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TRANSFIGURATION
Continuing our series on INFRA-RED PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE PHYSICAL MEDIUMS

Transfiguration mediumship is a rare form of physical mediumship and in recent years, the most famous medium to produce such phenomenon was Queenie Nixon. But in February 1989 at the Royal Hospital, Chesterfield in Derbyshire, Queenie passed; she was 71 years old. Although the number of mediums to produce such phenomena\(^1\) is small, some have been willing for researchers to photograph their mediumship. A skeptical view of transfiguration mediumship would be that with practice, it would be easy to manipulate the face, control the lighting to use the shadows to the medium’s advantage, and by repositioning themselves from time to time, manipulate the light to create moustaches, beards etc.

There are numerous photographs of Queenie’s transfigurations available, which allegedly show the ectoplasmic mask/mould built upon her face. I was acquainted with Queenie in the 1970’s mostly at the Arthur Findlay College; she carried her photographs around with her in a small album and was very proud of them. Some of these photographs are mentioned in her *Psychic News* obituary on February 25, 1989; one of these photographs is particularly detailed:

In 1967 a university trained technician, D. M. Hosley, captured infra-red photographs of Queenie’s transfigurations.

The features of the medium’s guide, Sister Edith, were separate from the medium’s face, he testified and…Queenie’s black gown had vanished.

Through the medium wore a white blouse without sleeves under the gown, Mr Hosley told PN:

“It did not take long after seeing the enlargement to work out it was Sister Edith. Even the white cuffs, indicative of a religious order, are fully present”

The technician continued, “A definite ectoplasmic cloud can be seen around her face.”

I believe the set of photographs referred to above were taken by Hosley at Batley Carr, West Yorkshire, in September 1967. At this time, Hosley was a technician in the psychology department of the

\(^1\) We can note transfiguration with Miss Besinnet, see Psypioneer Volume 6, No.3:— *Miss Besinnet’s Mediumship by Mrs. Hewat Mckenzie*, page 79. Part of Ada Maud Besinnet Roche (1890-1936) – Leslie Price and Paul J. Gaunt, pages 61-80:—http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.3March2010.pdf
University of Leeds. Her album is now an exhibit at the Britten Memorial Museum at Stansted Hall. Today there are still a few demonstrating transfiguration mediums: note the photograph of the British medium Jean Skinner.²

In the last issue, we featured Leon Isaacs. It was noted he was the honorary photographer to the International Institute for Psychical Research and he was responsible for some of the first infra-red film of séance happenings. For this, Isaacs invented and manufactured all his own apparatus. It was at the International Institute, Isaacs photographed the transfiguration medium Mrs E. F. Bullock; unfortunately it appears the film has not survived.

Like Queenie Nixon, there is little biographical information on Mrs. Elizabeth Frances Bullock,³ except for reports on her séances during the 1930’s – 1940’s. We can note in the article below that by the early 1950’s her public platform work had ended. The article below appeared in the Two Worlds, January 26, 1952 p, 42, in their series “Notable Mediums,” though the title showing her initial as L. is incorrect:

![Mrs. L. Bullock of Manchester](image)

**Mrs. L. Bullock of Manchester**

ONE of the best known mediums in the Spiritualist Movement is Mrs. Bullock of Manchester. Recently Mrs. Bullock’s health has largely confined her to her own domicile; but for a number of years she was a familiar figure on Spiritualist platforms over a wide area, particularly in connection with her rare and baffling form of mediumship — transfiguration.

I can remember, some years ago, taking a well-known artist to a demonstration by Mrs. Bullock in Edinburgh Psychic College. Later describing his experience to some of his friends in a club in Edinburgh, Mr. John Duncan, R.S.A., said his dominating sensation was one of “fear.” He knew little

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³ Thanks are due to Lis Warwood for searching the family background:—Elizabeth Frances SEDDON married William Mason BULLOCK Sep Q 1909 in Bucklow District (8a 401, Bucklow district is on the borders of Cheshire and Lancashire).

Elizabeth Frances BULLOCK died Dec Q 1965 (Manchester 10e 239) at age 79. There is record of a will for her in the National Probate Calender (Index of Wills and Administrations).

William Mason BULLOCK was born Dec Q 1882 (Macclesfield 8a 133), the son of George Bullock and his wife Ellen (possibly Sarah Ellen). William M Bullock died age 83 in 1965 (Dec Q 1965 Manchester 10e 57).
or nothing about psychic phenomena, and this experience was entirely new to him. He had studied the medium’s face and head with the expert observation of a professional figure painter. He could have drawn her physiognomy from memory; yet as he watched the demonstration he saw the contours of her head and face definitely change. He could not understand it.

Mrs. Bullock has been described as a “woman of a thousand faces.” Thousands of people have watched the extraordinary change in her features, and many of them have recognised the face taking on the familiar lineaments of some relative or friend. Her mediumship is not a matter of a few isolated demonstrations of this kind; it is based on almost daily experience over many years. Amongst the facial reconstructions which have been witnessed have been those presenting the familiar features of W. E. Gladstone and, recently, George Bernard Shaw.

A BEREAIMENT AND A MISSION

Mrs. Bullock’s entry into physical mediumship of this special kind was by the way of a common and very human experience. Some 27 years ago she lost two young children, one a boy of two and a half years, who with his little sister died from an infectious disease. The parents were desolated. Mrs. Bullock felt herself unable to face life bereft of the two children. One of her friends suggested to her that she might get some comfort from visiting the local Spiritualist Church. She knew nothing about Spiritualism or communication. The Church was a bare little building with white-washed walls, and comfortless wooden seats, but Mrs. Bullock owed revived hope and courage to the little woman who was the demonstrating medium. The latter described the little boy, gave his pet name of “Chubby,” and convinced Mrs. Bullock of the actuality of his survival in another sphere.

The medium sensed Mrs. Bullock’s grief-stricken state of mind and privately made a very remarkable suggestion. She knew, she said, that Mrs. Bullock’s arms ached to hold the child once more. If she sat quietly after the household had retired and prayed to God,

4 Lis Warwood comments:— The article suggests that Elizabeth F Bullock became involved some 27 years earlier (so circa 1925) after “she lost two young children, one a boy of two and a half years, who with his little sister died from an infectious disease.”

So far, in my searches, I find that Elizabeth F Seddon and William M Bullock had only 3 children:

1. – Kathleen Mary Bullock b. Dec Q 1910 (Hayfield 7b 875). She does not appear to die in childhood.
2. – Edgar Mason Bullock b. Mar Q 1916 (Hayfield 7b 1501). He died Sep Q 1917 (Hayfield 7b 693) at about 18 months old.
3. – William W Bullock b. Sep Q 1920 (Hayfield 7b 1789). It is possible William W died before reaching the age of 1 (Deaths Mar Q Hayfield 7b 1018: William W age 0)

Perhaps the story in Two World is a distortion of the true one. Certainly she appears to have lost 2 children, however, both were male children and they do not die at the same time, eg. Edgar in 1917, and William in 1921.
she told her this aching void would be removed. Mrs. Bullock followed her advice and at midnight sat alone, in prayerful silence, and had the distinct sensation of an unseen child resting on her knees.

Inevitably Mrs. Bullock was interested in this strange process of communication. She attended a circle carried on by a friend, at which further evidence of its reality was received. Then the unseen workers began to prepare her for her special mission. She had some remarkable and sometimes disagreeable experiences. She used to wake up in the night feeling that her head and face did not belong to her. She could even feel that her teeth had somehow moved and become different. All this made her very nervous. Actually those on the other side were preparing her for transfiguration phenomena and her special mission.

The first transfiguration witnessed by others, came at one of the ordinary seances she was attending, when she felt extraordinarily drowsy, and the others in the circle noted the alteration in her appearance. Progress was thereafter rapid and continuous, and she has given transfiguration demonstrations for over twenty years. A film was made of this remarkable super-normal process at the International Institute of Psychic Science.

Latterly, Mrs. Bullock, who has carried on her own domestic circle for 20 years, has suffered from arthritis, but rather that give up the sittings she has at times had her friends round her bedside, carrying on the séance there.

HEALING

She has had some outstanding experiences of the power of healing being exercised in absence. Her guide for healing is known as Rainbow. A notable case of healing by spiritual help was when the daughter of a neighbour, suffering from valvular affection of the heart, collapsed after a hemorrhage. Her doctor announced that she could only live for a few hours. When Mrs. Bullock went to see her she was unconscious and her face was blue owing to a surge of blood flooding the lungs. She stayed by her for half-an-hour and the young woman fell asleep. From that point she made steady and rapid improvement, and in the subsequent two years regained her health. This remarkable evidence of healing power was fully described in Two Worlds on September 3rd, 1949.

SHAW’S VOICE

The transfiguration episode in which George Bernard Shaw appeared was in the presence of Mr. Percy Wilson, who said that what impressed him most was the intonation of the voice. The communicant stated on that occasion that he found this process an easy instrument of manifestation.

