

PSYPIONEER JOURNAL

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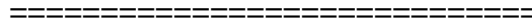
Garth Willey



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A new series of articles starts in this issue:

THE BUILDING OF THE SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL UNION

I have always been dismayed that no serious attention has been given to this history; the task of a national organisation, which started in Darlington in 1865, was immense. At this time it would be fair to say Spiritualism in this country was represented by the *Spiritual Magazine*,¹ a Christian publication which dealt mainly with the facts, but did not take any noticeable interest in the subject as a public movement. The few brief references to early attempts at a national organisation referred to then as “Progressive Spiritualists” mostly a non-Christian group. They were then, and are today, looked upon as failed attempts.

Though these pioneers of National Spiritualism are today mostly unknown, it would be incorrect to state that these noble efforts were in fact “failed attempts”. The long chain of events, immense struggles, ridicule and a desire to succeed, give prominence to their final achievement. One of those early pioneers was William Johnson. Decades later he would become the last Spiritualists’ National Federation, and the first Spiritualists’ National Union President in 1902.²

At the annual Conference of Spiritualists, held in Liverpool on Tuesday, August 5th 1873 under the presidency of Mr. Thomas Everitt, a new upcoming physical/trance medium, James J. Morse made his feeling known on the future of a National Spiritualist movement:

“Mr. Morse expressed himself strongly in favour of national organisation, by means of a union of all the existing associations; and he believed the thing to be feasible. Their work was to show that the cardinal fact of Spiritualism—communication between the two worlds—was absolutely true. There was a sufficient staff of mediums and speakers to do this work if they were organised, well used, and sufficiently paid. He was for avoiding theological and philosophical disputations, and would simply invite the people to come and judge for themselves. The function of the executive would be one of business rather than preaching or teaching. This would ensure a certain amount of harmony. There were reasons both for and against the use of the word “Progressive;” these reasons Mr. Morse placed fairly and forcibly before the

¹ See footnote 24 for more details.

² See *Psypioneer* Volume 7, No.1:—*Forgotten Pioneers of the S.N.U: Was William Johnson the first S.N.U. President? – Paul J. Gaunt – S.N.U. Presidents, by Frank T. Harris, General Secretary, S.N.U. – Mr. J. J. Parr – The Two Worlds*, pages 12-16:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP7.1January2011.pdf>

Conference. He approved of locating the executive power in London, but the conferences should be movable. He moved:—

“That this Conference, being a representative one, do constitute itself into a permanent national association, and elect, either from itself or from representatives of other societies not present, or by both methods if desirable, an executive head, for the purpose of carrying out the objects decided upon by that body.”

As a workable template for this series we publish below: A paper read by Mr. J. J. Morse,³ before the Spiritualists’ Debating Society, at Corbridge’s Café, Manchester, on Tuesday, March 20, 1894:

THE NATIONALISATION OF SPIRITUALISM

*The Two Worlds:—*⁴

To what extent, and at what time, Spiritualism will enter as intimately into our national life as, say, Christianity has, and does, are questions that depend upon many considerations for their answers. The operations of various forces, human and spiritual, the general acceptance, or rejection, by Spiritualists, of any definite set of principles and opinions, as representative of a concrete system of thought and practice, to be known distinctively as Spiritualism, and the ability or disinclination for organised and united action, with the recognition or rejection of the necessity of



J. J. MORSE.

³ Sketch of James Johnson Morse is taken from the front page of the *Medium and Daybreak*, January 8, 1875. Most references give his birth as October 1848, however, according to his autobiographical book: *Leaves from my Life: A narrative of Personal Experiences in the career of A Servant of the Spirits*’ Published by James Burns in 1877 he states that he was born on October 1st 1849? Morse was taken ill on February 18 1919, with an attack of influenza, its effect on his heart was fatal, on the 19th Mr Morse became unconscious and sank rapidly; at about 6:30pm he passed quietly away. His wife preceded him a few years before, it was reported “Mrs. Morse passed over, after a long illness consequent on shock from air-raids in November, 1917.”

⁴ *The Two Worlds* over two issues:—Friday, June 1, 1894 Front page-254 & Friday, June 8, 1894 Front page-266.

representative men or measures, are all fruitful sources of aid or hindrance to a comprehensive nationalisation of what is generically described as Spiritualism, but which generic definition it is almost hopeless at present to attempt to embody in any concrete statement. Certainly indeterminate talk, either men or spirits, sentimental platitudes, and a utilisation of the communion between us and the spirit world that does not involve something higher than test-hunting and phenomena gazing, will by no means aid us to offer our nation a spiritual gospel whose transcendent truths shall suffice to displace the shams, errors, falsities and follies that prevail.

Do not misunderstand my meaning. To me there is no doubt about our cause containing, in the matters of fact, knowledge, and philosophy, all the world is waiting for. But we are still working the drift for our diamonds; it is in the polishing of the gems, and in their setting, that the value of our labours will be finally made manifest. We have the diamonds—of purest water, too—but have we the polishing and settings? Let each answer as he understands our present status, as a cause.

My first duty, however, is to deal with the difficulties in the way of nationalising Spiritualism, my second duty will be to consider the possible way by which the object suggested in the title of the paper can be accomplished, while a passing glance must be given to the desirability, or otherwise, of the matter discussed.

First, then, as to the difficulties. A favourite argument against nationalisation is the universality of our facts and philosophy. "They are for every one, for all nations. They belong to the human race, and, therefore, cannot be nationalised in one country, or another. Just as well talk of nationalising light, heat, air, or water." Perfectly true, as far as it goes. Universal facts cannot be nationalised, but if our Spiritualism is merely, and only, facts, destitute of meaning or use to our daily life, I am afraid that sort of Spiritualism will have but little, if any, vital, moral, or spiritual life in it. Hence, this difficulty defeats itself, for the facts are, surely, not *all* we contend for? But, is it not true, nevertheless, that the Law and the Church, Materialism and Conventionalism, have tried, and are still trying all they can, to prevent even our facts from becoming nationalised—here, happily with but small success, and therefore might not the opposition of our enemies, rather than the universality of our facts, be cited as the potent difficulty in the case? It is urged, as another difficulty in our road, that "if our cause is ever nationalised, it will be first creedalised, and then its emasculation is assured. We have no creed, no authority, no doctrines, no popes or leaders," and so forth, and so on; therefore, the argument appears to be that having no principles, policy, or purposes, how can we nationalise a thing that is nothing? Indeed, as a sort of triumphant overthrow of the whole idea of nationalising our cause, it is at times urged, that evidently our spirit teachers never intend us to nationalise ourselves, for have they not frustrated all attempts at national unity! I make bold to assert that this last plea is utterly incorrect. I do not believe, for one moment, that the spirits ever frustrated any attempt made by us to organise on national grounds. But, my conviction is that impracticable counsels and ideas, jealousies, groundless fears of order and organisation, mistrust in one another's honour, and, in some notable cases, an anxiety to concentrate all power in certain personal directions, have had far more to do with the failure of our previous attempts at

nationalisation than any hostility thereto by the spirits. For, if their life is heavenly, and if “order is heaven’s first law,” it is rather curious that the heavenly visitants should oppose the first law of their own existence!

The foregoing arguments are among the stock and usual objections urged against attempts to nationalise our cause, but there are others of more importance not usually urged. First may be cited the undoubted fact that the religious, social, and commercial conditions of English society are not prepared to adopt, and live up to, such facts and their teachings, whereon the generality of Spiritualists are agreed, while the legal right to the public practice of mediumship—to seek communion with spirits—is still to be won.⁵ Next, we must remember, that in no wise have our interests any direct and tangible representation in our legislature, boards of guardians, town or county councils, school boards, charitable institutions, or benevolent societies. This is not due to any inherent failure of weakness as to our facts, or the deductions from our facts, which would disentitle us to such recognition, but from our failure to bestir ourselves in those directions by which effects are produced upon the various sections of our common life. We cannot, as Spiritualists’ societies, hold property, nor can our societies, as Spiritualist societies, be incorporated upon a legal basis. Here, then, are real difficulties in our way, practical obstacles to nationalisation, that must be met and overcome. While, further, there is the fact, that nearly all Ireland and Scotland, and large portions of Wales, and the South, East, and West of England are practically virgin soil, where scarcely any seed has been sown. I am no pessimist, no crier of wolf, no minimiser of what has been done, but do not let us call one fine day a whole summer. Another difficulty, too, is our increasing dearth of those very facts upon which we lay such stress. Private mediumship is undeniably less available now than ever, while public mediumship has but a mere handful of representatives. Our public workers—the phenomenal mediums, particularly—have been so persistently and scurrilously denounced, both within our ranks and outside, and a sentiment of hostility to them so persistently fomented, that the movement has thus had driven from its service the very agents necessary to its maintenance and growth. The fact that our halls are, in many cases, in stable lofts, up back courts in out-of-the-way places, while it may indicate the devotion and earnestness, and primitive sincerity of the founders, indicates to the average onlooker only a poor cause, poorly sustained—living, as it were, a hand-to-mouth existence, and utterly devoid of promise to become a national movement, or power. I do not believe there is any need for us to hide away in this fashion. There is abundance of means in our midst, and with a little more of self-sacrifice,

⁵ This would not be achieved until 1951, one of Morse’s final contributions as elected vice-president of the Spiritualists’ National Union was his work with S.N.U., President Ernest Oaten, Thomas H. Wright, Hon. Treasurer, and Hanson G. Hey General Secretary, on the S.N.U. Parliamentary Fund (Witchcraft Amendment) in 1916:

To raise the question of a reform in the administration of the Witchcraft Acts, and to obtain their amendment, the Spiritualists’ National Union, at its Annual General Meeting, held in Glasgow, on July 3rd, 1916, passed the following resolution:—

“That the Council be instructed to open a fund (amount named, £1,000) for the purpose of securing the amendment of the Witchcraft Acts and the Vagrancy Act, the adequate protection of mediums, and all necessary machinery.” (*The Two Worlds*, November 10, 1916 page 461.)

the best of meeting places could be found to house the best of gospels the world has ever heard.

