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PSYPIONEER GRANTS.

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This edition of Psypioneer is the first to be produced with new hardware and software, made possible by grants from the Spiritual Truth Foundation (£600) and JV Trust (£500). Hitherto we experienced frequent technical problems caused by obsolete and incompatible technology, to the extent that the whole editorial process was in jeopardy. We are very grateful to these organisations for their assistance, and to the other individuals and organisations who assist in the work, and make possible this free educational resource.

LP.

THE KATIE KING PHOTOGRAPHS

The photographic images of the alleged spirit Katie King, through the physical mediumship of Florence Cook, taken at 20, Mornington Road London the residence of William Crookes are well known, through numerous books, spiritualistic journals and websites. Published below is the original article that brought four of these photographs to public attention in 1934. There has been much speculation about the origins, dates, and destruction of these famous images. The article and images were first published in *Psychic Science*, the quarterly journal of the British College of Psychic Science (BCPS):¹

FOUR “KATIE KING” PHOTOGRAPHS

Psychic Science:—²

Mr. Frederick William Hayes, among whose papers these photographs were found by his son Mr. Gerald Hayes who has very kindly presented them to the College, was a distinguished artist (1848-1918) whose works were displayed at a Memorial Exhibition in 1922.

He was a lover of nature and studied it from first to last with an intense power of close observation. His range was not wide but the intensity of his vision more than atones for its circumscription; and it is refreshing in an age that is over-given to scamping detail on the plea of attaining breadth, to see his beautiful rendering of the minutiae of Nature.

Perhaps the greatest charm of his work is its freshness. He is at his best in those small transcripts where the hues of earth, sea and sky are given with peculiar vividness. These he painted in the “thin-oil” method which he made peculiarly his own. Its essentials were



PLATE 1. COPY OF ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY SIR WILLIAM CROOKES.
MADE BY MISS KATE COOK FOR F. W. HAYES.
KATIE KING

¹ Not to be confused with the College of Psychic Studies (CPS), previously called The College of Psychic Science – The London Spiritualist Alliance:— <http://www.collegeofpsychicstudies.co.uk/college/history.html>
For the British College of Psychic Science (BCPS) use our search engine at www.woodlandway.org key word BCPS. Articles in particular 3.8: *A Knight Errant of Psychic Science* James Hewat McKenzie, & 7.2: *Whatever happened to the British College ?*

² *Quarterly Transactions of the British College of Psychic Science Ltd.*, Vol. XIII April, 1934 No.1, pages 25-30. The article has no author's name, but Stanley De Brath was the editor of *Psychic Science* from 1926 until 1936.

the liberal use of turpentine with oil-colour. A piece of cartridge paper was stretched and sized. The main masses were then washed in with the thin colour, details being added with smaller brushes. Examples of his painting have been secured for the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Walker Art Gallery Liverpool, the Manchester, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Leeds, Sheffield, Hull, Nottingham, Bristol, Southport, Burnley and Glasgow Art Galleries and the Dublin Municipal Gallery of Modern Art.



He joined the S.P.R. before 1890 and remained an active member till his death. He was associated with the Misses Cook and Sir William Crookes in the séances with Miss Florence Cook for the “Katie King” manifestations and his views on phenomena are indicated in a novel *A Kent Squire*. In chapter xxxiv of that book occurs the actual case of the revival of a still-born infant. His interest in psychic phenomena was always strictly scientific; first to establish and define the occurrence with an unbiased outlook and taking into account all possible normal factors: explanation of the “how” or “why” being treated quite separately.

Psychic Research was very different in those early days from what it is now. It needed a much more open mind than at present and his interest and work in it deserve a place among its pioneers.

THE FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS

These, now published for the first time, are copies of those taken at Sir William Crookes’ house by himself. On the back of No. 4 is the autograph inscription as below:

Mrs. Helen Whittall Dr. Gully
Katie King.

I was present,

Kate S. Cook.

There is no record of date when taken.

They speak for themselves, and were found put away among his papers.

COMMENT

“You know,” said Justin, awkwardly, “I feel pretty badly about the way I behaved at first. You see, I didn’t want to believe what you said, and so I didn’t.”

Brown nodded sympathetically.

“Only about ninety-nine out of every hundred people are like that,” he murmured.

John Stephen Strange.



PLATE 3. COPY OF ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY SIR WILLIAM CROOKES.
MADE BY MISS KATE COOK FOR F. W. HAYES
KATIE KING

This sentence, out of a modern novel³ aptly expresses the reaction of average minds, including some that pass for distinguished, to any new truth. It has been exemplified throughout history. Sometimes it goes further. Sir Oliver Lodge in his *My Philosophy* recounts (p. 269) how a very simple, but (apart from psychic force) inexplicable experiment, was presented to the eminent Secretary to the Royal Society, Sir George Gabriel Stokes, who maintained that it was mechanically impossible and refused to witness it. “In other words, the testimony of a good and famous experimenter about a simple but incredible result, entirely controlled by himself, was not accepted.” (p. 270.)

It is true that he abandoned the attempt to convince his scientific brethren, but he never withdrew or modified the conclusion which he published in the *Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism* in 1874. Before the British Association at Bristol in 1898, he declared “Upon one other interest I have not yet touched—to me the weightiest and farthest-reaching of all. No incident in my scientific career is more widely known than the part I took many years ago in certain psychic researches. Thirty years have passed since I published an account of experiments tending to show that outside our scientific knowledge there exists a Force exercised by intelligence differing from the ordinary intelligence common to mortals. I have nothing to retract. I adhere to my already published statements. Indeed I might add much thereto.”

The experiments of Professor Crookes with Miss Florence Cook as medium, lasted three years. The Katie King who manifested claimed to be the daughter of Sir Henry Owen Morgan, ex-buccaneer and Governor of Jamaica under Charles II. Her name was Annie Owen Morgan. The name “John King” assumed by her father, was never satisfactorily explained: His identity



PLATE 4. COPY OF ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY SIR WILLIAM CROOKES.
MADE BY MISS KATE COOK FOR F. W. HAYES. (AUTOGRAPH ON BACK)
KATIE KING

³ *The Strangler Fig*, p. 212

with the Governor Sir Henry Morgan has never been established.

Mr. Crookes was not convinced of Katie's identity. In a letter to professor Brofferio in 1894, he said: "All that I am concerned in is that invisible and intelligent beings exist, who say that they are the spirits of dead persons. But proof that they really are the individuals they assume to be, which I require in order to believe it, I have never received, though I am disposed to admit that many of my friends assert they have actually obtained the desired proofs, and I myself have already frequently been many times on the verge of this conviction." (*Für den Spiritismus*. Leipsic. 1894.) This disposes of Mr. Crookes' supposed credulity. Katie King has recently been associated with Dr. Glen Hamilton's circle and the photograph of her in *Psychic Science* of January, 1933, Plate 5, may be compared with No. 4 of the present issue.



PLATE 5. ENLARGEMENT FROM PLATE 4

It has always been a matter for regret that with the exception of two or three single heads, all the forty-four negatives taken by Sir William Crookes, O.M., F.R.S., were destroyed after his death by persons who considered that all memorials of his devotion to psychical research would damage his scientific standing.

It is unnecessary here to do more than allude to the storm of hatred, vilification, falsehood and slander to which this able experimenter, a Fellow, of the Royal Society, Gold Medallist and member of the Order of Merit was exposed, simply because he testified to what he had repeatedly proved. Even at the present day when the phenomena have forced themselves by constant repetition on a reluctant world, Dr. Nandor Fodor remarks in his article on Crookes (*Encycl.* p. 71) that "As late as 1930 we find Mr. H. G. Wells in his *The Science of Life* stating that 'his experiments have been submitted to searching criticism and it is now seen that they have no claim to be in any way scientific. Crookes himself abandoned the attempt to convince his scientific brethren and returned to his chemical work.' Wells also said that 'Sir William Crookes had to submit to the conditions the mediums demanded.' "

The best refutation is the statement of Crookes before the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1876. . . . He said, "I was asked to investigate when Dr. Slade first came over, and I mentioned my conditions. I have never investigated except under these conditions. It must be at my own house, with my own selection of friends and spectators, under my own conditions, and I may do whatever I like to make the physical apparatus test the things themselves, and have not trusted more than is possible to my senses. But when it is necessary to trust my senses, I must entirely dissent from Mr.

Barrett, when he says that a trained physical inquirer is no match for a professional conjurer. I maintain a physical inquirer is more than a match.”

Signor Bozzano in his book *Animism and Spiritism* gives, on p. 120. *et seq.*, a summary of this case. He says:

“It should be remembered that ‘Katie King,’ endowed in a high degree with all the attributes which characterize a thinking entity, does not cease to maintain her independent spiritual existence, tells the name she bore when living, and narrates the painful vicissitudes of her short earthly life. She also shows her independent existence by showing herself to the experimenter at the same time as her medium, letting herself be photographed along with the medium and Mr. Crookes; allowing him and Mrs. Marryat⁴ to touch her, kiss her, and feel the beating of her heart and the rate of her pulse, and finally waking up the medium and conversing with her.”

This last episode has great psychological value; I will therefore quote a short passage descriptive of Katie King’s farewell. Mr. Crookes writes:

“After closing the curtain, she conversed with me for some time, and then walked across the room to where Miss Cook was lying senseless on the floor. Stooping over her, Katie touched her, and said, ‘Wake up, Florrie, wake up! I must leave you now.’ Miss Cook then woke and tearfully entreated Katie to stay a little time longer. ‘My dear, I can’t; my work is done. God bless you,’ Katie replied, and then continued speaking to Miss Cook. For several minutes the two were conversing with each other, till at last Miss Cook’s tears prevented her speaking. Following Katie’s instructions, I then came forward to support Miss Cook, who was falling to the floor, sobbing hysterically. I looked round, but the white-robed Katie had gone.”

This passage, quoted from *Animism and Spiritism*, page 121, is given to disprove the theory current among those who will resort to the most extravagant notions to avoid admitting survival. The particular passage referred to from the works of M. Sudre is as under:

“It is therefore logical to conclude that all the phenomena of materialisation proceed from this cause—(ideo-plasty combined with metagnomic prosopo-pesis), from inanimate objects and the clothing of phantoms, up to the most complete images. The resemblances which these last may present with persons who have lived, comes from the memory of the medium or from that of the assistants.” (p. 299 *Introduction à la Metapsychique Humaine*.)

To such absurd lengths will reluctance to accept undesirable conclusions carry a man who ‘does not wish to believe.’

⁴ Should read: Miss Florence Marryat (1837-1899), later becoming Mrs. Ross-Church.

The most conclusive proofs of survival will be found in this book by Bozzano which I should advise everyone to read. Among these proofs, one of the best is the excellent summary of the experiments by Mrs. Willett and Mrs. Verrall which lasted for eighteen months before their purpose became clear. The analysis and details will be found in Vol. xxxix of the *Proceedings S.P.R.* related by Lord Balfour. All who are not contented with empty verbal expressions and elaborate Greek terms, taking these for scientific demonstration, will come to the same conclusions as did Lord Balfour. We may well ask ourselves what more could be demanded from defunct personalities by way of proof of their spiritual existence dependent of the medium. From the very beginning of metapsychical research up to the present day, defunct personalities have furnished all the proofs the human mind can imagine or demand. They invent a new and unexpected system of the greatest efficacy, not suggested to them, but invented by themselves, who, having been during their lives interested in metapsychic investigation, and knowing well the gratuitous and often contradictory hypotheses invented by sceptics, endeavour to surmount these by inventing new and ingenious proofs, of which this example is but one of a thousand.

Again and again we find the old objections repeated as if never replied to—that the “spirits” give nothing new on Physics and Chemistry; that they only talk trivialities; that they are futile, &c. &c. The plain purpose of these manifestations is to reveal the Continuity of Life by evidence to our material senses. Why should they, who have passed beyond all matter as we know it, trouble themselves about our changing speculations? Would they be believed if they did?

They make the Appearances of Jesus credible in this materialistic age. They show that the enlarged faculties of the soul in the after-death state enable the discarnate to see at a glance the character of all whom they meet; and they show that the incarnate soul, even in the body of flesh, has foregleams of its higher destiny. They abolish the fear of death. Is this trivial? or futile? If sceptics would read with open minds and consider the evidence impartially, the answer would be plain.

