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Emma Did Link Principles to Owen

By Paul J. Gaunt

Being a brief resumé of my research:

In 1997 I started my paper trail into the questions:—When did this happen and what means of mediumship were used in the formation of the Spiritualists' National Union's Seven Principles?

My SNU course tutors at the time were unaware when, how, or where the Seven Principles were given to Emma Hardinge (or Britten, if the date was post October 1870), except to affirm that they were transmitted by Robert Owen.

On purchasing a secondhand copy of the centenary re-print of the first edition of *The Two Worlds* I found my first link, in the late Ray Taylor's preface:

“Married to Dr. Britten in 1870, Emma returned to England the same year. In the following April she delivered her famous lecture in which she announced Spiritualism's Seven Principles.”¹

Later, on receiving as a present from my wife Cindy, a first edition of *Leaves from My Life* by J. J. Morse² my second piece of information was revealed, on p. 27:

“My position as a Spiritualist may be briefly defined thus, as expressed in the eloquent and gifted utterances of that inspired teacher Emma Hardinge-Britten, as detailed in her able lecture, “The Creed of the Spirits,” delivered at Cleveland Hall, London, on Sunday, April 30, 1871, and reported in the *Medium and Daybreak* for May 5 of the same year.”



¹ *The Two Worlds*, November 18th 1887/1987 100 Year Centenary, published by The Headquarters Publishing Company Limited.

² Published by James Burns, London 1877

Morse continued with her four creeds/principles and their meanings given in the lecture, as originally published by James Burns in his newspaper from her oration. The full lecture was re-published in Psypioneer June 2009.³

It was from this information I was able to order a photocopy of *Medium and Daybreak* from the British Library, which led to my first article in *Psychic News* (PN) published on June 17th 2000:—‘Did Robert Owen, in 1871, communicate the basis of the Seven Principles through the mediumship of Emma Hardinge Britten or was it given prior to his passing?’

On September 2nd 2000 Garth Willey had an article published in PN in response to mine; he also queried the SNU’s Education Course literature, and was unable to find satisfactory answers. Prior to writing the *Psychic News* article I wrote to Leslie Price to find out if he had any additional information. These were the days before I had a computer! [It was Garth’s interest in my article that led him to contact me from Australia. It’s interesting to note that now we all now work together in producing the monthly Psypioneer. Perhaps we should make Robert Owen our *Patron in spirit!*]

On November 24th 2001 I contributed another article for *Psychic News*, “The Formation of the Seven Principles.” Then in Psypioneer May 2006,⁴ I updated my research in an article: ‘The Error That Changed History’, and suggested some possibilities.

My contention with the SNU has been whether or not Robert Owen transmitted the seven principles of the SNU through the mediumship of Emma Hardinge Britten in the fullness as they are published; and if so when? Despite only tentative links with Robert Owen, the Spiritualists’ National Union is insistent that:

The concepts and original wording of the Seven Principles came through Emma’s mediumship as she was inspired in 1871, by the communicating spirit of Robert Owen, to summarise the philosophy of Spiritualism in principles that all Spiritualists would agree. These have since become known as the Seven Principles of Spiritualism.⁵

The reasons for my concerns are published in Psypioneer, in the above linked articles mentioned.

³ Psypioneer Volume 5, No.6 pages 170-184: *The Creed of the Spirits, and the Influence of Spiritualism*:—
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.6June09.pdf>

⁴ Volume 2, No.5 pages 93-101: *The error that changed history – Paul J. Gaunt*:—
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/2.5%20PSYPIONEERFoundedbyLesliePrice.pdf>

⁵ Taken from the, Spiritualists’ National Union’s website: *Spiritualism History—Emma Hardinge Britten*:—
<http://www.snu.org.uk/Spiritualism/emma.htm>

These include:

Why did Robert Dale Owen, who attended the first séance (during the American Civil War 1861-1865) ⁶ where his father allegedly gave “Ten Spiritual Commandments” and “Ten Laws of Right,” not record this in his *The Debatable Land*? ⁷ And especially so since he had reported his record of the séance in the New York papers at the time and from which EHB quotes. ⁸

Were the “Ten Spiritual Commandments” and “Ten Laws of Right,” printed in 1871 the same as those given at the aforementioned séance? And why were they along with Emma’s four principles not credited Robert Owen, in spirit, as author?

