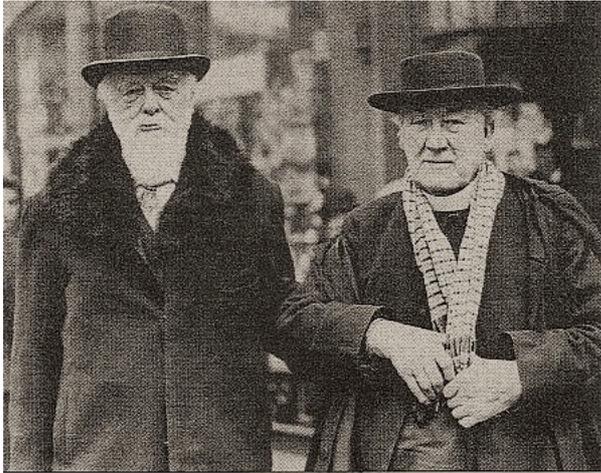
He seemed pleased with my answer for he opened out and gave me his confidence. I think he was glad to have found a sympathetic listener for his story. He told me that for several consecutive years he had spent his holidays at the little French village of Domremy where Joan was born. He had sat in Joan’s room in the little house her parents had occupied, and had spent hours in contemplation beside the famous “fairy tree” where she saw her visions and heard the voices of her guides. He frequented the little church, and listened to its bells. He had wandered about the countryside that had been so familiar to “the maid”; and sometimes went farther afield to visit places associated with her story. By this means,

¹⁸ Taken from: *Towards Eternal Day – The psychic memoirs of a playwright* by Graham Moffat Published by Rider and Company (1948) Chapter eleven pages 85-91. Photograph of painting taken from the frontispiece of *Joan of Arc and England* (1927) by John Lamond published by Rider & Co, London

though he himself was devoid of psychic gifts, he hoped, somehow or other, to get into touch with the still living spirit of the “Maid of Orleans”. In the end, back in London, he reaped the full reward of his earnest seeking. Through the trance mediumship of Mrs. Mason he had had many interviews with Joan. She had spoken freely, giving details of incidents in her early days at Domremy, imparting much interesting information that was entirely unknown to her biographers. From the facts that he had thus accumulated he was writing a play.

“She is helping me to write it,” he said. “Indeed, it is more her play than mine.”

That may be true, but Dr. Lamond’s book, *Joan of Arc and England*, clearly shows that he had made a profound study of Joan and her times.



Subsequently, I met Dr. Lamond quite a number of times. He was deeply interested in spiritual healing, and I found him several times at “The Seekers” headquarters. At the Fortune Theatre I, on several occasions, took the chair at the Mrs. Meurig Morris Sunday trance lectures, and Lamond was nearly always there. He regarded Mrs. Meurig Morris as a kind of modern Joan of Arc, and during that extraordinary and almost tragic trial,¹⁹ when her manager, Mr. Lawrence Cowen, challenged the powerful *Daily Mail*, he hardly ever left her side.

I bless the fortunate occasion when I missed the last bus one night after a “Seekers” meeting at the Kensington town hall, where Dr. Lamond was chairman and I was one of the speakers. He invited me to his Kensington flat for a cup of tea and what we Scotsmen call “a crack”. He ’phoned for accommodation for me at a local hotel, so that we were free to talk far into the morning. Joan of Arc and Spiritualism were, of course, the main themes, and I took the script of his play away with me to read. While it must be admitted that G. B. S.²⁰ has given us a drama more skilfully constructed and more intensely dramatic, Dr. Lamond’s work depicts the real Joan. When we consider that it was written by a Scottish parson whose knowledge of theatrical technique cannot have been very profound, the play is an astonishing fine piece of work. Here is no credulous village girl deceived by church bells into thinking that she hears voices; no victim of hallucinations; but a clairvoyant and clairaudient maid directly inspired from the spirit world and raised up by Heaven-given power to be the saintly heroine of France, carrying through her sacred mission to defeat a ruthless aggressor nation that was devastating her beloved country.

Those who have witnessed the clairaudient powers of such mediums as Mrs. Estelle Roberts and Mrs. Helen Hughes cannot doubt for a moment that Lamond’s estimate of the source of Joan of Arc’s inspiration is the correct one. Joan saw her heavenly guides clairvoyantly, and heard their voices clairaudiently just as our best mediums see and hear those whom we have loved and lost. Speaking through Mrs. Mason, the Maid of Orleans informed Dr. Lamond that her early faith in her visions had been greatly strengthened by a village boy who, on one occasion, had shared her clairvoyance and clairaudience, seeing the “angel” messengers and hearing them speak to her concerning her mission.

¹⁹ Photograph shows Sir Oliver Lodge (left) and John Lamond leaving the Meurig Morris trial.