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Paul Gaunt comments:

We can note in the above article “It has always been a matter for regret that with the exception of two or three single heads, all the forty-four negatives taken by Sir William Crookes, O.M., F.R.S., were destroyed after his death ...”.

A recent book *William Crookes (1832-1919) and the Commercialization of Science*, a 500 page biography by Professor William H. Brock,⁵ states “Crookes was extremely protective of the set of Katie Cook photographs,” and suggests, (referring to the above article) it was “most likely” the original photographs were destroyed by James Gardiner, Crookes’ laboratory assistant,⁶ – ‘who considered that all memorials of his devotion to psychic research would damage his scientific reputation’ (Brock p 192).

Brock further comments on a life-size portrait of Katie King, painted for Crookes in 1874 by J. Hawkins Simpson. The story was later published by James J. Morse in his *Spiritual Review* London,⁷ in May 1901. Simpson’s portrait of Katie King was painted from Crookes photographs, as the artist himself never witnessed Katie King’s materialised form. The painting has not survived. The *Spiritual Review* article is reprinted in *Psypioneer*, November 2005.⁸

Brock, also gives on page 192 this footnote (42):

“According to Simpson, Crookes had told W. T. Stead that he had accidentally destroyed the packet containing *all* his negatives and prints of Katie, so that the 22 copies in his possession (19 paper prints and 3 glass prints, one of which was in stereo) were all that survived. Simpson had been allowed to keep these on condition that he did not print or publicly exhibit them. Simpson was in no doubt that the photographs proved that Florence and Katie were quite different in appearance and stature. See discussion (and one photograph) in Fournier d’Albe (1908).”

Having only internet access to Brock’s book, I have been unable to directly match this reference; and it does not appear in *New Light on Immortality* by Fournier d’Albe 1908.⁹ There is no mystery that Crookes photographed Katie King at Mornington Road, and he

⁵ William Crookes: A Major Reconsideration

⁶ “... who had worked with him for nearly 40 years, ...” (Brock xvi).

⁷ First issue published May 1900.

⁸ Volume 1, No.19:—*A life-size portrait of ‘Katie King’*, pages 252-254:—
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/19.PSYPIONEERFoundedbyLesliePrice.pdf>

⁹ Read on line or download:—<http://archive.org/details/newlightonimmort00fourrich> (Edmund Edward, 1868-1933)

had forty-four negatives leading up to her final farewell séance on May 21, 1874 which is published in Sir William Crookes, *Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism* (1874).

The article *The Last of Katie King – The Photographing of Katie King by the Aid of the Electric Light*, was first published in *The Spiritualist*, June 5, 1874. Another reference can be found in *Mr. Sludge, The Medium: Being the Life and Adventures of Daniel Dunglas Home*, by Horace Wyndham (1890-1916), published by Geoffrey Bles, London, 1937. On page 257: he writes, it was Crookes himself who had “subsequently destroyed these photographs and forbidden their reproduction”.

What happened to the negatives is relatively unimportant, but we can note in William Stead’s *Borderland* Volume IV., No.2 April 1897 pages 124-132 “Professor Crookes” (p. 128) Stead states:

“I had hoped to have been able to reproduce some of these Katie photographs, but, alas! Mr. Crookes tells me they were all accidentally destroyed some years ago.”

Presumably, there would have been prints available in Crookes’ private circle of friends. We can note in the above article that Kate Selina Cook (Florence’s elder sister and also a medium), made copies for Frederick William Hayes. Nandor Fodor, in his *Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science* (Citadel Press, 1966 p71) states: “He never allowed the circulation of the photograph in which he stood arm-in-arm with Katie King.” Some reports state that none of Crookes photographs were published in his lifetime. When the above article, along with the publication of the four Crookes photographs appeared for the *first* time in April 1934, *Psychic News* also reproduced these by courtesy of *Psychic Science*. Surprisingly, the captions with the large reproduction photographs printed on page 7 (April 21st) are changed! Plate 2, now states: “Katie King standing beside her medium, whose comparative bulk, always described by Crookes, is obvious.” This shows confusion presumably by the paper’s editor Maurice Barbanell. Florence never sat as part of the circle with Crookes and always used a cabinet (Crookes library). During the photographic séances showing both medium and the alleged Katie King together the medium’s head is concealed with a shawl.

There are some valuable studies of the story of William Crookes, Florence Cook, and Katie King. The first, *The Spiritualists* by Trevor H. Hall, published in 1962, caused a stream of protests from those involved as an attack on William Crookes character. For research purposes however, it gives a biased but referenced overview of the story with some unpublished correspondence. In 1960, Hall accessed the Charles Blackburn file from the Spiritualists’ National Union (SNU), then headquartered at Britten House, Tib Lane, Manchester. Housed in the Britten Memorial Library, the file of unsorted correspondence had been given to Britten Memorial Library on the advice of former SNU president Ernest Oaten for safe keeping in 1946 by Lillian Dixon, a niece of Captain Edward Elgie Corner, (died 1928 age 83), who had married Florence Cook (1874).

Following Florence's death in 1904,¹⁰ he married her sister Kate Selina (1859-1923) in October 1907.

Another valuable well-documented study was undertaken, partly in response to Trevor Hall's conclusions by Mr R.G. Medhurst, and Mrs Kathleen M. Goldney: *William Crookes and the Physical Phenomena of Mediumship* published as the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Volume 54, Part 195, March 1964.

In the Appendix of "Crookes's 'Katie King' Photographs" on page 149, we find this interesting piece:

"It has never been clear what motivated Crookes in withholding publication of the 'Katie' photographs during his lifetime. What have survived are a few, poor quality prints of obscure origin. His attitude to publication is expressed, but not explained, in a letter to a Captain T. D. Williams, written on August 4, 1874. The original was in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Psychic Museum,¹¹ and was probably lost when most of the contents were destroyed by flood. It reads:

"It was at the express wish of Katie King and is also that of Miss Cook and myself that the photographs I took should be kept strictly private and only given to intimate friends. If, however, you will not allow the picture to be circulated or copied in any way, and will consider it quite private, I shall have great pleasure in begging your acceptance of the one I enclose."

Crookes does give some photographic details in *The Spiritualist* (1869-1882), on June 5, 1874 and later published in his *Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism* as previously alluded to:

"During the week before Katie took her departure she gave séances at my house almost nightly to enable me to photograph her by artificial light. Five complete sets of photographic apparatus were accordingly fitted up for the purpose, consisting of five cameras, one of the whole-plate size, one half-plate, one quarter-plate, and two binocular stereoscopic cameras, which were all brought to bear upon Katie at the same time on each occasion on which she stood for her portrait. Five sensitising and fixing baths were used, and plenty of plates were cleaned ready for use in advance, so that there might be no hitch or delay during the photographing operations, which were performed by myself, aided by one assistant."

¹⁰ Psypioneer Volume 8, No.3:—*Transition of Mrs. Corner – Light*, pages 99-101:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP8.3March2012.pdf>

¹¹ See Psypioneer Volume 5, No.5:—*The World's Happiest Museum – Through a Room of Miracles with Sir A. Conan Doyle*, by Leonard Crocombe, pages 136-145:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.5May09.pdf>

But details of the photographic images and the amount of printable material from the forty-four negatives are unknown. Crookes stated: “Altogether I have forty-four negatives, some inferior, some indifferent, and some excellent”. He gives details of only two of the photographs:

1).

“On entering the cabinet Miss Cook lies down upon the floor, with her head on a pillow, and is soon entranced. During the photographic *séance*, Katie muffled her medium’s head up in a shawl to prevent the light falling upon her face. I frequently drew the curtain on one side when Katie was standing near, and it was a common thing for the seven or eight of us in the laboratory to see Miss Cook and Katie at the same time, under the full blaze of the electric light. We did not on these occasions actually see the face of the medium because of the shawl, but we saw her hands and feet; we saw her move uneasily under the influence of the intense light, and we heard her moan occasionally. I have one photograph of the two together, but Katie is seated in front of Miss Cook’s head.

2).

One of the most interesting of the pictures is one in which I am standing by the side of Katie; she has her bare foot upon a particular part of the floor. Afterwards I dressed Miss Cook like Katie, placed her and myself in exactly the same position, and we were photographed by the same cameras, placed exactly as in the other experiment, and illuminated by the same light. When these two pictures are placed over each other, the two photographs of myself coincide exactly as regards stature, etc., but Katie is half a head taller than Miss Cook, and looks a big woman in comparison with her. In the breadth of her face, in many of the pictures, she differs essentially in size from her medium, and the photographs show several other points of difference.”

As for the actual sitters in Crookes séances we know little. He often refers to the sitters as “those of our friends,” “seven or eight of us ...” etc. Crookes we note acted as photographer, “aided by one assistant.” Trevor Hall suggests in *The Spiritualists* this aid may have been Dr James Manby Gully (1808-1883). He is reported by some to have witnessed the experimental séances with Crookes, and appears in two photographs. One of these photographs is plate 4, and published in the above article. These photographs are the only connection between Crookes and Gully I have found – yet Gully is not mentioned in any of accounts by Crookes, nor does he appear to be personally associated with him in any way, except to say they probably met at the Hackney séances. Hall states “that he must have been present during some of the Mornington Road sittings ...” which makes sense, as he appears on the photographs. However, Crookes clearly states “having been very successful in taking numerous photographs of Katie King”, apart from the other two photographs previously mentioned. It is puzzling he makes no comments as to the sitters who appear on the photographs with Katie King, unless they asked for their identities to be withheld—which would be strange as some were well known Spiritualists.

With such little information and clarification, how do we know what was actually photographed by Crookes? We can reasonably assume that during Crookes' lifetime his photographs were for private circulation only, and not published. If so, this would mean that none of Crookes' photographs were published before his death on April 4 1919.

While earlier researching Professor William H. Brock's Fournier d'Albe (1908) reference, *New Light on Immortality* I found this photograph on page 232. We can note it was published in 1908, and is a cropped version (cutting out the two sitters one of which is Dr. Gully) of Hayes plate 4 of our article claiming; the four photographs were taken at Sir William Crookes' house by himself and published for the first time in 1934, around eleven years before the death of William Crookes!

It is usually assumed that all photographs of "Katie King" are part of Crookes' private collection. We can note quite clearly the cabinet behind the alleged materialisation, and we can see on the four photographs the sitters appear to be facing away from the cabinet, this is suggestive that the photographs were not taken at Mornington Road as the article states.



A PHOTOGRAPH OF "KATIE KING"
Taken in the presence of Dr. Gully

Note Crookes' comments on the photographic séances setup:



"My library was used as a dark cabinet. It has folding doors opening into the laboratory; one of these doors was taken off its hinges, and a curtain suspended in its place to enable Katie to pass in and out easily. Those of our friends who were present were seated in the laboratory facing the curtain, and the cameras were placed a little behind them, ready to photograph Katie when she came outside, and to photograph anything also inside the cabinet whenever the curtain was withdrawn for the purpose."

It is my opinion that these two photographs, which can be found on websites, articles, and some publications are the actual photographs taken by Crookes at Mornington Road, and are part of the original collection he endorsed and circulated to his intimate friends like Captain T. D. Williams as noted previously. We can also note Epes Sargent's remarks:¹²

¹² Taken from: — *The Proof Palpable of Immortality; Being an Account of the Materialization Phenomena of Modern Spiritualism*, published by Colby and Rich, Boston, 1875 page 107.

“During the week before Katie took her departure, she gave séances at Mr. Crookes’s house almost nightly, to enable him to photograph her by artificial light. In a letter dated July 21st, 1874, and enclosing two photographs, he writes me:

“You may be interested in seeing one of my photographs of Katie, as she stood holding my arm; also one in which she is standing by herself.” In the former of these the person of Katie, nearly to her ankles, dressed in her white robe, is taken; in the other, not quite so much of the figure is seen. In both photographs, the drapery is gracefully disposed; the countenance is placid, and the features finely formed, though it might not require much imagination to discover in their general expression a spectral look; the figure has all the distinctness of a veritable human being, there being nothing shadowy in the outlines.”