Mrs. Bullock was born in Manchester. Her husband, who is a Manchester businessman, has also had from time to time remarkable experiences and communications from friends who have passed over. In one instance a golfing friend of
Mellor, where he had once resided, materialised at his bedside and gave him details of his passing.\textsuperscript{5}

This was a particularly robust man, in the prime of life, but he stated that he had passed out in an instant, “I was waving good-bye to my friends and then I was here.” Mr. Bullock was inclined to doubt this communication as he had not heard of his friend’s sudden death and could not think of him as having passed over. But the details were fully confirmed soon afterwards when he had a chance meeting with a friend who was with him at the time of the heart attack to which he succumbed.

A famous actor who has witnessed Mrs. Bullock’s phenomena when Tsinglee, the transfiguration control manifested, said that with all the resources of elaborate make-up at his disposal he could not have produced such a realistic Chinese figure as he saw at the séance.

J.W.H.

\textsuperscript{5} Lis Warwood concludes:

\section*{Census Records}

\textbf{1891:} James E Seddon, wife Mary and daughters Amy A (9) and Elizabeth F (5) residing 94 Temperance Street Ardwick, Lancashire. Records suggests Elizabeth born Manchester, Ardwick. Father a Railway Signalman.

\textbf{1891:} George Bullock, wife Ellen and son William M (9) residing in Chorley, Cheshire. Father a Cheese Factor born Wincle, Cheshire.

\textbf{1901:} Elizabeth Frances Seddon (15) Confectioners worker, and her elder sister Amy (20) are boarders in the household of George Hill, a Railway Carter, residing 30 Ancoats Grove North, Manchester.

\textbf{1911:} William Mason Bullock (28) and Frances Elizabeth (25), and daughter Kathleen Mary (6 mths) residing 1 Rose Lea, Longhurst Lane, Mellor, Derbyshire (this is in the Hayfield Registration District). William is recorded as being a Shipping Clerk.

You will have noticed the comment Mr Bullock “also had from time to time remarkable experiences and communications from friends who have passed over. In one instance a golfing friend of Mellor, where he had once resided, materialised at his bedside and gave him details of his passing.”

Elizabeth Frances and her husband William Bullock certainly did live in Mellor for at least 10 years and it was where their children were born and two died. Presumably they moved to Manchester after 1921.
In 1934 Mrs. Dawson Scott, Mr. J. Arthur Findlay and Mr. Shaw Desmond founded The International Institute for Psychical Research (IIPR). Initially its séance rooms, laboratory etc., was established at 16, Queensberry Place, London S.W.7., the London Spiritualist Alliance (LSA). Further, as announced in Light, on August 17, 1934 page 439:

The International Institute for Psychical Research has secured premises at 21, Harrington Road, South Kensington, S.W.7. They consist of a seance room, office, dark room, workshop and washing room. Alterations are being made to fit the premises for the Society’s work. The services of Miss May Carter have been secured for the Secretarial post. The Society hope to begin activities at an early date.

Later in 1939, the IIRP amalgamated with the British College of Psychic Science (BCPS), forming the International Institute for Psychic Investigation (IPI). Numerous articles tend to use one of these photographs; however, the articles I have checked give no indication as to their origin. This may suggest these are the only photographs, and probably taken by Leon Isaacs as part of the IIPR experiments published below.

This set of photographs were published in the Two Worlds April 15, 1950 (p662-663) “Spirit Guides, Past and Present, of Mediums, Healers and Speaker”

Mrs. Catharine Amy Dawson Scott (married Dr. Horatio Scott and had two sons and one daughter), died on November 5th, 1934. She was founder of the Survival League in 1919, and one of the founders of the IIRP and was Hon. Secretary, but resigned before her death.

See Psypioneer Volume 7, No.2:— Whatever happened to the British College? - Psychic Science & The International Institute for Psychic Investigation (IPI), pages 35-46:—
NEW RESEARCH METHOD

*Light:*—\(^8\)

INFRA-RED CINEMA FILM OF MRS. BULLOCK’S TRANSFIGURATIONS

PSYCHICAL Research history was made last Friday (February 22nd), at the International Institute for Psychical Research, London, by the taking of an infra-red cinema film of the transfigurations of Mrs. Bullock, the Manchester Medium.

In the presence of a small group (a doctor, a physicist, a chemist, the Research Officer and two ladies), the Medium passed into trance. Her face was illuminated by four powerful reflectors enclosed in light-tight metal boxes behind infra-red filters. The visible light, however, was so dim that Mr. Leon Isaacs, the honorary photographer of the Institute, standing two yards away behind the cine-camera, could only see a red blur and had to be given, for start and stop, signals by the Research Officer,\(^9\) who was peering into the Medium’s face. At the rate of 24 exposures per second, the camera recorded the changing of Mrs. Bullock’s face into that of a Chinaman.

The Chinaman, apparently, was disconcerted by something. He disappeared soon and “Mooney,” an African control, came and asked that the Medium’s earrings should be removed, as the Chinaman dislikes wearing them. The request was complied with and the Chinaman came back.

There were other unidentified facial representations which are available for study. Two infra-red and two ultra-violet “stills” were also taken.

The only complaint made by “Mooney” was about the whirring of the cine-camera, which caused the Medium discomfort, but she stood the trying moments with admirable courage.

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\(^8\) *Light*, February 28, 1935 page 138.

\(^9\) *Light* June 15, 1934 page 359:—Dr. Nandor Fodor has been elected Research Officer of the International Institute for Psychical Research. The election leaves Dr. Fodor’s position as Assistant Editor of *Light* unaffected. Several lines of investigation are being initiated at the Institute’s Laboratory at 16 Queensberry Place, S.W. 7., in which the new Research Officer, who takes the place of Professor Fraser-Harris, will be assisted by well-known men of science. Fodor became Assistant Editor of *Light*, in issue October 13, 1933.
The end piece of the film was immediately cut off for a trial development. The pictures came up sharp and distinct. Mr. Isaacs had no hesitation in declaring that the cinema record was quite successful. It will stand more than life-size projection, promising thereby an excellent chance for a searching study.

THE CHINAMAN’S “MOUSTACHE”

On the Thursday night previous to the taking of the infra-red cine-film (which has received unusual publicity in the daily press), Mrs. Bullock gave a demonstration of her powers to a large gathering at the International Institute. The unusual feature of this demonstration was that, after white light had been restored, the Medium stood up and, in full illumination, changed into the same Chinese cast which was seen several times in red light. A distinctive feature of the red-light seance was the appearance of markings on the Medium’s face which gave a definite impression of a moustache.

These moustache markings impressed the observers as the result of a supreme mastery over light and shade effect. Actually, they were more. The Research Officer remarked loudly, towards the end of Thursday night’s demonstration, that he had seen a shaft of shimmering light cascading down the Medium’s face when the moustache of “Conan Doyle” was seen.10

There is now definite proof in the possession of the Institute that this light did not spring from the lamp-box. One of the “stills” taken on the following day in infra-red light (while the Medium was sitting without her lamp-box) unexpectedly disclosed, on enlargement, a moustache on the face of a Chinaman, hanging down almost to the bottom of the chin. The moustache is obviously not of hair, and is only seen on the left side of the face. The right side was illuminated direct and the moustache, being apparently transparent, is lost.

The Medium was all the time under the close scrutiny of six pairs of eyes. Only one sitter, a physicist, thought he saw the moustache-markings for a second or two, so it appears that the successful taking of the photograph was entirely due to a fortunate angle of refraction. The photograph is quite clear and unmistakable. The ultra-violet “stills” have also yielded very interesting results.

10 It was reported in *Psychic News*, front page April 17, 1943 that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir Oliver Lodge and former S.N.U., President Frank Blake, all transfigured with Doyle speaking in his earthly voice at a Mrs. Bullock séance held at Drummond St, S.N.U. Church, Wolverhampton (now situated at 67, Waterloo Rd, WV1 4QU).
Two weeks later, it was further reported:

TRANSFIGURATION
Light:—\(^{11}\)

RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION AT THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE

In an address to the Manchester Central Spiritualist Church last Sunday (March 10th), at the Deansgate Picture Theatre, Dr. Nandor Fodor, Hon. Research Officer of the International Institute for Psychical Research, gave a summary of the results so far arrived at in the study of Mrs. Bullock’s transfigurations. The summary was cautiously worded, but it contains some important admissions.

“Does Mrs. Bullock’s face change,” Dr. Fodor queried, “while she is in trance, or do the onlookers suffer from an illusion due to the deceptive nature of red light? The answer is that while the sitters certainly may suffer from illusions in making observations in red light, Mrs. Bullock’s face unquestionably changes. There is 200 feet of infra-red cinema film still waiting for a close examination, square by square, and a number of infra-red and ultra-violet flashlight photographs to prove it.

“The onlookers, however, are often quite positive that they see a moustache, or a beard, a ring in the nose or a wound on the forehead. I must confess that I, myself, sitting quite close and having the best possible chances of observation, have repeatedly rubbed my eyes. I saw things which I put down as impossible. I saw the moustache and beard; I saw the ring in the nose and the wound on the forehead; yet I knew they were not real, as they could not be. In bewilderment I fell back on the only possible explanation—a supreme mastery over light and shade effects.

