

# PSYPIONEER

Founded by Leslie Price

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## NEW SPIRITUALIST NEWSPAPER

A new monthly newspaper, Spiritualist News International with strong coverage of Spiritualist churches, was launched in February 2008 under the editorship of Lyn G. De Swarte, assisted by Cathy Gibb. There was an associated web site<sup>1</sup>.

The experienced editorial team would be recognised from former days at the weekly Psychic News. But Lyn had become a senior minister with the Corinthian Church and Healing Association.( [www.corinthian-association.co.uk](http://www.corinthian-association.co.uk) ) The new paper, while in no way limited to Christian Spiritualism, certainly gave it a fair showing, and might have helped fill the gap left by the demise of the sometime weekly paper “The Greater World.” The March issue contained a valuable feature on the past and present of Croydon SNU Spiritualist Church, and like the paper generally, made extensive use of colour. However the editorial team have now left the paper, and are hoping to launch a fully independent newspaper, provisionally entitled Spiritual News and expected in April. LP.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://spiritualistnewsinternational.com/>.

## **WAS BLIGH BOND A PERSECUTED SPIRITUALIST?**

This question is raised by the publication of an outstanding new biography “The Rediscovery of Glastonbury. Frederick Bligh Bond Architect of the New Age” (Sutton Publishing, 2007) by Dr Tim Hopkinson-Ball. The book uses much archival material not available to William Kenawell “The Quest at Glastonbury” (1965).

Let us consider in what sense Bond was a Spiritualist. Prior to 1914, he was active in the Church of England, even serving as a church warden for a time. Then the loss of a diocesan architectural position, which contributed to his bankruptcy, precipitated a crisis of faith (Ball. p.98-9) which caused him to widen his understanding of Christianity. Amid a variety of esoteric involvements, he was ordained about 1932 as a priest of a tiny group “The Catholic Church of North America”. Clearly Bond did not take his religion from Spiritualism, What about his view of the phenomena?

Bond was a member of the SPR, and his attitude to automatic writing and other phenomena could be critical. He did not take at face value the monastic communicators who guided him in his excavations at Glastonbury Abbey and elsewhere. He postulated a Great Memoria, from which, by interaction between investigator, sensitive and supersensible levels, veridical material might emerge.

In 1935 he was sacked by the American SPR from his editorship of their Journal, after publishing a report critical of the physical medium Mrs Crandon. Bond had been previously been first editor of the Journal of the British College of Psychic Science in April 1922, and perhaps he is best regarded as one those investigators, often found in BCPS or LSA between the wars, who took a cautious pro-Spiritualist view.

According to legend, Bond used mediumship, especially that of Captain Bartlett, known as John Alleyne (a fellow SPR member), to make archaeological discoveries at Glastonbury. This annoyed the Church of England which dismissed him from the excavations.

But was Bond persecuted? Actually he did rather well out of his Glastonbury work, being able to start career as a lecturer on this and other subjects. He had a long relationship with the various authorities in Glastonbury from 1907-1926, after which he moved to the United States. As already mentioned, he had lost his most important architectural position with the diocese by 1914 - three years before “The Gate of Remembrance” about his psychic work, was published. This and other losses owed much to his professional feud with W.D. Caroe, a more powerful architect. His estranged wife was also assiduous in defaming his name.

Some of his early excavation work was on behalf of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society. From 1909, after the Church had regained possession of the site, there were the Abbey Trustees with which to reckon. From 1912 there was a Glastonbury Abbey Excavation Committee. Even without his psychic involvements Bond was in a vulnerable position, often threatened by rivals and bureaucratic in-

fighting. Some of his interpretations of the ruins were challenged, and are not regarded as correct today.

Bond's books and pamphlets (listed at Ball p.216-9) form a complex corpus, with much from small publishers, including Bond himself. Some papers are yet to be published. Bond's editorial work for BCPS and ASPR, though considered in the book, deserve further attention, especially his five part JASPR 1929 paper "Athanasia: my witness to the soul's survival." LP.

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## **ALFRED VOUT PETERS**

**1867 - 1934**

**Continued: -**

**Note by Psypioneer:** - Members of the S.P.R., and readers of their magazine *Paranormal Review* issue 45 (January 2008) would have noted the opening article by Wendy E. Cousins "Writer, Medium, Suffragette, Spy? The Unseen Adventures of Geraldine Cummins (1890 – 1969)".

Wendy Cousins after reading the first part of our article on Alfred Vout Peters in the February issue, has kindly submitted a paper to be published in Psypioneer: - *An English Medium In The Celtic Twilight: Alfred Vout Peters In Ireland*. This is printed below in full; the final part of the Alfred Vout Peters series will appear in the next issue.

Psypioneer would like to extend their thanks to Wendy Cousins for this valuable submission: -

### **AN ENGLISH MEDIUM IN THE CELTIC TWILIGHT: ALFRED VOUT PETERS IN IRELAND**

by

**Wendy E. Cousins**

Whereas much admirable work has been done from a British perspective in charting the history of spiritualism (Conan Doyle, 1926; Oppenheim 1985; Owen 1989; Bassett, 1990) and the early years of the Society for Psychical Research (Salter; 1948; Gault, 1968; Haynes, 1982) considerably less has been written about activities in Ireland. Yet on that 'Other Island' active engagement with the supernatural played a large part in the national awakening which was to lead to the 1916 Easter Rising and in the internationally recognised achievements of the writers and artists of the Celtic revival. While Psychical Researchers Arthur and Gerald Balfour both took turns to serve

as Chief Secretary for Ireland (From 1887 – 1891 and from 1895 – 1900 respectively) an entire swathe of the Anglo-Irish literary set was engaged in lively experimentation with matters paranormal. This was to prove a rich source of inspiration and a potent stimulation for those creative people travelling on the path towards personal and national reinvention.

An SPR, a sister society of the Society for Psychical Research was set up in Dublin under the leadership of Sir William Fletcher Barrett, at that time Chair of Physics at the Royal College of Science in Dublin. Membership included E. E. Fournier d’Albe and the poet William Butler Yeats. In order to bring the best-known mediums of the day over to Ireland, the Dublin SPR pooled financial resources with a local Theosophist group which included poet and dramatist James Cousins, later to become a journalist on Annie Besant’s *New India* newspaper, his wife Margaret, a militant suffragette - one of the founders of the Irish Women’s Franchise League - and their brother-in-law Pierce Leslie Pielou, a keen amateur archaeologist and astrologer (Cousins & Cousins, 1950; Sheeran, 2003). Séances took place at the Cousins’ home in Sandymount<sup>2</sup> and visiting mediums included Ronald Brailey, Mrs Feilding<sup>3</sup> and Alfred Vout Peters, who was then in his forties and described by literary critic Arnold Bennett in 1917 as: “Short, good forehead. Bald on top, dark hair at sides. Quick and nervous. Son of a barge-owner” (Newman Flower, 1932: p 185).