What is not generally recorded is the fact that Crookes was not the only person to photograph the alleged “Katie King”. In Psypioneer September 2010 we published the first likeness of alleged spirit “Annie Owen de Morgan,” better known as “Katie King.”

Below is published the short article and portrait:



“A series of four sittings were held to photograph the spirit of “Katie King.” The experimental efforts were successful: it is claimed that the engraving:—“... is about as faithful a copy as wood-cutting can give, of one of the photographs obtained on Wednesday night, last week. In the photograph itself the features are more detailed and beautiful, and there is an expression of dignity and ethereality in the face, which is not fully represented in the engraving, which, however, has been executed as nearly as possible with scientific accuracy, by an artist of great professional skill.”

“The original photograph was taken by magnesium light on Wednesday 7th May 1873. All the photographs were taken by the founder editor of *The Spiritualist*, William H. Harrison.

“The image and quote is taken from *The Spiritualist*, May 15, 1873 page 200.

“Were the actual photographs ever published? The photographs at the time were in the possession of Mr. Tapp, the engraving was cut by Mr. John Swain, and drawing from the photograph was made upon the wood by Mr. Frederick Winter.”

William Henry Harrison (1841-1897),¹³ was probably one of the most experienced sitters with Florence Cook covering at least two years of the teenage medium during her stages of development to full materialisation, and he was the first to obtain photographs of the alleged materialised figure “Katie King”. In May 1873, Harrison by magnesium light successfully obtained a series of photographic images as the form emerged from the cabinet walked about the room, conversed with the sitters who sat in a semi-circle in front of the cabinet. One of the more frequent sitters was a Dr. James M. Gully.¹⁴ In his testimony to Epes Sargent on July 20 1874 he states:

“When that photograph* was taken, I held her hand for at least two minutes,¹⁵ three several times, for we sat three times for it on one and the same evening; but I was constrained to close my eyes by reason of the intense magnesium light which shone upon me; she desired that none of us gaze at her whilst the lens was directed upon her.”

* “The well-known published photograph, in which Katie is represented standing with Dr. Gully sitting at her side and holding her hand.” (Sargent P54-55)

It should be noted there is some error with some of Sargent’s dates using 1874, rather than 1873 – for example he dates the William Volckman seizure of Florence as December 1874, in fact it was 1873.¹⁶ It is more likely the above report should be dated 1873.

William Harrison’s series of four photographic séances began on May 5 1873, ‘a dress rehearsal’ only obtaining faint pictures.¹⁷ In a signed statement,¹⁸ like Crookes’ later

¹³ New research information on William Harrison by Marc Demarest:—
<http://ehbritten.blogspot.co.uk/2012/06/william-henry-harrison-1841-1897.html>

¹⁴ James Manby Gully:—http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Manby_Gully

¹⁵ There are numerous references and speculations that Dr. Gully is taking Katie King’s pulse in this photograph. In Dr. Gully’s testimony to Epes Sargent it seems not to be the case.

¹⁶ *Psypioneer* Vol. 6, No.7:—*William Volckman – Paul J. Gaunt*, pages 185-195 continues over the next two issues:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.7.July2010.pdf>

¹⁷ May 5, faint pictures, May 7, four pictures one used for the engraving, May 12, four more photographs, May 28, four more photographs. Making a total of twelve photographs, taken by William Harrison in May 1873.

photographs, Harrison's photographic séance procedure is outlined. We can note from this:

"Katie usually leaned on the shoulder of Mr. Luxmoore, and stood up to be focused several times ..." (Sargent p98)

It should be noted to save any confusion reading the reports, that there were three farewell séances according to Harrison, starting on Wednesday May 13, the next on May 16, and the final séance on May 21 1874, Crookes attending all three.¹⁹ Just prior to these dates there was another farewell séance, which was attended by Benjamin Coleman. Held on May 9th, Sargent writes (P102) of my friend Mr Coleman: "He took from his pocket a photograph; Katie received it from his hands, and exclaimed, "This is Dr. Gully and my likeness. What do you want me to do with it?" "Write," said Mr. Coleman, "your name, and any message ..." Crookes was again present at this séance. A report of the final séance is also given by Harrison, and he notes who was present: Mr Crookes, Mrs Corner, Mrs Ross-Church, Mr W. H. Harrison, Mr G. R. Tapp, Mr and Mrs Cook and family, and the servant Mary (Cook residence). Much of these reports can be read on line in *New Light on Immortality* by Fournier d'Albe 1908²⁰ as previously cited.

On concluding my research, I consulted a scarce book, *The Critics' Dilemma*, which was privately published in 1966 by Eric J. Dingwall (1890-1986). Dingwall was a former research officer for the Society for Psychical Research (SPR). He wrote various books on psychical research, sometimes co-authored with Harry Price and Trevor Hall etc. In 1967, Maurice Barbanell referred to him as "The greatest expert on this subject in the world today."²¹

Although his references are a bit vague and his enquiry brief, he comes to a similar conclusion as myself albeit by a different route about the famous photograph of Dr. Gully holding Katie King's hand, which is reproduced in Harry Price's book *Fifty Years of Psychical Research* (1939).

¹⁸ Statement is undated but referring to May 7 1873, four photographs were taken - signed by: Amelia Corner (Florence's future mother-in-law), Caroline Corner, J. C. Luxmoore, G. R. Tapp, and William Harrison.

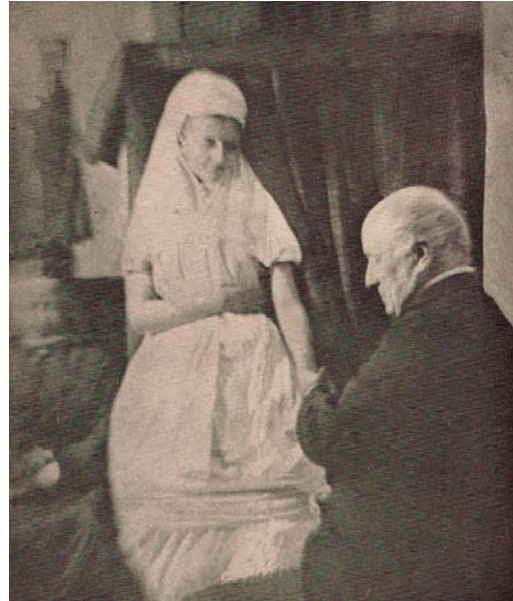
¹⁹ All farewell, and the final Katie King séance on May 21, 1874, took place at Hackney, not at Crookes' residence as some reports suggest.

²⁰ Read online or download:—<http://archive.org/details/newlightonimmort00fourrich> (Edmund Edward Fournier D'Albe, 1868-1933)

²¹ Eric John Dingwall:—<http://www.answers.com/topic/eric-john-dingwall#ixzz221HeyVzm>

Dingwall states:

“Now, if the reproduction in Price’s book be examined it will be seen that the background shows features so similar to those published by Mr. G. Hayes that it can hardly be denied that they were taken in the same place. For instance, note the falling curtain flap just behind and to the right of Katie’s head in the Price reproduction and in Nos. 1 and 4 of the Hayes photographs, together with the jagged edge made by the same flap as seen in Price and Hayes Plate 4. [...] Again, in Hayes’ Plate 1 Katie appears to be resting against the shoulder of the gentleman



to the left, and I suggest that this sitter is Mr. J. C. Luxmoore since in both the two series of sittings in May, 1873, Katie was in the habit of leaning on that gentleman’s shoulder. Indeed, in his account of the sitting when such a photograph was taken Luxmoore stated that in one of the photographs one half of his own face could be seen at one side of the picture. This can be compared with Hayes’ Plate 1 where one half of the face of a sitter on whom Katie seems to be leaning is out of focus and somewhat obscured.

“It is for these reasons that I suggest that the famous picture of Dr. Gully holding Katie’s hand was not taken by Crookes at Mornington Road but by Harrison at Hackney in 1873. Moreover, Dr. Gully himself when discussing what was apparently this very photograph stated that it was taken by magnesium light, which corresponds with the method used by Harrison.”

To conclude:

This exercise has, from all the various avenues and leads, brought to light some interesting results which have shown that most of the well-known materialisation photographs of “Katie King,” are almost certainly *not* from Sir William Crookes’ private collection as most of our references’ for the last eighty years or so have led us to believe—but were taken prior to Crookes’ photographic séances, by the editor of *The Spiritualist*, William Henry Harrison.

Briefly to summarise: we know that in May 1873 Harrison had a total of twelve photographs, as referred to in footnote 17. This is a full year previous to Crookes’

photographic séances in the following May 1874. Reports, photographic techniques, and additional information clearly separate them.

Crookes took his photographs when “during the week before Katie took her departure she gave séances at my house almost nightly to enable me to photograph her by artificial light”. He details his photographic setup, and limited details of the images he records. Reports lead us to believe he kept all his photographs for private circulation, and not for publication which fits in with this research e.g., writing personal inscriptions on the photographs. It is my understanding that there are probably around eleven or twelve surviving images (some additional photographs are cropped images of other photographs); nine of these can be viewed online for convenience on the old ‘Survival After Death’ site.²²

This number is made up from:

- 1). Four Hayes images (as reproduced in this article)
- 2). Dr. Gully holding the hand of Katie King (as reproduced in this article)
- 3). Katie King standing by the curtain (as reproduced in this article)
- 4). Crookes and Katie King (as reproduced in this article)
- 5). Crookes and Katie King
- 6). Katie King and Florence Cook photographed together

1 & 2, are I believe taken by William Harrison in May 1873 for reasons outlined above. What caused me to look further into the Hayes article was “why were all the sitters not looking at the materialisation – they are all looking away?” My research lead me to this statement: “The only stipulation Katie made throughout was, that the sitters would not stare fixedly at her whilst she stood for her photograph.”²³ I wondered also, who the man was in Hayes Plate 1 with Katie leaning on his shoulder while posing for her picture, in the same report “Katie usually leaned on the shoulder of Mr. Luxmoore,²⁴ and stood up to be focused several times, ...” These quotes are from the séance on Wednesday 7 May 1873,

²² See:—<http://www.survivalafterdeath.info/photographs.htm>

²³ *The Spiritualist* May 15, 1873 pages 200-203 and *The Proof Palpable of Immortality*, by Epes Sargent pages 97-99, 1875

²⁴ John Chave Luxmoore (1803c-1881) was a wealthy spiritualist, prior to moving to London he was a country magistrate at Alphington, Devon. It was at this time he discovered mesmerism, and in the mid-1840s Luxmoore was recorded in *Zoist* as healing through mesmerism.

that the engraving was also taken from and reproduced in this article. We can also note on Hayes Plate 3 a striking resemblance between the photograph and the engraving.

We can clearly see the materialisation cabinet in the pictures, especially in the one with Dr. Gully holding Katie King's hand. Probably the Psychic Science images are the best quality but they are slightly cropped, which is not the case in this image. In Harrison's photographic séances it is stated that Florence Cook's (old) cabinet is placed in the corner of the room, Crookes did not use a portable cabinet but a curtain across the door leading to his library. While on the subject of this photograph we know it was in general circulation by 1875. We also know this photograph was taken by "magnesium light" not used by Crookes.²⁵ Other details like "The cabinet doors were placed open, and shawls hung across ..." all lead to the Hayes photographs being taken by William Harrison in May 1873.

3 & 4, I believe are prints of the actual Crookes photographs; they fully fit with what was detailed by Crookes himself.

5, or other similar pictures may be Crookes' comparison photograph/s; no research has as yet been done. However, this website has done some work in a comparison photograph which is interesting:²⁶

"Afterwards I dressed Miss Cook like Katie, placed her and myself in exactly the same position, and we were photographed by the same cameras, placed exactly as in the other experiment, and illuminated by the same light. When these two pictures are placed over each other, the two photographs of myself coincide exactly as regards stature, etc., but Katie is half a head taller than Miss Cook, and looks a big woman in comparison with her. In the breadth of her face, in many of the pictures, she differs essentially in size from her medium, and the photographs show several other points of difference."