My second duty, that of considering the possibilities of nationalising Spiritualism, is a more pleasing task, but not by any means an easier one. Before entering upon it, let us briefly consider what advances have been made towards nationalising Spiritualism in the past, and present. There have been some four distinct efforts that merit attention. These were national Conferences at Newcastle-on-Tyne, Darlington, Liverpool, and Manchester, all before 1878. The memories of these are all that remain, and even the memory of them is almost confined to the pamphlets and reports that published their proceedings. Of actual work, or effect upon either the country, or the cause, there are but few and faint traces to-day.

The next, and as a working body, by far the most successful ever made, though distinctly local, instead of national, was the Lancashire District Committee, whose labours still bear fruit, while following, and upon similar, but not identical lines, is the Yorkshire Committee, now known as the Yorkshire Spiritual Union, while, lastly, we have the Spiritualists' National Federation, of which, at its inception, high expectations were expressed, but over which the national aspect is far from realised, not though through any fault of the Federation Executive. But, in spite of the seeming hopelessness of all these larger attempts to nationalise our cause, by defining it, propagating it, upholding it, or of making it part and parcel of our national life, a mark, broad and deep, has been made upon our national life, and with agencies that have been wielded under almost every possible disadvantage; agencies that have been formed and continued by the faithful few, who, it is sad to say, have too frequently been left by the thoughtless many, to endure and bear the burden as best they might, at times even, abused and slandered in return for their labours. These agencies are our local societies, dotted up and down the land, clustering, starlike, in Lancashire and Yorkshire more especially. Remembering all the difficulties they still labour under, it can be truly said our local societies have done more upon the mortal side to render it possible that Spiritualism should become a national movement, than all other agencies combined.

To come to close quarters with our question as to nationalising Spiritualism, let us ask what is meant by this oft-repeated term? In a phrase the reply would be: "The welding into one compact and concrete whole of our scattered and disjointed forces under three requirements, that is: for work, for teaching, and for propaganda, thus creating a national movement that shall stand as representing British Spiritualists and British Spiritualism, which two are not at all points the same,"

To accomplish the first of my three points should be comparatively easy enough. A federal union—with absolute home rule—of all societies, the division of the movement into districts or unions, the arranging of "plans" for lecturers, the "pooling" of expenses in districts, thereby hugely reducing the cost of local work, are all matters that merely involve ordinary business sagacity; while the formation of a national trust, the funds whereof should be used for, among other things, the production of needful literature, the

operation of missionary and propaganda work, and to create a fund of benevolence for sickness, accident, and death among our poorly paid workers, are all items that naturally suggest themselves.

When the question of teaching is touched some not inconsiderable difficulties are discernible. Here, too, lies our present weakness, for no matter how effective a machine we construct, what will be the use of it if it has nothing to do? It is in deciding what the machine shall do that the difficulties crop up. Easy to say that a perfected federation will enable us to effectively teach Spiritualism, but pray what do you mean by Spiritualism, and who is to define it, ourselves, or our spirit friends, or both? And, so far as teaching is concerned here, it is distinct from propaganda; *it is the teaching we, as Spiritualists,* require and will abide by, as concerns God, man, life, duty, death, immortality, the spirit-world, politics, religion, Labour, temperance, woman, virtue, and what not else besides. Where are we to stand? Shall we all ride with a free rein, none of us, perchance, agreeing, and all of us insisting upon our own correctness? But, if we teach, we should have something definite to teach, and if so, the definitions should be such as, on general principles, at least, we are willing to stand by, and be known by, that would mark us as a party in the nation, a power in the state. But, more especially, that we may have something definite to give to our children and ourselves, in the form of advice, counsel—in a word, teaching. Here, too, it seems to me there is abundant material ready to our hands. The writings of Andrew Jackson Davis, over thirty volumes, of a deeply interesting nature, full of information and experience, concerning all phases of our subject; the works of Hudson Tuttle, than whom we have no clearer writer on things spiritual from a scientific and rational standpoint; while William Denton, the Spiritualist geologist and radical, has bequeathed us unnumbered treasures. The constant stream of inspired utterances through our present-day speakers forms another source for materials with which to give suitable teaching that should unity, coherence, and national sanction. Do not retort upon me that all this is the thin end of the wedge of creedism and priestcraft, for such retort begs the question and answers nothing. Are you Independent Labour men, Trades Unionists, Liberals, or Conservatives, as many of you are? Have you not your points, programmes, and principles, in your several movements? Do you not sink minor differences and stand together on your principles? Then, if such unity and definition of sentiment are good outside our cause, my contention is they are equally as good within our ranks.

In tracing out the third point, propaganda, the enormous importance, and the wide-reaching scope of efforts in this direction are patent and unquestionable. But we must very seriously consider what we mean by propaganda work, that is, what we propose to propagate. Of course we mean to extend a knowledge of Spiritualism. Very good, yet, once again, what is Spiritualism? Do you mean its phenomena and how to obtain them? Do you mean mediumship? Or does your propaganda work expend itself in relating personal experiences of communion with spirits?

On these three broad lines of general polity will our National Federation ever be able to evolve a National Spiritualism that shall concentrate and focus in a clear cut, simple statement of principles and aims, what Spiritualism means to us? Has the time come?

Who can say? Yet, certainly the nationalisation of Spiritualism and Spiritualists by the aid of things now existing, is, to my mind, a practicable possibility, and, let me add, a growing necessity.

Before venturing upon the desirability or otherwise of nationalising Spiritualism, let me offer a suggestive opinion of the character of Spiritualism, as I understand it. Its foundation is in the sublime and fundamental fact that I am a spirit, here and now; an eternal spirit, surviving death, as others do; and that the improvements in my surroundings here, are not merely the benefits conferred upon body or mind, but are actual improvements for my better living, as an immortal spirit. Hence, everything that affects me, as a spirit, and as our Spiritualism should mean, it seems to me, the science and philosophy of spiritual life, it should include in its scope, every question that affects my welfare here, or anywhere else, therefore my Spiritualism is comprehensive, cosmopolitan, and catholic. It is the philosophy of life, the science of existence, the ethics of society, politics and government. Mediumship, phenomena, communion, are all parts of our means of study, education and improvement, aids to enable us to understand more and more of the mysteries, possibilities, and requirements of our own lives, powers, duties, and responsibilities. As a purely general statement the foregoing places my own position fairly, in general terms, before you. Is the dream of a national Spiritualism quite a chimera? I do not think so.

Let us now turn to the final point. Is it desirable to nationalise Spiritualism? And here let me point out, if it is not already sufficiently clear, that the main purport of my theme is really the nationalisation of the teachings of Spiritualism, hence my reiterated insistence upon the necessity of defining what Spiritualism is to stand for. Associated with the main purpose has been another purpose, the nationalisation of Spiritualism, by the union of its working parts into an organic whole, as our National Federation worthily set out to do—one may be termed the nationalisation of Spiritualism, the other the nationalisation of Spiritualists. Shall we say some assent to Spiritualism becoming a creed, and Spiritualists a sect? No, never! We have escaped from bondage; never again will we wear fetters, least of all, forge them and affix them ourselves. But have we learned nothing from the past, have we made no advance? Is it impossible to have a definite declaration of principles and policy, without crystallising it into a creed? Is it impossible to organise on business principles, for business purposes? Our foes are united, clear as to their aims, definite as to their principles. Surely we can be the same? To my mind we should be strengthened all along the line, gain weight and power, and consequently increased respect. We could take our part; as a body, in the various reforms, and stand absolved from the not quite unjust charge of being dreamers, rather than doers. Once let us come to the front with a united body of ideas and principles, once make ourselves felt as a power, then our place would be secure, and our recognition, certain. But it is surely needless to prolong reasons in favour, of unity and union, their desirableness is patent to all. For, flowing from the realisation of such desires there come training, discipline, safety, for, our speakers and media; succour for those in sickness and distress; a central body, in whom all could have confidence, having national funds at its command for national purposes, one of which could be the trading in our literature for the profit of the common good. A National Trust Fund that, wisely safeguarded, could be used for furthering our work and propaganda,

and so, to a large extent, superseding the usual and irksome special appeals for funds whenever anything out of the ordinary is done.