SHAFT OF SHIMMERING LIGHT

“At the meeting at the International Institute, on February 21st, I progressed a step further. I saw a shaft of shimmering light appear on her face and form into the transparent drooping moustache of someone claimed to be Conan Doyle. Was this light, cascading down at the side of the Medium's face, ectoplasm that mysterious protoplasmic substance which, as the Medium claims, issues from her body and moulds earthly likenesses of the dead over her face?\(^{12}\)

\(^{11}\) Light, March 14, 1935 page 170.

\(^{12}\) Light, June 27, 1935 page 411:—— TRANSFIGURATION DRAMA. THE dramatic appearance of a shaft of shimmering light like a transparent curtain on the right side of Mrs. Bullock’s face during a transfiguration demonstration at the International Institute for Psychical Research, was described to a very interested audience at the British College of Psychic Science last Wednesday (June 19th) in a lantern lecture by Dr. Nandor Fodor. The next impression was an enormous drooping moustache, which was seen by others before Dr. Fodor spoke. The shaft of light which originated the impression had a direction of its own, and appeared to move downwards. That is, it did not seem to come from the Medium’s light box.

“If this shaft of light was an ectoplasmic phenomenon,” Dr. Fodor continued, “and arose by the reflection of visible red rays from something resembling a cloud of material particles, such a cloud, very
“There is not much what I can definitely say. Certain it is that on one of the earlier infra-red flashlight photographs, taken at the time of Mrs. Bullock’s first visit to the Institute, there is a white cloud streaming up towards her face, an effect which is due to no fault in the plate or development (the Institute has a professional photographer of 19 years’ experience on its staff) and which is entirely absent from the black background of the other photograph taken at the same time.

“The ultra-violet plates exposed on February 22nd also reveal what I am tempted to describe as masses of alien matter over certain parts of her face. The representation was said to be a Zulu. The alien matter may be construed as two tufts of hair beside the lower lip and an irregular growth on the chin. The investigation is, therefore, promising, and worth pursuing, particularly as regards the purely physiognomical aspect of her transformations. The two Chinese faces obtained by infra-red are remarkable. But not until we have obtained cumulative and improved evidence of the presence of ectoplasm can, for science, the question of their supernormality be definitely established.

“I wish to add that Mrs. Bullock deserves the highest commendation for the courage and splendid spirit displayed in the sittings given at the International Institute. She realises the necessity of exact tests if the demonstrations of her psychic powers are to be of any use to Psychical Research. She is convinced that she will emerge with a case proven to the hilt. If that be the case, she will have done a signal service to science.”

Thirty years later Fodor records the story in much finer detail, in his *Between Two Worlds*:\textsuperscript{13}

**She Became a Chinaman**

Our dictionaries define transfiguration as a change of form or outward appearance, and quote from the Gospels the scene on the mountain where Christ’s face “did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as light.” (Matthew 17.2) The scene was witnessed by Peter, John and James; they saw Moses and Elias next to Jesus and were filled with exaltation.

Ever since, transfiguration implies a change of countenance, but subsequent ages have failed to witness a similar miracle. The only one that somewhat approaches it comes from witnesses of Ramakrishna's transfiguration. The account is given by Romain Rolland.\textsuperscript{14} It was the culmination of Ramakrishna’s years of burning desire to see the Divine Mother.

\textsuperscript{13} Parker Publishing Company, Inc. N.Y., 1964 pages 85-89

\textsuperscript{14} *Prophets of the New India*, Cassell & Co., Ltd., London, 1930.
From that moment his days and nights were passed in the continual presence of his Beloved. Their intercourse was uninterrupted like the flow of the river. Eventually he was identified with Her, and gradually the radiance of his inner vision became outwardly manifest. Other people seeing him saw what he saw. Through his body as through a window appeared the bodies of the gods. Mathur Babu, the son-in-law of the foundress of the temple and the master of the place, was sitting one day in his room opposite Ramakrishna’s. Unobserved, he watched him pacing up and down on his balcony. Suddenly he uttered a cry, for he saw him alternately in the form of Shiva as he walked in one direction, and of the Mother as he turned and walked in the opposite direction.

Transfiguration was always the last stage of the successive visions of this great Hindu prophet. Rolland writes:

First he saw the figures outside himself, then they vanished within himself, finally he became them himself. This ardent creative act is striking, but was natural to one of his outstanding plastic genius. As soon as he visualized a thought, his vision became incarnate.

No better introduction can be found to a discussion of transfiguration as it is understood in parapsychology. It no longer means an ambition to reach the gods but it does involve a plastic genius for assuming the bodily characteristics of deceased people in order to put them in contact with the living. It is a form of mediumship that in earlier years was very popular in England. Its best exponent was Mrs. E. F. Bullock of Levenshulme, Manchester, who in an illumination of red light thrown into her face, used to change into a Chinaman. She was in trance, of course, and the Chinaman was one of her spirit-guides and acted as a go-between for the audience. The transfiguration of Mrs. Bullock’s face was said to be due to a thin cloud of “ectoplasm” that her body emitted and the red light was said to be necessary because this emanation was too sensitive to white light.

I first saw Mrs. Bullock’s demonstration in the summer of 1934 at a meeting of the Great Metropolitan Spiritualist Association in London. I sat at a distance of about 15 feet and my impression was that the lower part of her face became an amorphous mass, that there was an ebb and flow over her face and that new features were forming in place of her normal ones. I was not allowed to leave my seat and approach her for a clearer view.

I invited her to a demonstration before the International Institute for Psychical Research for the purpose of taking infra-red flashlight photographs of her facial transformations. The demonstration proved to be highly successful. Standing on the platform against a black background in a black surplice (which left only her head and hands visible) in front of a 25- watt red lamp shining in her face, Mrs. Bullock showed a series of remarkable changes of countenance. There was a Chinaman, a Japanese girl, a bearded man, another one with a moustache, an alleged African with a ring in the nose, a man fallen in action during the war with a circular wound in the forehead and several
others, and the representations were so impressive that they called forth exclamations of wonder from the audience.

The weakness of the demonstration was that the light source used by Mrs. Bullock could cast strange shadows that could be considerably varied by the movement of her head and the play of her facial muscles. She happened to have a very flexible set of features and it was obvious that with due practice her face could easily assume a Chinese cast. Joey Brown had sent me a series of photographs on which he had done the same without any claim to mediumship or ectoplasmic assistance.

However, the study of the light and shade effects and the belief that she was an intermediary for spirit communication alone promised sufficient rewards for a close investigation.

On this occasion I was sitting at a distance of two yards from the medium. I saw nothing that would have suggested ectoplasm or other alien matter. But I saw a moustache. There were shouts from the audience when it appeared. It was formed, I could well see, by the shadow cast by the pursing of her upper lip. I saw a beard too. It was no more substantial than the moustache. The wrinkles of Mrs. Bullock’s neck shimmered in the red light and seemed to flow straight from the raised chin. The ring in the nose of the African was represented by a circular depression of the skin from nose downward, the wound on the forehead by a round swelling.

It was a highly dramatic performance. Leon M. Lion, the well-known theatrical producer, was my guest at the demonstration, and paid Mrs. Bullock the compliment: “Whatever the cause, we must pay tribute to the effect.”

The camera made Mrs. Bullock nervous. We could only take four photographs. The Chinaman was excellent. The audience did not imagine the Chinese cast. It was there. There was a vapor around the right hand which followed the shape of the hand and appeared to start 1/8 inch away from the surface. Mr. Leon Isaac, the Institute’s official photographer, could not account for it photographically. He was emphatic that it was not due to a photographic defect.

The other three photographs were less impressive. The moustache was clearly not a moustache but I could see how, with red illumination from underneath, it could suggest one. There was a problem though in the fourth picture. It was of “Moonie,” an African spirit-guide. It showed a curious surging white cloud over the black surplice under the neck. This cloud was not seen during the demonstration, is absent from all other photographs and was not due to a fault in the plate or process of development. Could it have been “ectoplasm”?

The experiments clearly were worth continuing. The following day we sat for our first infra-red cinema picture and for infra-red and ultra-violet “stills.” Something unusual happened during the demonstration. I called attention to a shaft of shimmering light that appeared, like a transparent curtain, on the right-hand side of Mrs. Bullock’s face. The
next impression was an enormous drooping moustache which instantly suggested the picture of Arthur Conan Doyle. The moustache was seen by others before I spoke. Hence, it could not have been an illusion on my part alone. The shaft of light which originated the impression had a direction of its own, and appeared to move downward. That is to say, it did not come from the light box.

Now we had a problem again: was the shaft of light an ectoplasmic phenomenon, seen by a reflection of visible red rays from a cloud of material particles? Would it be transparent to the longer wave-length employed for the flash exposure? In that case it could not be recorded on a photograph by infra-red. The moustache could have been there, but was absent as far as a photographic record was concerned.

This was a speculation in favor of the medium because, as we soon found out, the change of her features did not require ectoplasm. After white light had been restored Mrs. Bullock changed into a Chinaman in full visibility. The effect was very striking and it spoke well for her honesty, suggesting that her features could be controlled by both conscious and unconscious efforts and that the conscious change did not in the least dispose of the psychological problems presented by her religious devotion and mediumistic efforts.