6, again no research has been carried out on this but does not fit in with Crookes description:

"On entering the cabinet Miss Cook lies down upon the floor, with her head on a pillow, and is soon entranced. During the photographic *séance*, Katie muffled her medium's head up in a shawl to prevent the light falling upon her face. I frequently drew the curtain on one side when Katie was standing near, and it was a

²⁵ Crookes states the artificial lighting he used during the photographic séances, as being electric light: "*The Last of Katie King – The Photographing of Katie King by the Aid of the Electric Light*" published in *The Spiritualist*, June 5, 1874 & his *Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism* (1874).

²⁶ This can be translated into English text:—<http://www.ceticismoaberto.com/fortianismo/1969/florence-cook-katie-king-a-garota-que-era-sua-propria-fantasma-adendo>

common thing for the seven or eight of us in the laboratory to see Miss Cook and Katie at the same time, under the full blaze of the electric light.

We did not on these occasions actually see the face of the medium because of the shawl, but we saw her hands and feet; we saw her move uneasily under the influence of the intense light, and we heard her moan occasionally. I have one photograph of the two together, but Katie is seated in front of Miss Cook's head."



Finally:

The day after Katie King's *final* séance with Florence Corner, we find another report in a handwritten notelet from Florence, headed with her logo F.E.C.,²⁷ giving her Hackney address, to Charles Blackburn, dated May 22. Although now married she signs the letter Florence E Cook I quote:²⁸

"I am so sorry she has gone. I am dreadfully lonely without her. My only consolation is that we have some splendid photos. She tried very hard to get herself & me taken together but directly the light was turned on me I began to kick and fight so Mr. Crookes has only partially succeeded. He has got a bit of me."

Florence continues in her letter with another reference to photographs, which is confusing:

"I called on Burns. He said that he had no idea that we did not wish the photographs to be sold and that they had been sent to him from Paris along with others. I suppose the photographer had sent them. I have not given any away."

This would not fit in with Crookes' circulation of his photographs as noted in this article, for him to just randomly send his private photographs to a journalist (James Burns' founder editor of the *Medium and Daybreak*) without instruction, and Florence would not be referring to Crookes as "the photographer". We know the William Harrison photographs were taken a year earlier than Crookes. There were issues between Harrison and Burns and it is doubtful he would send Burns photographs especially a year later, and why from Paris when they both resided in London?

²⁷ Florence was lucky after her marriage in 1874 to Edward Elgie Corner: her initials remained the same!

²⁸ This letter is archived in the Britten Memorial Museum, at the Arthur Findlay College, Stansted Hall: — BMT 712: Exhibit BP. 12.

Who was in Paris around this time? Florence regularly wrote to Blackburn so the news would be fairly recent. Maybe, the photographs are of Florence as she was becoming a well-known medium. Burns did sell photographs of the various mediums at his Spiritual Institution.

Paul J. Gaunt.

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SPIRITUALIST CAMPS

John Patrick Deveney: *Free Love, Universal Reform and Fraud: The Economics and Transformation of American Spiritualist Camp-Meetings in the Nineteenth Century*²⁹

J. P. Deveney³⁰ has produced an evocative survey of Spiritualist camp meetings in nineteenth-century America. In so doing, he has expertly avoided the academic cliché that to write of Spiritualism is necessarily to write about mediumship; this account treats Spiritualism as an important social movement in the history of nineteenth-century American progressive thought. As such, it is a welcome alternative to the typical scholarly probing of the movement for its religious doubts, unresolved bereavements, and repressed sexualities. Instead, the central theme of Deveney's work is Spiritualism's development from a radical, "this-worldly" reformist movement to, in the author's words, a "curious minor Protestant sect" that hoped for betterment in the future as opposed to radical change in the present.



The work is grounded by an investigative study of the growth, success, and decline of various individual Spiritualist camp communities. From his considerable collection of sources, Deveney creates a colourful impression of the life of these camps, studded with many gems of historical observation. As he describes it, American Spiritualists travelled to the scenic hinterlands in search of spiritual community; reformist and radical discussion was the dominant feature of these gatherings, and mediumship was not the central or even an encouraged theme. Yet it was hardly possible to entirely disassociate mediumship from any Spiritualist event, and Deveney describes the jumbled retinue of mediums, psychics, and clairvoyants who attended these camps and plied their trade, though sometimes at a regulation distance. Deveney pays particularly close attention to the economics of the camps, both in terms of their income and profit as well as the economic (and sometimes predatory) aspect of performative mediumship.

²⁹ Theosophical History Occasional Papers Vol. XIII, 111 pages, \$27.00., available from:—www.theohistory.org Arrangements can be made to pay in sterling. Contact:—jsantucci@Exchange.fullerton.edu.

³⁰ Photograph of John Patrick Deveney: by kind permission of Colyn Boyce of the Theosophical Society.

Of all contemporary reformist issues, one stands out in Deveney's analysis: the push for free love. Deveney suggests that Spiritualist radicals eventually pushed their support of free love too far, prompting a backlash against the various reformists who had dominated the early life of the camps, and, consequently, the intellectual development of the Spiritualist movement. In putting together this narrative of reform, Deveney identifies numerous individual thinkers, speakers, and activists, and he considers carefully the influence of important periodicals such as *Banner of Light* and the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*. The reader gains a clear sense of the emerging conflict between spiritualism and liberalism, a contest played out in the organisation of the Spiritualist camps as various figures competed to lead and direct the Spiritualist movement.

As a result of their ostracisation, even the most radical seemed willing to return to a moderate position in order to win back support and escape exile from the camps, which were invaluable opportunities to present ideas to large gatherings of American Spiritualists. As attempts to start new camps rarely seemed to produce the desired results, the usual result was the watering down and even repudiation of radical ideas in order to regain acceptance. Deveney concludes that by the end of the nineteenth century, Spiritualism had lost its reformist fire, though it still paid "lip service" to earlier convictions. In one footnote, Deveney observes an ugly devolution in attitudes towards black Americans that seems particularly telling of a change in attitude. Combining all these themes—the economic challenges of the camps, the earnest but thwarted drive for progressive reform, and the inevitable cases of fraudulent mediumship — Deveney thus deftly spins a convincing account of a radical movement whose energies were gradually suppressed by the emergence of philosophical contradictions and concessions. From a progressive point of view, it is difficult to read this as anything less than a narrative of decline.

One of the apparent features of this declension is an eventual turn towards "occultism" or "New Thought": briefly put, the gradual dissolution of a specifically Spiritualist temperament into the more individualist-oriented, metaphysically noncommittal attitude that is commonly identified with the twentieth-century New Age, but which of course long predates it. Again, the economics of the camps play a role in this shift: Deveney suggests that they became forums for the sale of esoteric techniques (and, presumably, apparatus) that enabled psychic and occult methods of self-discovery. As with the fraudulent camp-followers, this trend further contributed to an increasing disaffection for the camps. Furthermore, as Spiritualism made its shift towards a form of religiosity, the camps began to focus upon producing a "generalized religious sentiment" in a sacral gathering space. These two new characters of the camp, as occult clearing-houses and prayerful sites of worship, are in sharp contrast to its earlier role as the forum for progressive discussion and volatile lectures (and, perhaps, free love.)

It must be said that this is quite a pessimistic piece, suggesting the diminishment of a once-vital movement into a mere shadow of its fiery former self; the final quotation, from Annie Lord, suggests a decayed, deflated camp offering little more than banal mediumship and faded dreams. Deveney suggests that Spiritualism, while an early bastion for social reform, became increasingly viewed as eccentric and irrational by

mainstream progressives. Once it had purged itself of whatever reformist spirit it may still have had, the inevitable conclusion is that Spiritualism entered the twentieth century as an entirely impotent progressive movement. I wonder whether further research might alter or confirm this characterisation; to my knowledge, there has never been a study of the way in which twentieth-century Spiritualists engaged with pressing social and cultural issues of the century. Did Spiritualists, following their beliefs, involve themselves in such issues as peace movement, second-wave feminism, and gay liberation? Did they content themselves with waiting for spiritual utopia, or even oppose these new waves of progressive thought?

Needless to say, it is the mark of fine scholarship that a study of nineteenth-century camp gatherings can inspire questions ranging well beyond its immediate subject matter. Any reader interested in the history of progressive thought and organisation in nineteenth-century America will appreciate this thoughtful, critical short piece.

Ben McDonald is a doctoral candidate in History at the University of Melbourne. His thesis considers the representation of death, grief, and mourning in twentieth-century psychic and occult thought.

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DEPUTATION

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

J.R. CLYNES, M.P.
(HOME SECRETARY)

BY THE UNITED

Spiritualist Organisations

[Note by LP: We are publishing below the official printed minutes of the 1930 official deputation seeking a change in the law of England. This was one of the last of many services by Conan Doyle to the Movement, as he passed on 7 July. The major contribution was made by Ernest Oaten, whom we have often featured, and who later was again called upon when there was a broadcast about Spiritualism, and an Anglican inquiry into the subject. One organization – the LSA – was conspicuously absent from the deputation, for reasons explained in our July 2006 issue.³¹ Paul Gaunt has been preparing a special study of the law as it was applied to mediums over the years, until the law was changed in 1951.]

HELD AT THE

Home Office, Whitehall, S.W.I

ON

Tuesday, 1st July, 1930.

³¹ *New light on the final days of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, Pages 139-147:—
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP2.7July06.pdf>

THE HOME SECRETARY was accompanied by
SIR ERNLEY BLACKWELL, K.C.B.,
ARTHUR LOCKE Esq, C.B.E.,
C.D. CAREW ROBINSON, Esq, and
F.A. NEWSAM, Esq. (Private Secretary).

The Deputation was introduced by MR. KELLY, M.P. (Rochdale)

The Deputation consisted of:

THE SPIRITUALIST INTERNATIONAL WORLD FEDERATION:
Sir Arthur and Lady Conan Doyle (Honorary President), Mr E. W. Oaten (President).

THE SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL UNION:
Mr E.W. Oaten (Editor of "The Two Worlds"), Mr Hannen Swaffer (Journalist), Mr
G.F. Berry (General Secretary), Mr J.M. Stewart (Treasurer).

THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF PSYCHIC SCIENCE:
Mrs Champion De Crespigny (Honorary Principal), Rev. Drayton Thomas.

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATIONS:
Rev. George Vale Owen.

THE SPIRITUALIST COMMUNITY SERVICES:
Mrs St. Clair Stobart.

THE MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE:
Mr. George Craze (President), Mr F. Hawken (Secretary).

JEWISH SPIRITUALIST SOCIETIES: Mr M. Barbanell.

INDEPENDENT SPIRITUALISTS:
Lady M. Molesworth, Miss Lind-Af-Hageby (Founder of Animal Defence and Anti-
Vivisection Society), Mr R.H. Saunders and Mr E. W. Lancaster.

THE HOME SECRETARY: I think you had better begin, Mr. Kelly.

MR KELLY: Mr. Home Secretary and Gentlemen, this is a Deputation that has been arranged by correspondence, to see you with regard to what is a very real grievance. In introducing the Deputation, I am not going to deal with the subject, but I will leave that to those who are well acquainted with it. I do introduce this Deputation in the confidence that probably one has not felt with any other Deputation when introduced. Some of us, and I think you know them, have been fighting for freedom to profess whatever one's conscience may dictate; we have gone further than that, we have asked for freedom to practise whatever our conscience dictates to us, and I think that is what this Deputation is asking for this morning. The first speaker will be Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and he will be followed by Mr. Oaten, who will put the main aspect of the case.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Sir Arthur, I am glad to see that you are well enough to be here, and I am sorry to hear of your recent illness.