To sum up, a truly nationalised cause would unite us internally, strengthen us for external work, and give us added weight and importance in society. It would create a definite statement of principles, enabling us to say to enquirers, "Here is where we stand on matters of fact, theory, and practice!" It might create an examining board, to decide upon the fitness of those who aspire to represent us on our platforms, for shirk it as we may, the fact is as true in our cause as in any other, we, like others, are frequently hurt more by our friends than by our foes. It would enable us to indulge in an intelligently devised and gradually extending propaganda along the lines of phenomenal proof, illustrative lectures, and personal testimony, and by a widespread dissemination of information by leaflets and tracts.

It might eventually enable us to establish and endow a Psychological College, wherein mediumship could be studied, developed, and practised under the best possible conditions, where Spiritual or Psychic Science could be pursued under the most advantageous surroundings. It would help to protect us against charlatans and all who for unholy ends ape our faith and steal our garments.

I again assert the materials are at our hands, ready to use. Shall we use them? Taking a large view of our work and our duty, casting aside doubts and dissensions, unswervingly serving the truth, shall we stand firm, and strive to nationalise our cause and our people, and bequeath at least the fair promise to our successors of that national Spiritualism which some of us at least see looming in the future? I know not what your answer may be, but mine is Yes! Yes, for God, humanity, and the angels. Yes, for unity, brotherhood, and progress. Yes, that we may compel the world to realise that our Spiritualism is the leaven that leaveneth the lump, and for breadth, power, and purpose the grandest gospel for heart, head, and life before the world to-day.

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Notes by the way

SPIRITUALISM THROUGH CHRISTIAN EYES



Much valuable information has been made available to students by Dr Georgina Byrne's book *Modern Spiritualism and the Church of England, 1850-1939*.⁶

But at £55, circulation will be limited. The book is also stronger in its handling of Christian material than of Spiritualism. The acknowledgments include three bishops but no Spiritualists, no CFPSS scholars like Dr Michael Perry,⁷ former editor of *The Christian Parapsychologist*. (CP), and no SPR specialists in the Victorian era.

Perhaps as a result, amid the wealth of useful references, there are some slips. Of the famous secret Anglican report on Spiritualism it is said "The report remained unpublished until the 1980s. (p.180)" But CFPSS secretary Julian Drewett has told me "This was printed in the

March 1979 CP, with introductory remarks by Garth Moore. Michael Perry wrote a short piece in the June 1979 CP about his work in the library of Lambeth Palace concerning the report. The Fellowship produced a further edition in 1999 edited by Michael Perry with contributions from both Michael and Rene Kollar. I have only one copy left of this edition but more can be printed. The price would be £4.95 including postage." Much information on the secret report is contained in *Psypioneer* January 2005.⁸

⁶ The Boydell Press, 2010:—<http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/store/viewItem.asp?idProduct=13438>

⁷ CFPSS: Churches' Fellowship for Psychical and Spiritual Studies, see *Psypioneer* Volume 4, No.1:—*CFPSS faces historic decisions – Leslie Price*, pages 10-11: —
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP4.1January08.pdf>

⁸ *Psypioneer* Volume 1, No.9:—*The secret report on Spiritualism*, pages 98-101:—
http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP9.pdf

The area of Spiritualist newspapers is a difficult one for historians. Attempts for example to list who edited *LIGHT* or *Psychic News* soon run into uncertainty. Although Dr Byrne commendably uses such newspaper sources, she errs on their details at times.

“*The Two Worlds* circulated initially from October 1858 until May 1859, but was re-launched in 1887, and is still active”. (p.66) Comment; See James Gregory, “The First Two Worlds” – *Psypioneer* December 2004.⁹ The two newspapers shared only a name.

“The Spiritual Magazine began in 1860 and continued for five years” (p.67) Comment: Two further series followed until about 1876.

“*LIGHT* commenced publication in 1880....” (p. 69). Comment: See “The Origins of *LIGHT*” *Psypioneer* November 2008.¹⁰ There Mr Dawson Rogers is quoted;

“In consequence of the dissatisfaction about the reports given in the ‘Spiritualist,’ a gentleman temporarily in London, Mr. J. G. Meugens, of Calcutta, whose name will be remembered in connection with his very wonderful experiences with Mr. Eglinton, suggested to me that a new paper should be started, to be the organ of the British National Association. I at once communicated with a number of friends throughout the country, and with their assistance ‘*LIGHT*’ was started on January 8th, 1881. The ‘Spiritualist’ soon afterwards disappeared.”

Dr Byrne includes a chapter “The Teachings of Spiritualism”. Indeed, she claims” this study offers the first thorough analysis of the theology of spiritualism” (p.15). That is quite a large claim – one recalls such books as G.W. Butterworth, *Spiritualism and Religion* (SPCK, 1944). However, the 28 page discussion by Dr Byrne that follows will educate readers of all parties. A notable omission is reincarnation, which had been a growing problem since Kardec, Tappan and Blavatsky and by the 1930s was taught by several high guides.

Also, she does not really engage with the output of the main Spiritualist bodies like the SNU and (though emerging late in time) GWCSL,¹¹ yet she knows of them through Nelson *Spiritualism and Society* (1969).

⁹ *Psypioneer* Volume 1, No.8:—*The first “Two Worlds”*, pages 74.75:—
http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP8.pdf

¹⁰ *Psypioneer* Volume 4, No.11:—*The Origins of LIGHT*, pages 276-281:—
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP4.11November08.pdf>

¹¹ On May 30th, 1931, The Greater World Christian Spiritualists League (GWCSL) was founded, later known as the Greater World Christian Spiritualist Association (GWCSA)

She does say, “In 1871 the medium Emma Hardinge Britten received the “Seven Principles of Spiritualism” from the recently departed Robert Owen” (p.82) and quotes them with the comment, “Neither Britten nor indeed the spirit of Robert Owen offered expansion of these principles”. In fact Mrs Britten expounded them often. However readers of *Psypioneer* will know that the Seven Principles, like the Apostles’ Creed, have a complex history – sometimes they were six, sometimes they read differently and so on.

Eminent Spiritualists like Maurice Barbanell and Arthur Findlay are not mentioned in the book. Or are they? The index is selective, and some Spiritualists don’t get selected. Thus Ernest Oaten, perhaps the most influential Spiritualist from 1914 onwards, is in the text as a witness to the Anglican enquiry (p.179) as is Miss Phillimore of the LSA, but they are not in the index.

Nevertheless, this book is to be greatly welcomed as a solid contribution to the overlap area of Spiritualism and religion. One may suspect the author cares chiefly for academic and ecclesiastical opinion, but there is a noticeable absence of that snide tone to which authors on this subject can descend. Simply by evenly reporting what Spiritualists believe, she shows a welcome sympathy.

LP.

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Mr. J. B. Conklin and the Founding of Glasgow Association of Spiritualists

In the October 2011 issue,¹² we published “The Glasgow Association of Spiritualists,” and stated we would be giving more information in a later issue under the title: “Mr. J. B. Conklin and the Founding of Glasgow Association of Spiritualists”.

In the October 2009 issue¹³ we had published the first part of “Nettie Colburn Maynard,” who had authored *Was Abraham Lincoln a Spiritualist?* which appeared towards the end of 1891 from Rufus C. Hartranft, Philadelphia. This article brought Simon P. Kase to our attention who was present at a séance with President Lincoln. In part two, (February 2010 issue)¹⁴, we published “Dr. Walter Franklin Prince Versus Simon P. Kase.” In this story the medium J.B. Conklin played a central part, though we noted that Dr. Prince incorrectly spelled his name as Conkling. We found that Conklin had earlier reported dealings with Abraham Lincoln, but biographical information on this early New York medium remains scarce.