One of our scientists, Mr. W. T. L. Becker, Managing Director of Color Photographs, Ltd. and a member of our Council, was asked for a statement of what he observed. This is what he said:

Changes began and the medium’s face appeared to be plastic as if it were dough being kneaded by invisible hands; alternatively, there may have been a rippling of the facial muscles under the skin, such as one notices under the skin of a tiger or a cat about to pounce on prey. The lips remained parted by approximately the same distance, whilst the upper lip lengthened and became less fleshy or thinner. I had an impression of pulsation of the lips or alteration from thick to thin and also of ripple as of smoke running vertically up and down from the upper lip to nose and sometimes also from lower lip to chin, just prior to some of the important changes in configuration. After this preliminary kneading, the eyebrows rose sharply, the eyes slanted, and the Chinese face arrived, the transformation being complete in a few seconds: as if the tiger suddenly had sprung. The whole of the change was utterly remote from any conception of conscious or unconscious grimace. I saw no lines or wrinkles or contraction of specific group of muscles but simply a kneading or plasticity of the whole. It may be that a grimace in slow motion would give a similar effect, but it is quite outside normal experience.

Our physicist adviser, J. B. Hoper, M.Sc., stated of the appearance of the Chinaman:

The Chinese face appeared as the first of the three or four definite forms produced during the demonstration. This came very suddenly, the eyes, eyebrows, cheeks and chin changing simultaneously. The face appeared to be
that of an old man, very much wrinkled, especially about the chin. The chin had that wizened form reminding one of a monkey, the shape of the lips adding to this illusion. Nevertheless, the figure produced was that of a Chinese, and a very good representation, too.

Both this Chinaman and another one were successfully photographed by infra-red. Indeed, the picture of the second Chinaman gave us a rare thrill. On the right side of the face a long, wide, straight-cut moustache appeared to be hanging. Unhappily, on closer examination and comparison with the first infra-red still photograph taken that afternoon the moustache turned out to be the collar of the medium’s dress, escaping from the black surplice and touching the Chinaman’s chin at a critical point. The effect was so deceptive that I wondered whether it was purely accidental or whether, in answer to our desire to photograph the moustache, the medium’s unconscious produced, by the most economical means, the result we hoped for.

The ultra-violet “stills” turned out to be puzzling, too. In the ghastly greenish-blue fluorescent light nothing was visible in the medium’s lap or over her face, yet the photograph of her Zulu spirit-guide showed markings that indicated a flattened nose, tufts of hair over the lips and the mockery of a beard. No explanation was forthcoming for these strange effects. The light was striking Mrs. Bullock full in the face and she could have had no knowledge how things would photograph in ultra-violet light. But fluorescence plays strange tricks. We hoped to settle our problems by an infra-red cinema film. Two days later we shot it successfully by improved lighting and with a noiseless cine-camera.

The film was 400 feet long. I showed it at the Oslo Psychical Research Congress in August 1936. It made quite an impression as far as the facial changes were concerned, but it showed no alien matter on her face. (We made her wash it and rub it with a rough towel before the experiment.)

The following day we photographed the Chinaman again. The result was odd. His nose was sharp and unmoved, but the skin of the face was in a heaving, rippling movement. We did have results for our labour but not enough to settle the problem of transfiguration. However, I have elicited one piece of information which seemed to bear, quite definitely, on a biological mystery. Mrs. Bullock told me that during the transfiguration process she had the positive sensation of a hand massaging her womb. This had lent support to a finding that has rarely been publicized in parapsychological research: that the medium draws on her sexual energies for the production of such phenomena, that she acts as if she actually were to give “birth” to the phantoms that lead researchers on such a heart-breaking chase.

——§——
DID MR WALLACE JOIN THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY?

Mr Alfred Russel Wallace is a pioneer of the first importance,15 the most eminent scientist to identify with the Spiritualist Movement, though his interest was in the phenomena and philosophy, rather than the new religion.

The Alfred Russel Wallace page conducted by Dr Charles Smith contains an immense amount of material by and about Wallace, including a monograph Alfred R. Wallace; Evolution of an Evolutionist which clarifies how he became a Spiritualist, and supersedes other biographical treatments.16

Events around the 2013 centenary of his passing are being reported on the Wallace News Blog of Dr George Beccaloni of the Natural History Museum.17

A recent discussion of Wallace is contained in Jeffrey Lavoie’s book The Theosophical Society, the History of a Spiritualist Movement (2012) which we featured in our previous issue. The author expresses doubt concerning Wallace’s membership of the T.S. and his letter to Madame Blavatsky praising her book Isis Unveiled (1877). Lavoie acknowledges that previous authors have generally accepted that Wallace was a T.S. member as claimed. But he notes; “It is curious that out of the multiple Wallace biographies used in compiling this section, none of them associated Wallace with the Theosophical Society, but some did note his belief in the irrationality of Theosophy. Further Wallace’s autobiography never mentioned any affiliation with the Society.” (p.331-2).


16 The Alfred Russel Wallace Page:—http://people.wku.edu/charles.smith/index1.htm

17 The Alfred Russel Wallace Website:—http://wallacefund.info/news_and_views
Lavoie therefore concludes that the membership is questionable. However just before his book was published, the early members’ register for the T.S. became commercially available, and I am informed by Paul Johnson that it includes Wallace for 1876, along with such well known figures as Stainton Moses and General Doubleday.

Why would Wallace join the T.S.? The TS president Henry Olcott was a long-time Spiritualist who had just published *People from the Other World*, a report of investigations, dedicated to Wallace and Crookes, which caused Wallace to write appreciatively to Olcott in 1875 (Lavoie, p 331). Emma Hardinge Britten was a founder member, whose oratory Wallace praised in his work on *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism* (three essays collected in 1875). Another founder was C.C. Massey, a leading light in the British National Association of Spiritualists. Madame Blavatsky, the T.S. corresponding secretary was known for writing letters to the press in defence of Spiritualism. The launch of the new society had been noted, for example, in Human Nature April 1876, which reprinted the presidential address by Olcott, and mentioned that Mrs Britten was a councilor.

It would not be true to suggest all was unity in Spiritualism; there were plenty of tensions. But certainly the cold war which was to emerge between Theosophy and Spiritualism, and between Spiritualism and Psychical Research, lay in the future.

As for the letter of appreciation which Wallace wrote to Blavatsky when she sent him the two big volumes of *Isis Unveiled*, Lavoie suggests a simple reason (p.330) – he was politely acknowledging the gift. Blavatsky herself quoted from this Wallace letter in one of her own articles *The Knout* which appeared in Religio-Philosophical Journal March 16 1878, and is reprinted in Blavatsky Collected Writings Vol. 1 (see p. 323). What is slightly surprising is that in her letter to Wallace sending him *Isis* she did not mention his membership of the T.S. (Her letter to him appears in the first volume of her Collected Letters.)

Lavoie reprints the Wallace letter of thanks as it appeared in *The Theosophist* April 1906. Very likely it was in the Adyar archives at that time. Hopefully it remains there, and can be reproduced in time for the Wallace centenary. A message has been sent to Adyar

LP.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE - CHANGE OF CONFERENCE DATE

Dear Colleagues,

There has been a change of date for our conference ‘Psychical Research in the History of Medicine and the Sciences’, which was originally scheduled for September 2012. Please note that the new and definite date is 26-27 January 2013.

If you have submitted, or intent to submit, a paper for presentation, please let me know if you can make the new date. If you intend to submit but haven’t done so yet, please note that the submission deadline has been extended to 1 July.

Hope to see you all in January – meanwhile, if you have any questions please don’t hesitate to get in touch.

All best,
Andreas

[Note by Psypioneer: We therefore reprint below our notice which appeared in the April issue, p.123.]

UCL Centre for the History of Psychological Disciplines
CALL FOR PAPERS:

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH IN THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE AND THE SCIENCES

Keynote speakers:

PROF. IVOR GRATTAN-GUINNESS
& PROF. SONU SHAMDASANI

The UCL Centre for the History of Psychological Disciplines invites original papers for a two-day conference on social, intellectual, epistemological and methodological aspects of psychical research and parapsychology in relation to orthodox medicine and the sciences in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Abstracts for 20-minutes papers should be around 300 words long and must be submitted by 15 June 2012.

We plan to publish a selection of papers in an edited volume. For enquiries and abstract submissions, please e-mail: a.sommer@ucl.ac.uk
[Introductory Note by LP:— We continue our extracts from A.W. Trethewy The Controls of Stainton Moses (1923). The second chapter consists of a list of communicators. This is valuable, as many readers of Spirit Teachings are unaware of the large number involved; and of course most of the actual identities behind the pseudonyms used by Stainton Moses are revealed. Then follows the first part of the next chapter “Characters of the Bible” which discusses “Imperator”.]

PRINCIPAL MANIFESTING SPIRITS

CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE

Malachias (Imperator).
Elijah (Preceptor).
Haggai (The Prophet).
Daniel (Vates).
Ezekiel.
St. John the Baptist (Theophilus).
St. John the Apostle (Theosophus).
St. John the Divine (Theologus).

