

PSYPIONEER

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STANSTED DONATION – CHARITY COMMISSION INTERVENES

The Charity Commission, which regulates charities in England, has written to the SPR seeking information about the handling of the Stansted donation (see Psypioneer previous issues). This follows an approach to the CC by Leslie Price.

Meanwhile the latest annual report to members of the SPR (2007-8) has noted only that “Useful items were received from the collection of Michael Bentine and copies of journals and magazines from the Arthur Findlay College.”

SPR members have not been told that many of these rare journals deemed surplus were offered for sale cheaply to council members and that these volumes are now inaccessible. For us at Psypioneer who encounter on a daily basis the problems of students in various continents trying to get access to such old journals, this remains distressing.

NEW BOOK ARTICULATES PIONEER CASES

An unusual Spiritualist book may do much to correct the general unawareness of pioneer workers which is common in the movement.

Michael E. Tymn of Hawaii is already well known for his Metgat survival web site¹, which offers outstanding historical cases, as well as reports of contemporary survival research.

In his book “The Articulate Dead; they brought the spirit world alive” (Galde Press, 2008)², Tymn presents classic pioneer personalities from both sides of the Atlantic. Central to his narrative are Mrs Piper, Mrs Leonard, Crookes, Myers, Barrett, Lodge and Stainton Moses.

In addition, a variety of lesser lights are recalled, including Carl Wickland, Mrs Curran/ (Patience Worth), Hamlin Garland and Charles Mundell.

The result is one of the few volumes in print which offers a way into the lives of workers who often feature in Psypioneer – and some who deserve to do so.

Tymn has now become one of the international contributors to the revitalised weekly *Psychic News*,³ so his valuable historical researches will reach a still wider audience.

LP.

¹

http://aolsearch.aol.co.uk/aol/search?query=+Metgat+survival&restrict=wholeweb&isinit=true&avtype=&invocationType=hf_talktalk_cl_ws_registered

² www.galdepress.com

³ Subscribe to *Psychic News*: - <http://www.psychicnewsbookshop.co.uk/catalogue/12>

Rev. William Stainton Moses, M.A



November 5, 1839 – September 5, 1892

Introductory Note by Psypioneer: -

In Psypioneer February 2007,⁴ Leslie Price reviewed ‘*The Autobiography, Reflections, and Essays of an Episcopal Priest*’ by a leading Christian parapsychologist in America, Canon William V. Rauscher. The book is published by Mystic Light Press, 2006.⁵

In Psypioneer October 2008, we published “The Grave of William Stainton Moses.”⁶ This article was due entirely to Bill Rauscher’s information and photographs that led me, eventually, to finding the grave of the Rev. William Stainton Moses, M.A., in Bedford’s old cemetery.

Chapter 40 of Canon Rauscher’s book is published in full below, with the exception of the eight photographs that accompany this chapter, and Moses’ obituary as published in the Bedfordshire *Independent* (September 17, 1882).⁷

⁴ Vol 3.2 page 32: - “On the Spiritual Frontier in America”
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.2February07..pdf>

⁵ Mystic Light Press: - http://www.mysticlightpress.com/index.php?page_id=142

⁶ Vol. 4.10 page 231: - <http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP4.10October08..pdf>

⁷ Vol. 1.2 Stainton Moses Funeral page 12: - http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP2.pdf

The above photograph is taken from the collection of William V. Rauscher; the photograph published below (which does not appear in his book) is the Moses family plot at Bedford cemetery taken July 10th 1974. To Raucher's right is the grave of Moses' parents, and on his left lies Stainton Moses.

See also Canon Rauscher's new book '*Pleasant Nightmares Dr. Neff and His Madhouse of Mystery*'.⁸

Thanks to Canon Rauscher for giving permission to Psypioneer to publish this work.

PJG

Stainton Moses: A Haunted Priest

A special class of people that call themselves mediums today (while in ancient times they were seers, priests and prophets) offer fascinating opportunities for study. They have unstable personalities (like the radioactive elements) but are no nearer the borderline of insanity than genius is, though they are far more exposed to the dangers of moral and mental breakdown.

Nandor Fodor, Psychoanalyst
- from his book, *The Haunted Mind*

There is a large library at the College of Psychic Studies in London. In addition to thousands of volumes on a variety of psychic subjects, it contains a vast collection of pictures, papers, paintings, and objects that help tell the story of psychics and the development of psychic studies through the years. In the entrance hall was a bookcase with a large glass door and a brass plaque, placed there because the College of Psychic Science (original name) was once the London Spiritualist Alliance and William Stainton Moses, who was its first president, established it in 1884. Moses served until his death in September 1892, and this bookcase belonged to him along with many other items now treasured by the leaders of the college.

During my visit in 1966 I saw another case on the second floor. On its shelves were numerous small notebooks, each filled with writings that differ markedly in appearance from page to page yet it all flowed from the hand of The Rev. William Stainton Moses. According to Ruby Yeatman who was then the secretary of the College there were also unwrapped parcels still to be examined which belonged to Moses. Through the years a great many of his notes had been published in the college's magazine entitled *Light*, and a full complement of the "received" scripts

⁸ Mystic Light Press: - <http://www.mysticlightpress.com/>

appear in book form in *Spirit Teaching* (London: London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., Memorial Edition, 1904), *More Spirit Teachings* (London: Spiritualist Press, 1952), and *Spirit Identity* (London: Hurst & Blackette, Ltd., 1920), which contain Moses' personal insights and experiences on the phenomenon itself.

Eric J Dingwall, the famous psychic researcher, was in the library on my rainy day visit to London, stooped over some old issues of *Light* doing research. He was intense, and in response to my question; about material on the personal life of Stainton Moses, he said: "Yes, yes, yes, someone must write a book about him with the full story, but I don't have time to do it!" Perhaps someone will, for there is a scattered accumulation of bits and pieces with short writings on his life, but no major work.

Mediumship is no respecter of persons, and often mediums do not possess intellectual as well as psychic gifts. This was not the case with Moses, and may be a reason why his approach to psychic work was unique. He was objective, and gave to the phenomena a certain insight tempered not only by education but also by the fact that he had been a successful parish priest with a biblical orientation and a concern for people. Through his automatic writings he tried to disassociate his conscious mind from the written material. In the midst of disassociation he would doubly disassociate by reading or by expressing an interest apart from the movement of his hand as he wrote. His combination of mediumistic gifts and intellectual gifts was a rare blend.

Born November 5, 1839, he spent his formative years at Bedford, England, where he attended college. Before Bedford he lived in Connington, his birthplace, in Lincolnshire where his father, William, was the headmaster at the grammar school there. His mother was the daughter of Thomas Stainton of Alford, Lincolnshire, thus the Christian names, William Stainton.

Granted a scholarship at Exeter College, Oxford, Moses had to leave his studies because of ill health. He spent six months in a monastery on Mount Athos in Greece, and later returned to Oxford to earn his M.A. degree. When he was 24 years old he was ordained by Bishop Wilberforce, and his first charge was at Kirk Maughold near Ramsey in the Isle of Man where he served as curate. He ministered at two parishes there in a curacy akin to a rectorship since the rector was old and pastoral duties were left in young Stainton's hands. Moses must have loved people or had what can be called "pastoral compassion," for during the time of this curacy we read of a severe epidemic of smallpox that did not keep him from attending to his flock. This is recorded in a biographical sketch of Moses in the memorial edition of *Spirit Teachings* by Charlton Templeman Speer. Moses, later acting as tutor to Speer, left an indelible impression, and it was through the Speer family that Moses' history of sittings was recorded. Within the framework of this private group Stainton Moses exercised his mediumship.

Now let us gain insight into his role as clergyman, for his life as a parish priest was short but effective. Speer wrote in *Spirit Teachings*:

There was no resident doctor in the district, but having at different times acquired some little knowledge of medicine, Stainton Moses was enabled to minister to a certain extent to the bodily necessities of his parishioners, as well as to their spiritual needs. Day and night he was in attendance at the bedside of some poor victim who was stricken by the fell disease; and in one or two cases when, after an unsuccessful struggle with the enemy, he had soothed the sufferer's dying moments by his ministrations, he was compelled to combine the offices of priest and grave-digger, and conduct the interment with his own hands. Such was the panic inspired by the fear of infection, that it was sometimes found impossible to induce men to dig graves for the dead bodies of the victims, or even to remove the coffins containing them.