In the 1850’s Conklin was advertised as a “Test Medium”¹⁵ along with other mediums, like the daughter of Judge John Edmonds Miss Laura Edmonds, Kate Fox and Emma Hardinge giving free circles in New York.¹⁶ Emma Hardinge became actively involved in Spiritualism around 1856; she later referred to Conklin (and others) in her early spiritualistic endeavours:

“I became early and dearly intimate with.....J. B. Conklin.”¹⁷

¹² Psypioneer Volume 7, No.10:—*The Glasgow Association of Spiritualists – Paul J. Gaunt & Historical Notes (Glasgow Association of Spiritualists) – The Two Worlds*, pages 317-324:—
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP7.10October2011.pdf>

¹³ Psypioneer Volume 5, No.10:—*Nettie Colburn Maynard (part one) – Paul J. Gaunt*, pages 341-347:—
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.10.October09.pdf>

¹⁴ Psypioneer Volume 6, No.2:—*Dr. Walter Franklin Prince versus Simon P. Kase – Paul J. Gaunt. Includes:—The Aetiology of a Psychological legend – Dr. Walter Franklin Prince*, pages 29-45:—
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.2February2010.pdf>

¹⁵ This can be noted in Emma Hardinge’s *Modern American Spiritualism* 1870, p 152. Mrs. Coan (better known by her maiden name Ada Hoyt) and Conklin were investigated by the “New York Philosophical Society of the Mechanics’ Institute”; they were tested for raps, table movements together with some mental mediumship. This took place in 1856, and a report recording Conklin can be found in *Emerson’s Magazine and Putnam’s Weekly* Volume V 1857, starting on page 176 “*Spiritualism and Philosophy*” free download:—<http://www.google.com/books?id=FxDZAAAAMAAJ&ie=ISO-8859-1>

¹⁶ See *Modern American Spiritualism* by E. Hardinge 1870, various publishers, page 149.

¹⁷ *Autobiography of Emma Hardinge Britten* John Heywood, Manchester 1900, p35

Emma Hardinge, states Conklin was the first medium she sat with in New York, 1855. Below is reprinted her account of her meeting with Conklin, taken from her first book *Six Lectures on Theology and Nature* published in 1860:¹⁸



“...I came to America, purposing to pass six months, which the horrors of the Crimean war, then raging, made very sad and depressing in London, in a temporary engagement in New York. The six months extended to ten, and during that period, for the first time in my life, I heard of Spiritualism.

“The idea of communion with “the dead” appeared, in the outset, impossible, then wicked, and nothing but the persuasions of several persons by whom I was surrounded, could have induced me to investigate. Purposing to return to England in a few weeks, however, and not unwilling to carry away with me subjects for sport and ridicule, (an inhospitable practice, too common among foreigners when visiting distant countries,) I determined to witness what I *knew* (as all *know* who really know nothing about Spiritualism,) was “*a grand American humbug.*” Trusting to my shrewdness to detect what I felt *must* be a very shallow imposture, I visited Mr.

Conklin, the well-known test medium of New York. Before I was introduced into the circle then assembled, I heard a sentence spelled out which appeared to me at variance with *Bible writ*. This was enough—after the fashion of some of those who attend our spiritual lectures, and with so little confidence in the truth of their own system, that the moment they hear it attacked, they rise up and fly, lest their truth and their religion should fly first—I fled, seared off, in fear that my “rock of ages,” my Bible should be insulted, and my own *unswerving faith* be shaken, by sitting in such infidel company. It was many weeks before I could bring myself to understand that great *truths are never in danger*, and every blow leveled against a rock, must be made with stronger material than the rock, before it can touch it.”

¹⁸ Autobiographical Introduction page pages 8-9—*Six Lectures on Theology and Nature* by Emma Hardinge, 1860 Scott and Company, Chicago, re-published by Paul Gaunt in 2007 (photograph is taken from this book). Later Hardinge relates a similar account (1855), with J. B. Conklin in her *Modern American Spiritualism* 1870, various publishers pages 135-136.

It is interesting to note, in her autobiography she again tells the story of her first encounter with a Spiritualist medium, but in this account she does not name Conklin:¹⁹

...I heard a thin, sad-faced looking man at one end of the table keep on repeating letters of the alphabet over and over again in a monotonous tone, until he at length stopped, when one of the party who seemed to have been engaged in writing something, said, speaking in a clear loud tone “The Spirit answers, Immortality would be a mere fiction were there no other evidence of it than Bible teachings.” This was enough for me. These horrid “ghoul” like looking infidels were pitching into the Bible!

Nine years later, she again refers to Conklin in her verbal statement dated Tuesday 2nd February, 1869 before the London Dialectical Society:²⁰

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE

“Mrs. Hardinge then proceeded to state some of her own personal experience. She said that for a long time she was sceptical of, and even hostile to the spiritual faith, notwithstanding that she had always possessed certain occult powers herself. She was induced to attend one of the *séances* of Miss Kate Fox; the raps occurred, but the questions put by the believers present were framed according to so unscientific a method, and characterized by so great a want of precision and exactness that she could not help exclaiming, “Surely, this is all humbug and absurdity;” when, in this disposition of mind, she sat down to the table herself, the raps instantly ceased, and she retired from the *séance* even more persuaded of the imposture than before.

Her next *séance* was with Mr. Conklin, of New York; the result was exactly the same. At last she attended a *séance* with a medium who appeared to be entirely unaffected by the disposition of those present. The manifestations were very remarkable, and evidently denoted the presence of a conscious intelligence; in two hours she was thoroughly persuaded of the existence of some occult, invisible and intelligent agency, and though it was only after many months of persevering research that she became convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, her scepticism was shaken from that *séance*.”

Conklin was also well known as a writing medium, below gives us a brief insight to his technique and method:²¹

¹⁹ *Autobiography of Emma Hardinge Britten* John Heywood, Manchester 1900 pages 16-17. Re-published by SNU Publications in 1996.

²⁰ Taken (edited) from:—*Report on Spiritualism, of the committee of the London Dialectical Society*, J. Burns edition, 1873 pages 111-112

“With Mr. Conklin, whom I have mentioned in my narrative, [p.85] the writing is always right to left; [...] the sentence is commenced at the right, that is, the beginning of the sentence is at the upper right-hand corner of the paper, and the paper must be reversed, and held towards the light so that the writing will show through, in order to read it readily, or from left to right as usual.”

Conklin came to England in around 1864. Part of his visit was spent with the veteran Spiritualist, Robert Cooper at Eastbourne.²² This proved to be very successful and his mediumship is recorded by Cooper in his book *Spiritual Experiences*.²³ However, from the Cooper household he continued to Glasgow, where his mediumship was suspected of fraud. For example p.98 (*Spiritual Experiences*): “The lifting of the table was explained by suggesting that the medium had hooks concealed in his sleeves!” A pamphlet was written by Mr. John W. Paterson, which professed to be an exposure of the whole affair; we can pick this up in *The Spiritual Magazine*.²⁴

²¹ *The Invisibles: an Explanation of Phenomena Commonly Called Spiritual* by M. J. Williamson published by J. B. Lippincott & Co 1867 pages 307-308. Free download available at:—
<http://www.google.com/books?id=diQPAAAAIAAJ&ie=ISO-8859-1>

²² *Psypioneer* Volume 4, No.12:—*Mr. Robert Cooper – Paul J. Gaunt*, pages 287-300:—
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP4.12December08.pdf>

²³ *Spiritual Experiences, Including Seven Months with the Brothers Davenport*, by Robert Cooper. Published by Heywood, London 1867, free download is available at:—
<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Vu3pRZ50YKcC&ie=ISO-8859-1&output=html>

²⁴ *The Spiritual Magazine* (1860-1877) was started in January 1860 under the editorship of Mr. William Wilkinson, its originator and proprietor, with Mr. Thomas Shorter, best known at the time by his *nom-de-plume* of Thomas Brevior (a Latinized version of his name), as sub-editor. William Howitt and Benjamin Coleman* were well-known contributors. Later editors in the last years were Dr. George Sexton, followed by J. Enmore Jones.

*For more information on Coleman and the *Spiritual Magazine*, see Marc Demarest’s blog which will also take you to a biographical summary of Benjamin Coleman:—
<http://ehbritten.blogspot.co.uk/2012/08/controversy-conducted-part-two.html>

J. B. Conklin's misfortune at Glasgow was indirectly instrumental in the founding of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists formed in 1866!

SPIRITUALISM IN SCOTLAND

*The Spiritual Magazine:—*²⁵

“IT is just two years since there appeared in Glasgow a pamphlet, written by Mr. J. W. Paterson, one of a party of sixteen who engaged Conklin, the American medium, to visit Glasgow, and who after several sittings with him, declared him to be a charlatan, and had a “strong suspicion that Mr. Conklin’s more famous brethren differ from him but in degree, that tracked with a like patience and met with a subtlety proportionate to their own inflated pretensions, would collapse, even as this man’s did, and vanish amidst a like laughter.” Mr. Paterson, no doubt, intended to give a death-blow to the further consideration of Spiritualism in Scotland, but the publication of this pamphlet led to a controversy in the Glasgow papers, in which Mr. Howitt and I took part in defence of Spiritualism. We denounced the folly of Mr. Paterson’s conclusions, based as they were upon such superficial evidences. The result has been quite opposite to Mr. Paterson’s expectations. A number of intelligent men, residing in Glasgow and the neighbourhood, stimulated by the controversy, commenced an enquiry for themselves, which has resulted in the conversion of a body of men sufficiently numerous to form a society of Spiritualists, who have appointed their officers and hold meetings fortnightly for the purpose of reading papers, and of interchanging their personal experiences, some of which, already described by me in previous articles, are as marvellous as any upon record.