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE: Thank you. Mr. Home Secretary and Gentlemen, we are, as you know, a Deputation representing a considerable body of people - an increasing body I may say - who feel that mediumship, whether from a scientific or a religious aspect, deserves to be treated very seriously. We realise your difficulties in dealing with the matter. Fraud and tricks are the difficulties, and are the greatest enemies we can possibly have. I assure you, and my words will be corroborated by the experienced Spiritualists present, that the real medium and the honest medium is in an enormous majority, and that these people are decent citizens who shed around them such an atmosphere of human comfort and consolation, and also a religious assurance, as no other body in the whole community does. I do not think that the most busy medical man or the forest workman can succeed in giving more happiness to the human race than a competent medium. These people, who are very delicate and sensitive creatures, are living always under the shadow of the police, and I would ask you, because here is a matter in which you can personally be of much help to us, to consider for the moment the administrative way in which the police act in these matters. It is always in the same way. They send policemen and policewomen disguised to the medium, who pretend to be in trouble and ask for consolation, and then they take out a summons against the medium. That is being an "agent provocateur," and the act, like the word, is not English it is against all our feelings and traditions. Just consider what the effect on the public would be if there was criminality in the park, and it was shown that the police had connived at the immorality; that would be an exact parallel with what occurs with us. Apart from those changes which will be presently suggested in the law, if you were to send word to the different Chief Constables from your honourable position, asking them in future to let the public who are aggrieved take action, but not the police to lay traps in this questionable manner, we think that you would go a long way towards alleviating the grievances from which these people suffer. I am not here to talk for any length of time for several reasons, but I hope by dropping that into your mind that something may come of it, and Mr. Oaten will put our case more fully before you.

MR OATEN: Mr. Clynes and Gentlemen, I have been asked to undertake the responsibility of laying our case before you, and I have taken the trouble to type it out carefully, so that you may have a very exact statement, and I shall be glad to hand this to you at the close.

The study and practice of Spiritualism and the investigation of psychical phenomena in this country dates back to about the year 1850, and is at present occupying the attention of hundreds of thousands of people in this country. There are several societies which are concerned in such investigation, study and practice; some of them working along purely religious lines, others interested only in the scientific aspects of the case, while others again make it purely a domestic matter concerned with the reuniting of family ties severed by the incident of death. These several societies are represented upon the Deputation which you have honoured us by receiving to-day. The only persons not directly represented are the mediums themselves, who have committed their case to our care.

The Deputation does not seek to justify a belief in Spiritualism, but presumes that the existence of Spiritualists as a sincere, as a religious, and as a scientific body is accepted, and therefore does not purpose at this interview putting forward arguments in justification or proof of its statements and beliefs. The Spiritualist movement exists for the investigation of psychical research and of spirit communications, whether it be for religious or scientific or moral purposes, and its investigation and practice is carried on by and through mediums who possess the psychic faculty, and through whose instrumentality occur phenomena, both of a physical type and of an inspirational type. The practice of Spiritualism is largely used for healing purposes. The scientific section of the Spiritualist movement, denominated psychical research, looks upon mediums as "the scientific apparatus" necessary for the carrying on of their investigations, and psychical research is hardly possible without the use of mediums. On the other hand, the religious section, comprising six hundred churches in the United Kingdom, looks upon mediums as the instruments through whom may come evidences of discarnate activity, and messages, and exhortations from a larger spiritual world. Whether the claim of the Spiritualist be admitted or not, it cannot be gainsaid that there are hundreds of thousands of law abiding citizens in this country who are satisfied that mediumship is a valuable asset in the experimental investigation of the human consciousness and its possibilities here and hereafter, and in their religious and moral life.

The Deputation would point out that the possession of the psychic faculty, which makes mediumship possible, is a perfectly natural and spontaneous one, which cannot be conferred upon anyone, but which is a part of the personality of susceptible persons. In a word, a medium is born, and not made, except in so far as those who possess the natural faculty may be trained, just as a musician or an artist must be trained. There is a growing recognition of the existence of this faculty, and of its value. It would not be difficult to cite cases in which the police have had recourse to mediums in cases of difficulty, and the speaker has been associated in one or two such cases. On the other hand, it would not be difficult to cite cases where medical men in times of stress and emergency have been materially aided and helped by recourse to individuals possessing the psychic faculty. We believe that the investigation made possible through mediumship is opening to scientific

study a field which will aid in defining the nature of human personality and its potentialities, while there are many of us who believe that psychical investigation can help to solve the problem of the ages, namely, the nature of death and the post mortem states of life.

Now, the Spiritualists of this country labour under material disabilities which are hindering investigation and restricting the religious freedom of the King's subjects. Under the Witchcraft Act, 1735,³² and the Vagrancy Act of 1824, mediums are liable to prosecution, and are frequently prosecuted and convicted. Section 4 of the Witchcraft Act, 1735, lays it down: "Be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that if any person shall, from and after the 24th day of June, 'pretend to exercise or use any kind of witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment, or conjuration,' or undertake to tell fortunes... every person so offending, being thereof lawfully convicted on indictment or information in that part of Great Britain called England, or on indictment or libel in that part of, Great Britain called Scotland, shall for every such offence suffer imprisonment by the space of one whole year without bail or mainprize, and once in every quarter of the said year in some market town of the proper county on the market day there stand openly on the pillory by the space of one hour, and also shall (if the Court by which such judgment shall be given shall think fit) be obliged to give sureties for his or her good behaviour in such sum, and for such time, as the said Court shall judge proper," etc. The Witchcraft Act virtually claims that there are no spirits, there is only pretence, and that any one claiming to hold communication with spirits is from the very nature of the case pretending. The very title of the Witchcraft Act is its own refutation, and in practice it has been superseded by the Vagrancy Act.

The Act which is generally brought into operation is the Vagrancy Act of 1824, and the decision in *Monck v. Hilton*, 1877, has very largely influenced the administration of this Act ever since. May I quote Section 4 of the Vagrancy Act, 1824: "Every person pretending or professing to tell fortunes, or using any subtle craft, means or device, by palmistry or otherwise, to deceive and impose on any of His Majesty's subjects... shall be

³² At this time it was primarily the Vagrancy Act which needed to be amended. The accused medium was not entitled to be tried by a jury, as under British law trial by jury was only applicable if the maximum sentence for any offence was beyond three months. Under the Vagrancy Act the maximum penalty was of hard labour imprisonment and *not* exceeding three months. The Witchcraft Act 1735, had not been used on any Spiritualist medium at this time, but on Wednesday January 19, 1944 Helen Duncan was arrested. Initially charged under section 4 of the Vagrancy Act and refused bail. The charge was later changed to conspiracy to defraud, but the prosecution needed to prove beyond reasonable doubt that monies had been paid to see materialised spirits. At a private meeting between prosecutors, John Maude, Henry Elam and the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) found a single clause in an obsolete statute: Section 4 of the 1735 Witchcraft Act. Charging Duncan with:—Conspiracy to contravene the Witchcraft Act 1735, she would be the first 'Spiritualist Medium' to be charged under this Act and the first to be tried by a jury, and eligible for a sentence exceeding three months, as would have been the maximum under the Vagrancy Act. Duncan to my knowledge is the only Spiritualist medium to go to prison under this act, she was sentenced to nine months imprisonment. PJG

deemed a rogue and vagabond within the true intent and meaning of this Act.” In *Monck v. Hilton* the charge was not fortune telling, but “using any subtle craft, means or device, by palmistry or otherwise.” Monck was convicted, because the justices on the bench said that there was no need to prove an attempt to deceive.

The Deputation most respectfully submits that since Spiritualism and psychical research in this country date from 1850, an Act of 1824 could not possibly have contemplated the psychical activities against which the Act is so frequently used. It is obvious from the very title, “the Vagrancy Act.” that it was intended to apply (in times far different from these) to the vagrant gipsy who went from door to door (very often back doors) imposing upon the ignorant classes, servants and suchlike, and often instilling into them superstitious fears. It must not be forgotten, sir, that these were times when the education of the masses was an unknown thing, and when pretenders who claimed strange powers struck terror into the hearts of the credulous. We are living in different times. To apply the term Vagrant and Vagabond to an individual who has a permanent residence, and is often the owner of the house in which he lives, is an anomaly which surely speaks for itself. It is obvious that such Acts were never intended to apply either to those who serve a bona fide and legally registered religious body, or to those who serve a scientific body comprising a large number of learned professors, whose investigations are conducted along purely scientific lines. It is submitted that the Vagrancy Act is an extremely difficult Act to administer. The speaker has interviewed quite a number of Chief Constables, individually, and led a deputation which waited upon the Chief Constables’ Association some years ago at the Hotel Waldorf, and a number of Chief Constables have admitted in conversation that the Act is an antiquated one, is out of date, and is difficult to administer, and should be simplified and better defined. Those are the admissions of the authorities themselves.

Again, the Act is intended to protect the public, but we would stress the fact that the Act is never put into operation save by the police, and then only through “agents provocateur.” A careful reading of the Act suggests that the police take action on the complaint of the common informer, but we ask you to note that there has never, to our knowledge, been a case in which any member of the general public has gone into court and said that he was either injured, deceived or cheated. We have no evidence that there have ever been bona fide complaints by the general public, although we have heard statements to that effect. No witnesses have ever been put into the box other than “agents provocateur” employed by the police. Without such, presumably at the instigation of unnamed persons in the background, “agents provocateur,” we are certain the authorities would have no case. Sittings are often held in private, and no one is present but the police agent and the medium. There is generally a total denial by the medium of the evidence given by the police agent, and since there are only two persons present, corroboration is virtually an impossibility, save in so far as one sitting may offer corroboration of a previous one. There is, generally, a total denial by the medium of the evidence given, but the evidence of the paid police agent is always taken, generally without corroboration. We have reason to believe that in some cases “agents provocateur” have visited mediums ten or a dozen times, and, failing to find evidence in his ordinary practice, have deliberately put leading questions to such medium for the purpose of extorting replies to questions,

and other information which would bring them within the law. This in practice is a distinct incitement to break the law.

In an earlier part of my speech I stressed the point that Spiritualism to many of us has deep and sacred religious implications. It goes without saying that such a movement, which is building up a religious organisation, has excited - I do not want to be offensive - but shall I say the antagonism, even the enmity of certain other churches. It is no secret that a "Papal Bull" has been issued by the Roman Catholic Church against its practice, and we have even reason to believe that if and when complaints have been received by the police, such complaints have often emanated from one particular church, which has been able thus to oppress others, while itself remaining unseen. We submit, sir, most respectfully, that any act which lends itself to exploitation by one religious community for the persecution of another is an unfair Act, which needs drastic revision.

Under the Act practically every form of mediumship has been declared illegal by the Courts, and the tendency is for the power of restriction to increase. In the recent Cantlon Case, the Secretary of a bona fide and legally registered organisation was prosecuted as accessory, so that the police are not only attacking the mediums, but even the Societies who employ them.³³

Thus a new weapon was forged by which the officers of any Spiritualist Association, acting in perfectly good faith, are equally liable to prosecution with the medium. The press of the whole country took note of this case, and was strong in its condemnation of the use of the police for these purposes. Several of the leading papers made it a matter for editorial comment. The exercise of mediumship is claimed by Spiritualists as a means of getting into contact with deceased friends and relatives. It must be obvious that when one enters into communication with such deceased persons, the conversation is bound to deal with either the past, the present, or the future. It is unthinkable, for instance, that a man could converse with his deceased father without that father in some degree referring to incidents in the life and prospects of his son. Such conversations, whether relating to the past or to the future, have been held to be fortune telling, no matter how great may be the evidence of the identity of the spirit one is communicating with.

I have alluded to the fact that mediumship is a natural faculty possessed by certain individuals. The Societies represented here are urgently in need of good, reliable, tested mediums, but there are hundreds of people possessing these valuable psychic faculties who refuse to use and train them, because of the stigma which attaches to mediumship under the law. These are generally the most valuable people we could have. They are people of education, sensitiveness, and culture, and these very advantages hold them back from a

³³ The Claire Frances Cantlon case in 1928 would show it was not just mediums who fell under the 1824 Vagrancy Act. The Secretary of the London Spiritualist Alliance (LSA), Miss Mercy Phillimore was charged with aiding and abetting in the offence. This resulted in the LSA paying over £800.00 in costs. Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle spoke for the defence at Westminster Police Court. The magistrate neither convicted nor acquitted Clair Cantlon and Mercy Phillimore; the decision really amounted to finding them guilty and dealing with them under the First Offenders' Act, whereby, although discharged, they were condemned to pay the costs of the case. PJG

course of action which might bring them into the Courts. It appears that we are only getting the most courageous, who are prepared to fight for moral right, or the more ignorant, or worse still, the callous who seek cheap notoriety.