From Maughold he became curate at St. Georges, Douglas, Isle of Man in the spring of 1868, and became friends with Dr. and Mrs. Stanhope Speer. Dr. Speer treated Moses for illness and their resulting friendship had a major impact on his life. We read that as a preacher Moses was impressive, and at Douglas he was beloved by his parishioners. His final curacy was in the diocese of Salisbury, his last church appointment in December 1869. Once again illness forced him to resign his parish work and consider being a tutor, and this twist of fate brought him again to Dr. and Mrs. Speer in London where he privately taught their son. Moses never seemed to have the health necessary for the strain of parish work, and the field of education demanded less physical strength, but even though his health was poor he still excelled scholastically. He was English Master in University College School from 1871 until 1889, and had a great influence over his students.

In 1870 during a visit to Dr. Speer the subject of Spiritualism was approached. He and Speer often discussed religion, and were discontent with existing church teaching. Mrs. Speer gave Moses the book *The Debatable Land* by Dale Owen, wondering what Stainton Moses would think of the content. Surprisingly the book helped trigger his thirst for more information, although until that time he considered Spiritualism an imposture. Before he read Owen's book he had read Lord Adare's book of records of seances with D. D. Home which he never finished because he considered it the "dreariest twaddle."

With the formal church now in the background, Dr. Speer's son wrote of him: "Had his health permitted him to follow his original career, he would have no doubt attained a distinguished position, as he was a powerful and original preacher, a successful organizer; and an earnest and efficient worker among the poor."

When Stainton Moses left the first parish in Maughold he received a letter signed by the Rector and Churchwardens and fifty-four persons who lived within the parish which provides insight into his character and his priesthood. According to the letter:

“We, the undersigned parishioners of Maughold, are much concerned to learn that it is your intention shortly to resign the position which you have for some years past so usefully and honourably occupied amongst us. We beg to assure you that your labours have been greatly appreciated in the parish. The longer we have known you, the more we have seen in your work, the greater has our regard for you increased. The congregations at both the churches under your charge are very different in numbers to what they were some time ago. The schools have been better looked after; the aged and infirm have been visited and comforted; and the poor have been cheered and helped by your kindness and liberality.

“By your courteous demeanour, by your friendly intercourse, and by your attention to the duties of the parish generally, you have greatly endeared yourself to its all; and not least to our respected and venerable Vicar, whose hands we are well satisfied you have done all you possibly could to strengthen. We cannot but feel that your loss will be a very serious one to the parish, and we should be glad if you could see your way to remaining some time longer with us. By reconsidering your determination and consenting to remain, you would place us under a deep debt of gratitude and obligation.”

Moses and Speer attended a number of seances, and by 1872 Moses' own abilities became apparent to group meetings at the Speer home. Five months after his interest in Spiritualism began Moses experienced levitation. In 1881 the physical manifestations began to weaken, and from 1872 to 1873 automatic scripts were produced, mainly in the form of questions, answers and dialogue. Moses was told he had around him a “band” of entities, 49 in number. If he knew who they were he did not disclose it, for the names were so biblically bold as to bring rebuke upon him. For those who wish to go further in exploring the “Imperator Group,” read *The Controls of Stainton Moses* by A. W. Trethewy (published by Hurst and Blackett, Ltd., London, 1920)

Moses was not without his doubts, nor did he rule out the fact that his own mind could be creeping into the communications. The questions posed in his volumes reveal a mind searching through the midst of the material he was receiving, looking for the weak spot which would prove it all false. The physical phenomena were incidental to the real problem of spiritual identity.

Moses wrote under the pseudonym “M. A. Oxon.” Frank Podmore, in *Mediums of the 19th Century* (published: University Books, Hyde Park, New York - 1963), claims that in his last years Moses suffered from “extreme depression and nervous prostration, and severe neuralgic pains,” and apparently the immediate cause of his death was Bright's disease. He also states that Moses became a victim to the “drink habit.” (I find no other reference to drink as a problem for Moses in books or upon request for information at The College of Psychic Studies.) In *More Spirit Teachings*, the preface states: “About four years before his passing which took place

in September 1892, Stainton Moses was thrown from the top of an omnibus and sustained severe injury. Then after his recovery' he was attacked with influenza. He rallied, but never threw off its clutches. Overwork sapped his strength, and influenza seized him again."

I do not think Stainton Moses ever lost interest in the church, but it must have vexed him to be a priest and not have the attention of his fellow clergy. The interrelation of his ordination, his leaving the active ministry, his work for Spiritualism, and his own paranormal experiences and illnesses must have created a strange sight for his eyes as he beheld the Church of England of his day. Once he wrote of a clergyman who refused to observe a psychic demonstration:

He poses in a most extraordinary attitude for one who has entrusted to him a cure of souls. He must know that all around him are men crying out for evidence of a future life. He must have had addressed to him the earnest request for some stable proof of continued existence. It is not men's fault that they cannot believe as he tells them they ought. They want evidence such as commends itself to their minds. With Thomas they would prove and test for themselves, and they have a sacred right to do so. But the method of the Christ is not the method of Mr. G. He condescends to say: 'Reach hither thy hand.' Mr. G. draws himself up and pharisaically replies: 'Get thee behind me, Satan.' "

From all reports Moses was a modest man who abhorred publicity. If ever he met with notables there is little recollection of those meetings on paper, for he was considerate of their reputations, but he was more well known than we might suppose. We read in *Spirit Teachings*:

A certain proportion of his time was devoted to visiting many of the most important people in the country-important both socially and politically-and also those who were distinguished for their eminence in the scientific, literary, and artistic world. During the lifetime of such people their names cannot be divulged, but it is not too much to say that Stainton Moses had interviews, more or less frequently, with most of the illustrious personages of his day; and all who took any interest in the phenomena of Spiritualism, whatever their position or attainments, were alike anxious to hear his opinions and experiences of that subject, on which none were so well qualified to speak as himself.

No one examined Moses' notebooks while he lived, and these books still reside in the College of Psychic Studies except for one which is thought to be missing or possibly destroyed. All the back issues of *Light* are there, as well as items that may not have yet been discovered. An anthology of Moses' writings, along with his articles in *Light* and a full treatment of his life story are yet to be offered to students. According to Nandor Fodor, F. W. Myers did an analysis of Moses' material regarding mental and physical phenomena in the *Society for Psychic Research, Proc. Vol. IX and XI*, as a result of receiving material which Moses willed to his friends C. C. Massey and Alaric A. Watts, who gave it to Myers.

No medium has shown as great a variety of phenomena as Moses. All forms of mental and physical phenomena were supposedly present, including levitation, movement of objects, lights, sounds, apports, odours, breezes, music, materialized forms, writings, and trance. Yet interestingly even in the last years of his life his name appears in the list of members of the SPR as "The Rev. W Stainton Moses."

It is recorded that Stainton Moses served seven or eight years in an active parish ministry, and acknowledged himself as a committed Christian and clergyman until he died. Even though we read that he gave up the dress of an Anglican priest, he retained his identity by using the title "Reverend." Perhaps this is indicative of those who believe inwardly the ministry cannot be erased, and those who have been ordained by a Bishop are indelibly marked.

Stainton Moses' body rests in Bedford cemetery, and I visited his gravesite on July 10, 1974 under the guidance of an old custodian of records who finally found the neglected and forgotten family plot inscribed under an imposing Celtic cross on a large base is the following:

*In Loving Memory of
The Rev. William Stainton Moses, M.A.,
only son of William and Mary Moses,
Born at Donnington, Lincolnshire, Nov. 5, 1839
Died at Bedford, Sept. 5, 1892
Known as "M. A. Oxon"
Founder and President
of The London Spiritualist Alliance
A joint founder of The Society for Psychical Research
Editor of "Light," and for 18 years English Master
At University College School, London
"Out of darkness into his marvelous light"
"He being dead yet speaketh"*

Along side are the graves of his parents, William Moses (born 1797, died 1879) and Mary Moses (born 1802, died 1896). The inscription then proclaims: "I know that my redeemer liveth."



An interesting account of his funeral is provided in *Light Magazine* (October 1, 1892 and reproduced in *Psypioneer* (Vol. 1, No3, 2004) by founder and editor Leslie Price. The funeral account originally appeared in the *Bedfordshire Independent* (September 17, 1882)

His best known work was “Spirit Teachings,” but he also gave to the world “The Higher Aspects of Spiritualism”; “Spirit Identity”; “Psychography, or Direct Spirit Writing,” all of which, with the exception of the last, are practically out of print; and several pamphlets on kindred subjects have also proceeded from his pen.