“These gentlemen having done me the honour to elect me one of the honorary presidents of their society, I was induced to pay a visit to Glasgow recently, to make their personal acquaintance, and I there had the pleasure of spending two very pleasant evenings at their place of meeting, at which about thirty or forty respectable tradesmen and their wives were present. One object of my visit to Glasgow was to see the medium, P. A., but he had left Glasgow and I had not therefore, the opportunity of witnessing the extraordinary manifestations attending his mediumship. I saw, however, several persons who had been present at various *séances* with

²⁵ June 1866 pages 263-264: The author of the article is not given, but the reference “having done me the honour to elect me one of the honorary presidents of their society” tells us it was Benjamin Coleman (see footnote 27:—“second annual report of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists.”) Free downloads of *The Spiritual Magazine*, 1860-1870 and other valuable spiritualistic material is available at: The International Association of the Preservation of Spiritualist and Occult Periodicals (IAPSOP) curated by Marc Demarest:—<http://www.iapsop.com/archive/index.html>

P.A., who corroborated the statements which I have recorded in former papers.

“The Conklin party of sixteen, I then heard, was originated by Mr. A. Kennedy, an intelligent man of business and the head of a very respectable firm in Glasgow. Mr. Kennedy did me the favour of calling upon me, and pronounced himself a thorough convert to Spiritualism, and I am glad to say he is one of the few who is not afraid to avow it openly. He subsequently brought his friend Mr. Paterson to make my acquaintance, and with him I had an amicable discussion upon the question of spiritual evidences. He is, however, one of that class of thinkers to whom human testimony is of no value. He must see before he can believe, and having committed himself so deeply by his too celebrated pamphlet he is not likely to be in haste to recant his errors, though I do not think he will ever attempt to support them by the publication of another pamphlet. Of quite another type of mind is Mr. Kennedy’s. He, it appears, did see enough during Conklin’s visit to interest him, and by subsequent enquiry he became satisfied and, as I have said, he is now a confirmed believer.”

The story continues in November 1867:

SPIRITUALISM IN SCOTLAND

The Spiritual Magazine:—²⁶

About three years ago “some 16 gentlemen,” residing in Glasgow, determined to investigate the claims of Spiritualism, and they engaged “a Mr. Conklin, a medium of 13 years’ standing, warranted to be highly favoured in spiritual matters,” with whom they held several *séances*, and concluded by denouncing him a charlatan.

A pamphlet, entitled *Spirit-Rapping in Glasgow: a True Narrative*, was written by Mr. John W. Paterson, one of the 16 whose “object was to arrive at the truth; they had read much and heard more, were not unwilling to believe, but had never had any personal contact with mediums,” and as Mr. Conklin, in their opinion, was an impostor, they had “strong suspicion that Mr. Conklin’s more famous brethren differ from him but in degree; that, tracked with a like patience, and met with, of course, a subtlety proportionate to their own, their inflated pretensions would collapse, even as this man’s did, and vanish amidst a like laughter.”

This “true narrative,” though supported by an influential journal, the *Glasgow Herald*, produced an effect the very reverse of the author’s intention. In the first place,—it called forth an admirable letter from Mr. Howitt, which met with a rejoinder, and a general controversy ensued. The *Glasgow Herald*,

²⁶ *The Spiritual Magazine* November 1867 pages 496-497

with great fairness, and sound discretion, since no subject could be more interesting to its readers, opened its columns to both sides, and it eventuated in the “collapse” of Mr. Paterson and his followers and the triumph of Spiritualism. A few intelligent men of the middle class, stimulated by the facts and reasoning of the supporters of Spiritualism, (who did not condescend to imitate their opponents by writing vulgar abuse under the cover of the anonymous,) took up the investigation in earnest, and the result was that an association was formed which has steadily increased its numbers, and is now in the third year of its existence. The hall in which it holds its meetings was filled on the third anniversary to overflowing, and the *Glasgow Herald* of October 5, reports their proceedings in full, under the head of—

A NIGHT WITH GLASGOW SPIRITUALISTS

“The third annual *soirée* in connection with the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists was held on Thursday evening, in Ansell’s Rooms, under the Trades’ Hall, Glasford Street.²⁷ The attendance was numerous and respectable, Mr. James Marshall (President of the Association) occupied the chair, and amongst other gentlemen present were—Messrs. James Nicholson, Hay Nisbet, James Walker, Alexander Simpson, and William Larmont. After tea, the company joined in singing the first two verses of the Hundredth Psalm. Thereafter, the chairman delivered the usual introductory address. In the course of his remarks, he said the object of the Association was to encourage members and inquirers in their investigation of the facts and teachings of Spiritualism; and secondly, to spread a knowledge of its truths, with the view of opposing the Materialism of the age, and of confirming the mind in the belief of a future state. . . . They were all practical men, who wished to use their own eyes and ears—who wished to use the senses that God had given them, leaving every one of course to deduce his own theory from the facts which were presented. The Association possessed no religious element, but was, in short, composed of a band of investigators who wished at their own fire-side to study the science of psychology.”

Want of space necessarily precludes my giving fuller details, which occupy two columns of the *Glasgow Herald*, but I may briefly state, that Mr. Andrew Cross, the Honorary Secretary, supplemented the report, which he read, by some sensible remarks, and Mr. Hay Nisbet gave an interesting account of the “Progress of Trance Painting.” The *Herald* says, “The story Mr. Nisbet had to tell related to the wonderful trance painting of a working cabinet maker in this city,” (of which the readers of Passing Events have already had an account in

²⁷ This is recorded in the second annual report of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists which is available from Marc Demarest’s site; this gives an excellent overview of the officers, committee, library, constitution & rules of the Association etc., and includes an address by Emma Hardinge “What is Spiritualism?”

See:—http://www.ehbritten.org/texts/primary/ehb_second_annual_report_glasgow_spiritualists.pdf

this Magazine). The medium performed all the operations of the painter, not excepting the mixing and arranging of his colours, with his eyes shut, and sometimes he worked in a room made perfectly dark.”²⁸

Miss Chapman, a young lady from Huddersfield, who I am told is a very interesting speaking and singing trance medium, who was present, and took a prominent part in the evening’s proceedings. The *Herald*, giving a lengthy report of Miss Chapman’s address and singing, says, “To a stranger, it was no slight novelty to see a young woman, with closed eyes and a pale face, led in by the hand to sing while in what Spiritualists call a trance, before 300 or 400 persons.”

I congratulate the Spiritualists of Glasgow upon their advanced position. I respect the editor of the *Glasgow Herald* for the example he sets to all others of his craft, and I hope Mr. J. W. Paterson, who is really the founder of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists, has at length arrived at the truth.

In conclusion:

The true histories of the Association’s founders are not generally reflected in modern literature. For example, John. W. Paterson who is credited above as its founder, is not *actually* mentioned in the Association’s formal history—“*An Outline and History*,” or in the article “Historical Notes” by the *Two Worlds*. Moreover, the above histories (see *Psypioneer* October 2011) both state their first president as Andrew Glendinning, as briefly indicated in the October issue. The Association booklet “*An Outline and History*”, states their first president Glendinning’s term of office was 1866-1869.

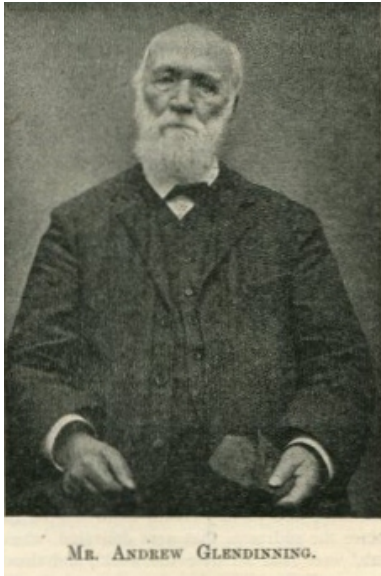
However, we can see from the “Spiritual Magazine” article, and the Second Annual report of the Association (footnote 27), that this is in fact incorrect as the president at the time of this report (1868) was Mr. James Marshall; furthermore we can note Andrew Glendinning did not hold any office in the Association at this time, but did serve them as a speaker. The name James Marshall does not appear in the above histories of the Association!