We would further like to point out that several magistrates, have openly protested upon the Bench against having to put into operation an Act which they consider unfair, while several have remarked that such prosecutions were both childish and trivial. When in 1896 the first appeal of any citizen convicted under these Acts in Scotland was brought before the Scottish High Court of Justiciary in Edinburgh, Lord Young, in delivering judgment, said that he had never heard or supposed that professed fortune telling by astrology or palmistry or seership was an act of roguery or vagabondry. It was conceivable that such professional fortune tellers might commit acts of roguery or vagabondry, but if so, these acts ought to be stated and proved. So emphatic was his Lordship in his judgment that he said, "I am informed that this is the first case that has occurred during the 25 years since the Vagrancy Act was made applicable to Scotland, and I express the hope that it will be the last attempted."

We further submit that the law has been applied in such an uncertain and changeable manner that gradually every defence has been whittled away. Mr. Justice Sankey, in the *Rex v. Davies* case in 1917, held that an intention to deceive and impose on His Majesty's subjects was an essential ingredient in any offence under the Vagrancy Act. He pointed out that this essential to criminality in fortune telling had already been decided in the historic cases of *Regina v. Entwistle*, 1899, and *Penny v. Hanson*. It had previously been held in *Monck v. Hilton* that there was no need to prove intent to deceive; the very claim to communicate with spirits was in itself evidence of such intent.

Then there was the case of a Mrs. Bloodworth, who was hauled before Mr. Ralph Bankes at Battersea for professing to tell fortunes. Mr. Bankes, in giving judgment, said, "I absolutely think that the defendant believes she has the power of foretelling. Startling though the decision may be to some, I shall dismiss the case." At Brighton, Mrs. Taylor Woodall, a clairvoyant and medium engaged by a Spiritualist Church, was conducting a week's mission. During her spare time she gave clairvoyant readings in the church hall to persons desiring them. Her consultants dropped half-a-crown in the plate, and handed it over to the Pastor of the Church, Mr. J. J. Goodwin, for the benefit of the Church funds. It was not taken by Mrs. Woodall. Two women, the wife and sister of a Brighton detective, solicited readings; they came, in fact, in widow's weeds, and pretended to be in very serious trouble, and subsequently the medium was prosecuted, and these two women gave evidence. There were two different sésances, and the medium totally denied the whole of the statements. After retiring for half an hour, the Magistrates found both guilty, the medium and Mr. Goodwin, and fined them each 40s., with 20s. costs, with the alternative of 9 days' imprisonment. Mrs. Woodall at once paid her fine and costs, but Mr. Goodwin declined to do so on principle, and elected to go to prison for 9 days. He expected to be conducted to the cells, but he was told that he could go. The Court had not sufficient faith in its own judgment to carry out its sentence: as an alternative they seized his goods.

Mr. Justice Channell, in the case of *Regina v. Entwistle*, said, "I think that in order that there may be a conviction under this Statute in respect of fortune telling, it is necessary that the thing should be done in order to deceive," and this position was taken up by Mr. Justice Sankey in *Rex v. Davies*. Mr. Justice Lawrence, in another case in 1921, says, "I cannot reverse the decision on the claim that the intention to deceive was not necessarily to be proved. The act of fortune telling is an offence in itself." The fact is, that the law has been vacillating and oscillating like a pendulum from side to side over a number of years, and I submit that it is time the matter was settled by law, and not by the decisions of the Courts.

As in Biblical times there were priests and prophets, so we claim that our mediums are the prophets of the modern church, and without them the spiritual voice is silenced. The very phenomena of the Old and New Testaments, upon which the religion of this country is based, is of exactly the same nature as that of modern psychical phenomena. Yet while we are trained to believe that such phenomena are sacred when located in the past, they become illegal when indulged in in the present. There is scarcely a phase of mediumship, whether clairvoyance, psychometry, prophecy, healing, writing, or spirit messages of any description, which has not been held to be illegal, with the result that every medium who practises is liable to prosecution, however honest, however conscientious, or however genuine. I would like to say that the Spiritualists have already presented a petition to Parliament, which was signed by 40,000 signatures, praying for relief from these disabilities. That, I think, was received in February, 1928.

These are some of the legal disabilities under which we suffer as a result of the fact that mediumship is continuously held to be illegal by the Courts of this country, but dependent upon these decisions there are several civil disabilities. In Scotland, where we have a number of Spiritualist Churches, the Registrar General for Scotland has deprived the Spiritualists of the right, which they previously exercised unchallenged in common with other religious bodies, of performing marriages through and by their recognised officials and pastors. A Glasgow Registrar, to whom application was made before the performance of an intended marriage, said that if performed by a Spiritualist pastor, the marriage could not be registered, and in reply to a question in Parliament, we were merely told that we could seek redress by a test action in court. We submit that to ask a young couple entering upon life to contract the marriage tie, and then go into court for a declaration that such marriage was legal, is to risk their whole moral reputation, as in the period between their marriage and the findings of the Court they are virtually living in adultery. Surely, the legal authorities know that no young couple could be expected to face such an impossible position, and I submit most respectfully that a Parliamentary reply of that kind seems to us both callous and inconsiderate.

Again, as the result of the case in *re Hummeltenberg Beattie* and the London Spiritualist Alliance (1923, Chapter 237), it has been held that a gift by will for the purpose of training mediums is not a valid charitable gift because mediumship is illegal.

As a result of this case the Spiritualists are held to be unable to receive legacies bequeathed them when one of the objects of the gift is the training of mediums, and the Charity Commissioners have refused to recognise as a charity a Spiritualistic body which

has been established for 30 years, and which has received money, because the training of mediums has been stated in its Trust Deed as one of the objects of that body. One of the consequences of such a position is that many charitably disposed Spiritualists will not make such bequests for fear of their bequests being nullified. Our legal advisers are still in a position of uncertainty as to whether we as a body have the power to hold churches, which have been bought, built, and paid for by Spiritualists, upon religious and charitable trusts. The present position is that it is by no means certain that a religious body, consisting of 600 churches, has the right to own its own property, as trust property held by trustees for religious and charitable purposes. Cases have arisen in which the right of interment of Spiritualists in a church yard under the Burials Act of 1884 - I may not be correct as to the date, I rather think it is 1885.

MR. ROBINSON: 1880

MR. OATEN: The right has been disputed, and in one case at Sheffield we had to take the body of one of our old and faithful workers and deposit it in the grave, and walk away without either a committal service or a word of prayer.³⁴ Had our representatives insisted upon forcing the issue, there would have occurred a breach of the peace, and they, therefore (wrongly in my opinion) sacrificed their moral rights, rather than create a scene at a funeral, and disturb the public peace. We ask you to say that such treatment is intolerable. Such civil disabilities press heavily upon us, but my point is, that they all depend upon the major factor that in law mediumship is illegal.

May I call your attention to the fact that in New Zealand the Government have passed an Act of Parliament incorporating the Spiritualist Church of New Zealand, and entitling it to hold its properties, and to deal with them on the same lines as other religious bodies. In April, 1929, the Canadian National Association of Spiritualists were granted a charter which enables them to work out the full development of mediumship under their own constitution. In New York the law under which fortune telling persons have hitherto been prosecuted, which was very largely a copy of the English law, was amended, and provides that after September 1st 1929, such sections shall not apply to the incorporated ecclesiastical Spiritualist Associations, nor to their duly licensed teachers and ministers, all of whom are mediums, provided they are acting in good faith and without personal fees.

Such is a broad outline of our case, and we cordially solicit your sympathetic consideration, to the end that our disabilities may be removed, consistent always with the protection of the public. If necessary, the Spiritualists would be prepared to set up some method of control or registration of bona fide mediums. The whole history of the last 80 years shows that Spiritualists have been persistent and alert to denounce charlatanry wherever it is found. It would not be an exaggeration to say that, apart from police prosecutions, 80 per cent of mediums who have been denounced or exposed, have been denounced or exposed by Spiritualists, but we submit that the amount of charlatanry,

³⁴ "This may have been an influencing factor in ACD's body, a few days later, being interred in a grave in the gardens of the family home, Windlesham." Garth Willey

cheating or fraud, is no greater amongst mediums than will be found in any other department of life.

As a means, however, of overcoming the disabilities the Deputation has laid before you, we beg to suggest the following amendment to Section 4 of the Witchcraft Act of 1735, and Section 4 of the Vagrancy Act of 1824: "Provided always that there shall be expressly excluded from the provision of this section all persons who may now or hereafter be bona fide engaged in the science of Spiritualism or Psychic Research, or any similar scientific investigation, or in any religious practice or service in connection with Spiritualism or Psychic Research, or any similar scientific investigation, and no proceedings shall be instituted, carried on, or maintained against any person acting or engaged in any such science or scientific investigation as aforesaid, or in any such religious practice or service as aforesaid, whether acting as a Spiritualist medium or otherwise, in the absence of proof of a deliberate intention on the part of such person to deceive and impose upon any of His Majesty's subjects."

That is the resolution we propose, and may I say, in conclusion, that the Deputation recognises the complex nature of the whole question. It would court the setting up of a Committee of Enquiry to investigate the whole subject, and would render every assistance to such a Committee to enable it to formulate a just decision. At the last General Election all candidates were circularised, and their attention drawn to the disabilities under which Spiritualists suffer, and some hundreds of replies were received, many of which expressed indignation that such a state of things should exist in a country which boasted religious and scientific freedom. There are at least a hundred members in the House of Commons who pledged themselves to consider carefully, and as far as possible, to remedy such disabilities.

Such, sir, is my case, and I respectfully request your serious and sympathetic consideration.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Does anyone else wish to speak?

MR OATEN: I would like Mrs. De Crespigny to say a word or two on the scientific side. She represents the Psychic College.

THE HOME SECRETARY: I think we had better have the whole case completed before I say anything by way of reply or comment.

MRS. DE CRESPIGNY: Mr. Clynes and Gentlemen, I would only represent the scientific side, because the religious side is more fully represented here, but it has become an extremely difficult and abstruse science, I assure you, and I assure you that it requires the very deepest study. It is not what many people think, merely ghost hunting; it is trying to get to the bottom of certain phenomena that we know takes place, and what makes these peculiar members of society whom we call mediums. If it would enlighten you a little tiny bit as to the understanding of what these mediums may be, I would say that they are members of the community who are able to tune in, which we all understand now, their

consciousness to the wave length to which a normal person is absolutely dead, and through that to get into communication with a condition of matter to which the ordinary person is unable to respond. That is the line along which the scientific side of the investigation goes, and we look upon that as being the foundation upon which the religious side is more or less built; I would say not only the religious side of Spiritualism, but the side upon which the whole of Christianity is built. It is those laws that the science side of psychic research is trying to fathom, and this prohibition of mediums is hampering us in our work in the same way as it does on the religious side. We have now got what they call methodology, and a certain amount of stabilisation of production of phenomena, which entitle us to be considered amongst the orthodox sciences. That is the way all science has begun, by guess work; we have got past the stage of guess work into this methodical method of procedure, and if we cannot have our instruments, which are these delicately poised things that we call mediums - they are the instruments through which we have to make our experiments and produce all our phenomena - we cannot progress. That, I think, is, just roughly speaking, what I would call the scientific side of it.

MR HANNEN SWAFFER: Mr. Clynes and Gentlemen, I would just like to put in a few words, if I may - the point of view of an ordinary man of the world, who finds himself impelled to join the Spiritualist movement. I received this morning in my ordinary post-bag three letters from bereaved people. Sometimes, after addressing a meeting, I receive as many as twenty in the course of a day. Sir Arthur will tell you that after his long crusades on behalf of our movement, he has received hundreds of letters, and we find ourselves unable to deal with hundreds of the cases that are forced under our notice. I have been holding in my own home for some months now a series of séances at which only amateur mediums, have been present, and these have given comfort to scores and scores of people. People to-day are demanding proof of things which formerly they were content to believe. I could be of great service to people in this troubled age but for the fact that owing to a stupid and ridiculous and old-fashioned law, mediumship, which we consider sacred, is still illegal. That is my position.