Unknown to many researchers William Stainton Moses was a Mason, and his Masonic degrees are recorded in the United Grand Lodge of England. Leslie Price supplied the following information obtained on July 10, 1992 from John Hamill, the Grand Lodge librarian and curator:

William Stainton Moses was initiated in St. Thomas's Lodge No. 142 London, on 4 March 1876. As far as I can trace he did not take office in his lodge and resigned from it in 1887.

In 1880 he became a joining member of Campbell Lodge No. 1415, Hampton Court. Again I can find no trace of his having taken office in the lodge.

In 1877 he was appointed Provincial Grand Chaplain of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Middlesex, holding the appointment for one year (usual Custom.)

In the Royal Arch he was exalted in Campbell Chapter No. 1415, Hampton Court, in 1877 but took no office.

In the Ancient and Accepted rite he is listed as an unattached member of the 18th degree (Rose Croix) in the 1877 Year Book. In 1879 he is listed as a member of Palestine Rose Croix Chapter No. 29, London, of which Capt. F G. Irwin was the senior member. He continues to be shown as a member of this Chapter to the end of 1882 and then appears, again, as an unattached member in the 1883-5 lists.

There were no obituaries for him in the Masonic press.

Of course during my visit to the gravesite there was no sign of ghosts, but there was a sense of peace. Moses’ haunted mind was still, and I said a prayer and repeated the words: “I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write. From henceforth blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours.”

The End of El Morya

A review of *Prophet's Daughter* by Erin Prophet
Guilford, Ct.: Globe/Pequot, 2009

By Paul Johnson

Introductory Note by Psypioneer:

From the foundation of the Theosophical Society in 1875, the Spiritualist movement lost a succession of workers to the new society, and to Madame Blavatsky's teachers, supposedly advanced men, such as Morya. These teachers however took on a life of their own outside the T.S. and others reported contacts with them. Among those influential in the States a generation ago was Elizabeth Clare Prophet. Paul Johnson is a noted historian of early Theosophy;⁹ his current research interests, which include Emma Hardinge Britten, can be followed through his blog.¹⁰

Reviews on Amazon suggest that thousands of readers have needed this book to make sense of their experiences in the New Age movement of the 1980s and 1990s. Until reading it, I did not realize that I was among them, despite having very limited exposure to the organization whose rise and fall it documents. This unvarnished history nevertheless helps bring closure to some issues about New Agers that have arisen from my experience of related movements. The Church Universal and Triumphant faded from my memory as it had from the national memory, as other apocalyptic and/or suicidal cults of the 1990s provided more fodder for the same media attention that had once made Elizabeth Clare Prophet a familiar name. This book reminds us of all the reasons that Mrs. Prophet's church deserves serious consideration as part of the history of esotericism.

Prophet's Daughter is the result of almost two decades of reflection on the rise and fall of Elizabeth Clare Prophet, and should be read by everyone with a scholarly or personal interest in alleged messengers of the Great White Brotherhood. Erin Prophet opens with a description of March 14, 1990, when members of her mother's church hid in underground bunkers at their Montana ranch, constructed at a cost of twenty million dollars, to await a nuclear war after which they would emerge to rebuild the world. Their frenzied preparations for catastrophe were directed by transmissions alleged to come from "El Morya," the same Master figure who had been known as Mahatma Morya to his earlier disciple, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. In the twentieth century, Morya had already been appropriated by the movement led by Russian artist Nicholas Roerich and his channeler wife Helena, but became better known in the 1980s and 90s, when he was

⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K._Paul_Johnson

¹⁰ <http://backintyme.com/kpjohnson>

See also his *new* website called the Theosophical Network. This one will be used to discuss esoteric history and related subjects: - <http://theosnet.ning.com/profiles/blog/list?user=28p4gweq05nes>

proclaimed as the source of apocalyptic warnings by his alleged mouthpiece Mrs. Prophet. In mid-March 1990 when the CUT members went underground by Morya's instructions, I was en route from Delhi to Jammu pursuing research on a historical prototype for the Mahatma, the Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1830-1885) who had been involved in the Theosophical Society during its earliest years in India. The fact that Morya was then receiving more public attention than at any time since the Hodgson Report on the Theosophical Society a hundred years earlier barely registered on my consciousness at the time. My interest in Blavatsky and her Masters was inspired by appreciation of the quality of the books she produced under their alleged inspiration; Mrs. Prophet's books by contrast could never hold my attention for more than a paragraph. But the entire output of the Church Universal and Triumphant and all the alleged post-Blavatskian channelings of Morya are outweighed for serious readers by Erin Prophet's excellent, illuminating memoir. For the first time since Blavatsky introduced him to the world, a mouthpiece for Morya has written an honest memoir that will serve as a cautionary tale about the dangers of belief in the authority of invisible Masters.

After opening with the debacle in which her mother's followers hid in bunkers to await nuclear catastrophe, Erin Prophet takes us back to the story of her parents whose devotion to the Masters had begun long before they met. Betty Clare Wulf had first encountered them in the form of the Count Saint-Germain as envisioned by the *I AM* movement. At eighteen she read discourses attributed to the mysterious 18th century alchemist, channeled by Guy Ballard in the 1930s. Betty had already embraced Christian Science but now "viewed the Ballards' work as the next step in a self-motivated spiritual quest that had begun much earlier." (39) Her mother Fridy had studied Theosophy and encouraged Betty Clare's interests in reincarnation. Although Betty married a fellow Christian Scientist, she was never satisfied with the orthodoxy of Mrs. Eddy and in 1961 attended a meeting of the Summit Lighthouse, an *I AM* offshoot created by Marcus Prophet three years earlier. Prophet had studied Hinduism in Paramahansa Yogananda's Self-Realization Fellowship in the 1950s, and while affiliated with this group discovered the channeled writings of the Ballards. Their *I AM* movement had been splintered and in disarray for years when Prophet founded Summit Lighthouse. He delivered messages from various Masters of Theosophical and *I AM* lore, as well as the Archangel Michael who had been one of Edgar Cayce's alleged sources. The first night that Betty Clare met Prophet (now known as Mark), she asked to become his trainee as a messenger of the Masters, and in response he asked her to become his life partner. Both were married at the time, but within two years they had divorced their spouses and married each other, and in 1964 had their first child, Sean. Erin was the first of three daughters born to the couple before Mark's death at 56 in 1973. What had been steady but gradual growth under Mark became rapid expansion under Elizabeth (renamed when she became a Messenger), who moved the church headquarters from Colorado to California in 1977.

Although her siblings occasionally occupied positions of authority in the church, only Erin became a messenger of El Morya, at her mother's request keeping this appointment secret from her brother and sisters when she accepted it in 1985 as the church was relocating to Montana. By 1990 when the bunker episode catapulted the church into worldwide notoriety, Erin's role as Morya's mouthpiece had reached the point where her

mother relied on her to consult the Master for practical instructions on the building of the underground shelter. Some of the doomsday timetables that motivated the frantic shelter activity came through Erin's channeling of the Master. Prophet's Daughter describes the transformation of Summit Lighthouse into the Church Universal and Triumphant, the decision (directed by El Morya) to relocate its headquarters from California to Montana, and the escalating challenges facing the community in its new location. Erin Prophet's narrative is engaging and honest, and she makes few excuses for herself and her role in the Church. Elizabeth Clare Prophet had suffered petit mal seizures for years without informing her family or church of her epilepsy, but when her illness progressed to grand mal seizures in 1988 her ability to lead the church was seriously compromised. Nevertheless, the health crisis was concealed from the members and the public and it was not until she resigned her leadership after being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease at age 59 that her health problems became known outside the family. For the last ten years the Church has been redefining itself, adopting participatory management styles and abandoning the practice of Messengership. However, alternate mouthpieces for El Morya have arisen to meet the needs of followers who cannot accept his silence. As leader of the Church Universal and Triumphant, Elizabeth Clare Prophet modeled herself consciously on Helena Blavatsky to the extent of claiming to be the mouthpiece of the same Mahatma. But her church drew on many other sources of inspiration. The mission to create a spiritual community in a remote Western locale was the largest such operation since the Mormons relocated to Utah more than a century earlier. The rigid moral code of the CUT was as stringent, and as homophobic, as that of the LDS. In her declining years, Mrs. Prophet became convinced that evil entities were attacking her and recruited her followers to hold vigils "protecting" her from her enemies; Mary Baker Eddy had set the example for this paranoid element of the CUT belief system. Mrs. Prophet's apocalyptic warnings were similar to those of the Adventists of the 19th century, and the obsession with weapons that developed in her later career was echoed by the modern Adventist group the Branch Davidians in the years following the shelter debacle.