In 1912, between 26th and 30th October, Alfred Vout Peters sat for four séances at the Cousins’ house. Twenty or so invitees were seated round the drawing room, including W.B. Yeats, who on one occasion brought Maud Gonne as his companion. Sitters had assembled before the medium came in, and no identities were formally disclosed<sup>4</sup>. Psychometry was the principal demonstration with descriptions of the personal and historical attributes of certain objects brought by the sitters and placed on a table without the knowledge of the medium (Foster, 1998; Cousins & Cousins, 1950).

*But the special incident on the occasion was not psychometrical. The medium squatted on the carpet, appeared to go into a trance, and addressed himself in the broken English of an alleged Red Indian “control” to Yeats and Miss Gonne. They were accompanied, the control said, by a tall, bearded man, over whom a flag connected with Ireland flew. Further than the description of the form the control could not go. Name and identity were beyond his knowledge. Then he saw a picture, a pig. But he exclaimed, this was no ordinary pig. “This pig had shot himself!”*

*(Cousins & Cousins, 1950: p 121)*

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<sup>2</sup> James Joyce was also a visitor to the Sandymount house, however the earnest ways and vegetarian cooking of the Cousins’ Theosophical household, agreed with his neither his temperament nor his digestive system (Ellman, 1982 p 162 & p171 )

<sup>3</sup> Formerly Stanislaw Tomczyk, prior to her marriage with psychical researcher Everard Feilding.

<sup>4</sup> It must be noted that in addition to being well-known public figures, Yeats and Gonne were both remarkable for their tall stature and striking appearances and it seems unlikely that they could have gone unnoticed.

This was taken to refer to Irish nationalist leader Charles Stewart Parnell, who in March 1887 was accused by the Times newspaper of involvement in the brutal murders of Lord Cavendish, then the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and the Under-Secretary Burke, in Dublin's Phoenix Park. Letters were published which suggested Parnell was complicit in the murders, however, a Commission for Enquiry revealed that the letters were in fact forgeries created by Richard Pigott, an anti-Parnellite rogue journalist<sup>5</sup>, who broke down under cross-examination and fled to Spain where he was found dead, by his own hand, in a Madrid hotel room.

***Pigott had shot himself.***

For W.B. Yeats, in addition to Parnell, Peters managed to bring in the writer's own daimon 'Leo Africanus', the poet and painter William Blake and the playwright J.M. Synge (1871-1909), who had been Yeats and Cousins' colleague at the Abbey Theatre. Yeats carefully recorded the séance proceedings and noted that with regard to Parnell, it had been communicated that, "the people he had worked for had not been known as a people, they were a crowd that is all. He had worked for the country people, their traditions and rights, but had been brought down by 'the white dog' of religious hypocrisy." Yeats' biographer, Professor Roy Foster, observes that a resonance of this mediumistic communication may be found in one of Yeats' later poems '*Parnell's Funeral*' and notes that this "is proof that what was heard in séances might be echoed later in WBY's art" (Foster, 1998: p 468).

Two days prior to the séance, two members of the Theosophical group had visited the prehistoric passage tomb at Newgrange (in Irish *Dún Fhearghusa*) and collected some stone chippings from the floor of the central chamber of the mound<sup>6</sup>. These were wrapped up carefully and presented to Mr. Peters on a tray along with other articles to psychometrised.

*In due course he took up the little packet containing the chips and, after holding them in his hand and to his forehead for a short time proceeded to describe the tumulus as it stands at the present, stating the number of upright stones standing in a circle around it. The number was unknown to anyone present but was afterwards found to be correct. He then said, "I am going back some hundreds of years in time" and then described the place as it was then, saying that the district was inhabited by people who had no definite knowledge of the origin and purposes of the building, but that they had a superstitious reverence for it and buried their chieftains there. He continued, "I feel myself going back an immense distance in time and I see coming into Ireland a tall fair race, clothed in white. They are coming into this country to preserve their ancient religion. It is they who built this mound, and I can see them gathering men and women around them in a circle and teaching them*

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<sup>5</sup> The Salisbury government and Arthur Balfour, Chief Secretary for Ireland, have been suspected by some commentators of involvement in the Pigott conspiracy (see Randolph Churchill's remarks in the debate on the report of the Commission for Inquiry in March, 1890)

<sup>6</sup> Carbon dating (Grogan, 1991) has shown that Newgrange is more than 500 years older than the Great Pyramid, and predates the Stonehenge trilithons by about 1,000 years. Today it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and such removal of stone chippings would now be viewed in a distinctly more negative light

*their ancient wisdom.” I think Mr Peters was carefully questioned by Mr Cousins and others but had evidently had no knowledge of the antiquities of Ireland, and had never been here before. He knew nothing whatever about the chips of stone, where they came from or who brought them, before he gave the psychometric reading.*

*(Pielou, 1937: pp 21-22)*

Margaret Cousins (familiarily known as ‘Gretta’) had also developed her own talents as a medium through the practice of automatic writing and James Cousins posed the question to Peters as to whether it was possible for a clairvoyant to get beyond the earthbound personality of an automatist and touch the other consciousness operating beyond the automatist’s own? Two examples of Gretta’s automatic writing were then randomly selected and with the paper tightly folded, so the script could not be recognised, these were passed to Peters.

*After some silent moments, eyes closed, Peters said he got at once beyond the medium, but could not describe the communicator. He felt that the writing emanated from a woman who had recently been on earth. But she was far away now, as she belonged to a higher order of persons than the ordinary. Yet she was interested in those who followed up her work. He could not make out what the work was. As if to answer his question he saw a picture, a table with benches around it as in a students’ lecture hall. A small dog appeared on the table, and assumed an attitude of begging for mercy. We recognised the symbolical description as that of the special work of Dr Anna Bonus Kingsford against vivisection.*

*(Cousins & Cousins, 1950: p 118)*

The other autscript also posed some difficulties in interpretation for the medium, impressions were similarly vague, but in a slightly different way. He felt that the writing was not communicated from a person who had lived and died, but from a ‘great super-personal power’.

*It was related to the ground under his feet, to Ireland of the past. He wanted to chant, to make poems. The script (one of many then and since) was signed by an entity who said he had never been in earth life. He was the leader of a band whose work was to restore the spiritual interpretation of life through individuals who were sensitive to inner things when material elements in life had reached ascendancy.*

*(Cousins & Cousins, 1950: pp 118- 119)*

James Cousins also records a particularly personal incident which occurred about a year later during the medium’s second visit to the Dublin circle.