Andrew Glendinning died on Tuesday, October 25 1910 at the age of eighty-four, James Robertson wrote a brief obituary which he said:

... “Spiritualism claimed Andrew Glendinning at least half a century ago, and to its promulgation he gave his best powers and freely opened his purse to help on the work and the workers. He was a friend and associate of nearly all the notable men and women in our ranks—Gerald Massey, Rev. H. R. Haweis,

²⁸ This would be referring to the automatic and direct drawings by David Duguid. It should be noted some authors make reference to the mediumship of “Duguid”. There were two other brothers Alexander and Robert. Alexander Duguid (Kirkcaldy) would also become a well-known medium. Some of David Duguid’s paintings are on display at the Britten Memorial Museum, Arthur Findlay College, Stansted Hall, Essex.

William White (the author of *The Life of Swedenborg*), W. T. Stead, Traill Taylor, and hosts of others.”



... “It was in the work of psychic photography that he did more than anyone. Along with his friend, Traill Taylor, he published *The Veil Lifted*,²⁹ which will ever stand forth as placing the evidence beyond doubt. For over a quarter of a century I have been on the most intimate terms with him; visiting him, often at this home, and meeting him during my frequent visits to Scotland. I have had hundreds of letters from him, full of his good sense and sweet spirit. His virtues were not painted on him, but ran through all his being. I shall miss his friendly correspondence, yet I anticipate that soon the old messages of cheer and hope will come from his new habitation. A few years ago his wife, who was a true companion, passed to the Unseen, and no doubt since then he looked forward with joyous anticipation to the great promotion which would reunite them.”³⁰

—§—

We can also note in the same Second Annual report of the Association, the Secretary was Mr. Andrew Cross, like Andrew Glendinning a well-known pioneering Spiritualist and also present at the founding meeting of the Association as the sketch reveals. The following sketch gives a nice overview of early Spiritualism in Glasgow, with a rather amusing report of Emma Hardinge’s visit which I believe was her only visit to Glasgow; we can also note Andrew Cross names the first president of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists as Mr. James Marshall:

²⁹ Whittaker & Company, London 1894.

³⁰ Quote and photograph taken from his obituary published in *Light*, November 5 1910, page 531

EARLY GLASGOW SPIRITUALISM

The Medium and Daybreak:—³¹

THE EXPERIENCES OF MR. ANDREW CROSS.

Our friend Mr. Cross has been interviewed by us, and from what he writes, and what we know, we give—as much as possible in his own words—some of his early reminiscences in connection with Spiritualism.

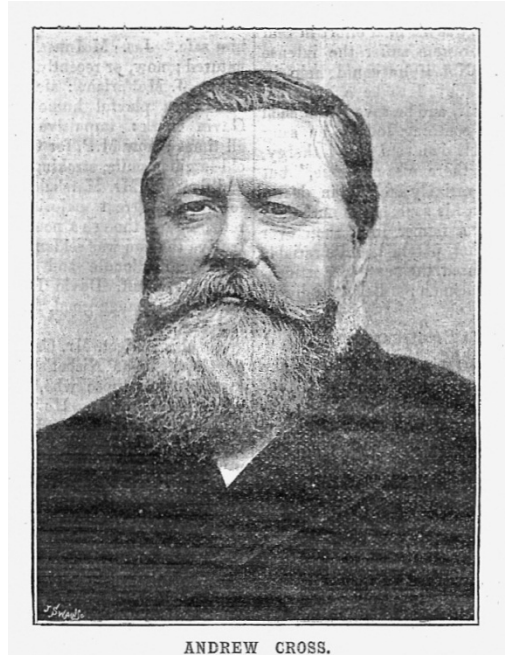
EARLY REMINISCENCES.

He states that his Father was one of the eminently good and advanced men of his time. Stern and exacting in all things pertaining to religion, but advanced; for being infected with Morisonian heresy he was turned out of the Church, and his Son seems to have inherited the Father's speculative mind, along with his good and noble Mother's strong physique.

Yet though trained in the *free* air of the E. U. Church,³² he was *afraid of Hell*; that prison-house of souls, whose gates never open to let one escape; built by a Father of LOVE, that therein he might roast and torment his unruly children, for ever and forever.

The boy was afraid, and tried to be good. He asked his father, If God loved his soul as much as Saul's why He did not speak to him personally, that he, too, might believe and be saved? and a religious war broke out within him: he fought and struggled in darkness, with terrible doubt. Tossing hither and thither, like Noah's dove seeking rest but finding none, these were dark days. He was advised to see Prof. Kirk, who would likely speak words of peace to his soul, but the rev. gent gave him a book on Predestination to read, and so the war went on.

The family were spending the season at the then village of Dunoon, and Andrew was down from Saturday till Monday. On Sunday morning he got up right early, and wandered by the banks of Milton Burn, until he was out of sight of the passing crowds. At the foot of a tree, by the side of the silvery stream, laughing and dancing past, with the Sun looking down, like the eye of God upon him, and the birds warbling their praises on every hand,—with all the elements of inspiration around him, he knelt down in an agony



A PIONEER GLASGOW SPIRITUALIST.

³¹ *The Medium and Daybreak*, July 31 1891. Photograph of Andrew Cross front page, text 482-484.

³² Evangelical Union (Scotland):—[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelical_Union_\(Scotland\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelical_Union_(Scotland))

of soul indescribable, to *pray for help*; but the prayer came back like an echo through the darkness. He struggled there for two hours, and arose at last, with tearstained eyes, *unanswered, unheard*. He had not *faith*, and prayer without faith is vain; so this was his final effort in that direction. But he asked: Should others suffer the intense mental agony he had endured? Not if he could help it. So he began to teach, what he believed to be a GIGANTIC DELUSION, that they might believe it, and be saved from such a hell as he had endured; and the soothing lullaby he sang to others would soon have wooed his own soul into lethargy, whispering, "Peace, peace, where there was no peace," but that of painless mortification, invariably ending in death. But, again, fortunately the fever in his soul broke out amid deeper gloom: a wilder unrest, a fiercer fury than ever raged before; and troubled with a hot, parched, and insatiable thirst to *know*. That fever once roused, the peace of mortification was gone, and he said with Solomon: "Better a living dog than a dead lion."

THROUGH MESMERISM TO SPIRITUALISM.

At this time Mr. Cross resided for a few months in the town of Hamilton, and by way of amusement, a few friends being met at a house there, he tried, and to his own astonishment succeeded, in mesmerising a young man named Templeton, now a large dry goods merchant in Liverpool, his subject turning out a splendid clairvoyant. He industriously pursued the Study, until, with an electric thrill, he received the conviction, "That there were more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in our philosophy,"

With heart and mouth full of the story of his deliverance, and convinced that, after all, the Bible fables might be true, he flew to his old friends with the "Glad tidings." Jas. Brown and Robt. Colquhoun did not jump with joy, and rejoice with him, but sadly shook their heads, and on his departure bemoaned the fate of poor Cross, whose brain so soon showed signs of decay. He however went on with a series of experiments, which led him far in the study of Psychology, before he took time to look back. These experiments were too varied and numerous to be given here; suffice it to mention, that first he found that he could control his subject by an exercise of will, without mesmeric passes, and therefore concluded, that it was *not* "A subtle fluid passing from the extremities of the body of the operator, into the system of the subject." By many tests, he found, that the subject could inform him on matters of which he knew nothing, until subsequent inquiry proved them true; therefore, mysterious as thought-reading is, *this* was more baffling, and more complicated still. He tested clairvoyance alone, and also in a large audience, on the evening of the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales; the clairvoyant read books through brick walls, read notes in gents' pockets, described parties, and their occupations, in houses at a distance, &c., &c.; and while Cross was struggling against the spiritual hypothesis in every way possible, the fates introduced him to a real live Spiritualist, Mr. Sharpe (here was a curiosity), and through him to a most remarkable and reliable clairvoyant, Maggie Townsend, whose powers have since been destroyed by reckless abuse. With two good clairvoyants in hand, it may well be understood that he made rapid progress in the unpopular but fascinating study. He says: "At this time my good, upright, and truly religious Father passed on, a non-Spiritualist in life, but an exultant one in death, for ere the waters of Jordan touched his feet, he warned those around him that he was not

delirious, but that he saw himself surrounded by an immense cloud of angelic witnesses, and amid the seraphic songs of welcome, audible, he said, to him, he bade his loving friends not Farewell, but simply Good-bye. He has gone forward. I possess immense advantages over him to-day, but I would to God that with them all I were half as good a man.”

THE PIONEERS OF SPIRITUALISM IN GLASGOW.