Erin Prophet's book is a memoir rather than a history, and succeeds on its own terms by making sense of a life that is very much worth documenting. The group dynamics of Mrs. Prophet's followers are revealed in the narrative rather than explained conceptually, but the author has evidently devoted long years of consideration to understanding why she and thousands of others went along with the apocalyptic obsessions that emerged from El Morya in the 1980s. She frequently refers to a sociological study of the group from the early 1990s, and to issues of prophecy fulfillment raised by Leon Festinger's *When Prophecy Fails*, but never shows any interest in the evolution of Morya prior to his adoption by her parents.

Throughout the 1980s I was involved in the Theosophical movement, and frequently heard Mrs. Prophet mentioned in disparaging tones. But there was never any public statement to my knowledge regarding her claims to intimacy with Theosophical Masters. In addition to Morya, the CUT also honored Kuthumi (K.H. to Theosophists) and prominently displayed portraits of them that were painted during Blavatsky's lifetime and with her blessing. In the 1990s my organizational involvement was focused on the

Association for Research and Enlightenment, as my scholarly interest turned to Edgar Cayce after my books on Blavatsky were published. Like the followers of Mrs Prophet, Theosophists have shown a remarkable willingness to accept alleged communications from Morya and K.H. uncritically, starting with Blavatsky and continuing through C.W. Leadbeater and more recently Geoffrey Hodson. But after the 1929 debacle in which Krishnamurti rejected the World Teacher role that had been created for him according to the revelations of Leadbeater, Theosophists have shown no taste for prophecies and End Times expectancy. As the 1990s drew to a close, I felt confident that the ARE would not succumb to the kind of embarrassing behavior for which fringe religious groups had become notorious throughout the decade. And yet, thanks to some vivid End Times predictions in the Cayce readings related to the return of Christ, the organization went through a millennial meltdown that was a milder version of what had happened to the CUT. Within a six year period there were four changes of administration, and at the most contentious period a division arose between Christian and Universalist factions in the membership. By the dawn of the new millennium, ARE membership was in steep decline, and a rival organization led by former executives was created to compete for the loyalty of the members. Yet the ARE had always sustained several areas of focus which were unaffected by prophecy failure, especially the holistic health readings, and has rebounded from its difficulties rather rapidly in light of the circumstances.

The major problem that led the CUT astray, in Erin Prophet's reckoning, is belief that church leaders were able to see the past and future and provide guidance based on this ability. As in the Theosophical Society under Besant and Leadbeater or the ARE during Cayce's lifetime, people were told of their past lives and advised on the basis of the alleged former incarnations. This had lent itself to abuses, either conscious or unconscious, as members' desires for past lives as companions of Krishnamurti, Jesus, or Cayce were regularly satisfied by clairvoyant revelations. In the case of CUT, past life allegations by Mrs Prophet were blatantly used as mechanisms of social control, including within the Messenger's own family. From the point of view of a historian, one of the unfortunate results of belief in past life readings is the way historical evidence and reasoning are devalued and/or ignored in favor of pseudohistory from authoritative "spiritual" sources. In the Theosophical movement after my books were published there has been widespread hostility to any historical questioning about the Masters, whereas with the Cayce movement such questions as I asked about sources inspired indifference rather than anger. In either case, though, the questions "where did this material originate, and how reliable is it?" are anathema to the mind of the true believer, and to organizational mindsets despite their lip service to research and openness.

Elizabeth Clare Prophet abused her power to a far greater degree than was shown by earlier mouthpieces of the Great White Brotherhood, in that she had extreme control over her followers, down to details of their sex lives. Perhaps the cause of greatest bitterness among her former followers is the extent to which financial ruin was often the result of following the guidance of El Morya. Most CUT staff were left with neither jobs nor resources after the organization threw most of its energies into shelter construction and then collapsed. Erin Prophet's older brother Sean, now an avowed atheist, takes a much less indulgent approach to their mother's abusive history, and sees no merit whatsoever in

her role as a Guru. Erin, by contrast, acknowledges all the harmful consequences of her mother's Messengership, yet clings to the belief that in some ways she was a valid spiritual teacher and that the CUT's teachings include many valuable elements. All four Prophet children, however, are agreed in rejecting the Church and the Messengership behind its rise and fall.

Mme. Blavatsky confessed to using false claims about Mahatmic inspiration to manipulate her followers: "It is very rarely that Mahatma K.H. dictated verbatim...when I thought my authority would go for naught, when I sincerely believed acting agreeably to Master's intentions and for the good of the cause...insisted that such and such a note was from Master...often something reflected from my own mind." Claims of Mahatmic inspiration to bolster one's spiritual authority became a mainstay of Theosophical discourse under Besant and Leadbeater, even though Olcott and HPB herself had tried to backtrack from such authoritarianism. Erin Prophet and her siblings grew up in a family where channeled messages from the Great White Brotherhood were a regular occurrence, and Erin seems never to have seriously questioned the sources until the collapse of their mother's church. It is easy to understand how unquestioning acceptance of claims to sponsorship by Masters can occur for someone who has never known anything else. But for tens of thousands of Mrs Prophet's followers who made a conscious choice to accept her teachings, the historical Jesus, Buddha, St. Germain, Morya, and Koot Hoomi seem to have been relatively unimportant while Guru Ma's transmissions from them were absolutely authoritative. Her authoritarianism brought disrepute to the entire notion of the Great White Brotherhood and its Masters, yet Mrs. Prophet's church will never repudiate her alleged sources even as it backs away from the worst abuses of their Messenger.

Having witnessed the followers of Edgar Cayce descend into a period of instability and conflict in the wake of prophecy failure, I have long pondered what makes people embrace apocalyptic predictions. Perhaps the unknowability of the future is so painful to the true believer's mindset that they will embrace any implausible prediction rather than admit that we just don't know. But why do catastrophic, disastrous expectations play such a major role in movements centered on prophecy? A Jungian explanation might call upon archetypal patterns, but a more recent theoretical framework provides a concept that I find more satisfactory. The study of memetics proposes that certain memes (units of cultural transmission or imitation) are far more effective than others at replicating themselves in receptive minds. The most powerful memes, according to Richard Dawkins who coined the term, are those involving danger, food, and sex; humans are hard wired by our evolutionary history to pay special attention to these. Hence messages that tell people their survival is at stake, or that sexual freedom is dangerous to individuals and the group, tend to get more attention than other messages because our evolution makes us especially alert to such memes. Mrs Prophet "hit the trifecta" by delivering messages about apocalyptic danger and sexual purity, and then adding the urgent message that a food supply lasting many months had to be provided in the underground shelters Morya had advised her to construct. Her Church combined the most delusional and destructive aspects of Mormonism, Christian Science, Theosophy, Adventism, and Spiritualism in a kind of syncretic occult authoritarianism. It is

inconceivable that she would have consciously chosen to construct a belief system out of the worst elements of many others. But her seizure disorder may well have led her to becoming the channel for such elements, as explained in the passage from Erin Prophet I found most insightful, and with which I will close:

“And what about the prophecies? Epileptics often describe their seizures as being preceded by a penumbra of approaching doom. Although Mother did not give dictations while experiencing seizures, the imagery of some of her messages during the late 1980s and early 1990s took on an aura similar to that of an imminent, world-shattering seizure. It was almost as if she felt that the outer world could not continue turning while her inner world was shaken to its core. With every blip of her EEG, God was making his will for the macrocosm known.” (p. 174)

ACD ON THE SECOND HIGHEST SPIRITUAL BEING IN HISTORY

As we approach the 150th birthday of Arthur Conan Doyle on 22 May 2009, readers will not be surprised if we note that he regarded the Christ as the highest spiritual being in history. But who came next in his estimation?

The answer appears to be Joan of Arc, whose biography by the French Spiritist Leon Denis he translated.

In his preface, ACD wrote:

His treatment of his heroine is so complete that there is no need for me to say anything save to express my personal conviction that, next to the Christ, the highest spiritual being of whom we have any exact record upon this earth is the girl Jeanne. One would kneel rather than stand in her presence. We are particularly fortunate in the fact that we have fuller and more certain details of her life and character than of any celebrity in mediaeval or, perhaps, in modern history. The glorious life as so short and so public, that there was no time or place for shadows or misunderstandings.