²⁰ George Bernard Shaw

During the period that I and my folk lived in Berkshire we occasionally motored to the delightfully quaint and historically interesting town of Winchester. I came to have a real affection for its old buildings and especially for its beautiful Cathedral. Within its stately walls there are two contrasts that have never failed to appeal to my sense of the dramatic. Entering by a side door we find ourselves in a very old part of the cathedral that seems to retain the gloomy atmosphere of the Middle Ages. The place always gives me a cold chill as though it might be haunted by the ghosts of hooded monks and other earthbound old-timers. But I hurry on and the uncanny grue is presently succeeded by a thrill of pure delight as I pass out of the semi-darkness into the brilliant light of the beautiful main building where the sun is streaming down from the long, high windows upon the glorious architecture and artistic decorations.

But it is the other dramatic contrast that appeals to me the most. In the full light of the Nave representations of those forces of light and darkness which contributed to the occurrence of a tragic, historical event have been brought into realistic juxtaposition, probably by the action of some Bishop with a high regard for truth and justice. The Spiritual is symbolized by the statue of a maid in armour—Joan of Arc—the dark material forces by the lordly tomb of the crafty statesman-priest, Cardinal Beaufort. These two, the maid and the Churchman, once faced each other in the Market Square at Rouen. Beaufort represented the English King. Seated in state, and dressed in his gorgeous vestments, he officiated at the burning. Joan, tied to the stake, high above the faggots, offered up her last prayer to God; but the Bishop—for he was only a Bishop then—growing impatient at the prayers of the supposed witch, hastily gave the signal for the fire to be lit below the maid who is to-day the most beloved of all French saints. Then, through the curling smoke, as the cruel flames leaped up on all sides towards her frail body, the voice of Joan was heard to cry out in triumph:

“My visions were true! I was not deceived!”

We can guess what Joan was seeing to call forth that exultant cry, rather than the shrieks of agony which, no doubt, the Bishop and her other judges fully expected to hear; not devils waiting to claim the soul of a witch condemned by mother Church; but Angels and ministers of grace, her guides whose voices she had heard in Domremy; her comrades who had fought and died by her side, and a host of other spirits. All would be there to welcome home the martyr who had accomplished her mission to fight and die for her country.

And now in Winchester Cathedral these two face each other again, but their positions are reversed. The witch is now a Saint; the Cardinal who, no doubt, thought himself a Saint when on earth, is now known to be the sinner; for time's ever-sitting court of appeal has given its judgment against him.

Now let us see what the Church of England has to say about Joan to-day. I quote from *Doctrine in the Church of England*:

There is a real sense in which guilt attaches to the society and to individuals as its members. Thus an Englishman of to-day may feel that he has a share in the guilt of the nation which burnt Joan of Arc, or which took a leading share in the slave trade, just as in the latter case he may feel himself to share the credit which belongs to the nation which took a lead in abolishing the slave trade.

Well, we can all heartily agree with that; but surely the little list should be greatly extended. Joan was far from being the only witch burned. There were great numbers of

them. I do not say that they were all Saints, far from it, but they were burnt or drowned because they possessed psychic powers—“spiritual gifts”, St. Paul calls them—and were potential Saints, since these gifts might have been cultivated to the furtherance of God’s Kingdom on earth.

Dr. Lamond, in the course of that midnight “crack” that we had together, told me, apropos of this, that in an old church register of his native parish he had found a statement to the effect that, on a certain Sabbath, no services were held in the church as the minister was away at a witch-burning.

In the earlier part of the seventeenth century Kenneth Mackenzie, the great highland prophet and seer, was put to death by being thrust into a barrel of boiling tar, the so-called Christian Clergy assisting the proceedings with their distinguished presence.

Taking the hint from the book of doctrine, I think we are all sharers in the guilt of our forbears for such deeds. Would it not be to our benefit, then, if we made sure that our descendants, in their turn, should not have to share our guilt for the persecution of spiritually gifted men and women to-day?

How truly Christian it would be if, by our belated action, those who live after us could claim some share in the credit which would accrue to us were we to restore true mediumship to the honoured place it undoubtedly had in the Churches founded by St. Paul!

The recognition of Joan of Arc as a Saint is an acknowledgment that, she being divinely inspired, her campaign against the English invaders of her country was designed and carried out with the aid of her spirit guides. To grant this is to admit that the dogma, held by all the Protestant Churches, that all direct manifestations of the spirit ceased with the writing of the Scriptures, can no longer be maintained.

We have had recent proof that God still defends the right. Spiritualists are assured that He does this through His willing servants; the risen dead. There is an element of the miraculous in the escape of the British Army from Dunkirk and in The Battle of Britain. That gallant Spiritualist, the leader of those brave “few to whom the many owe so much”—Lord Dowding—has told us how the dead, on one occasion at least, fought alongside the living to turn the world-be invaders back. The Bible tells how Elisha had a whole host of invisible warriors to protect him. God is the same to-day as when He sent His messenger to save St. Peter from prison two thousand years ago: the same to-day as when Joan of Arc listened to her voices five hundred years ago: “the same yesterday, to-day and for ever”.