Mr. Cross continues:—“On removing to Glasgow, after my Father’s departure, I received a circular, inviting those interested in Spiritual Phenomena to meet at Buchanan’s Hotel, Carlton Terrace, where to my amazement I found, that if I was mad, my old friends Brown and Colquhoun, were stark staring crazy, for they were the promoters of said meeting. Here I formed associations, which I have cherished in my after years, and which I declare I will always cherish in this life, as well as in the next. The memories are still green and sweet, of Robt. Colquhoun, the intelligent and cultivated gentleman, later M.D.; Jas. Brown, who though not *now* travelling along with us, will doubtless come right in the end; tough, gruff, blunt, and honest he aye was, and still is. He says Spiritualism is as true to him to-day as it ever was, but he found it to be of evil origin. With a belief that the Devil is doing this work, we think him safe. Jas. McInness: quiet, ever smiling and good-natured; now, or recently, editing the *Free Press*, Wakefield. J. McFarlane: always busy, full of drive, push, and sometimes playful humour; now M.D., near Glasgow. Gavin Clark: impulsive and ambitious, but kindly at all times; now M.P. for Caithness. Hay Nisbet: with his old familiar smile, stroking down his long Garibaldi beard; and dear old Mr. Marshall, the first President, who has gone to join the great majority. Jas. Nicholson, too: quiet, retiring, and though a poet of no mean ability, yet so unobtrusive that he was seldom heard. Then there was gentle, genial, affectionate and emotional Andrew Glendinning; and jolly, bluff, David Duguid (Scotch for Do Good), and he has done much good, for who has not heard of the Painting Medium.”

On this subject, Mr. Cross goes on to say: “Mr. Duguid’s development at Nisbet’s was most interesting as well as instructive to those who, like me, followed it through its various evolutions. He was visited by half the clergy of Glasgow and neighbourhood, while literary and scientific men from all over the country came to see him. He was as usual tested, and toasted, and roasted, more than I have ever seen any medium, and has come out unscathed. But the strict rules, rigidly enforced, at the seances held night after night, at the Nisbet house—rules enforced alike on priest or pauper—were doubtless, the reason of his retaining his mediumship to this day, not only undiminished, but evolved and developed beyond conception. The first I saw of his mediumship, was some scrolls and writing, mediocre, if not inferior. Then I saw an elaborate sketch of some Temple of Truth (I had not seen it produced), and feared its foundations were laid in mist. Then came the watercolour drawings; under the conditions, wonderful productions enough. The pill grew larger in my mouth, or my throat more contracted, when there swept upon me the Waterfall test, which washed the pill down with a gulp, and I found I had swallowed the whole. The strictest order and decorum were enforced upon all at these sittings by Mr. Nisbet, and the result has proved the wisdom of what, to many, appeared

unnecessary severity at the time. For a full account of those seances, read 'Hafed, Prince of Persia,' a book dictated by Mr. Duguid in the unconscious trance. It contains fac-similes of some of the instantaneous drawings given at these unsurpassed sittings,"

MR. D. DUGUID'S MEDIUMSHIP.

Mr. Cross continues: "I have been present when this medium's coat was whisked off from his body, and found on me., I have assisted to tie him on to a chair, when a privately-marked card was put on the table, under a musical-box, and in less time than you take to read this story of it, he was carried through the wooden partition, into a cabinet, without visible disintegration; the musical-box wound up and floated round the room, while the card was found to have a pretty little sea-piece painted on it in oil, the colours, of course, still wet. I feel bound to say here, for the sake of young aspiring mediums, that undoubtedly the ultimate success of the painting medium is due to the tender care of conditions, &c, taken by Hay Nisbet: quiet, easy-going as he was, but enthusiastic; and when opposed in such matters, firm and determined."

While referring to Mr. Nisbet, Mr. Cross states, that on one occasion he was much troubled by the passage running in his mind, "Be sure your sin will find you out." Musingly he leaned over a table, with pencil in hand, and while studying what application the passage had to *him*, he unconsciously wrote it out, and addressed it to Mr. Greatrex, photographer. He then mentioned the matter to Mr. Nisbet, who advised him to send the note to Greatrex. He declined; and two weeks thereafter, the Union Bank forgeries were discovered, and Greatrex fled; the sequel being, that he was arrested in America, brought back, and sent to penal servitude for twenty years. The question presents itself: What would have been the result, if Cross *had not* "Quenched the Spirit?"

This was a brave band of men-united, and filled with the spirit; and it is no wonder that a prominent Glasgow Magistrate, one who had been decrying them, should say when he saw them, "Is it possible that you gentlemen are Spiritualist? You look respectable and intelligent; you are not at all the men I expected to see." These men had received the truth, and the "Truth had made them free," and they were anxious that others should share with them this glorious Gospel.

PUBLIC SPIRITUALISM.

Casting their eyes southward, they hailed Miss Sarah Chapman, from Yorkshire, who was the first medium they ventured to bring before the public. Her mediumship was crude and undeveloped, therefore unsatisfactory, though doubtless genuine. She was visited privately, at Mr. Cross's home, by many prominent gentlemen, amongst others, Jae. Bain, Esq., who had published something on the subject, and freely acknowledged his belief in the phenomena; and doubtless would do so still, notwithstanding the fact, that he is now Sir Jas. Bain, Bart. All through the society's early struggles, he was their friend, and his check-book, by his generosity, was often a blessing to many.

England, at this time, was being visited by a lady from America, whose reputation had preceded her, Miss Emma Hardinge, now Mrs. H.-Britten. Her movements were brought prominently before the public by the wide circulation of the MEDIUM, where Mr. Cross says he learned first of her good qualities as an inspirational lecturer. He then corresponded, and succeeded in making terms with her to appear in Glasgow. Each individual member was anxious for success, and toiled for victory. As an instance of the enthusiasm, we give one ease in Mr. Cross's own words: "Along with Gavin, now Dr. Clark, M.P, I set out after 12 o'clock, on Saturday night, carrying paste-can and bills, and proceeded to adorn the doors and pillars of the churches—climbing the railings when necessary—with the flaming announcements of the new Gospel, to be preached that day by Miss Hardinge. As we went round next day, we found groups of people at the church doors, discussing the subject. Indeed it may be truly said, She Came, Saw, and Conquered. Four lectures were announced in the Merchant's Hall; three passed off quietly, but the fourth was to be on a subject "Given by a committee selected by the audience." Rev. Mr. Craig, now Prof. Craig, of Edinburgh, was chairman of that committee, and the subject given: "State the processes, and mode of procedure, by which we attain an approximate estimate, as to the weight and density of the Sun." Dead silence for a moment preceded the storm. The chairman tremblingly stated, that he thought it would have been better if the committee had chosen a subject of more general interest. The lady instantly announced that she threw herself on the protection of her committee, and declined the subject. I gave my opinion, that the lady should not be expected to accept that subject, for who were to judge of her treatment of it when finished? Surely it was monstrous, with both her and Spiritualism on trial, to risk the reputation of all in the hands of one man, and he rendered incompetent to judge, by an already acknowledged prejudice.

The storm had burst. The scene was one of indescribable uproar. Shouts, yells, and cat-calls came from every part of the hall. The treasurer, in dread agony, offered to give them their money back. Mr. Nisbet was gesticulating wildly, the president pleading tearfully. J. W. Jackson—the noble, peerless, too-soon-forgotten J. W. Jackson, then a non-Spiritualist—stood on a bench, shouting: "Fools! You ask what the apostle Paul could not have done." I heard someone whisper, "Cool as a cucumber," and, turning, I saw the medium, a smile on her face, and a twinkle in her eye, sitting with ease and grace, in any easy chair, the picture of complacency, *waiting*. A thrill of confidence inspired me, and I too became calm, and others appeared likewise affected. The storm raged around us with unabated fury for an hour and a half, after which she was allowed to proceed, when she gave a short but pithy and eloquent address, and one of the stormiest meetings ever held in Glasgow came to a close. Not, however, until the rev. gent. had, of his own accord, apologised for his part, in debarring the audience so long a time from such a treat. Whether or not the source were supernatural, it was a treat, at least to him. Subsequently another lecture was given in the City Hall, on "Garibaldi," presided over by the late Rev. Hately Waddell, of Burns fame.

"These events, and the strong opposition, toned our enthusiasm a little, but did not deter us from going on with the good work." Mr. Cross then informs us that they altered the name of the society to the "Psychological Society," and thus opened the door to admit Prof. Jackson, and many others, who stood outside waiting. Prof. Jackson gave the

inaugural lecture at the opening of a new session, and at the annual soiree addresses were given by Mr. Andrew Glendinning, Port Glasgow, now of London; and also the Rev. A. Brown, of Galashiels, now of Aberdeen, who openly acknowledged his convictions. The society was also visited during that session by Mr. Robert Harper, of Birmingham; Mr. E. H. Green, and others; and during this session many interesting events took place. Mrs. Harriet Law, the Secularist lecturer, made some strong but friendly opposition to us, and though the parties differed so widely, we have reason to believe that it helped the society, and Mr. Cross has a knowledge, that it did Mrs. Law no harm.

A CONFLICT WITH CHURCH MEMBERS.