There is a Kessinger reprint¹¹. Also, the full text of this translation is available on line at: Jeanne d’Arc.¹²

The chapter “What were her voices?” is of particular interest. The entities who claimed to speak to her were of doubtful historicity. Denis suggests these were symbolic identities. But if this principle were applied to guides in general, where would it lead us?

LP.

¹¹ ISBN: 0766165744 / 0-7661-6574-4)

¹² www.jeanne-darc.dk/

SNU TRIED TO BAR CHRISTIANS IN 1934

It is well known that in 1928 the SNU rejected the proposal of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to add an eighth principle to the existing seven. There is often some vagueness about what was proposed, so it is worth quoting again the terms of the motion at the 1927 SNU conference.

“That a new principle be added to the Seven Principles of Spiritualism, declaring that while admitting that every creed has its own message from on high, however distorted by human frailty, we in the western world acknowledge the original teaching and example of Jesus of Nazareth and look upon them as an ideal model for our own conduct.”

It is this which was rejected in 1928 by the SNU conference, and before that by a special committee, whose report can be found in *Psypioneer*, November 2004.¹³

Less well known is that an attempt to actually keep out Christians was made in 1934. Let us go back to the presidential address that year as reported in *LIGHT* July 13, 1934 page 418.

SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL UNION

MR. J. B. M'INDOE RE-ELECTED PRESIDENT

THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

In his presidential address, Mr. M'Indoe dealt with the Spiritualist movement and its place in national life. There was the difficulty of the movement getting into a groove, and many issues which deserved serious consideration were regarded all too lightly. They were faced with the tremendous problem of unemployment which made it difficult, if not impossible, for individuals to maintain a decent standard of living.

Those who were endeavouring to face the situation had announced that at the best we must be prepared to face a more or less permanent condition of unemployment of some magnitude. Spiritualists who realised that the most important thing in the world was human life, must sooner or later come to grips with the social problems facing us, and make their contribution to the arrangement of a society where every one of their brothers would have the fullest opportunity of developing the best that was in them. That, he said, was the great message of Spiritualism. Were their churches delivering it? Were they taking a just part in association with the various ameliorative movements to re-condition human life? It was a question on which he invited discussion.

¹³ Vol. 1. 7 page 58: - http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP7.pdf

Continuing, Mr. M'Indoe said: "We claim to be a religious organisation arousing the attention of all types of minds, and there are many indications that we are gradually being recognised as an organised religious body. I stress the necessity that we shall ever keep to the front the ideals of what a religious organisation should be. I fear we may be tempted to follow the path which has been that of so many religious organisations, and which resulted some weeks ago in the decision that Unitarians should not be allowed to speak in Anglican cathedrals. The situation had a lesson for Spiritualists, who were faced at that Conference with suggestions which might lead to a restriction of the intellectual freedom which up to now had characterised the movement.

LEGAL RECOGNITION

Concluding, Mr. M'Indoe alluded to the time – not far distant, he believed – when they should be granted legal recognition. The recent broadcast of Mr. Oaten's address was a pointer in this direction. He also emphasised, in contradistinction to the attitude of certain Spiritualist writers, the value of scientific research in respect of mediumship. This was work that ought to be encouraged, and he believed, with Mrs. St. Clair Stobart, that one of the chief obstacles to the universal acceptance of demonstrated survival was that they had not received endorsement of their position from official science. Resolutions were unanimously carried expressing strong disapproval of the "Incitement to Disaffection" and "Medical and Surgical Appliances" Bills, and the Conference reaffirmed its position in regard to peace and its support of the League of Nations in the bid to reduce armaments.

A resolution regarding the acceptance of churches inculcating certain doctrines will not, we understand, become operative unless and until confirmed by a postal ballot vote of the whole Union, which has been called for and will be taken shortly.

This confirmation was not forthcoming, for as LIGHT reported on November 1st 1934.

RESULT OF S.N.U. POLL

At the annual conference of the Spiritualists' National Union at Blackpool in July this year, a resolution was passed by 73 votes to 54 inviting the National Council to refuse affiliation to any Church "that asked its members to accept the doctrines associated with original sin, virgin birth or vicarious atonement." The alternative was to leave the National Council to exercise its discretion.

A final vote of Churches and subscribing members was demanded and this has resulted in the vote being reversed by a majority of 61 votes.

Decision as to admission to the Union will therefore remain with the National Council.

LP & PJG.

Leonora E. Piper Online:

Some Web Resources

By

Carlos S. Alvarado

Introductory Note by Psypioneer: -

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Writing about the history of psychical research French physiologist Charles Richet (1850-1935) stated: “If there were no other medium in the world but Mrs. Piper that would be sufficient to establish scientifically the facts of cryptesthesia” (Richet, 1923, p. 34), a phenomenon Richet defined as “a perception of things by a mechanism unknown to us of which we are cognizant only by its effects” (p. 64). Medium Leonora E. Piper’s (1857-1950) importance to psychical research may be assessed by the fact that she is still cited today by those writing about evidential phenomena supporting the concept of survival of bodily death (e.g., Braude, 2003; Fontana, 2005), as well as by those discussing the history of psychical research and psychology (e.g., Blum, 2006; Taylor, 1999). I present here a bibliography of online material about her mediumship, much of which was difficult to obtain before the advent of the Web. In addition to the citation, readers of *Psypioneer* will be able to click on the links I have provided to go directly to the reference in question.

¹⁴ See: - An interview with Dr. Carlos S. Alvarado by Michael Tymn - http://metgat.gaia.com/blog/2008/12/an_interview_with_dr_carlos_s_alvarado

Online Materials About Mrs. Piper

Michel Sage's *Mrs. Piper & the Society for Psychical Research* (1904) is a good general introduction to Mrs. Piper. The author wrote in the first chapter: "Mrs Piper's mediumship is one of the most perfect which has ever been discovered. In any case, it is the one which has been the most perseveringly, lengthily and carefully studied by highly competent men. Members of the Society for Psychical Research have studied the phenomena presented by Mrs Piper during fifteen consecutive years. They have taken all the precautions necessitated by the strangeness of the case, the circumstances, and the surrounding scepticism; they have faced and minutely weighed all hypotheses. In future the most orthodox psychologists will be unable to ignore these phenomena when constructing their systems; they will be compelled to examine them and find an explanation for them, which their preconceived ideas will sometimes render it difficult to do" (pp. 1-2).

In addition to some general articles (e.g., Blossom, 1901; Raynes, 1917), there are also excellent introductions to Piper's mediumship in chapters of the following books: *The Cosmic Relations and Immortality* (Holt, 1919), *Science and Future Life* (Hyslop, 1905), *The Survival of Man* (Lodge, 1909), *Modern Spiritualism* (Podmore, 1902), *The Naturalisation of the Supernatural* (Podmore, 1908), and *The Newer Spiritualism* (Podmore, 1911). Another author summarized many different viewpoints in an article about the medium (Erny, 1899).

I have also included several classic séance reports and discussions of mediumistic mentation published in the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*. Two important ones are Richard Hodgson's (1855-1905) "A Record of Observations of Certain Phenomena of Trance" (1892) and "A Further Record of Observations of Certain Phenomena of Trance" (1898).

William James' (1842-1910) initial paper in the *Proceedings of the American Society for Psychical Research*, in which the medium was called "Mrs. P.," is also available (James, 1886), as are his later papers (James, 1890, 1909). There are also seances reported by James H. Hyslop (1854-1920; Hyslop, 1901, 1910), and others (Leaf, 1890; Lodge, 1890; Newbold, 1898; Tanner, 1910).

A remarkable work was Eleanor Sidgwick's (1845-1936) "A Contribution to the Study of the Psychology of Mrs. Piper's Trance Phenomena" (1915), one of the most systematic analyses about work conducted with a single medium ever published. Sidgwick considered such aspects as the spirit controls and relationships to each other, the different stages of trance, and the effects of sitters on the communications.