PHILOSOPHERS AND SAGES

Solon.
Plato.
Aristotle.
Seneca.
Athenodorus (Doctor).
Hippolytus (Rector).
Plotinus (Prudens).
Alexander Achillini (Philosophus).
Algazzali or Ghazali (Mentor).
Kabbila.
Chom, Said and Roophal.
Magus.

ENGLISH HISTORICAL CHARACTERS

William Grocyn.
Thomas Linacre (Odorifer).
William Lily.
John Dee.
Elizabeth Barton—The Holy Maid of Kent.
Edward Fairfax.
Earl Rivers.
John Lydgate and his Sister.
Zachary Grey.
Jeffrey (or Geoffrey) of Monmouth and other Chroniclers.
Thomas Norton.
MUSICAL COMPOSERS

James Nares.
The Brothers Lawes.
Benjamin Cooke.
Earl of Mornington.
Thomas Augustus Arne.
John Blow.
Mendelssohn.
Beethoven.

SPIRITS OF PAST GENERATIONS BUT NEAR MODERN TIMES

Thomas Wilson, Bishop of Sodor and Man.
Arago.
Charlotte Buckworth.

AMERICAN SPIRITS AND SOME OTHERS

Benjamin Franklin.
Theodore Parker.
W. E. Channing.
Judge Edmonds and Swedenborg.
Robert Dale Owen.
Epes Sargent.
Sergeant Cox.

MODERN MEMBERS OF THE BAND

Bishop Samuel Wilberforce (S. Oxon).
William Callister.
Catherine Pauline Stanhope Speer.
Alice Webb.
Little Dicky.

MODERN SPIRITS ADMITTED FOR EVIDENTIAL PURPOSES

Grandmother of Stainton Moses.
T. J. S.
Fanny Westoby.
H. Le Mesurier.
W. B.
Blanche Abercromby.
J. B. Callister.
F. H. Trollope.
Mr. and Mrs. S—.
Relations of Mrs. Speer.
Cecilia Fielden.
Miss Green.
Mr. Rowbotham.
Miss A. P. Kirkland.
Dr. Speer.
Abraham Florentine.
The Jones Children.
Rosamira Lancaster.
The Death Family.
Henry Spratley.
Diana Hopton.
Ann Dalton.
Mary Hall.
Emily C—.
Napoleon III.
President Garfield.
Steam-roller Suicide.
Samuel Arrowsmith.

There is a notice about every spirit in this list in the chapter assigned to the group to which the spirit belongs. The appropriate chapter will be found by reference to the “Contents.” There is also an entry for every spirit in the alphabetical index at the end of the book, and if a facsimile of the spirit’s handwriting has been reproduced in Appendix III, the entry shows the appropriate page of the appendix.

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CHAPTER III
CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE
MALACHIAS (IMPERATOR)

IMPERATOR, the leader of the band of spirits, often mentioned as “The Chief,” announced his advent at seances held in the summer of 1872. (See Proceedings S.P.R., Vol. IX., p. 284.) On September 19th, 1872, he signed as Imperator (p. 285 id.); on December 3rd he declared that he had been incarnated on earth, and on December 12th he was seen clairvoyantly by Stainton Moses. It was not till July 6th, 1873, that in Book IV. he disclosed his earthly personality, yielding to pressure on the part of Stainton Moses, who demurred to accepting teachings proceeding from a source which might have no individuality but merely be part of himself.

“You ask me to tell you of my personality. Know then, that I was incarned upon your earth in those terrible days of desolation which succeeded the return of God’s people from the land of Persia under Nehemiah: days when the priests were corrupt and corrupted their people, when the service of God was neglected and profaned; and when the people were fast losing all direct consciousness of the presence of God’s messenger with them. In those days I lived and spake with human utterance the prophetic message, even as now I convey through you a fuller and clearer knowledge of the same God whom I then revealed.
“When Nehemiah stood forth to guide the people and to bring them back to God, I, Malachias, the Angel of Jehovah, the Messenger of God as I was called, stood by his side and prophesied of God’s judgments. Ye have some of the utterances which fell from me in the sacred records which you so prize. Many were not preserved, but there ye can read how Malachi spoke of God, how he received the questions of the sceptic, and how he answered them even as Imperator, the leader of the new movement—new, yet so old, so perpetual, so unceasing—has answered you, [here the name is written in Hebrew- LP]

“Malachias “the Messenger of Jehovah,” “the Angel of the Lord,” who spoke in the days of Nehemiah; [in Greek letters “prophetes” – LP] the prophet who inspired William Grocyn: Imperator Servus Dei who speaks to you, it is I, the same individuality, the same spirit. It has ever been my mission to do what I am now doing. Inspired and guided in my earth life by that sublime intelligence who on your earth was known as Elijah, I spoke of God, as I have been speaking since. He, Elijah, influences me still though he has passed far beyond my ken. His blessed influence inspires me and of his fulness I pour out blessings on men even now.

“Friend, we have reluctantly granted your earnest wish to be informed of our earth identity. We did not purpose so to do: but we have deemed it wiser to grant a request so earnestly made. We do not add to our claims on your belief by so doing. Rather perhaps you will reject our words the more that they claim to come from such a source. But not permanently. You will gradually grow to know that God does use similar, or the same, messengers for similar work. That high intelligence of whom I spoke has been the motive power in every first revelation of the Most High: and I, in humbler sort, am working ever for the same end. One thing we charge you that save to those intimately associated with you, you speak not of our identity save by our express permission. See that you fail not to obey this command. We may claim that at your hands.

“We leave you now with our blessing. We shall not cease to be nigh and to minister to you.

IMPERATOR S D
RECTOR
PRUDES PHILOSOPHUS
DOCTOR.”

NOTE.—The Hebrew characters in the text and the name Malachias are to be found in the article on Malachi in Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible.
The next day the following dialogue occurred between Imperator and Stainton Moses:

IMPERATOR: Friend, I have come to watch over you and to mark the effect of the information which was given you at your earnest request. We charge you that you do not mention it to the wonder seekers. You will now see how intimately I have always been associated with that work typified by the Cross. You will understand how I have spoken to you: and though the name which I bore on earth can add nought to the validity of what I tell you, still it may satisfy you that you have not to deal with a merely impersonal spirit. For our teaching it stands or falls by no name, but must be accepted or rejected according as it meets or fails to meet the wants of the individual spirit. This, as we have told you, is the measure of all revelation. We do not now seek to add to what we have already said. We prefer rather to leave you to ponder over what you have heard: and from time to time we shall supplement in such way as may be necessary.

S. M.: I am greatly obliged to you. I am personally thankful to know definitely who you claim to be and I feel more impressed than ever with the responsibility of accepting or rejecting what comes from so high a source. I must ask for time and I shall tax you with some questions as they occur to me.

Stainton Moses was not convinced of Imperator's identity and considered his teaching subversive of Christianity. On July 14th (Book V.) he asked him to furnish proof of his identity through some other medium. That course Imperator declined to take as likely to prove a failure. For this argument, which continued for a long time, see Spirit Teachings, pp. 134 et seq. On October 24th, 1873 (Book VIII.), Imperator, on being asked if the statement about his identity was real or symbolical, declared that it was real and that certain information received by Stainton Moses from a medium assigning another name to him was wrong. Later in the same book he made fragmentary statements about his work on earth which do not appear, at least in this form, in the version printed in Spirit Teachings, pp. 184 et seq. On November 2nd, 1873:

“He [Elijah] too reappeared on earth in the days when I, Malachias, wrought the work of God on earth.... I stood beside the Reformer [Nehemiah] of that age and seconded his work. And when I passed to my work in spirit the power of spirit teaching faded and was withdrawn.... I reappeared again as the guide of John Baptist.”

On November 5th, 1873:

“The Voice of the wild prophet who cried in the wilderness of Judæa was inspired by the voice of him not less wild and weird whose favoured home was the desert of Carmel, and his place of communion the mountain top. Elijah reappeared in John. I, too, who had stood side by side with Israel’s last reformer, I, even I inspired the utterances of him who, himself a stern and ruthless critic, was the Forerunner of the Man whose mission was pre-
eminently one of social reform. John Baptist, the Desert Preacher, was also John the Reformer, and through him came unsullied the inspired promptings of one to whom progressive reform had been dear in earth life. None ever inspired a nobler medium. Isolated from the world, instinct with genius, fire and enthusiasm, fettered by no conventionalism, simple and pure in his habits of life, with mind bent with all the energy of which man could boast on the great purpose to which his life was dedicated, he was a mighty engine in the hands of his guides.”