*On a free evening, with Gretta out on some of her activities, Alfred and I chatted alone in the gaslight in the drawing room. Apropos of nothing in our conversation (which was on old books and bindings and Robert Browning), he asked me to lower the light, and passed into what appeared to me to be quiet sleep. In a few minutes he began to address me, and I perceived that the address purported to come from Gretta’s deceased sister Annie. She*

*(accepting her identity) reminded me of the incidents at her death-bed. She held my hand as I had seen her hold her husband's in the hospital. She said she did not recall these things to harrow me. But she had found a way of communicating through the medium who was now, she said, in a trance: and as these were the latest memories of her earth life and as I had been a sharer in them, she referred them to me to show me that she was really Annie. She gave (though in the deeper voice of the medium) her typical happy little laugh, and said: "You know, Jim, I didn't think it was so easy to die".*

*(Cousins & Cousins, 1950: pp 119-120)*

The same incident is also recalled by Gretta, who had been distressed that despite the sisters' joint activities in psychic research, in the six months since Annie's death, she had not felt a single contact with her sister's spirit, nor any dreams and clairvoyant or clairaudient experiences connected with her, although such contact was very much desired. This seemed inexplicable to her.

*Then Alfred Vout Peters came to us for a second visit. In the middle of the first night of his stay with us I suddenly awoke and hear Annie's voice clearly say: "Listen Gretta. At last I am able to speak to you. Some obstruction has been removed by Mr Peters. I am allowed to mix with you all again and I have been taught how to communicate with you. Listen carefully so that you may remember and tell Jim and Leslie." I then listened in some kind of interior way with all my being, while she explained, and comforted me, and healed the break of the empty months. The next morning at breakfast my sister Florrie told us how she too had been awakened by Annie's voice calling her so clearly that she got up and looked outside the door of her room (she was putting up with us) in the hope of seeing her. After that Annie made herself felt by us many times and frequently gave me help in difficult situations in most circumstantial and practical ways.*

*(Cousins & Cousins, 1950: pp 183-184)*

This incident was to have an interesting corollary, two years later, on a week-end trip to James Cousins' hometown of Belfast where he fulfilled a promise to address a recently established body of spiritualists.

*...the address touched in passing on the sentimental exaggeration of pain and pleasure to which people were prone, and the evil which this was likely to introduce into the values of life. Then a thought outside the notes of my address occurred to me. "Even in the matter of death", I added "people exaggerate beyond the reality, for, as a friend said to me from the other side of life, 'I did not think that it was so easy to die.' The statement drew warm applause. At the close of the meeting Gretta came to the platform and asked me if I had that phrase that the audience applauded in my notes. No, it had just jumped into my mind. Then she said that sitting amongst the congregation accustomed to mediumship she had become lucid and aware that Annie was standing beside her. Inwardly she heard her say: "Listen, Gretta, and you will hear Jim say something of mine." A moment later I made the statement that she recalled as having come from Annie two years previously through Alfred Peters. While we were speaking, a lady, an entire stranger to us, said to Gretta that she was a clairvoyant, and usually described spirit*

*presences at the morning meeting, but illness had prevented her from doing so of late. However, she must tell her that, during my address, a spirit form had appeared beside the lady whom she now presumed to be Mrs Cousins. The description she gave was that of Annie as we had known her, even to the detail of her manner of dressing her hair. Then the form vanished, and the lady turned her attention to the platform. And there was the spirit form standing beside me, apparently saying something to me. In a moment I used the words about being so easy to die. The audience applauded me, and the spirit form joined in.*

*(Cousins & Cousins, 1950: p 120)*

When the Cousinses moved to Liverpool in 1913, prior to their departure for Theosophical Society work in India, contact with Alfred Vout Peters was soon re-established on English soil. James Cousins describes their friendship as 'warm' and records that their literary discussions were a constant delight.

*On a walk together along Lord Street he broke our chat and said that there was a bookshop somewhere near that, he felt must have an old volume that he badly wanted. He found the shop and asked for the book. The shopman had never heard of it. Alfred enquired what the out-of-the-way top shelves were used for. For obsolete stuff, occasionally items from private auctions that didn't fulfil hopes of demand. It hadn't been looked at by anyone but the duster for years. "Well, if you now look at (place indicated) you will find the book I want." And he did, and got an unexpected sovereign for it; and Alfred filled the blank in his collection...*

*(Cousins & Cousins. 1950: p 238)*

It would appear from this recollection, that not only was Alfred Vout Peters a particular favourite with the Irish literary set, but he also seemed to be held in particularly high regard by that particularly benevolent being whom bibliophiles choose to call 'the Library Angel' !

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Wendy E. Cousins is an Irish university lecturer and a member of the Society for Psychical Research. She is currently carrying out a piece of personal research into the paranormal experiences and experiments of the writers, artists and mediums of the Irish revival, with a particular reference to the practice of automatic writing. She would be particularly interested in hearing from anyone with information about the Irish automatist Geraldine Cummins. Her email is [dalriada3@gmail.com](mailto:dalriada3@gmail.com)

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## CONAN DOYLE – AND AFTER

**[Note by Psypioneer:** *After the passing of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the Spiritualist movement was bereft of its most high profile leader. Uncertainty extended even to the manner of remembering him. The book which is described below never appeared, and the sum raised in his memory fell far short of what was hoped. Much more was to be heard of Mr Barbanell, but the fight to change the law on mediumship was to take another twenty years.*]

Taken from *LIGHT* August 6, 1930 page 419: -

This will be the first contributed volume that will, in effect, be a living version of the history of Doyle's life and work.

Mr. Hannen Swaffer, who has been elected President of the Spiritualist Community, and who is likely to take a still more prominent part in the propaganda of the movement, lately gave us his views on various matters arising out of the present situation in psychic affairs. They are as follows:

## PROPOSED CONAN DOYLE MEMORIAL

THESE are the matters of main consequence in connection with Doyle's death.

I have suggested that the Memorial to be established by the Movement shall take the form of a volume to be called *Conan Doyle and After*, which will be edited by myself, perhaps, although I am prepared to stand out if any other arrangements are desired.

It will be published by the Marylebone Spiritualist Association if our plans materialise. That will depend on Lady Doyle. I have asked her to write the story of her husband's crusade, making it a wife's tribute to her husband, whose worth she knew better than anybody. I want the story of the many letters which were received, and the incidents at the meetings, put on permanent record so that the Movement shall understand the marvellous work which was done by a man who died working for his Cause.