Several authors discuss concepts and interpretations. Many concluded that Piper showed veridical phenomena (e.g., Lodge, 1890; Hyslop, 1901), as did James when he wrote that "taking everything that I know of Mrs. P. into account, the result is to make me feel as absolutely certain as I am of any personal fact in the world that she knows things in her trances which she cannot possibly have heard in her waking state, and that the definitive philosophy of her trances is yet to be found" (James, 1890, pp. 658-659). One writer commented that Piper produced some errors

and confusions in her statements, but that, nonetheless, her “lucidity is undeniable, I would also say that sometimes she is stunning . . .” (Mangin, 1902, p. 31).

In his second report Hodgson (1898) accepted spirit communication. Sidgwick (1915) described Piper’s trance and manifestations this way: “I think it is probably a state of self-induced hypnosis in which her hypnotic self personates different characters either consciously and deliberately, or unconsciously and believing herself to be the person she represents, and sometimes probably in a state of consciousness intermediate between the two. In the trance state her normal powers transcend in some directions those of her ordinary waking self And further what makes her case of great importance she can obtain, imperfectly and for the most part fragmentarily, telepathic impressions” (p. 330). Others, such as Amy Tanner (b. 1870), believed that the communicators were purely psychologically created secondary personalities and that the rest was explained as being due “to a heightened suggestibility to involuntary betrayals of the sitter, with a modicum of guessing, fishing, and inference” (Tanner, 1910, p. 310).

I have not mentioned all the items of the list of articles and books appearing below. Furthermore, this is not an exhaustive bibliography. But I believe it represents the best of the available sources in the Web today that are available free of charge.

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Hippolyte Léon Denizard Rivail

Better known under the pseudonym of

Allan Kardec

1804-1869

Introductory Note by Psypioneer:

Controversy arose from Aksakof's paper published in *The Spiritualist*, August 1875: "*Researches on the Historical Origin of the Reincarnation Speculations of French Spiritualists*" attacking Kardecism, see Psypioneer November 2008.¹⁵ P. G. Leymarie,¹⁶ editor of *La Revue Spirite* vehemently defends Kardec in a letter which was sent the editor of *The Spiritualist*, published October 8th 1875, page 175: published in full below.

Revue Spirite, was a monthly journal founded in 1858 by Rivail / Kardec, it was the official organ of French Spiritism, upon Kardec's death in 1869, Leymarie became editor.

We will also note in this letter the name M Pierrard; after some research I have been unable to locate this exact name and I am therefore assuming Leymarie is referring to Z. J. Pierart¹⁷ the French Spiritualist - Researcher who founded and edited *La Revue Spiritualiste*, based on the contents of the letter below. Kardec and Pierart were representatives of the two opposing factions Spiritists and Spiritualists of which they openly debated.

Also, Baron Dirckinck Holmfeld (Demark) is referred to: he was an early supporter of Spiritualism in Germany. I noted this letter by Holmfeld in *The British Spiritual Telegraph*, 1859: Evil Spirits.¹⁸ In the same journal he gives us a useful insight to early European spiritual manifestations.¹⁹

At the start of the Kardec series, I stated: - Kardec's book, *Le Livre des Esprits* (*The Spirits' Book*) was first published in 1856, which had marked the beginning of

¹⁵ Vol. 4.11: - <http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP4.11November08..pdf> see also December 08 & January 09 issues relating to Kardec.

¹⁶ Leymarie was imprisoned for a year, allegedly for producing fake spirit photographs. Although Emma Hardinge Britten did not sympathise with Kardec's teachings, she spoke most highly of Leymarie. See: *Nineteenth Century Miracles* pages 88 -89. See also one of the photographs, with comments by Stainton Moses: - <http://www.photographymuseum.com/buguetl.html>

¹⁷ <http://www.answers.com/topic/z-j-pi-rart>

¹⁸ <http://books.google.com/books?ie=ISO-8859-1&output=html&id=hfQDAAAQAAJ&jtp=29>

¹⁹ <http://books.google.com/books?id=tI8RAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA249&vq=Dirckinck+Holmfeld&ie=ISO-8859-1&output=html>

Kardec's Spiritism. I have had some feedback on this date with the general consensus being that the first edition was in fact 1857! Anna Blackwell who translated *The Spirits Book* in 1875 states in her Translator's Preface: - *the "Revised Edition"... brought out by him in 1857.*²⁰ ...but gives no first edition date.

It is interesting to note that Leymarie states the first edition of the *Spirits' Book* is 1855! Who is correct?

THE EDITOR OF THE "REVUE SPIRITE" ON ALLAN KARDEC

SIR,-Having recently glanced over a few of the leading Spiritualist periodicals of your city, I was painfully surprised to find that at this crisis, when we all (whether denominated Spiritists, or Spiritualists) should be united in order to withstand and repel the attacks of our common enemy, the spirit of evil is rife; and this when you are perfectly aware of the overpowering and baneful influence exercised in this country by a certain body of the clergy, when you yourself, on treating the subject of the trial, have spoken of M. Leymarie and Mr. Firman as being the victims of that body, at this crisis, I repeat, you open the columns of your influential paper to all those who seek to depreciate the memory of Allan Kardec by petty slanders and vile insinuations, knowing, as you probably must, from what source they come.²¹ It is truly painful to me to see such erroneous allegations disseminated by the public prints, and you will allow me, sir, I trust, to defend the honoured memory of a most honourable and injured man.

A feeling of respect and veneration towards the departed, and especially towards those whose lives have been consecrated to the accomplishment of all that is good and great, has always been recognised as inherent in the English nation, and well may it be proud of such a noble sentiment. In France it is customary to attack the reputation of every celebrated man whose services have not been tendered to the Church as by law established. Turn him into ridicule, render him contemptible, take away his good name,- nothing is spared for that purpose, neither the use of vile language, nor the repeated and simultaneous attacks of those two great organs of bigotry and Jesuitism, the *Univers* and the *Figaro*.

Have MM. Dirckinck Holmfeld, and Aksakof been acquainted with Allan Kardec? Not in the least. They have simply repeated calumnies to which they ought never to have listened. It is a well-established fact that a man of talent, M. Pierrard, and others, whose

²⁰ Vol. 5.1: - <http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.1January09..pdf>

²¹ We have never printed any slanders or insinuations in this journal. Baron Holmfeld, an honourable gentleman, has published that Allen Kardec was once on the staff of the Jesuitical paper, *L' Univers*, and that he was instigated by the Jesuits. This is a mere statement of *alleged* facts, not made anonymously.-ED.

names it would be useless to mention, take upon themselves the trouble to circulate those falsehoods, which naturally make an impression upon strangers in Paris, who care very little about discovering the truth, and merely repeat what has been communicated to them. We have not the honour of being personally acquainted with M. Pierrard, but would not for worlds do him any wrong, even though, in order to militate against him, we were but to utter the hundredth part of the calumnies broached by *him* against Allan Kardec, both during his lifetime and since he has been consigned to the tomb-Allan Kardec, who was incapable of resenting an injury, and whose only vengeance consisted in saying all the good he could find to say of his most implacable of enemies!

To be adverse to certain studies or to certain doctrines, is perfectly comprehensible and natural. Different men will necessarily seek after the solution of many different problems, and each individual seeker after the truth (or what he considers such) will inevitably magnify the importance of that subject which he is most frequently called upon to investigate: harmony is the result of variety, both in the physical world and in the spiritual. That M. Dirckinck Holmfeld's system of philosophy should be incomprehensible to those whose suffrages he seeks, that it should be incomprehensible to us, what does that signify? Does that prove anything against a scientific and literary reputation, highly prized in Denmark? because he cannot easily explain his theories in the French language, ought we to condemn *a priori*? It would be absurd, and he certainly possesses the right of combining his ideas and giving them publicity (should he find readers); does he not also claim the right to pick up odd bits and scraps of scandal, and have them inserted in the English papers?

That M. Pierrard should write volumes, and influence the minds of many by a vigorous, concise, and logical argumentation, is his duty and his right. We can peruse his works with infinite satisfaction to ourselves, but, certainly, without caring to know what he was or what he did ten or twenty years ago. We have to deal with his *mind* alone, and would never stoop to pry into the private life or actions of any man.

That M. Aksakof, an eminent member of society, it is said, and a pioneer of our cause, should collect the materials necessary for the propagation of the truth; that he should do away with old customs and time-worn scientific prejudices, bravo, M. Aksakof! say we. We are amongst the first to applaud and to thank you; we honour you for what you have done, for what you mean still to do, but cannot demean ourselves by inquiring into your past life.

These gentlemen have leagued together for the purpose of attacking not only the founder of Spiritism, but also the doctrine of reincarnation, and their antipathy to that, subject has certainly led them too far. Allow me to give you a brief and curtailed outline of the biography of Allan Kardec.