REV. DRAYTON THOMAS: Mr. Clynes and Gentlemen, it was thought by the Deputation in consultation that a special word might be said from the religious point of view. We desire that the law should be so amended that those who interpret it shall discriminate between the genuine and the counterfeit. Mediumship is Heaven's gift, that is our attitude, and where that gift has been duly trained, and is being discreetly used, we have a human instrument by which God can bring to earth something which society deeply needs. There is reason for believing that of the numerous suicides committed every day that passes in these islands of ours, several of them result immediately from hopeless depression following bereavement, and this is often combined unfortunately with an entire disbelief in any life beyond the present one. Half an hour with a gifted medium would have saved those people, and that assertion is founded on several years of personal work with mediums during which I have seen possible suicides saved. The question is one which touches the religious convictions of great multitude at the present day. They are people who know from experience that mediumship provides present-day evidence for the reality of life beyond death. If we remove belief in an after-life, what is there left of religion? All religion worthy of the name is broad based on a belief that this life is but a school-time for

something greater beyond. Philosophy provides us no certainty for that belief. Its conclusions have left the question an open one, and all refer us to authority or to ancient history as the case may be, and this as we all know happily seems to be quite sufficient for the many; but even if it were sufficient for the majority, there remains a big minority with that type of mind which must have evidence upon which to base character and religion. There are tens of thousands of us experimentally convinced that we have found this certainty, and we found it while conversing with friends beyond death, and we conversed with them through the channel called mediumship.

Spiritualistic churches are largely composed of people who have been brought back to religion through personal evidence obtained in this way, and it is because they ardently desire for others the same blessing, that they are so earnestly pleading with you for the removal of the legal stigma which rests upon genuine mediumship. The present interpretation of the law discourages many sensitive souls from exercising their gifts professionally, and that means in other words that it prevents them from using their gifts for the public good. I know clergymen and Free Church ministers who would most gladly make a judicious use of such gifted people, but they cannot find them, good mediums are all too few. If I may say so, I mean no disrespect to the cloth; it is my profound conviction that one Heaven-gifted medium is of more value than many Bishops. We believe that Spiritualism has a great contribution to make towards the moral and spiritual uplift of society. We are equally convinced that mediumship is an absolutely indispensable instrument by which that movement must advance. The question of legal status for genuine mediumship is therefore a matter of deep and burning religious conviction with us. It has been said, and we all feel the difficulties that meet you and your colleagues in touching this subject, that the difficulty is the fraudulent medium. We say: Let the fraudulent medium be dealt with as you would deal with fraudulent solicitors or bogus clergy-men. We submit respectfully that sound law should discriminate between the good and the bad.

MR. OATEN: Mr. Clynes, that completes our case.

REPLY

THE HOME SECRETARY: Sir Arthur, ladies and gentlemen, let me first say that I give you welcome to state your case, and meet you with a feeling of complete respect in hearing that case, and with the deepest sympathy as regards your consciousness of grievance. As to the evidence of grievance under which you are labouring, you have left me in no doubt. Mr. Oaten read a very long statement, but not too long, when we consider the case he had to state, and remember the narrative of fact and the argument of that case, I am not at all complaining. The Deputation represents a far wider International organisation of Spiritualist bodies than I had any notion of before I saw the list. The titles vary, but, broadly speaking, the organisations exist, I suppose, to cover the two lines of the scientific and the religious in different parts of the world.

MR. OATEN: YES.

THE HOME SECRETARY: There are two or three matters of detail upon which I would like to go back, as expressed in the paper read by Mr. Oaten. Let me first remind you that, as regards the law, it is the law for all. I imagine that it was not specially passed with a view to placing Spiritualists of to-day under any legal disability, but you, in answer, might say that in practice it is only the Spiritualists who come under the disabilities of the law as the law now is. Mr. Oaten read in his paper a very long paragraph, or resolution, and mentioned three Acts of Parliament passed in a previous generation, and, indeed, in a previous century, but, as I am advised, that resolution or the clause, if it became law, would still leave two of those Acts untouched, and would relate only to one of the three Acts which now provide the disabilities under which you labour. For the Home Office, it might be said in respect to that part of Mr. Oaten's paper where he used the word "callous," that the Home Secretary has nothing whatever to do with Scottish law or its operation as expressed through the Scottish Courts. Another adjective in Mr. Oaten's paper by way of allegation was, that the proceedings were "frequently" taken in certain cases. Well, I was under the impression that that was not so, and that trouble, so far as it was brought into Court, was only in the rarest instance, but if there are frequently instances of these difficulties arising which bring you into the Courts, then it seems to me your case is stronger on the facts, and if you have them, they might very well be adduced. Then reference is made to police agents. While technically, as head of the Metropolitan Police, I would not like to be under the stigma of employing agents to procure breaches of the law, at the same time it is the obligation resting upon the police to see that the law is enforced. Do I understand under this head that your case is, that so far as prosecution ever might arise, it should arise only where some member of the public takes the initiative, and that the police ought not, within the law, to have any right themselves to act in initiating proceedings.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: That is my own feeling.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Again, taking a case where the Court has to decide, no matter whether the initiative for the prosecution has come from a member of the public or from the Police, do I gather that you distrust the decisions of the Courts, and that you cannot feel at all confident that you are getting fair play from the decision of the Court. Setting aside the origin of the prosecution, the substantial point is the trustworthiness of the Courts in relation to the law as it is. As to changing the law, that is another matter.

MR OATEN: My own opinion is that while there are exceptional cases where we get a biased Court, those are so negligible in quantity that they are not worth considering. Where, I think, we are not getting justice, is that when "agents provocateur" are used, we are not satisfied that their evidence is true and reliable evidence. The Vagrancy Act says that a person shall be convicted on the evidence of a credible witness or witnesses. The question arises: Is a paid police agent a credible witness without corroboration. I do not object to using "agents provocateur" if in addition, there was to be some other person, some member of the public to corroborate the evidence.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Still there is the point whether, under all the circumstances, a British Court can be trusted on the facts, as presented and in relation to the law as it now is, to reach a fair decision so far as it is possible for any of us to be fair in this matter. For myself, I would like to say that the Deputation is all the more welcome, because personally I want to see the most complete tolerance of freedom towards every tendency and every disposition of either individual or organised religion. I want to see most complete freedom, and there is nothing more hateful to me than any kind of interference with people's tendencies of conscience in these matters, but the law is what it is, and the duty of the poor Home Secretary is to administer the law; at any rate, he is technically responsible for many aspects of its administration. That brings me finally to the question of method. I think there was a faint hint of something like an enquiry.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: It was made by Mr. Oaten.

THE HOME SECRETARY: I believe that aspect of it has been brought forward before, and the answer put has been that there is a quicker way, that quicker way being for all these organisations to be organised by methods Mr. Kelly very well understands in the House of Commons, and to take the initiative by framing a Bill that would cover the purpose, and arranging to get that Bill introduced by some private member. I know that that is a line which is not always fraught with success, but sometimes it is; there is a consciousness in the House of Commons, no matter what its political complexion in these days, and I think you will find the present day House of Commons much more inclined to consider that freedom and tolerance to which I have referred, than was so a few generations ago. If you take that step, I can only say for the present Government that we would meet you with every sympathy, and see that, so far as the Government can, no difficulty was placed in your way of having your case fully ventilated in the House of Commons. I can only submit that to you, because as a rule in these days, in all such matters as these, that is matters affecting just single groups of people or organisations or societies, the first step is the step of a Bill introduced by a private member. Indeed, there is much more freedom now for private members, and much more time placed at their disposal, than was the case in former years. I rather think that there is not enough Parliamentary time left to a Government for legislation. There are a large number - I forget now the number - of Fridays and week-days in the first few months of a session, in which private members have more time for taking action on these matters than the Government itself.

Ladies and gentlemen, that is about all I can say on the method. There is one other point. Would you just tell me a little more on that point about control which was the word used in your statement I would like to know more clearly how, supposing something were done under that head, you could take steps effectively to control those who would be acting for you.

MR OATEN: Speaking in the first place as the President of the International Federation, which governs Spiritualistic branches in 28 different countries, and secondly, as past President of the Spiritualists' National Union of Great Britain. In the Spiritualists National Union we have had in operation for 10 years a system of licensing mediums by examination. Those licences exist. We license under various heads; some are licensed as

speakers. I would like to place before you my own annual certificate. (Handed.) There is a large framed certificate, but those are my own credentials as a speaker for the movement. Then we license clairvoyants, and we have granted licences to physical mediums, and so forth, but although we are doing this, we remember that we are merely preparing for future generations, because we know that if any of our mediums, however bona fide, are attacked under this Act, they are bound to go under. There is no gainsaying that, in spite of the fact of their licence and their genuineness. We have already a Spiritualists' National Union who have put a scheme into operation, and, I imagine, that the scientific section and various other sections, might be prepared to put such a scheme into operation under their own organisations. I might suggest as a theoretical way of meeting the difficulty, that these various sections and organisations unite to establish a national panel, so that each section may license its own mediums for working within its own domain, and, having got the local licence, they should be commanded to a national panel, who could issue a national certificate, just as the British Medical Association or some other bodies do, such licences only to be issued after examination and evidence. I think such a scheme could be worked out; it may be cumbrous, and it may take a long time to get into operation, but I again insist that our trouble is the suspicion we have that "agents provocateur" are not true witnesses in the box. That is our difficulty.

THE HOME SECRETARY: May we close the discussion with just this statement I would like to read it. It covers some part of the comments I have already offered, and it officially expresses, so far as I can state the Home office view, our answer on the main and central matter. "It is quite inconceivable that the law would ever be invoked for the purpose of interfering with scientific research into psychical phenomena. The sole function of the Government in this matter is to protect the public against fraud, imposture, and mental terrorisation. In every large community there are numbers of ignorant and credulous people who would be willing to part with their money in order to have their fortunes read, and would place implicit reliance on what was revealed. Parliament has not yet been seized of the various matters to which the Spiritualists have called attention, and it seems to be the duty of the Spiritualists themselves, who alone have any real knowledge of the organisation of Spiritualists, their needs and difficulties, to prepare a Bill, as they have been invited to do several times, which would:-

1. Define the qualification of mediums;
2. Provide rules for the governance of their conduct; and
3. Indicate specific immunities which Spiritualists would wish to see conferred upon them.

If such a Bill were prepared and introduced into Parliament the Government would give sympathetic consideration to it.

That, ladies and gentlemen, is as much to-day as I can say to you. If this paper is to be left, I would like, at greater leisure, to look at one or two of the points in it, and should anything else occur to me, I shall be glad to communicate with you.

MR. KELLY: Mr. Clynes, I want to thank you for receiving the Deputation, and I think I ought to say that what is felt about it, certainly what I feel about it - is that the suggestion with regard to a Bill, and the sympathy expressed, are such that we hope, at any rate, it will - may I use the word? - materialise before long, and that that freedom with which, if you will allow me to say it here, you and I have fought for all the years we have been engaged in fighting, will be an advantage. I thank you for receiving the Deputation.

The proceedings then terminated.

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Chapter III

Characters of the Bible

Note by LP: We here present further extracts from Mr Trethewy's book,³⁵ and here conclude the third chapter. More evidence is offered which interprets biblical prophets as inspired by others who lived before them, in a chain of inspiration. . One or two communicators do not have much to say, which perhaps reduces their credibility. . The most notable absentees, who did not communicate with this medium, are the apostle Paul, and the first three traditional authors of gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Continued from the last issue:

ELIJAH (PRECEPTOR)

Elijah, to whom Imperator frequently referred as his "Great Master," was said to have been directing the movement in the background under the leadership of Jesus. (See extract from Book VI. copied below.) He was seen clairvoyantly and in a vision (Book XXIII., January 4th, 1880) by Stainton Moses, was said by Imperator to give advice occasionally, and on May 27th, 1876, in Book XX., signed a communication under the name of "Preceptor," giving his blessing also. In the vision he "presented a most commanding appearance; and gave one the idea of indomitable power. His stature was commanding, and his frame of massive build, the head specially large and striking. The features were bold and pronounced, and the face was one of rugged power, vigour and determination."

³⁵ From The "Controls" of Stainton Moses pages 35-43

His earth life is noticed in Book VIII.—November 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 1873—a much edited version of which has been printed in Section XXIII of *Spirit Teachings*. He is credited with very high mediumistic powers, and was regarded as a link between Moses and Malachi in the chain of spirit influence which extended from Melchizedek to Jesus. His translation to heaven in a chariot of fire is said to be a legend in harmony with the ignorance of the age.