I take the following quotation from Miss Helen A. Dallas’ book *Comrades on the Homeward Way*: About the year 1897 or 1898 the following communication was made through Mrs. Piper. It claimed to come from a band of spirits. It was posted to the editor of LIGHT by Miss Lilian Whiting (a well-known authoress in the United States) in the summer of 1914 and was published on July 25th, 1914. I quote only the last paragraph of the communication:

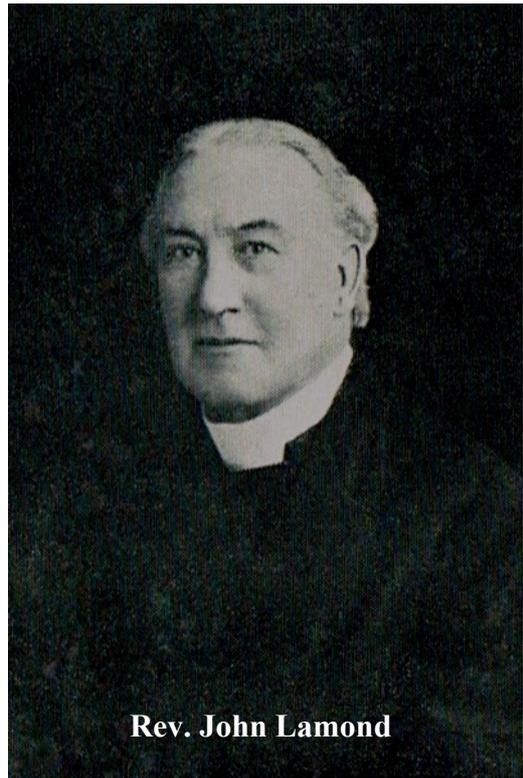
“Before the clear revelation of spirit communications there will be a terrible war in different parts of the earth. The entire world must be purified and cleansed before mortal man can see, through his spiritual vision, his friends on the other Side, and it will take just this line of action to bring about this perfection. Friend, kindly think on this.”²¹

²¹ There are some slight verbal changes from the original version of this in LIGHT July 25th 1914, p.350.

In 1914-18 war has come and gone, “the revelation of spirit communications” has been given abundantly, but the purifying and cleansing effect has not been anything like sufficient—so now we have had another terrible war. Will the world be purified and cleansed this time? We can only hope and pray. At present the prospect is rather hopeless. The Churches have been given their proofs, but the “blind brothers” prefer to remain blind, yet continue obdurately to lead. The modern sisters of Joan of Arc daily give comfort to the bereaved and proclaim the truths concerning the after life. The teaching that is given to the world through their mediumship is Christianity brought up to date, “purified and cleansed” from the mistakes of unguided theologians. Must it take still another war to make Church and State wake up to the fact that Spiritualism is of God, and mediumship the open door for ministers of grace; the Jacob’s ladder by which Angels descend to talk with men?

The grand soul who was the Rev. John Lamond, D.D., is one of those ministering Angels, and he does not disdain to use the humble ouija board to spell out his messages to me. No one has a better right to speak to his fellowmen than this Doctor of Divinity who dared to preach Spiritualism from his pulpit, and gave up his Church and a good stipend for conscience’ sake. I know that in his later years, while he rejoiced in his freedom from orthodox fetters, he gladly shared what little he had of wordly gear with those who needed help. His was no belief in Salvation by mere believing; he knew that only by love can any man ever raise himself to unity with his Creator. “Parson John” has gone to his reward, and he comes back in the strength of a fuller knowledge to speak with all the vehemence of a translated Jeremiah.

His first message through my daughter’s mediumship was:



Rev. John Lamond

“I am working on the book. You cement past friendship by co-operation.”

I welcome his help most gladly. He is the third famous literary man to offer inspiring aid to my awkward pen. I am painfully aware that with W. T. Stead, the Rev. George Vale Owen, and “Parson John” at my elbow my output ought to show some semblance of their combined genius. I ought to be as sure of my prose as Burns was of his verse when he wrote to Davie:

The words come skelpin’ rank and file,
 Amaist before I ken!
 The ready measure rins as fine,
 As Phoebus and the famous nine,
 Were glourin’ o’er my pen.

I feel sure that as my spirit helpers “glour o’er my pen” they find me a very unsatisfactory instrument. But, as a well-known literary man once said to me when he asked me to write an article for a magazine, “No one expects the author of *Bunty Pulls the Strings* to write except in a simple way!” Perhaps my spirit helpers will not expect it either.



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Paul J. Gaunt