Allan Kardec (Léon Hyppolite Denizan Rivail), of an ancient family, distinguished at the bench and at the bar, was one of the most eminent disciples of Pestalozzi, at Yverdon, in Switzerland. Pestalozzi, the great thinker, the profound philosopher, the man of science and progress, who exerted so wide an influence on the reform of education in France and

Germany; Allan Kardec became one of his most distinguished pupils, and subsequently his coadjutor. Italian, English, and German he wrote and spoke perfectly; he was a, good Latin scholar, and has translated several works into the German language, amongst others those of Fénelon, Member of the Academy of Arras in 1831; he received the crown of honour for his memoir-“What System of Studies is most appropriate to the Social and Intellectual Development of our Epoch?”

In an educational establishment, founded by him in the Rue de Sevres, in Paris, he taught, during five years (from 1835 to 1840), chemistry, physics, anatomy, and astronomy. He also gave gratuitous lectures during the same period; he was the inventor of an ingenious method of learning to count, and also of a mnemonic table to fix the dates of historical facts and remarkable discoveries in the memory; he was likewise a member of several learned societies.

M. Rivail was a man of well-established merit; he was very intimate with Alvarez Levi, and elaborated conjointly with him those lectures which were attended by the aristocratic and studious youth of Paris. To M. Rivail we are indebted for: 1st-“A Plan proposed for the Amelioration of Public Instruction” (1828); 2nd-“Theoretical and Practical Course of Arithmetic” (1839); 3rd-“Classical French Grammar” (1831); 4th-“Manual of Examinations for Diplomas of Capacity, and Solutions of Questions and Problems of Arithmetic and Geometry” (1846); 5th-“Grammatical Catechism of the French Language” (1848); 6th-“Programming of the usual Courses of Chemistry, Physics, Astronomy, Physiology (of which he was Professor at the Polymathic Lyceum”); 7th-“Exercises for the Examinations at the Hotel de Ville and Sorbonne, with Dictations upon Orthographic Difficulties” (1849). These various works, still highly esteemed, were in great vogue at the time of their first publication. In 1868, M. Rivail had new editions of them published, and his name was well and deservedly known, not among sensational writers, or contributors to light literature, but to men of letters and men of judgment, who like to see useful knowledge diffused in public and in private.

Madame Amelia Boudet, of a rich and respectable family, brought a dowry of 80,000 fr. to her husband, M. Rivail. At the death of the latter this sum of 80,000 fr. did not pay the inheritance tax (*droits de succession*). It is exceedingly easy to verify the fact. After their marriage, M. and Mme. Rivail lent large sums to friends, who, in consequence of failures and other untoward circumstances, never repaid them. One, the manager of a theatre (Les Folies Dramatiques), had 50,000 fr., the remnant of their fortune, and when this sum was in peril, M. Rivail was obliged to superintend the pecuniary affairs of the theatre, in order to save the last wreck of his fortune. From this very natural circumstance his enemies would fain make us believe that he had been a vendor of theatre cheques. The name of the manager we keep a secret, in accordance with the last wishes of Allan Kardec, who forgave him on his dying bed. After the entire loss of their fortune, Madame Rivail established a young ladies’ boarding school; her husband became bookkeeper to several large establishments, and, amongst others, to the newspaper office of the *Univers*. He thus maintained himself honourably with the produce of his hard earnings in several different houses. What disgrace is it to work for one’s bread? And was he a contributor to the *Univers* because he sat over the account-books two hours every day?

Can one single article be produced proving him to be the contrary of what he was, a lover of freedom, progress, and justice; an enemy to bigotry and superstition in all its forms? How was he interred? "But calumniate, calumniate," says Basil, "something will always come of it." Madame Allan Kardec, now the possessor of a small property, on which she lives, and which came to her as a family bequest, has but a slender income of less than two hundred a year, notwithstanding the unwearied and lifelong labours of her late husband. Since 1840 M. Rivail had always been a member of the jury, and was almost constantly elected foreman. Now it is perfectly well known that in order to be a jurymen one must be in possession of one's political and civil rights, never have undergone any penalty, condemnation, &c. The English reader has too much good sense not to understand that Baron Dirckinck Holmfeld imposed upon the credulity of the truly estimable Mr. William Howitt, when he asked him to publish statements so erroneous in the *Spiritual Magazine*.

Ah, M. Aksakof! you are much to blame. Like M. Dirckinck Holmfeld, you have hearkened to slanderers, and yet ours is a common cause. You should have used your influence to promulgate the doctrine of brotherly love, and instead of that you try to disunite us. The principle of reincarnation is not to your taste; well, refute it calmly, dispassionately, philosophically, without having recourse to such petty means as backbiting and sarcasm. Men of great learning and talent believe in it, and will not change their manner of thinking unless you give them plausible reasons for doing so. Our opponents seem to have read Allan Kardec in a very superficial manner, and their opinion as to the compilation of the *Spirits' Book* is altogether a mistaken one.

M. Rivail began to study animal magnetism in 1830, and continued his investigations with that spirit of impartiality and soundness of judgment which his contradictors seem entirely to want. In 1850 he had already analysed a quantity of documents, and made many interesting observations on that subject; during twenty years he studied the phenomena of magnetism in all its bearings during *twenty years*, you understand!

Mademoiselle Japhet, Mesdames Roger, Bodin, many somnambulists and mediums, such as Mlle. Huet, Mlle. Duffaulz, Mme. Robyno, and hundreds of others were, and are still, very fit subjects of study to a clever mesmerist; each and every one of them has his or her especial qualities and imperfections. Taken separately and individually, the result of a mesmerist's researches would not, perhaps, amount to much; taken collectively, and submitted to the interrogations of a clear-sighted, judicious, and able questioner, who knew how to select the good grain from the bad, who went to work as only an experienced practician can, the precious diamond truth was extracted from the dark mine, and given to the light of day. In 1855 the *Spirits' Book* was first published, many additions were subsequently made to it up to the year 1858, when it appeared in its complete form, such as we have it at present: 100,000 copies of it have been published and translated into all languages. Did Allan Kardec ever assert that the *Spirits' Book* or the *Mediums Book* were from his pen? Never. They are the productions of supernatural beings who made use of the instruments which they deemed most useful for that purpose, to convey to us their instructions.

They selected Allan Kardec, because he was a man of good sense and sound judgment, to preside over the spiritual sittings, exactly as his colleagues chose him on all particular occasions, or in all matters of weight, to be their chairman or their umpire. Allan Kardec has not invented reincarnation, the principle has always subsisted, has always had numerous and eminent adherents in ancient and modern times; has he not repeated it over and over again? and how could M. Aksakof employ an argument so futile and so false?

Why should M. Kardec take more particular notice of Mlle. Japhet than of the other mediums and somnambulists whom he mesmerised, and who all claim their share in the compilation of the *Spirits' Book*? All of them are equally modest and unpretending. M. Leymarie, who ever since the year 1858 has been considered a good writing medium, would find it absurd were he to lay claim to any portion of that work, because, forsooth, the communications from the spirit would come through him. No! such teachings belong of right to those from whom they have emanated, to our elder brethren in the spirit-land, and we should all think ourselves only too happy to have been chosen as instruments for the amelioration of our fellowmen.

Who ever thought of throwing Mlle. Japhet, or any other medium, into the shade? They have all been useful in their way at a given moment, but what would be thought of placing a dozen of their names at the top of each paragraph? Would it not be simply absurd? We regret that M. Aksakof should make use of arguments so puerile; if he would overturn the colossal monument cemented by the labours of a great and noble spirit, let him write a work himself, one which will enlighten our darkness, and "bring us out of the shadow of death into the gates of life," if he can.

Those are likewise mistaken who accuse the Spiritists of being attached to certain rites, dogmas, &c. No; they are men of free independent minds, seekers after the truth, enemies of all deceitfulness and juggling, whose time is spent in studying the phenomena of Spiritualism, and not in flying about the world, like M. Aksakof, to collect a parcel of gossiping tales, and then recount them gravely *Urbi et orbi*. No; they make use of no absurd practices; they have no articles of faith laid down for them as a law; they respect the opinions of others, even when most opposed to theirs, and they honour and esteem the missionaries of truth and science, such men as Wallace, Varley, William Crookes, and Davis.