In this book (VIII.) he also gave some information about the compilation of the Bible. (See pp. 188, 189 of Spirit Teachings.) In Book IX. (November 10th, 1873) he returned to the same subject and gave particulars of his own share in it. (See Spirit Teachings, p. 203, where “Malachi” has been substituted for “I””) The following portion of the original, omitted from Spirit Teachings, is worth quoting:

“We then, Malachias and Haggai did arrange and add those prophetical books which were left unarranged by Ezra and Daniel who assisted Haggai in the previous compilation. We did but select such of the utterances of the preachers who spoke as moved by spirit agency as might be serviceable. We dreamed not that they would be judged to be of universal application or to contain predictions to be fulfilled in after ages. . . . The final arrangement was made by my hand. I did not interfere with the arrangement made by Ezra and his scribes. Nor did I alter aught of what Haggai and Daniel had written. Nor did I do other than to select prophetic words, which remember, friend, are in no sense predictive.”

On the same date he referred to his presence with Daniel on the occasion of the vision on the Banks of the Hiddekel. (See Spirit Teachings, pp. 203, 204.) These statements have been tested by reference to the Bible, Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible and the Encyclopædia Britannica. No important discrepancy has been found relating to any proved fact, but of course several of the points are subjects of contention. In the original the names of Ezra’s scribes (Elnathan and Joiarib) are mentioned; they have been verified by reference to Ezra, ch. viii., verse 16.

In this connection a puzzling passage occurs XIX. (February 27th, 1876):

S. M.: I want to ask as to II. Esdras. Is it a reliable document?

IMPERATOR: Yes. It is the work of Ezra, and records his views as truthfully as does the book inserted in your Bible. We have told you before that the books called by you sacred and inspired differ in no way from many others which have been rejected or lost.

S. M.: In that book the writer distinctly states that he compiled the book of Moses.
IMPERATOR: We have told you of this. What you read there does but corroborate our testimony. We are glad that you should find proof of our correctness.

S. M.: I never doubted it: but it is curious corroboration: and quite new, so far as I know.

IMPERATOR: Not new. It is familiar to many. Cease.

NOTE.—RECTOR wrote for IMPERATOR as usual.

This dialogue refers to the Apocryphal Book Esdras II., which, according to the current opinion among scholars, was not written by Ezra but by some unknown person at a time near the beginning of the Christian era. If this modern view is correct it is hard to reconcile Imperator’s mistake with his claim to have had an important part in the compilation of the scriptures. Of course the error may be due to the subliminal mind of Stainton Moses; though his question indicates that he was aware of the dispute about the authorship, and the reply (especially the concluding sentence) has a distinct appearance of coming from an external source.

There is, however, another explanation which deserves to be considered. In Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible, Esdras II is said to have been mentioned with respect by Irenæus. Now he was Rector’s teacher on earth (see p. 52 below), and his influence still persisted, for on May 30th, in Book II., Doctor said that his aid would be enlisted by Rector in the instruction of Stainton Moses. Is it not possible that Rector when writing for Imperator reverted to the opinion, which he had imbibed from Irenæus, and coloured the communication? He may have done so unconsciously, or his views may have influenced Imperator. It is also of course possible that the writer of Esdras II may have been a medium, long subsequent to but inspired by Ezra, who was therefore regarded as the real author.

Manifesting spirits produced by the Band to convince Stainton Moses supported Imperator’s claim to have been Malachi, viz., Dr. Eves at the seance of January 4th, 1874, and Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man on January 25th, 1874. Others declared that he was a high spirit and had helped them to manifest.

The prevailing opinion among Hebrew scholars appears to be that the word Malachi, which means “my messenger,” is not a proper name, but the name assigned to the prophecies by the editor. There has, however, been support for the theory that the author was named Malachias. (See the article on that name in Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible.) The important question is whether Imperator was the author, not what his original name was on earth. If he did write the prophecies, as he alleged, he may have assumed this name even if he had borne another. It may have been a second name like “Simon called Peter,” or it may have been adopted in accordance with the symbolical usage of the spheres, and it would be intelligible to Stainton Moses.
The high position assigned by Imperator to Elijah is on a par with the respectful references to Elijah in the Book of Malachi; but of course it may be argued that if Stainton Moses’ subliminal mind was responsible for the impersonation it drew on his normal knowledge of the scriptures for this point of resemblance.

As nothing certain is known of the author’s personality, and his writings may be the fruit of spirit-control, there is practically no material for a comparison between him and Imperator. There is, however, one point of similarity which may be noticed. To judge from the outbursts of denunciation in his prophecies the author must have been a vehement man with a fierce temper. Imperator occasionally showed more heat and impatience in his arguments with Stainton Moses than would be expected from an exalted spirit. At the seance of December 16th, 1872 (see S.P.R. Proceedings, Vol. IX., pp. 293, 294), he showed great irritation and knocked so loud that he was requested to moderate his violence. It may be that renewal of associations with the earth through a temperament like Stainton Moses' sometimes caused reaction and revived old feelings. Ordinarily his words and manner were unexceptionable. Mrs. Speer refers to the deep impression produced upon the circle by the “power and dignity of Imperator’s influence and personality.” (Proceedings S.P.R., Vol. XI., p. 63.) The records show him to have been intensely earnest, virile, devout, conscientious, careful and thorough. He was absorbed in his mission, had a very strong sense of duty and little or none of humour.

It is difficult to understand why a figure of no greater prominence than Malachi was placed at the head of the movement while persons of greater importance as judged by mundane standards occupied subordinate positions. If the situation was not real, but a drama constructed by Stainton Moses’ subliminal mind, the choice is hard to explain otherwise than as the fruit of irresponsible fancy. If the situation was real, Imperator’s position may perhaps have been due to his extraordinary power of will which enabled him to blend together the influences of personalities more spiritual than his own and to maintain the rapport. He does appear to have been in charge of the medium and to have taken very seriously the responsibility of keeping him free from contamination, but the signatures at the end of the communications show that often the teaching proceeded jointly from him and other spirits. Plato was declared to have inspired the prayer of September 14th, 1873, in Book VI., and great importance was attached by Imperator to a control on the part of Theophilus (see page 41 below). On various occasions he was ready to give place to some other spirit as more competent to deal with the subject of discussion.

In Proceedings S.P.R., Vol. XL, p. 107, Myers implies that though there is no proof of identity with Malachi (such points are unprovable, p. 109 id.), Imperator’s communications are not out of harmony with his alleged personality and his main object the development of Stainton Moses’ soul.

At a later stage of his development Stainton Moses got into touch with Madame Blavatsky, who hinted that Imperator was connected with “the Lodge.” On 24th December, 1876, in Book XXI., Stainton Moses questioned Imperator on this point. The reply was: “. . . She does not know or speak with us: though she has the power of
ascertaining facts concerning us. . . . We are what we have revealed ourselves to you: no other: and our name and presence could not be taken by any other. . . .”

In 1881 a story was started from a theosophical source that Imperator was a living man, a “Brother,” and that his dealings with Stainton Moses had been perfectly known to Madame Blavatsky. Stainton Moses consulted Imperator, who replied on November 6th, 1881 (Book XXIV.):

“It is not necessary to say more than that the whole story is false from beginning to end. We know nothing of any Brothers, tho’ there may be men who so style themselves. . . .”

Imperator’s attitude towards the Occult is discussed in Chapter XIII.

Stainton Moses frequently saw Imperator clairvoyantly. The following passage is taken from Book VI., and is part of a description of a vision of worship in the spheres on August 27th, 1873.

“As I stood wondering at the beauty of everything that met my eye, a door opened and a Figure advanced towards me. It was Imperator as I have before seen him. On his head was the Diadem with seven points, each point tipped by a star of dazzling radiance, and each of different colour. The face was earnest, benevolent, and noble in expression. It was not aged as I should have expected, but wore an aspect of devotion and determination mingled with gentleness and dignity. The whole air and mien was most dignified and commanding. The figure was draped in a long flowing robe of brilliant white. I cannot better describe the appearance than by saying that it seemed to be composed of dew drops lit up by the morning sun. The whole effect was so dazzling that I could not look steadfastly at it. It reminded me at once of the description of the Transfiguration, and of the angels who stood at the sepulchre in shining raiment. I instinctively bowed my head, and a voice soft and earnest with a strange melancholy cadence fell on my ear. ‘Come and you shall see your friends: and we will try to touch the heart of disbelief.’ He held out his hand and I noticed that it was jewelled and seemed to shine as with an inner phosphorescent light.”

On January 4th, 1880 (Book XXIII.), Stainton Moses again describes Imperator as seen in another vision: “His clear-cut, refined and spiritualized countenance, and slight but active figure. He has become far more spiritual in form and face of late, and his air is that of one more and more removed from earth.” On October 27th, 1881 (Book XXIV.), he notes that Imperator seems to develop in majesty and grandeur.
The portrait of Imperator which forms the frontispiece of the present book has been reproduced from a photograph in the possession of the late Mr. Charlton T. Speer by his kind permission. The original must have been a sketch made by Stainton Moses as an automatic drawing; it is probably that mentioned on March 3rd, 1875, in Book XV. The spirit who controlled his hand for the purpose left the Band and his name was not disclosed.

Imperator’s communications were not written by himself, but by Rector. They were signed by or for him, “Imperator S:D:” or “I:S:D:.” The letters S:D: are for Servus Dei. A Latin cross was prefixed to the signature till page 11 of Book XXII., when it was replaced by a crown. A curious drawing in that book (see Plate I.) appears to embody a symbolical reference to the change. Imperator “never attempted writing” (see page 4 of the Introduction to Spirit Teachings), though his first communication (on May 11th, 1873, in Book I.) ostensibly was written by him.