We want Sir Oliver Lodge to write the Preface. As regards the title I have suggested for the book, I designed this to mean everything it can mean – for instance, it means Doyle's proved survival – and also that it shall place on record exactly how our movement stands to-day, and what should be our future.

In the book I would like the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas to say exactly how the Church stands in relation to Spiritualism and to Conan Doyle. I should like Ernest Oaten, as the greatest authority I know on Spiritualism, to write on some special aspect. The other contributors will be chosen by me, in consultation, because I want to avoid overlapping. We don't want to leave out anyone who has something important to say. I think there is no volume which describes Spiritualism as it is to-day in relation to other subjects – Art, Letters, Science, Medicine, Politics and the rest.

The International Spiritualist Federation should deal with the International side of the matter.

When I first suggested the book Denis Doyle came to me on behalf of his mother and family to say that they approved the idea. The only difficulty is that we shall have to wait for Lady Doyle, who is busy with the hundreds of letters which she has received since the passing of her husband.

The Marylebone Association have agreed, and they will publish the book. It is suggested that 500 copies be published at £2 2s. 0d.; later that there shall be another edition at £1 1s. 0d., and my idea is that with the profits there shall be published eventually a cheap edition which anybody can buy. The great difficulty in our movement is the dearness of its books.

This will be the first contributed volume that will, in effect, be a living version of the history of Doyle's life and work.

Lady Doyle's own idea of a Memorial, I am told, is a Central Church in London. I, of course, don't want to interfere with anything the Movement desires, but I do want

to warn our friends that the difference between us and other movements is that we have no earthly possessions.

I have often been asked to raise funds from my wealthy friends towards the creation of a Spiritualist Cathedral, and my answer is that when you get your building your troubles begin, and when you set out to get money it can only be by a system of cadging, which is the curse of our civilisation.

Moreover, as a Movement we shall never find sufficient agreement to run a Church which shall represent every branch of the subject.

### **THE PROPOSED COMBINATION OF LONDON SOCIETIES**

A meeting was recently summoned by Capt. Hay Clark, the Secretary of the Spiritualist Community, which was attended by people from several Societies, the London Spiritualist Alliance and others, in order to form a Committee to co-ordinate the activities of all the London groups. This is a very important work. It wants more tact, however, than most spiritualists know.

### **AMENDMENT OF WITCHCRAFT AND VAGRANCY ACTS**

Maurice Barbanell has been put in charge of the Parliamentary Bill which the Spiritualists' National Union are trying to get through the House. Now, I was surprised at the lax way in which these things have been dealt with in the past. I took Barbanell to the House on Tuesday 29th ulto. We met, in the Central Lobby, Commander Kenworthy who offered to pilot the Bill in the House; also Holford Knight, who had witnessed phenomena at my flat, who said he was willing to take charge of it, if desired. We met M.P. after M.P. all of the Labour Party, and all sympathetic. There was Capt. Hall, Labour M.P. for Portsmouth, a sympathetic Quaker. There is no doubt that if the S.N.U. had had its centre in London and could have got into direct touch with the House of Commons they would have got the Bill through years ago. Capt. Holford said it would go through under the Ten Minutes Rule. They all said that if the matter were put on a religious footing no one would dare to oppose it

It is my definite opinion that Spiritualism will never be more than a great Clearing House of thought, a beacon, and a centre of influence for permeating the thought of the time.

### **THE LEADERSHIP OF THE MOVEMENT**

As to the question of the leadership of the Movement, there was never any *official* leader. The nominal leadership fell naturally to the man who was best known. But it was only a leadership in name. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle once told me the Movement did not follow him. That was the secret of Sir Arthur's position, and there is at present no man who is qualified to succeed him in the nominal position he occupied. There are several people who are qualified to take various places in the Movement and do portions of the work, and some of them will play their particular part without being at all conscious of the significance of the work they do. And they will gravitate naturally to their true places in the Movement without the need for official sanctions or appointments.

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[**Note by Psypioneer:** - The following paper is the second part of a four part series presented by Dr. Carlos S. Alvarado. The following two papers will be: - Perispirit and Mediumistic Forces, and Mental Mediumship and Telepathy.]

## **Further Notes on Historical Ideas of Human Radiations:**

### **II. Od and Psychometry (1)**

**Carlos S. Alvarado**

#### **The Od Force**

Like the mesmerists, Baron Karl von Reichenbach (1849/1851) believed in the existence of a universal force. He called this principle Od, and argued that it was not only generated by the human body, but also by magnetism, crystals, light (including sunlight and moonlight), heat, friction, chemical processes and electricity, among other causes. Describing the effects of this force, as channeled by magnets, Reichenbach wrote:

The kind of impression . . . is rather disagreeable than pleasant, and combined with a slight sensation either of cold or warmth, resembling a cool or gently warm breath of air, which the patients imagine to blow softly upon them. Sometimes they feel sensations of drawing, pricking, or creeping; some complain of sudden attacks of headache. Not only women, but men in the very prime of life, are found distinctly susceptible of this influence; in children it is sometimes very active (Reichenbach, 1849/1851. pp. 1-3).

In the human body such processes as digestion and respiration were believed to produce Od. Sensitive persons, Reichenbach thought, were able to perceive this force in different ways, such as visually (e.g., lights and auras around magnets, crystals and individuals) and as sensations of temperature and discomfort. According to Reichenbach:

When I tried substances of another character – coal, selenium, iodine, sulphur – they too were found to be luminous. The appearance of their bodies resembled the glow of phosphorescence . . . Together with the glow, high-sensitives observed surrounding these substances . . . flame-like emanation[s] of light losing itself in smoke . . . In colour the emanations were found to be by no means alike . . . Everything made of copper, for instance, was seen in a red glow, surrounded by a green flame . . . (Reichenbach, 1852/1968, p. 59).

In his discussion of the properties of Od Reichenbach stated that it could be stored on and transmitted to some bodies. Od, he stated, “is capable of mechanically attracting the hands of cataleptic patients . . .” (Reichenbach, 1849/1851, p. 116). Like magnetism, Reichenbach stated:

The odic force possesses polarity. It appears at the two poles of the magnet with constantly different properties: at the northward . . . it produces a sensation of coolness in the feeling, as a rule, in the pass downward, and in darkness a blue and bluish-grey light; the southward pole, on the other hand, a sensation of tepid warmth, . . . and a red, reddish-yellow, and reddish-grey light. The former is connected with a decided pleasure, the latter with discomfort and uneasy pains. Next to magnets, crystals . . . and living organic beings . . . exhibit the odic polarity most distinctly . . . In crystals, the odic poles occur at the poles of the axes . . . ; in crystals with several axes, there are several odic axes, of unequal strength (Reichenbach, 1849/1851, p. 283).