About this time Mr. Cross's connection with the E. U. Church was severed, but their Mutual Improvement Society kindly invited him to address them on Spiritualism, which he consented to do. Some models were lent him by Miss Hardinge, and some paintings and writings by Mr. Duguid. Armed with these, and inspired with a determination to flash upon them the electric light of Immortality, from across the Styx, he went to the hall, to find instead of twenty or thirty persons as expected, the larger hall filled with probably 300 or 400 people. After the lecture and the illustrations were past, the onslaught was furious, personal friends with tears imploring his return, and begging others not to go near *them*. "Come out from among them." "Touch not the unclean thing," &c., &c. At 11 o'clock p.m., the meeting was adjourned till the following week, and two gentlemen (one a lawyer) were appointed to take up the question, with a view to counteract the influence of the effort made by friend Cross. As large a meeting as before assembled, but Mr. Cross had only to sit still, and be criticised—pretty harshly too—till 10.50 o'clock, when he was allowed ten minutes to reply to his critics. He rapidly reviewed some of the statements made, and thoughts put forward, by his old friends. Then Mr. Andrew Wallace, Inspector of the Poor, who presided, called "Time up." Mr. Cross then said: "One phase of the subject I have not been able to bring before you, but as it is an important one, I shall do so shortly, and then leave you to ponder over the matter at home. I shall quote from a gentleman for whom I have the greatest respect, a deep thinker and profound scholar: "

This is a marvellous power which the soul possesses of wandering away from the body, * * of separating itself from the body, and wandering amongst suns, and moons, and stars, whilst the body lies dormant and still; * * * yea, beyond suns and stars, even within the veil of the Holy of Holies, while the body lies still in a corner at home. * * * This is a wonderful power possessed by the Soul." Considerable interruption took place during the reading of the quotation, and some one near Mr. Cross muttered, "Horrible blasphemy." But the lecturer said, "Ponder these words well; they contain sound doctrine, and are the words of the Rev. Prof. Morison, D.D., *your minister*." Silence for a moment, then loud cheers by his sympathies followed. On leaving the hall, he said, quietly, "The ball is rolling, and as it rolls it grows," again quoting from the same source. Shortly afterwards a part of the lecture was stereotyped, and issued by the society, in tract form, and circulated by thousands.

This lecture had evidently made an impression, for Mr. Cross was asked to deliver it in Paisley, Renfrew, and various other places. At Paisley, the local press gave long and quite favourable reports, and a spirited controversy arose in the leading journal on the subject.

Glasgow was visited just then by various other mediums, in rapid succession, some fairly good, some better, amongst these, were a (not the) Mr. Robt. Owen, Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Green, Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, &c., &c.; some helping, some retarding, the work in that city, but doubtless all trying their best for the best. During this time a circle was held at Mr. Cross's house in Hospital Street, and he ventured to ask Dr. Geo. Sexton, the noted Secularist, to be present. Messrs. Harper, Clark, Brown, and others were there also. Mr. Clark was—and likely still is—an abstainer; becoming possessed by a force, declaring itself to be the spirit of an old sailor, he demanded “whisky” ere he would tell his story; whisky being forthcoming, the medium drank it, something we all knew he would *not* have done, of his own volition. That seance was the unhingeing points, with Dr. Sexton, and we regret that when he was cut adrift from Materialism, he has not been able to moor himself firmly anywhere since.

RESIDENCE IN YORKSHIRE.

At this period, friend Cross was called to leave Scotland, and reside for a few years in Yorkshire, where he made the acquaintance of a large number of warm-hearted, sturdy, honest, and earliest Spiritualists. He says: “Every name I give was a nucleus, round which a galaxy of stars revolved, each one trying to outshine the others, in spreading the new Gospel. There was Mr. Wade, of Bowling; Mr. and Mrs. Smith, of Bradford; Mr. and Misses Culpan, of Halifax; Mr. and Mrs. Lingford, of Leeds; Mrs. Butterfield, and Mr. and Mrs. Bradbury, of Morley; Mrs. Scattergood, and many others, humble but noble ‘Defenders of the Faith.’ At this time I also made the acquaintance of that old apostle John Lamont, also of Geo. Thompson, declared by Lord Brougham to be the greatest orator of his day; also G. Thompson's co-labourer—if not in the spiritual vineyard, yet in the antislavery movement—Fred. Douglas, American Consul at Hayti; and I must not forget Charles Bradlaugh, who said he liked to talk with me on any subject except Spiritualism. But above and beyond all these, there was that profound thinker, powerful speaker, and most accomplished lady, Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond. The first time I met her was at Halifax.

The audience at the suggestion of a medical gentleman had selected for a subject: “The mode of operation, by which the optic nerve conveys the impressions from the eye to the brain.” I put my objections to the subject before the meeting, as I had done in a similar case in Glasgow. The majority of the audience voted for Spiritualism, but the medium immediately rose and asked, as a personal favour, that the Spiritualist majority would give way, this time, to the minority, which they did, and the lecture was given in such an intelligent and popular form, that *all* were interested and instructed, the M.D. referred to expressing his personal gratification. I believe she stands *alone* in her peerless, as well as fearless, advocacy of the *truth*.”

Mr. Cross then returned to Glasgow, and succeeded in inducing Mrs. Richmond to pay Scotland a visit. Her first lecture in the City Hall, Glasgow, to 3000 people, was a magnificent success; indeed it seems there was a regular "Outpouring of the spirit." The Society by this time had made an acquisition in the person of our old esteemed friend, Jas. Bowman, to whose house the Duguid seances had been transferred; after which, it happened friend Cross never again had the opportunity of being present. Previous successes were eclipsed, however, and genuine advancement made. Mr. Cross informs us that at this period he also met with the worthy and well-known President of the Glasgow Society, Mr. Jas Robertson, whose estimable friendship he still hold, dear.

WORK IN AMERICA

Our friend has since moved to America (New England), where he seems to have gained laurels as a lecturer and elocutionist. His lectures on Spiritualism and kindred subjects, though seldom given under Spiritualist auspices, have been widely reported and read in the outside press. It is a pity so little is heard of him, on our own platform, in the West, instead of being engaged by *liberal* societies and *churches*. At another time we hope to give Mr. Cross's experiences in America, where he says he has "Met noble and self-sacrificing men and women, mostly in humble life, who have tasted the fruits of a Spiritual Philosophy, and burn with a heavenly zeal to pass the blessing round."

[After having given as much of our interviewer's notes as we can possibly find space for, very much more remains unsaid. We can trace most of the facts cited. It is remarkable that these pioneers nearly all earned distinction. We walked about Glasgow streets with some of them when unknown to fame. What has become of Dr. Colquhoun? We shall never forget his kindness and gentle care in a case of sickness. Our readers will be able to study somewhat the demerits of the theatrical form of Spiritualism, and the importance of expensive strangers: compare it with the priceless and unpaid work of David Duguid.]

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BOOKS WE HAVE REVIEWED

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

An Extraordinary Journey:—The Memoirs of a Physical Medium, by Stewart Alexander, published by Saturday Night Press Publications, England, 2010. Paperback ISBN:—978-0-9557050-6-9., available at Amazon. Psypioneer review, by Leslie Price pages 294-296:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.11November2010.pdf>

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>

Dead Men’s Embers, by Gerald O’Hara, published by Saturday Night Press Publications, England 2006. Large Paperback ISBN:—978-0-9514534-6-9., available at Amazon. Psypioneer review, by Leslie Price pages 1-2:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.1January07..pdf>

Mrs Miller’s Gift’ - a Celebration of 75 Years of the Edinburgh College of Parapsychology formerly Edinburgh Psychic College & Library, by Gerald O’Hara & Ann Harrison, published by Saturday Night Press Publications, England 2007. Paperback ISBN: 978-0-951-4534-9-0., available at Amazon. Psypioneer review, by Paul J. Gaunt pages 1-4:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP4.1January08..pdf>

Mrs Miller’s Gift CD:—Helen Duncan Séance, Ernest Oaten and Harry Edwards,
Written and produced by Gerald O’Hara B.Sc. Psypioneer review, by Paul J. Gaunt pages 106-107:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.4April09.pdf>

The Indescribable Phenomena – The Life and Mysteries of Anna Eva Fay, by Barry H. Wiley published by Hermetic Press, Inc., Seattle Washington 2005. ISBN: 0-945296-50-9., available at:—http://www.hermeticpress.com/product_info.php?products_id=45
Psypioneer references by Leslie Price pages 39-42:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.2February09.pdf>

Immortal Longings – FWH Myers and the Victorian Search for Life After Death, by Trevor Hamilton published by Imprint Academic in Exeter, U.K (also VA, U.S.A) 2009. ISBN: 9-781845- 401238 H.B, 9-781845-402488 PB, available at Amazon. Psypioneer review, by Leslie Price pages 157-148:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.6June09.pdf>

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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