Other mediums with whom Stainton Moses sat, e.g., Butland (Proceedings S.P.R., Vol. IX., p. 298), showed respect to Imperator as a high spirit. The members of the Band also assigned to him an important position in the missionary movement said to have been organized in the spheres. He himself said on January 6th, 1878 (Book XXII.), when asked whether he acted with “the Brothers”: “I do not act directly with any, but am one who directs many.” Nevertheless, he was modest about his own powers and knowledge and showed no sign of any attempt to magnify his own importance.

There are frequent references to his control and direction of the action of the Band, to the necessity of consulting him and to his delegation of powers in his absence. On August
13th and 14th, 1874, in Book XV., he was said to have put restrictions on the quantity of power to be used for phenomena at séances because too much had been used when he was away. On November 23rd, 1874, Book XV., the subordinate members of the Band are said to have enjoyed more freedom owing to his absence. On the other hand Prudens and Magus and some other spirits claimed to exercise independent powers (presumably delegated by him) in certain departments, see pp. 76-79. Moreover, on October 4th, 1873, Book VII, some members, especially Bishop Wilberforce, remonstrated with him for his harsh treatment of Stainton Moses. He was strict, but not unduly jealous of power, and he was open to reason.

As Stainton Moses stated on page 74 of his second Retrospect (unpublished), the whole tone of Imperator’s thought was different from his own. Elsewhere (Spirit Teachings, pp. 286, 287) he has admitted, and the internal evidence of his writings shows, that his own mind was inaccurate in matters of detail. On the other hand, Imperator was scrupulously exact: “I never speak with positive assertion save of that which I know.” (Book VI., August 17th, 1873.)

[We hope to continue with the remainder of this chapter soon. Serious students who wish to study the full text of Mr Trethewy’s book may care to contact Marc Demarest, curator of www.ehbritten.org ]

——§——
The Physical Phenomena of the Past
An Historical Survey

*The Two Worlds*:—18

**Apports**
Flowers, Birds and Precious Stones Brought Into Closed Rooms

By W. Leslie Curnow, B.A.

WHAT a world of marvels is revealed in the production of what are called Apports, that is, objects brought from somewhere outside and deposited in the seance room! We cannot in truth say that one form of physical manifestation by psychic means is more wonderful than another. A Rap or a Light is in essence as remarkable as a full form Materialisation. But while granting this we must admit that some phenomena have the power of startling and impressing us more than others, and in this class the Apport takes a prominent place.

MRS. ROBERTS JOHNSON

It was at a sitting with Mrs. Roberts Johnson, the well-known Voice medium at Colonel Cowley’s house at Highgate in November, 1922, that I had my first experience of an Apport. Without telling anyone of my intention I had brought in my pocket a quarter-plate slide containing two photographic plates. As soon as the electric light had been turned out and we were sitting in darkness I took the slide from my pocket and held it on my knee to await developments. Billy, Mrs. Johnson’s son in spirit life, soon perceived what I was holding, and promised (as I had hoped) to try to impress a photograph on the plate. How he succeeded must be told another time. What I wish to mention now is that while I was holding the woollen slide something struck it, and groping on the floor I picked up a coin. When the light was restored I found that, it was an American one-cent, bearing the head of Abraham Lincoln. David Duguid, Mrs. Johnson’s chief guide, said they had brought it for me. I still have it as a treasured possession. A fact that none present could have know was that anything relating to Abraham Lincoln had a special interest; and significance for me. With Evan Powell, Craddock, and Mrs. Annie Brittain I have had flowers placed in my hand at seances when the conditions made it impossible for the articles to have been brought by human agency.

MRS. THAYER, OF BOSTON

This form of manifestation has occurred at some time or other with most of the powerful mediums, but a few have been pre-eminent in it. Take Mrs. Thayer, for instance, the wonderful American medium, about whom the majority of Spiritualists know nothing. She was called the “flower medium” but live birds were frequently produced.

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18 *The Two Worlds*, October 24, 1924, pages front and p. 590
Mr. Robert Cooper, of Eastbourne, a stalwart of the early days of Spiritualism, relates that he and Mr. J. J. Morse (a former Editor of THE TWO WORLDS) attended a seance of Mrs. Thayer’s Boston (U.S.A.), and Mr. Morse found a live pigeon in front of him. At a second seance the medium was secured in a muslin bag, and Mr. Cooper had a white fantail pigeon placed in his hand. Mr. Morse brought the bird to England and exhibited it at a meeting of the B.N.A.S. Mr. Cooper tried the interesting experiment of bringing a sealed box into the seance to see if objects could be introduced into it. The light was put out and singing indulged in. After about ten minutes there was a succession of loud, quick rasps on the box, then a loud crash was heard. He says, “A light was produced and on examination the box was found to be in a perfect condition and the seal intact, and inside were observed several flowers and other objects, a list of which was afterwards made, and is as follows: Four tiger lilies; three roses, white, pink and yellow: a gladiolus; a piece of fern; and several small flowers; also a copy of the “Banner of Light” and “Voice of Angels,” and a photograph of Mr. Colby. The flowers were all quite perfect, and appeared to be fresh gathered, and the papers were folded as if for sale.” At each seance all present signed a paper certifying to the facts observed.

Colonel Olcott, in 1875, made strict and exhaustive tests of Mrs. Thayer’s mediumship. He first, inquired into her personal character and found Mr. Lloyd Garrison, “a partner in one of the greatest, mercantile houses in New England.” Mr. Charles Houghton, “the well-known lawyer.” and many others ready to bear witness to her honesty and to the fact that she was a true medium. From Colonel Olcott’s account published in the “New York Sun,” August 18th. 1875 (a summary of which appears in “Light,” 1881, page 416), we see under what convincing conditions the results were obtained.

In daylight at Mr. Charles Houghton’s home in West Boxburg, while Colonel Olcott held both Mrs. Thayer’s hands, “a fragrant crimson rose was dropped in my lap,” and while under the light of a chandelier in the hall, and within two feet, of the medium, “a young canary suddenly sprang upon my head towards the closed door, where I caught him.” It was brought in compliance with Olcott’s secret request from the cage in Philadelphia of a friend who afterwards identified the bird. There could be no hallucination in this case. Either the facts were as stated, or Colonel Olcott and his friend were fabricating an untruth.

At his first public sitting with Mrs. Thayer on July 4th, 1875, under stringent precautions to guard against fraud, eighty-two varieties of plants and flowers were placed on the table, “fresh unrumpled, and the petals covered with dew.” In front of one lady lay “a begonia with a potful of dirt attached.” We are told that this lady “informed the company that it was a perfect test to her, as her spirit sister had told her the day before that if she would come here she should receive this plant as a present from her, and she had come two hundred miles to make the experiment.”

Many other instances are related of the production, under test conditions, of flowers, fruit and birds, often a particular flower or plant which had been mentally asked for. Let us close with this highly evidential case.
Colonel Olcott, while on a visit to Forest Hills Cemetery, suddenly devised what he considered would be an excellent test. “Passing through the greenhouses my attention was struck by a curious plant with long narrow leaves striped with white and pale green. It was the *dracena regina*. With my blue pencil I marked on one of the leaves the cabalistic sign of the interlaced triangles, and requested the Spirits to bring it to me at the circle the following evening. I purposely sat at Mrs. Thayer’s right hand, and held her hands, when suddenly I felt something cool and moist drop upon my hand, and when, the candle was lit found if to be my marked leaf. *I went to the greenhouses, and found that the leaf selected by me had actually been broken off.*”

As Stainton Moses says in his comment on the above, “What more do we want to establish the whole Spiritualist theory?”

Dr. L. F. H. Willis, the divinity student, who was expelled from Harvard University on account of his mediumship, was another through whom flowers were produced at seances. An account of the varied phenomena with this medium will be found in the periodical, *Human Nature*, 1869, pages 573-583.

**ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE’S TESTIMONY**

Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace supplies a convincing narrative of flowers that came in abundance in London at the seances of Miss Nichol, who afterwards became the celebrated Mrs. Guppy. In his book, *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, he writes: “The most remarkable feature of this lady’s mediumship was the production of flowers and fruit in closed rooms. The first time this occurred was at my own house, at a very early stage of her development. All present were my own friends. Miss N. had come early to tea, it being mid-winter, and she had been with us in a very warm gas-lighted room four hours before the flowers appeared.

“The essential fact is that upon a bare table in a small room, closed and dark (the adjoining room and passage being well lighted), a quantity of flowers appeared, which were not there when we put out the gas a few minutes before.

“They consisted of anemones, tulips, chrysanthemums, Chinese primroses, and several ferns. All were absolutely fresh, as if just gathered from a conservatory. They were covered with a fine, cold dew. Not a petal was crumpled or broken, not the most delicate point or pinnule of the ferns was out of place.”

Dr. Wallace speaks of other occasions when flowers have been heaped on the table in vast quantities, and he mentions the same feature that Colonel Olcott remarked, namely, that special flowers or fruit’s were brought in response to requests. A medium to answer this test without spirit aid would need to carry round with her a miniature Covent Garden.