Why also did the Lyceum manual published in 1887 not credit Robert Owen, in spirit, as the originator of the Spiritual Commandments and Laws of Right? ⁹

Emma Hardinge Britten had always been very clear that her creeds/principles were movable statements, open to change and growth; change she adopted over the years. This is clear in the 1871 lecture when she produced the original four creeds/principles and stated: *You have heard some of them in past discourses; you may apply those to the results which I now offer.*

In 1883 EHB’s principles numbered five. The fourth principle of this set was “*Personal Responsibility Here and Hereafter*”; and she had used this at a New York lecture on 12th July 1857, ¹⁰ where she mentioned ‘my own personal responsibility both here and hereafter, for all the good or evil I have ever done on earth.’ **It is interesting to note that in 1857 Robert Owen was still alive!**

Generally Emma refers to her creeds/principles as “Given by the Spirits” rather than by one single communicator, i.e. Robert Owen. Below is a good example of this taken from her book, *On The Road*. Later she serialized the book in *The Two Worlds*:

⁶ Page 107 of the *Autobiography of Emma Hardinge Britten*, first published in 1900 John Heywood, London. S.N.U., facsimile reprint 1996.

⁷ *The Debatable Land Between this World and the Next*, G.W. Carleton & Co., Publishers New York 1872, Owen recorded other seances in the same household, around the same period. Why not his own father’s communication?

⁸ Page 107 of the *Autobiography of Emma Hardinge Britten*.

⁹ British Lyceum Manual—originally compiled from various sources by Emma Hardinge Britten, Alfred Kitson and H.A. Kersey 1887: see Golden Chain Readings 109 & 110.

¹⁰ Page 52 of the *Autobiography of Emma Hardinge Britten*.

“As a sample of the morality taught by those spirits who have so long and faithfully guided the author’s storm-tossed life barque, we subjoin a reprint of the “Ten Spiritual Commandments” and “Ten Laws of Right,” aphorisms communicated by spirits, through the author’s mediumship, at a lecture given by her in London some years since. As the lecture in question was phonographically reported, it was subsequently printed, distributed in various countries, republished and translated into many languages, and is now offered as a specimen of the ethics and morality enunciated from the spirit spheres.” ¹¹

I am presently compiling a large two volume book on the formation of national organisation and of the Spiritualist’ National Federation that was to become the Spiritualists’ National Union. During this detailed research I found a short, but very important statement, made by EHB that sheds new light on the relationship between Britten, Owen and the SNU Principles:

Under an article headed: “Can Spiritualists and Theosophists unite on a common basis of belief?” her final statement reads:¹²

“Finally, we offer for our correspondent’s further information a brief summary of our accepted faith, given under the MOST CRUCIAL TEST CONDITIONS by the spirit of Robert Owen, the great Socialist, as follows:—

I believe in the Communion of Spirits and Mortals,
In the Fatherhood of God,
The Brotherhood of Man,
The Immortality of the Soul,
Personal Responsibility,
Compensation and Retribution hereafter for all the good or evil
deeds done here,
And a path of eternal progress open to every human soul that
will to tread it by the path of eternal good.”

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<sup>11</sup> *The Two Worlds*, part VII T.W. August 17<sup>th</sup> 1888 page 20.

<sup>12</sup> *The Two Worlds*, Volume III No.148 September 12, 1890 pages 518-520. The first five volumes (1887-1892) of *The Two Worlds* can be found on Marc Demarest’s site:—<http://ehbritten.org/bibliography.html>

What can we make of all this?