Reichenbach’s claims were met with skepticism. For example, Scottish physician James Braid (1846/1970) argued that suggestion and expectation could account for the perceptions of Reichenbach’s sensitives. Similarly, American physician William A. Hammond wrote in his booklet *The Physics and Physiology of Spiritualism* (1871) that “many of the experiments of the Baron von Reichenbach have no other foundation than that property of the human mind which causes it to be subjectively affected by suggestion” (p. 17).

Reichenbach’s work was very influential on later developments. For example, he was widely cited by writers in the United States that discussed concepts of force to account for the phenomena of spiritualism (e.g., Beecher, 1853, p. 10; Rogers, 1853, pp. 21, 64). A physician combined the concept of Od with homeopathy, referring to “Od-preparations” relevant for health (Rohland, 1871). In this author’s view: “The cause of every disease-phenomenon lies in the distemper of the *od-activity* in the organism” (p. 8).

Reichenbach also had an influence on the Society for Psychical Research, at least to the extent that one of the original purposes of the Society, as stated in the first issue of its *Proceedings*, was: “A critical revision of Reichenbach’s researches with certain organisations called ‘sensitive,’ and an inquiry whether such organisations

possess any power of perception beyond a highly exalted sensibility of the recognised sensory organs” (Objects of the Society, 1882, p. 3). This led to the establishment of a committee that conducted some research (e.g., Barrett et al., 1883; see also independent work by Barrett, 1884). This work explored the ability of individuals to perceive emanations from magnets. After tests with an electro-magnet, it was concluded:

Firstly, that three observers, separately, on distinct occasions were in some way immediately aware when an electro-magnet was secretly “made” and “unmade,” under such precautions as were devised to suppress ordinary means of knowing, and to exclude chance and deception; and identified such magnetization with luminous appearances which as described agreed generally with the evidence recorded by Reichenbach:—

Secondly, that there were, though less decisively, indications of other sensory effects of magnetism.

In view of these apparent confirmations of previous testimony, the Committee incline to the opinion that, among other unknown phenomena associated with magnetism, there is a *primâ facie* case for the existence, under conditions not yet determined, of a peculiar and unexplained luminosity resembling phosphorescence, in the region immediately around the magnetic poles, and visible only to certain individuals (Barrett et al., 1883, p. 236).

Further work conducted in the United States did not support Reichenbach’s ideas. This included the work of Jastrow and Nuttall (1886), and Pickering (1886). But there were earlier observations conducted independently of Reichenbach that were similar to some of his claims. One example was English physician Joseph Haddock’s studies of a woman called Emma, as reported in his book *Somnolism & Psycheism* (1851):

Emma could see an aura, or fluid, passing into, along, and out of the magnet. Nothing was said to her respecting the poles of magnets, or their relation to terrestrial magnetism, lest any idea should be suggested to her, which might give a bias to her perceptions; but she invariably represented the fluid as passing *in* at the south pole of the magnet, and *out* at the north pole. This she did, whether the bar or horseshoe magnet was used. She describes the colours as “rainbow-like;” duller, with greenish and bluish colours predominating at the south end; and more brilliant colours, with *red* predominating, at the north end. In comparing the current with that in her hands, she said, That the current out of the *north* pole of the magnet, and out of her *right* hand, was warmest, and that was the reason she called her right hand, “the *warm* hand;” and the right side

of the body, generally, “the *warm side*” (Haddock, 1851, pp. 168-169). (2)

Work with magnets, mentioned in the early mesmeric literature (e.g., Mesmer, 1779), was continued in later years by many individuals, but with the purpose of healing. Some examples include Hector Durville’s *Traité expérimental de magnétisme* (1895), and Colonel Albert de Rochas’s *Les forces non définies* (1887). In fact, the latter discussed and popularized Reichenbach his books *Le fluide des magnétiseurs* (1891) and in *Les frontières de la science* (1902). The latter work is organized in three parts: Reichenbach’s predecessors, Reichenbach’s work, and Reichenbach’s successors.

De Rochas (1895) reported observations of effluvia from magnets and other substances while the observer was hypnotized. He considered Od a vital principle, a force intimately connected with the human body and its functions, and one centered in the brain and its ganglions of the human body. As he wrote in his 1891 book:

The odic movement, called a *current*, comes mainly from the brain, descends down through the nerves of the face and goes to its corresponding ramifications. Finally, it is exhaled in the air, rendered sensible by impressions of heat and cold that it causes on the sensitives, is made visible in the form of effluvia in plain day, and as lights in darkness. The whole body seems bright; the head seems to have an aureole; the hands, the fingers and the toes throw long streams of odic light (De Rochas D’Aiglun, p. 104).

### Psychometry

Another Od theoretician, physician Herbert Mayo, presented ideas to account for clairvoyant impressions obtained through touching objects such as hair or a letter in his book *Popular Superstitions, and the Theories Contained Therein* (1852). He wrote:

I conceive that the lock of hair, or the letter . . . is charged with the Od-fluid emanating from the distant person; and that the clairvoyante measures exactly the force and quality of this dose of Od, and, as it were, individualizes it. Then . . . *distance being annihilated to the entranced mind*, it seeks for, or is drawn towards, whatever there is more of this same individual Od quality any where in space. When that is found, the party sought is identified, and brought into relation with the clairvoyante, who proceeds forthwith to tell all about him (pp. 185-186).

During the 1840s Joseph Rodes Buchanan, Dean and Professor at the Eclectic Medical Institute (Covington, Kentucky), developed interesting ideas similar in some respects to those of some of the mesmerists. In his view human beings had an aura coming out of the nervous system. “This nerveaura, which is the agent by which one

individual makes a physiological impression upon another when in contact, is radiated and conducted freely from the human hand” (Neurology in New York, 1849, p. 18).

Buchanan created the term psychometry to refer to the ability of some “sensitive” individuals to obtain impressions, sensations, and information from objects they touched. Early tests involved metals, and the sensitives could recognize the metal and perceived sensations of taste. In Buchanan’s view: “It may be supposed that an impression made upon the nerves of the hand, is propagated by continuous sympathy to the head, or that some imponderable agent, proceeding from [materials and substances] conveyed their influence into the body” (Buchanan, 1849, pp. 52-53). Apparently Buchanan thought that the person’s “nerveaura” went into the substances and materials in question thus creating a link that brought information back to the individual. The fact that sensitives could obtain information also from writing and photographs suggested to Buchanan the emission of something from a person to an object, something indicating the possibility that “the mental and the physical were capable of entering into a psycho-material combination” (Buchanan, 1849, p. 60).