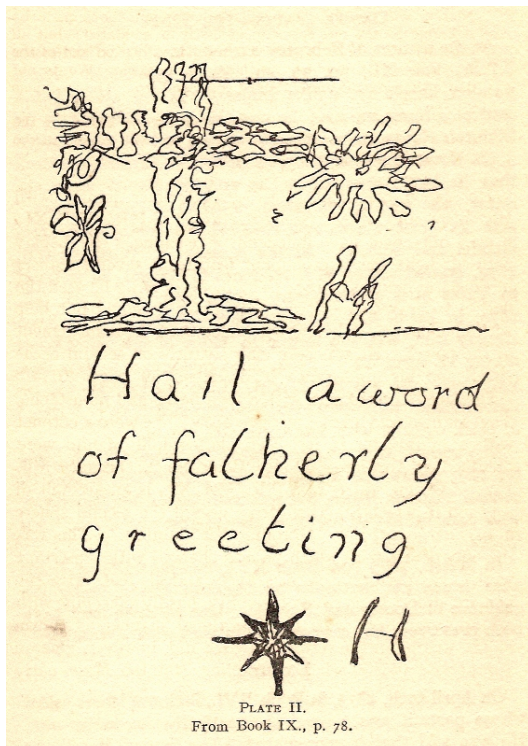
His association with Malachi as that prophet's spirit-guide has been mentioned on page 26. In Book VI., on August 29th, 1873, Imperator returned to the subject:

“We have already said that two great spirits have been intimately associated with every such movement as this. Moses and Elijah. My immediate inspiration has been derived from my great master Elijah. He it is who has ever inspired in me whatever of great and noble I have imagined. He it was who animated me when I trod your earth, and he it is who through me influences you. But he and we all act in direct subordination to that exalted spirit whom men call Jesus.”

On October 4th, 1873, Book VII., he was represented by Imperator as having urged him to furnish further evidence for the satisfaction of Stainton Moses.

He manifested at the séance of February 24th, 1878. (*Light* of August 5th, 1893.)

HAGGAI (THE PROPHET)



There was a scraping sound at the séance of December 31st, 1873, and the name "Haggai" was rapped out; the next day the same name was written under the table with Rector's name at a séance. On January 7th, 1874, Haggai showed a light, in the form of a stick two or three inches long, and tried unsuccessfully to control Stainton Moses. On January 9th and 11th the light was shown again moving about rapidly; he was said to have been instructed in the use of it by Mentor. On the 11th he was also seen clairvoyantly by Stainton Moses. On the 14th, in Book IX., an unknown spirit made a rough drawing of a cross and wrote under it: "Hail! a word of fatherly greeting," signing under it the letter "H" with a rough star. (See Plate II., p. 39.) Stainton Moses made the following note under the signature:

“The writing was quite different from that which is usually written. The hand moved about in a fidgetty [sic-Trethewy] way, and the star was elaborately drawn and corrected.”

Prudens, who was in charge at the time, then wrote:

“The old man is unable to write though he wishes much to communicate.”

On January 17th there were again curious drawings and writing like drawing. Stainton Moses asked who did it, saying that it was quite different from the usual control; his hand shook and the whole arm seemed to quiver. The reply was: “It is new as yet.— [Drawing of a star] Prophet.”

Asked who he was, the spirit replied: “H. know me as the Prophet.” Then to show his skill he wrote a few words with great rapidity, and having exhausted his power gave place to Prudens.

Haggai, who was a contemporary of Malachi, was designated in his lifetime as “The Prophet.” (See article on Book of Ezra in Smith’s *Dictionary of the Bible*.) On January 18th, Book IX., Imperator, in explaining the future course of instruction, said:

“I have specially secured the presence and powerful assistance of two who lived with me on earth and who, in conjunction with me, will now labour in the work which is laid upon me. Neither will be alone, nor will the communications made be referable to any one specially unless it be so stated: but all together will labour to give you true views of God and of the revelation of Him which you have in the Bible. We do not desire that great names be bandied to and fro. The teachings on the Old Testament will be given by myself and will be signed by me or by Propheta [sic] and Vates. These are the names which the intelligences who aid me will assume in the communing with you.”

He signed communications several times jointly with Imperator and others (see *Proceedings S.P.R.*, Vol. XI., p. 41), but never gave independent teaching. His display with his light was a prominent feature at several séances in the early months of 1874 (see pp. 36-43 *id.*); he used the flashes to answer questions; otherwise he could not help with phenomena, as he did not understand the management of the power. He was seen clairvoyantly on several occasions, and his appearance is described on page 36 *id.* “The face of an old man with a long beard and moustache, deep-set eyes and a large massive brow;” he wore a coronet with a bright star in it. Two photographs of him were obtained at Hudson’s (Séance Book No. 5, January 8th, 1875). On pp. 36, 37 of S.P.R., Vol. XI., is an account of a vision in which Stainton Moses visited the second sphere in his charge and saw “Grandmother Stainton.” This was the only occasion on which he was charged with important work. His performances at séances and his feats with the pen are almost suggestive of frivolity, hardly in keeping with his appearance or with his traditional manner as shown in his writing in the scriptures. He did, however, give an appropriate address when controlling Stainton Moses early in January, 1875. (*Light* of April 15th, 1893.)

DANIEL (VATES—THE SEER)

At the séances of February 11th-14th, 1874 (*Proceedings S.P.R.*, Vol. XI., pp. 39, 40), Vates manifested with a peculiar knock not unlike Imperator's, and attempted a control without success; he was also seen clairvoyantly by Stainton Moses in the guise of a young and beautiful spirit.

On November 10th, 1873, in Book IX., Imperator stated that he had accompanied the prophet Daniel when the latter, who was a "powerful recipient of spirit agency," saw his great vision and received his commission from Gabriel and Michael. In the passage of January 18th, 1874, quoted above with reference to Haggai, he referred to Vates as a contemporary of his own. On April 9th, 1874, in Book XII., he said that Gabriel, "as we have already said, was the bearer to Vates of his commission during his earth life." From these passages it is clear that Vates was the prophet Daniel. Like Haggai, he did no independent work, but signed communications ("Vates," in thick writing) with Imperator and others.

The record of a séance printed on page 237 of *Light* for 1893 shows that on March 4th, 1875, Vates wished to control Stainton Moses, but was not allowed by Imperator, who asserted his authority in the interest of the medium's health.

In March, 1875 (see Book XV.), two portraits of Vates were drawn automatically by Stainton Moses, under the guidance of Doctor and Kabbila. One of these may have been preserved, but cannot be identified with certainty.

EZEKIEL

On April 11th, 1875, in Book XVI., Stainton Moses asked whose portrait was a head automatically drawn by him. He was told that it represented "The Son of Man," the name by which Ezekiel was styled in the Bible. The message was written in straggling printed characters and signed with an "E." Ezekiel made no communications independently, but signed some jointly with other spirits.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST (THEOPHILUS)

On November 5th, 1873 (Book VIII.) (see page 27 above in the notice concerning Imperator), it was said that in his earth life John the Baptist was a medium under the control of Imperator. At the end of that message a promise was made to Stainton Moses that he should have communication with John. This promise was repeated in the message of January 18th, 1874 (Book IX.), part of which has already been quoted with reference to Haggai. The quotation is continued:

"Rector, in dealing with the later revelations, will be assisted by three spirits who know and can teach you aright. They lived near to the time when Jesus taught and knew and learned His pure and elevated teaching. From the highest

spheres of knowledge these three will come to continue the work of teaching souls. Theophilus, Theologus and Theosophus will they name themselves.”

At the séance of January 26th, 1874 (the account in the S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Vol. XI., p. 37, has been expurgated), Theophilus manifested with a sound like the roll of a drum and was said by Imperator to have been John the Baptist. He was seen clairvoyantly by Stainton Moses, wearing a crown with a cross in the centre.

He controlled Stainton Moses (Book XV., February 1st, 1875) just after the photograph of the latter’s spirit in Paris, and Imperator seems to have considered the inspired address more important than the photographic experiment; the subject was Spiritualism as a new revelation, a parallel between the time of Jesus and the present day.

On several occasions he gave independent teaching, chiefly on subjects connected with Christianity, e.g., in Book XI., on April 5th, Easter, 1874 (see *Spirit Teachings*, pp. 245, 246). and on Easter Day, 1875, in Book XV. (see *Spirit Teachings*, pp. 249-255). Stainton Moses’ notes on pp. 245 and 249, which imply that Theophilus wrote for the first time on Easter Day, 1875, were due to an oversight. In the first few pages of Book XII. he discussed the ingredient of Truth in all religions. He used Rector as scribe and signed “Theophilus” in a straggling hand. He signed several communications jointly with Imperator and others, e.g., the greater part of Section XXXII. of *Spirit Teachings*.

ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE AND ST. JOHN THE DIVINE (THEOSOPHUS AND THEOLOGUS)

These two spirits are mentioned in the communication quoted above, with reference to Theophilus, from Book IX. They with others signed a communication of March 6th, 1875, in Book XV., dealing chiefly with the imperfect knowledge and erroneous beliefs of spirits. The next day Imperator said that Theosophus was “especially useful in informing your mind on religious matters.”

On Easter Day, 1875, in Book XV. Stainton Moses wrote: “I have forgotten who Theosophus and Theologus are.” The reply, signed by Theophilus and others, was:

“You have not been informed as yet. You are in error in supposing that they are those who are in your mind. We will inform you in due time. For the present we have not authority: and you mind too much about names and things of earth. Let your spirit soar about [above ?] them: and know that what you call facts are oft of less import than the spiritual significance which underlies them.”

On March 4th, 1876 (Book XX.), Stainton Moses again wrote that he did not remember who these two were. Imperator replied:

“It is not necessary to conceal from you that the spirits of whom you enquire are the two Johns. John the Apostle who was the special friend of Jesus and John the Divine or the seer one of whose visions or Revelations you have in the

closing book of your Bible. They have been long associated with us in our work.”

Stainton Moses’ question as to the Gospel and Apocalypse having been written by two different persons was answered in the affirmative. There is nothing new in this assertion; there have been great controversies on the subject. (See *Encyclopædia Britannica* (9th edition), Vol. XIII., p. 707, and Vol. XX., p. 500.)

From the order in which Stainton Moses put the names in his question, Theosophus and Theologus, it would seem that the first was the Apostle and the second the Divine, though the forms of the names suggest the contrary meaning. That this conclusion is correct is indicated by the incident recorded in Book XX. At the end of the communication of May 15th, 1876. Imperator and others, including these two spirits, denounced the conduct of W. B., a suicide. (See page 279 of *Spirit Teachings*, where, however, the end of the message has not been printed.) Stainton Moses, after seeing the signatures, wrote: “You, too! I should have thought that denunciation out of your way.” Rector replies for Theosophus “Love is well: but truth is better. It is true.” Stainton Moses’ remark is more applicable to the Apostle than to the Divine.

A reference to St. John the Apostle as having accompanied Jesus in moments “of chiefest exaltation,” contained in the Easter Message of 1877, is said in the original to have been made on St. John’s authority. (See *Spirit Teachings*, pp. 261, 262.)

Except on the occasions mentioned above, Theosophus and Theologus took no overt part in the instruction besides signing communications jointly with Imperator and others.

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BOOKS WE HAVE REVIEWED

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Helen Duncan The Mystery Show Trial, by Robert Hartley published by H Pr (Publishing), London 2007. Paperback ISBN:—978-0-9553420-8-0. Psypioneer review, by Paul J. Gaunt pages 244-247:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.11November07..pdf>

Aquarian Evangelist: The Age of Aquarius as It Dawned in the Mind of Levi Dowling, by John Benedict Buescher Theosophical History Volume XI available at:—then—Occasional Papers. Psypioneer references by Leslie Price page 7:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP4.1January08.pdf>

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Talking to the Dead – Kate and Maggie Fox and the Rise of Spiritualism, by Barbara Weisberg published by HarperSanFrancisco New York 2004. Hardback ISBN: 0-06-056667-1., available at Amazon. Psypioneer review, by Paul J. Gaunt pages 9-10:—http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP2.pdf

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