Allan Kardec has never essayed to depreciate the physical manifestations, nor the researches in physical science; on the contrary, he has always recognised their utility. Do not his works prove it? But he has been perfectly right in warning us against those who would seek to deceive by means of those manifestations. Have we not experienced latterly the necessity of such a warning? And do we live in a country where *even* researches into the phenomena are tolerated? Have we not been condemned for merely speaking of the physical effects produced by Firman, Williams, and Buguet? Talk of America, talk of Russia, where a commission has just been deputed to investigate the science of Spiritualism, and then turn your eyes to this land of bigotry and intolerance, where a prison is ready for those who believe

steadfastly in the possibility of physical intercourse with another sphere of being. Ah, my friends, the moment was well chosen to level your blows at us; you have acted manfully in trying to crush those who were already bruised. Had you wished for more ample information you might have consulted our young media of the present day; intelligent, energetic, and liberal-minded; valiant labourers in the new vineyard; and, in our eyes at least, infinitely superior to many whom you would glorify; for we do not attach an undue importance to mediums like Mdlle. Japhet, Mdlle. Guldenstubbe, Sardou, Vaillandier, &c. And why has your newspaper at Leipsic always refused to insert the refutation of the articles published in it against *reincarnation*?

You speak of Camille Brédif, but you are not probably aware that it was precisely M. Leymarie who, in conjunction with Dr. Houatz, brought him out as a medium, and introduced him into Russian society at Paris. Does he remember a certain *seance* which took place in the Rue d'Isly in the presence of M. Golovine, M. and Mdme. Allan Kardec, and M. and Mdme. Leymarie? Will M. Aksakof kindly ask him if he wishes me to publish an account of that meeting? M. Golovine took some notes at the time, and they are still in his possession. Shall I mention why M. Kardec could not possibly write an article concerning the said medium? why he could tell nothing of what he had seen? Will he have the goodness to answer? It is sometimes well to examine both sides of a question.

M. Rivail by no means despised his family name, which was a very respectable one, but in France it is customary for public writers to sign an assumed name? It was his spirit friends and guides who gave him the one which has now a world-wide reputation. It was likewise his guides who directed him to publish the *Spirits' Book*, and he did so notwithstanding the exiguity of his pecuniary resources. He continued his labours until the clay of his death, which was caused by a disease of the heart (an aneurism). They who have known him intimately can testify to his goodness, gentleness, and purity of life. He lived very unostentatiously, and never refused to those who asked his assistance: generous, simple-minded, and unaffected to the last.

And now, gentle English readers, you who have sent me for my defence before the Tribunal at Paris, witnesses so friendly, and attestations so numerous, let us shun, I pray you, all that has a tendency to disunite us. Let us walk hand in hand, joined by the bonds of brotherly affection; let us not hearken to wolves in sheep's clothing. I am a reincarnationist, and yet, I consider you all as my brethren. If, in England, your spirit friends give you instructions different from those which we daily receive in France, it is that in their world, as in ours, opinions vary. Let us respect those opinions; let us weigh them in the balance, but without giving them more importance than they deserve.

"There is no effect without a cause," and myriads of disembodied souls may think differently with regard to certain questions which to all Spiritualists are not of vital importance, and yet act in harmony together, because the principal points of their belief are identical.

Allan Kardec says, "Spiritism is entirely based on the existence within us of an immaterial principle, on the existence of the soul. He who will not admit that there is an intelligent principle within him, cannot necessarily admit that there is one existing without; and consequently, not admitting the cause, he cannot admit the effect." Like you, dear friends, we believe in God, the Author of all things, all powerful, sovereignly just, good, and of infinite perfection; we believe in His providence, in the existence of the soul after its separation from the body; we likewise believe in its individuality, not considering it as a probability, but as the necessary consequence of the divine attributes. Admitting the existence of the soul, and its survival of the earthly envelope, we think that it would be neither according to the justice, nor according to the goodness of the Almighty that virtue and vice, good and evil, should be treated in a similar manner after death, when we know that during life, the reward and the punishment are seldom distributed with equity. Then, if the souls of the wicked and those of the just are not treated alike, some must be happy, and others unhappy; that is to say, they must be punished or recompensed according to their works.

What we desire (Spiritists and Spiritualists) is to challenge research, to excite curiosity by means of adverse criticisms, and to awaken the attention of the indifferent; rejecting, as unworthy of us, the use of coarse and abusive language-sole arguments of the shallow and unrefined. We ask of our contradictors to prove to us, not by any subterfuge or shift, but by a clear and palpable demonstration-whether mathematical, physical, chemical, mechanical, or physiological-that an intelligent being, capable of the act of thought during his life, becomes incapable of performing that same act after he has quitted his corporeal frame; that the faculty of thought being allowed him, he cannot communicate with the beloved ones he has left on earth; that, having the power of locomotion, he cannot transport himself into our vicinity; that, being at our sides, he cannot commune with us; that, by means of his fluidic envelope, he cannot act upon inert matter; that, endowed with power to act upon inert matter, he cannot influence a hand to write; that, causing a hand to write, he cannot answer our questions, or transmit to us his ideas.

Allan Kardec says (posthumous works, *Revue Spirite*, September, 1869, page 207 to 261). "The right of research and criticism is one which cannot be proscribed: Spiritism cannot expect to ignore it, any more than it can hope to give universal satisfaction. Every one is free to reject or to approve; but we should, at least, have cognisance of what it is that we reject, and what it is that we approve. Now our opponents have but too frequently given proof of their complete ignorance of the most elementary principles of our doctrine, attributing to as sentiments and language in direct opposition to the truth." That article should be read by all Spiritualists, but we are obliged to be brief, and shall add only a few lines from the same *Revue* (page 160): " In the warfare that Spiritism has been forced to sustain, it has always received the suffrages of impartial minds for its moderation; it has never employed retaliation against its adversaries, nor ever returned wrong for wrong.

"Spiritualism is a philosophical doctrine, the tendencies of which are essentially religious, as in every Spiritualistic system of philosophy; and hence it has necessarily many points of contact with the fundamental bases of all religions-the Deity, the human soul, a future life, &c. But nevertheless one cannot call it a religion, for there is no worship, no

rite, no temple, no dogma, nor are there among its adepts any who style themselves priests or high priests, those high-sounding terms having existed only in the imagination of our criticsers. He is a Spiritist who gives his adhesion to the principles of the doctrine, and who conforms his conduct thereto. Every man has an undeniable right to entertain certain opinions, or to uphold certain modes of belief, whether he choose to be a disciple of Voltaire or Descartes, or whether his religious sympathies incline him to be a Jew, a Catholic, a Protestant, a Fourierist, a Saint Simonienist, a Deist, or even a Materialist. The Spiritists look upon liberty of conscience as a natural right, which they allow to others at the same time that they claim it for themselves; they respect the opinions of others, and demand that theirs should be respected in return.

“The natural result of liberty of conscience will be the free right of research in matters of faith. Spiritism opposes the principle of *blind faith*, because it imposes the necessity of abdicating one's own judgment, and consequently cannot take deep root in the mind. Hence, among the number of its maxims we find the following one:- ‘No system of belief is built on firm foundations which dares not support the investigations of reason throughout all the revolutions of humanity.’

“In accordance with its principles, it imposes no restraint, uses no coercion, and desires no other followers but those who come to it voluntarily and from a sentiment of pure conviction; it gives the exposition of its tenets, and leaves those free to embrace them who will.”

At page 307 in the *Review* of 1869 Allan Kardec says: “As to all feelings of envy and jealousy on the part of others, we possess an infallible means for rendering them innocuous. Let us endeavour to develop our intelligence, to improve our hearts and minds. Let us vie with others in the practice of good works, in the exercise of charity and self-sacrifice. Let the motto of ‘Brotherly love’ be inscribed on our banner, and let the search after truth be the aim of our existence. Imbued with the like sentiments, we can defy the raillery of our contradictors and the ill-will of our enemies. Should we go astray, let us acknowledge our error, and turn from it: by observing strictly the laws of charity and self-sacrifice, by avoiding every sentiment of envy and jealousy, we are sure of keeping in the right path. These must be our principles; are they not the bonds of unity which should draw together all ‘men of good will upon earth,’ whereas egotism and deceitfulness would irrevocably separate them.”

Spiritualists and Spiritists of all countries, let us reflect upon those memorable words.

P. G. LEYMARIE.

Rue de Lille, Paris.

Allan Kardec and Spiritism will continue in the April issue.

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