Years later, Buchanan (1885) still maintained these views in his *Manual of Psychometry*, but extended them to argue that “Psychometry is the earthly irradiation of omniscience and it will be known hereafter that it can penetrate all things” (p. 156). Like some of the mesmerists before him, Buchanan had extended the concept of psychic functioning and emanations to include the idea of divinity and transcendence. Buchanan clearly stated that after his first studies “in which emanations and influences were recognized” (p. 159), he was ready to take a deeper view of the subject. Psychometry was an indication of the divine element in man, an element that provided the key to access universal knowledge.

Writing in *Buchanan’s Journal of Man*, physician B.W. Richardson (1855) believed that “while writing a letter, the paper imbibes the nervaura of our bodies from the hand, and that aura or vapor is subject to decomposition like all matter” (p. 34). In the same volume of the journal Dr. A. M. Potter (1855), a psychometrist, asserted that everything in nature had emanations. As he wrote: “By this magnetism we impart to all we touch or are in relation with, we leave ourself stereotyped; and a psychometrist has but to reach our emanation to unfold our entire character as well morally, as intellectually and physically; and from the present follow down the link-work of events to our earliest moment of existence or going forward, may by the aid of prevoyance unfold the future” (p. 246).

Many other ideas of force were related to psychometry. In *The Soul of Things* psychometrist Elizabeth Denton speculated on an ethereal fluid that “radiated to the surrounding atmosphere . . . which stamps upon it . . . images . . .” (Denton & Denton, 1863, p. xv). James Coates (1906) considered psychometry to be a “sense by which we are placed in conscious relation to certain subtle forces—emanations, vibrations—in nature . . .” (p. 7), while another writer referred to a “network of vibrations, waves, influences, of nameless, numberless and uninterrupted fluids” (Maeterlinck, 1914, p. 92). Somewhat later Ernesto Bozzano argued in his book *Les énigmes de la psychométrie et les phénomènes de télésthesie* (1927) that the vibrations corresponding to events are registered on a “transcendental and immanent medium on the object’s matter, this medium is space ether” (p. 115).



Other force ideas related to psychometry included those discussed by Duchatel (1910), and Pagenstecher (1922). Some variants of these ideas were H. H. Price's (1939) and Warcollier's (1938, pp. 261-269) discussions of the "psychic ether" and "psychic charges," respectively.

### Notes

1. Readers should keep in mind that these notes are meant as supplementary material for a previous paper (Alvarado, 2006).
2. Other work following-up Reichenbach's observations is summarized by Sudre (1926, pp. 206-207).

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# A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL SPIRITUALISTS' FEDERATION

## Presented to the ISF's 1948 Congress in London

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[**Note by Psypioneer:** - Printed below is an early history of the International Spiritualist Federation by M. Beversluis who represented Holland in 1922, and again in 1948 when he gave this paper. (Reverend) Beversluis was President of the Union of Spiritualists in Holland ("Harmonia"). On the Sunday evening session (2<sup>nd</sup> July 1922) of the congress; Beversluis spoke on the "necessity for an international Spiritualist religious union".

*Incidentally the 1922 congress was jointly the S.N.U.s twentieth annual meeting and the International Congress]*

Ladies and gentlemen, congenial friends; it is a great joy for me to attend this sixth, Congress of the International Spiritualists' Federation, and to speak to you a moment, giving a sketch of the history of this Federation.

To the congress in London, convened in 1922 by the British National Union of Spiritualists, I had come representing the Dutch Society of Spiritualists, "Harmonic" of which I was president. Before I went to London to attend this congress, I had corresponded with Mr. Yates, who was then the secretary of the National Union, and had asked him to give me an occasion during the congress to propose the founding of an International Union of Spiritualists. But Mr. Yates, by illness, was prevented from attending the congress. The chairman, however, at the first meeting on Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, gave me the opportunity to make my proposal. Great applause showed the sympathy of the audience for my proposal and it was accepted with unanimity. In the afternoon a meeting of all delegates and representatives of the respective countries-British Isles, United States of America, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, Holland, and Mexico-was held. After some discussion about the word "religious" in the title, which word the Spanish delegates wished to be removed. Mr. Warne, of Chicago, remarked that we had to try to unite not only the religious spiritualists, but also the scientific and philosophic section, it was resolved unanimously to remove the word "religious" out of the name.

Mr. Warne, U.S.A., proposed a Preparing Committee and this proposal was accepted. As members of such a committee, were chosen-Mr. WARNE for U.S.A., MR. BERRY for Britain, MR. GOMEZ for Spain, MR. CLEMENT DE ST. MARCQ for Belgium, MR. BEVERSLUIS for HOLLAND. It was agreed to meet in Liege, Belgium, the following year. Mr. Clement de St. Marcq was chosen as secretary of the Provisional Committee with Mr. Berry as president.

Soon after my return to Holland, I received an invitation to come to Brussels to give a lecture for the Belgian Spiritualists' Society (*Union Spirite Belge*); and when I

came to Brussels and made my acquaintance with the friends there, I learned that Mr. Clement de St. Marcq had not been the accredited representative of the Belgium Spiritualists, that the Union Spirite Belge had chosen as its delegate Mr. Delsart who had attended the congress. I wrote to Mr. Delsart about this question and he answered that in London he had remained silent about it, not wishing to hinder the founding of an International Union.

Then in the Belgian Spiritual Journal, "*La vie d'outré tombe*," an invitation was published by the *Union Spirite Belge* to the spiritualists of the world to gather in Liege, in 1923 to hold a World Congress (*un Congrès mondiale*) where "the proposal to found an International Spiritual Federation could come up for discussion." Of course it was clear that two different congresses in the same country and the same year, both intending to found an International Union or Federation, would be contrary to the idea of international union. I received a letter from Mr. Delsart informing me that a compromise was made between Mr. Clement de St. Marcq and the managing board of the *Union Spirite Belle*; and the conference of the Preparatory Committee would be held at Liege on the 27th and 28th of August, in connection with the congress held there from the 26th till 29th of August. So it happened that this Congress of Liege, though convened by the Belgian Society and presided over by its president, Mr. Connicxe, was the first Congress of the International Spiritualists' Federation (*Federation Spirite Internationale*).

Of the members of the Preparing Committee chosen in London, the only members present in Liege were Mr. Berry, Mr. Clement de St. Marcq, and I. Mr. Warne, Mr. Senespleda, and Mr. Nielsen were absent. While Mr. Nielsen had asked me to represent him, in the place of Mr. Gomez, of Spain, two other Spanish representatives were present; Mr. Gomez being prevented by illness from attending. Two new members were present, to represent France and Switzerland, Mr. Gastin of Paris and Mr. Fritz of Geneva.