One of the most striking tests with this medium, after she became Mrs. Guppy, occurred in Florence, in the presence of Mr. T. Adolphus Trollope, Colonel Harvey and others. The room was thoroughly searched, and Mrs. Trollope dressed and undressed
Mrs. Guppy and examined every article of her clothing. The medium was firmly held when the seance began, but in about ten minutes there was a scent of flowers, and on a light being struck Mrs. Guppy’s and Mr. Trollope’s arms were found covered with jonquils.

If further proof of the supernormal character of these phenomena were needed it is only necessary to say that on one occasion Miss Nichol produced a flower such as had never been seen before. “It appeared to resemble a rose and camellia combined, the leaves being of an irregular or wavy form, cut at the edges something like a holly, as soft as velvet to the touch. One of the leaves grew altogether out of the calix of the flower. It was unmistakably a flower of super-ordinary character.” At this seance the medium’s hands were held. One would like to hear a sceptic’s attempted explanation of this phenomenon.

SIR WILLIAM CROOKES

Sir William Crookes (“Researches,” etc., page 97) gives a good instance of a bell brought from an adjoining room in his house, during a seance with Kate Fox. A message was received, “We are going to bring something to show our power.” and almost immediately all heard the tinkling of a bell which was moving about in all parts of the room. “After ringing for five minutes the bell fell on the table, and Sir William recognised it as one that he had seen in the library (which Miss Fox had not entered) shortly before she came. He went and satisfied himself that the bell was not in the library.”

BAILEY, THE AUSTRALIAN MEDIUM

Charles Bailey, of Melbourne, is a remarkable Apport medium, about whom much has been written. Some idea of the variety of the objects said to have been produced at his seances may be judged from this list after one series of Sittings:—

Eight live birds, one bird’s egg, four nests, one Indian cap; eighty-seven coins, some in full daylight; one newspaper in Arabic, one leopard skin, four shrubs, one pair of satin slipper shapes, one blood garnet, two spinifex rubies, two green sapphires, two christobels, two cinnamon stones, six moon-stones, three turquoises (in full daylight), seven tablets, one Egyptian scarabeus, a Bedouin Arab woman’s head-dress, a witch doctor’s belt, two live turtles (in full daylight). In all, 138 articles. Some were dematerialised, but most were retained.

The best account of Bailey is to be found in that rare little book, Rigid Tests of the Occult (1904), by X (Dr, Charles MacCarthy, whom I knew well in Sydney, where he practised). In later years this medium has been somewhat under a cloud, though there is much competent evidence of his powers in earlier days. He came to Europe in 1904, and was examined by scientists at Milan and Grenoble. It was on this trip that a damaging discovery was made that Bailey had bought in the neighbourhood canaries or small birds of some sort such as he produced at his seances.
A DAVENPORT MYSTERY

Now, I am not prepared to say whether Bailey cheated at times in this way, but something I have come on in my reading suggests a caution in judgment. Experience shows that ignorance of the profound mysteries of psychic phenomena has often led investigators astray. It was so at the start of the seances with Eusapia Palladino, when such a thing as an ectoplasmic arm which moved objects and then retreated into the body of the medium was quite unknown. What I wish to call attention to (and as far as I am aware it has never been done before) has to do with what happened at a seance with the Davenport Brothers in America, when ladies present had their laps filled with delicious fruit. At the close of the seance a man who kept a fruit shop underneath the hall said that about an hour previously William Davenport had come to him and bought and paid for a large quantity of fruit, which he had taken away with him. On this his biographer says, ‘Now, nothing is more certain than that William had, been tied in his chair nearly four hours, and had not quit it; neither had the door been opened to let anyone in or out from the moment the company sat down till the circle disband.’ The explanation tendered is that it was his Double! There are many thoroughly trustworthy and capable witnesses who have seen the Doubles of the Davenports at the time these mediums were observed to be securely bound. It is a deep aspect of our subject which I can only thus refer to in passing. Accounts of Bailey and his Apports will be found in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s ‘Wanderings of a Spiritualist’ and Mr. Leaf’s ‘Under the Southern Cross.’

‘STELLA OF THE TEA-CUPS’

I have seen and handled, at the home of my friend, Mr. H. Leaf, in Bayswater, an object of extreme interest. It is a vase fifteen inches in height, of a deep chocolate colour, crudely made as though by some primitive form of pottery. It is said to have come, from Syria, and to have been brought into the seance room. The medium was Mrs. Maggs, of Portsmouth, whose husband was editor of two local newspapers, in which she frequently wrote under the pseudonym of ‘Stella of the Tea Cups,’ I said the vase was interesting, by which I meant not merely in itself but as a link with one of the most extraordinary mediums in our ranks.

The Trinity Circle, as it was called, composed of Major General Drayson (a distinguished officer and scientist), and Mr. and Mrs. Maggs, was rich in phenomena almost without parallel. The guides worked in conjunction with circles sitting in Brooklyn (U.S.A.), in Melbourne (Australia), in Spain, in Syria, and in China, and between these various circles articles were regularly exchanged. General Drayson’s house was filled with articles which he said had been brought to him in the twinkling of an eye from all parts of the world.

In an interview in Light, (1895, page 283), where he is spoken of as “General Lorrison,” we read:—

“Examples there are in great variety of the potter’s, the weaver’s, the wood-carver’s, and the metal worker’s art from all parts of the Globe; west from America, south from
Australia, the Cape and Spain, east from Syria, India, and China. There are vases quaint and rare, painted plates, draperies of fine texture and colouring, carved and scented boxes, baskets of woven grass or knotted string, things of beaten brass or moulded bronze, fans, rosaries, trinkets, charms, and I know not what. Enough, in fact, to form the nucleus of a small museum, and they still are coming without sign of break in the generous supply.”

Every one of these things, the General declared, had been brought through closed doors and windows, without damage or change in the process. He had over a thousand articles, and as many more were in the house of the medium, for everything that came was divided in equal proportion.

A startling feature of these seances was the regular production of fresh eggs brought by arrangement from the Brooklyn circle in America. Here are some extracts from General Drayson’s diary:—

January 6th, 1895.—Articles brought: large box, two plaster figures, twelve eggs.
January 13th.—Fourteen eggs brought.
January 20th.—Fourteen eggs, two spoons, two quires of notepaper and a diamond stud pin, a present to the medium’s husband from Brooklyn.

And so on, week after week. On the night of December 29th, 1894, a letter was deposited on the table. It was from the wealthy gentleman who was the Brooklyn medium, and General Drayson was told to copy it and to tear off a bit from the corner of the letter in order to identify it, which he did. It then disappeared and the sitters were told it had gone back to America. Ten days later the General received this letter by post, bearing American stamps, and with a date showing that it had been posted after the night of the seance in England. On examination it was found to be the same letter, with a piece missing from one corner and the piece retained by General Drayson exactly fitted the gap. A better test could not be devised. As to the eggs, it was explained that the General at the start of a sitting put his hat in a corner of the room, and at the close he always found from one dozen to two dozen eggs in it. He had not bought any eggs for months. They were a present from the Brooklyn medium, who went each week to his fowl yard and gathered them himself in readiness for their transmission to England.

There was an amusing fiasco on one occasion, when three addled eggs were received instead of the usual fresh ones. The explanation was that on this night the Brooklyn gentleman was not feeling well, and instead of gathering the eggs himself, left this to the control, who took three nest eggs. I have not given anything like a full account of the marvels occurring at this wonderful circle. Those who wish for fuller details can read them in Light, 1895 (page 283 et seq.)

There is not space to refer to the transmission of a letter from India to London through the mediumship of William Eglinton, nor to the wonders that occurred with Herne and Williams (some of them recorded on the excellent testimony of Mr. J. J. Morse) and a dozen other mediums. Pearls were frequently brought at sittings with Stainton Moses,
whose mediumship was rich in Apports. I would like also to refer to the efforts to transport to a distant part of the world, as to India, in one case, a copy of *The Times* on the day of issue, and to the spirits’ explanation of why this could not be done. Mr. A. P. Sinnett, in the *Occult World*, Mr. James Curtis in *Rustlings from the Golden City*, and General Drayson in *Light*, discuss this problem.

Enough has been said to indicate that spirit operators have the power to disintegrate and reform the matter of solid articles. If a thousand more instances were quoted the sceptic would not be any nearer conviction. The humble student of psychic phenomena is the only one likely to be influenced. He is on the path to enlightenment when he recognises that there are powers and forces to be investigated of which, as yet, orthodox science has no knowledge.

To be continued …

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**Editors Note:**

In the last issue, we stated we were to publish the history behind four of the “Katie King” photographs, which are said to have been found amongst the papers of the well-known artist F. W. Hayes (1848-1918). Due to space, this article will now be published in the next issue.
BOOKS WE HAVE REVIEWED

If you have any problems locating a copy we can contact the author


Mrs Miller’s Gift CD:—Helen Duncan Séance, Ernest Oaten and Harry Edwards,


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Paul J. Gaunt

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