At the meeting of the committee in Liege on the 27th and 28th of August, was founded the union proposed by me in London, under the name-International Spiritualists' Federation or *Federation Spirite Internationale* (I.S.F. or F.S.I.). Statutes were, adopted and a board of management chosen consisting of a president, a vice-president, a general secretary, a treasurer, and one or more councillors. Mr. Berry was chosen as president, vice-president Mr. Jean Meyer, of Paris, who freely offered his beautiful building, "*Maison des Spirites*" in *la rue Copernic*, in Paris, as headquarters; general secretary, Mr. Gastin, as Mr. Clement de St. Marcq wished to retire; treasurer, Mr. Fritz, and as first councillor, Mr. Beversluis. The *Maison des Spirites* was chosen as the domicile of the Federation.

Unfortunately Mr. Fritz, of Geneva, died before he could make a beginning of his task of treasurer; and Mr. Gastin left Paris for other work. In place of Mr. Fritz was chosen Mr. Pauchard, of Geneva, President of Honour of the Society for Psychological Research in Geneva. Mr. Andre Ripert was chosen secretary and performed his task extremely well until his state of health made it necessary for him to give it up. In the year 1929 Mr. Jean Meyer also was prevented by illness from attending the meetings of the Executive and General Committees. We hoped that he would recover his health, but he passed away.

I remember Mr. Pauchard as a modest, kind friend, always devoted to his work which he did with devotion and faithfulness; Mr. Ripert, an ardent spiritualist full of enthusiasm and inspiration, of which his yearly reports bore witness; and I remember Mr Jean Meyer as a noble gentleman and a sincere friend, full of zeal. At the Congress of London, in 1928, he had taken a great part in the work and was full of enthusiasm.

Great changes have taken place during the fifteen years since the founding of the Federation. At this moment I am the last of the original members of the Executive Committee and I know that soon the moment will come for me to leave this work and pass to that other life, where so many friends have gone before.

I remember the four congresses convened by the International Federation-the Congress of Paris in 1925, the Congress of London in 1928, the Congress of The Hague in 1931, and the Congress in Barcelona in 1934. I remember diverse persons coming more or less to the foreground at these congresses. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who already in the first year has been chosen as the President of Honour of the I.S.F., was always ready to help. He made possible the Congress of Liege by his financial assistance, as the *Union Spirite Belle* found the expenses were too great for it. Then also I remember the president of the Congress of Paris, Mr. Leon Denis, who, at the last general meeting of that congress, stood and spoke with enthusiasm and youthful ardour. Then I shall also remember Mr. Forthuny, the poet, musician, and medium, who gave an interesting seance in Paris and also co-operated at the Congresses of London and The Hague. And as the last I shall remember the Japanese professor, Mr. Wasaburo Asano and his psychic photos of thought-forms, who gave us a copy of his book, "Lectures on Psychic Science," printed and written in Japanese language.

Let me make an end by expressing my thanks to God, that he has made it possible for me to work with others in the propagation of our beautiful conviction, not only in my own country but also abroad. May our Federation grow and thrive; may it influence all nations in all countries of the world, in religion, morality and science, removing all fear of death, all separation, enmity and hate among men and nations, and prepare the future international union of all men, as brethren and sisters, children of our Heavenly Father, who calls all to his glorious Kingdom, because he has prepared for us a glorious life in the world of light, love, and beauty.

M. BEVERSLUIS.

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To finish I have added a short article by *LIGHT*<sup>7</sup> giving an outline of the then impending 1922 congress. -

## THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SPIRITUALISTS

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Delegates who are to attend the International Congress of Spiritualists, organised by the Spiritualists' National Union of Great Britain, are now arriving in London from overseas in considerable force, and the reception that is to be held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, London on Saturday, July 1st, at 7 p.m., when Mr. Geo. F. Berry, the President of the S. N. U., will deliver the address of welcome, promises to be a very representative and interesting function.

The annual business meeting, at which the election of officers for the S. N. U. who are to hold office for the coming year, will be held on Saturday, July 1st, at the Caxton Hall, at 10 a.m. Messrs. Geo. F. Berry, E. W. Oaten, W. D. Dodd, and R. A. Owen are standing for the Presidency.

The International Congress proper will be held at the Queen's Hall, Langham-place, on Sunday, July 2nd, and will be divided into three sessions. At the first session, commencing at 10.30 a.m., Mr. Geo. B. Warne, M.A., U.S.A., will deliver an important address on "Does Spiritualism contain the Essentials for a World Religion?" Mr. Warne is one of the most prominent Spiritualists in the United States to-day, and his paper is awaited with very keen interest.

The second session opens at 2.30 p.m., when a paper will be read by Chevalier Clement De St. Marcq on "Spiritualism as a Factor in International Relationship." Questions will be invited from the audience and an interesting discussion should follow.

The evening meeting, which commences at 6.30 when the chair will be taken by Mr. Geo. F. Berry, will be in the form of a big Spiritualist rally, and a very large attendance is anticipated. Many of the Spiritualists' Churches in the Metropolis will be closed that evening to enable the members to be present.

As the White Star Liner "Adriatic" on its homeward voyage includes among the passengers Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Lady Doyle and family, and is expected to dock at Liverpool on Sunday morning next it is certain that should the liner arrive to time Sir Arthur will be present to give an address at the evening meeting, when a great reception awaits him<sup>8</sup>. Mrs. Cadwallader, U.S.A., the editor and proprietor of the "Progressive Thinker," Chicago, and one of the most interesting personalities of American Spiritualism, will deliver the closing address of the meeting. On Monday,

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<sup>7</sup> July 1<sup>st</sup> 1922 page 411

<sup>8</sup> ACD did not arrive in time for his lecture at Queen's Hall on Sunday; he and his family did not arrive until midnight on Sunday. His lecture however, was given on the evening session on Monday (4<sup>th</sup> July) at South Palace Institute. He received a tremendous ovation and gave a brief account of his American trip.

July 3rd, the International Congress will continue its meetings at South Place Institute. There will be a morning and afternoon session, and at 6.30 in the evening the Congress will terminate with a final rally, when a musical programme will be given and short addresses delivered by leaders, officials and delegates.

Mr. R. H. Yates, the General Secretary of the S. N. U., has asked us to state that Mrs. McKenzie the Hon. Secretary of the British College of Psychic Science, 59, Holland Park, has arranged for Mrs. Deane to give sittings for Psychic Photography on Tuesday and Wednesday, July 4th and 5th, to delegates only. The S. N. U. have issued an attractive illustrated programme covering the whole Congress which will be obtainable at Caxton Hall and Queen's Hall on Saturday and Sunday. A full report of the International Congress and reception to the delegates will be given in the next issue of LIGHT. Those wishing to be certain of obtaining a copy should place their order at once for the issue of July 8th with their newsagent or bookseller or direct to the proprietors.

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## DR. JAMES M. PEEBLES

1822 - 1922

*When the great spiritual outpouring of the nineteenth century shall be submitted to the judgment of posterity, and the criterion of time, unbiassed by passion or prejudice, shall determine its true value to mankind, the more precious the record may become, the more eagerly will humanity search for the footprints of its pioneers, preachers, teachers, media, and martyrs. It is this tendency to identify all human interests with human individualities that has led to the errors of hero-worship, and god-men.*

*Emma Hardinge<sup>9</sup>*

James Peebles was born on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 1822 at Whitingham, Vermont. He was to spend around 80 years of his long life promoting the cause of Modern Spiritualism. In 1871, J. O. Barrett wrote <sup>10</sup> 'The Spiritual Pilgrim: A Biography of James M. Peebles' already by this time he was an accomplished traveller and author. It was while at Barrett's house in autumn 1868, while Peebles was busily engaged in literary work, that he related some of his experiences to Barrett who urged him to publish his experiences. This led Barrett to become his early biographer. Emma Hardinge wrote the preface to this book.

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<sup>9</sup> Taken from the preface of 'The Spiritual Pilgrim' by J. O. Barrett 1871

<sup>10</sup> Availability see: -

<http://www.abebooks.co.uk/servlet/SearchResults?bi=0&bx=off&ds=30&sortby=3&sts=t&tn=The+Spiritual+Pilgrim%3A+A+Biography+of+James+M.+Peebles&x=0&y=0>

A year later in the summer of 1872 Peebles made his first trip to Australia, being the first visiting speaker to deliver a series of lectures at the Temperance Hall and the Prince of Wales Theatre, and attracting large gatherings of up to 3,000 people. See: *The Cause in other Lands*<sup>11</sup>

In 1877 Peebles made a second trip to Australia and another in 1897. Printed below is a letter to *Light*<sup>12</sup> whilst on his fourth visit in 1902 to Australia.

The next Newsletter will publish an interview by *Light* with Dr. James Peebles which was given on his arrival in London from Australia in August 1902.

A later account<sup>13</sup> was written by Edward Whipple 'A Biography of James M. Peebles M.D., A.M.' 1901 which covers the earlier Australian trips.

Peebles was a few weeks away from his one-hundredth birthday when he died on February 15<sup>th</sup> 1922. His ashes were scattered by his request in an orchard in Los Angeles, Calif., on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

## DR. PEEBLES IN AUSTRALIA

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The writing and publication of my two books last year on, 'Vaccination' and 'Death Defeated, or the Psychic Secret of How to Keep Young,' together with the supervision of a large medical practice and a very extensive correspondence, reduced my vitality, and seriously threatened nerve-prostration; accordingly, I quietly slipped away from America for a rest. These ocean voyages always prove tonics to me.

This is my fourth visit to Australia. You may be aware that I had the honour of delivering the first course of lectures upon Spiritualism ever given in this part of the world. Just recently I finished a two months' course of lectures in Melbourne, and am to return there next month for another course, under the continued supervision of the V.A.S.,<sup>14</sup> of which that indefatigable worker and able editor of the 'Harbinger of Light,' Mr. W. H. Terry, is the president. Through his untiring energy £1,000 have

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<sup>11</sup> *Psypioneer* volume 1 No 18 October 2005 page 224: -  
<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/18.PSYPIONEERFoundedbyLesliePrice.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> *Light* March 15 1902, page 129

<sup>13</sup> Availability see: -  
<http://www.abebooks.co.uk/servlet/SearchResults?an=whipple&sortby=3&sts=t&tn=james+m+peebles&x=51&y=12>

<sup>14</sup> Victorian Association of Spiritualists (VAS)  
<http://64.233.183.104/search?q=cache:SJX3Ahr7kVgJ:www.vsu.org.au/html/history.html+v.a.s.+australia+spiritualism&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=5>



just been raised and banked to pay the expenses of speakers and mediums from England and America to this really prosperous country. Brother Colville<sup>15</sup>, whom I had the pleasure of meeting before he left Australia, did excellent work in these South lands in the interest of liberal thought and Spiritualism. He contemplates, so says the American Press, another visit here very soon. He will find open hands and warm hearts to greet him.

Having reached this city (Sydney) from Melbourne, I am now lecturing four times during the week upon reform subjects, and three times on each Sunday; in the morning in the Australian (Unitarian) Church, the Rev. Mr. Walters, a progressive Unitarian and highly cultured gentleman, being the pastor; in the afternoon in Queen's Hall, a magnificent and richly carved structure; and in the evening for the Psychic Society. The hall of this society, seating nearly five hundred is altogether too small, and many are turned away every Sunday evening. The singing, the solos, and the music are excellent. Mr. Hillcoat, a venerable worker, is president of the society. Mr. I. Crawford Bradley has been their speaker for over three years. He is now resting in the mountains. The Spiritualists of Australia, and especially the mediums, like those in America, have yet to learn the full meaning of the phrase- 'in union there is strength.' Many of them lack enthusiasm, consecration, deep religious conviction, devotion to their principles, and the moral courage to defend them, but they further lack the genius of organisation and the social cement of true brotherhood. This is probably equally true of both America and England.

When finishing my next course of lectures in Melbourne, I go to Zealand by way of Tasmania. I expect to deliver several lectures on Spiritualism in Hobart and one or two other places, as arrangements may be made. This will be the first course of lectures upon the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism ever delivered in this lovely isle of the ocean. And this reminds me that in 1869 I delivered my first course of lectures in Cavendish Rooms, London. How well I remember you, my dear friend, away back more than thirty years ago, and how, when I was lecturing in Cavendish Rooms and had to be occasionally away, you came up from the country and filled my desk, twice, I am sure, possibly three times. I remember, too, how I enjoyed the clairvoyant communications that you kindly took me to witness. Well, we are older now, but our souls are equally a equally warm. I have just passed the eighteenth milestone, and yet am vigorous and strong. And the rapid strides which Spiritualism has made since first we met must be encouraging and highly cheering to both of us and every lover of truth.

Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.

J.M. PEEBLES.

January 16th, 1902.

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<sup>15</sup> See W.J. Colville page 46: - <http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP4.2February08..pdf>

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Paul J. Gaunt