I know of only two other occasions when EHB has linked Owen with her mediumship:

Firstly: On page 107 of EHB's autobiography she states (as taking place during the time of the American Civil War 1861-1865):

“Immediately after supper we all adjourned to the suite of reception rooms, our company consisting of our host and hostess [Mr. and Mrs. D. Underhill], Emma Hardinge and her mother, who were then staying at the house on a visit, Oliver and Mary Anne Johnson, Robert Dale Owen, William Lloyd Garrison, and a few others. The first Spirit that manifested by loud rappings and calls for the alphabet, was Robert Owen, who announced that he wished to give a set of Spiritual Commandments through Emma, if she would kindly submit to his control, whilst his son, Robert Dale Owen, should transcribe them as the entranced medium spoke. Upon this, Emma Hardinge, passing to the open piano, played for a few minutes a grand and solemn improvisation; then returning to the rest of the party, apparently under strong influence, she announced that she was ready to receive the good Spirit's inspiration, provided only he would give three affirmative knocks at the end of every *correct* sentence, or interrupt her by two knocks at any words that he objected to.

The medium then commenced speaking slowly, but emphatically, and with two corrections only from the controlling Spirit, who spelled out by raps the words he wished to substitute, there were given ten Spiritual Commandments, and ten laws of right.”

Secondly, after her 1871 Cleveland Hall speech already mentioned, Emma concluded the evening with this statement:

“ ... As a supplement to the oration, Mrs Emma Hardinge electrified the audience by reading Ten Spiritual Commandments,” which she had written in a very rapid manner on the previous morning under the influence of Robert Owen, whose centenary takes place next week. They are wonderfully characteristic of that revered philanthropist, and present perhaps the most comprehensive view of religious ethics which the world has ever seen. On Monday morning Mrs Hardinge presented the manuscript and copyright to Mr Burns, with the request that he would print them for his own benefit and that...”

Neither of the above accounts could be suggestive of “given under the MOST CRUCIAL TEST CONDITIONS”!

Which brings me back to my original questions asked when doing SNU courses in the mid 1990's "When did this happen and what means of mediumship was used? etc, ..."

What it does do for the first time, is to confirm the claim by the SNU that Robert Owen acted through the mediumship of Emma Hardinge in some mode of mediumship, at some time prior to 1890. What is perhaps more interesting is that Owen does not give 4, 5 or 6 statements but 7! A new principle:

"I believe in the Communion of Spirits and Mortals," is added.

Why did EHB generally indicate that her creeds/principles were given by the spirits, rather than by a single communication? Was it because, as was her habit, she rarely gave indications of her controls and guides, maybe feeling the source being irrelevant? It was the message that held the wisdom of spiritual truths.

This new addition to the previous researches, at last provides a concise statement in the first person by Emma Hardinge Britten that she received seven statements from the spirit of Robert Owen, though (as we have shown) it is difficult to correlate with other evidence

Research is still continuing.

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# Sir Oliver Joseph Lodge

[**Note by Psypioneer:**—In last month's issue, Psypioneer acknowledged the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the passing of Sir Oliver Lodge, 1851–1940. We add to this a tribute to Sir Oliver, by an old friend Ernest W. Oaten who at the time was Editor and Secretary of *The Two Worlds*.<sup>13</sup> Oaten a former Spiritualists' National Union (SNU) president on two occasions <sup>14</sup> recalls his first meeting with Lodge.]

## Gone Forward!

*The Two Worlds* <sup>15</sup>

SIR OLIVER LODGE has left us, and his passing leaves a gap which it is difficult at the moment to fill.

The strength of Spiritualism lies in the fact that it can and does offer evidence of survival which is able to withstand the closest scrutiny and satisfy the most scientific analysis. For over sixty years Sir Oliver Lodge has devoted his time and talents to the investigation of the case for spirit communication, and his investigations left not the shadow of doubt in his mind concerning the positive fact of human survival.

It must not be overlooked that fifty years ago any scientist who dared to talk of spiritual things in terms of proof, endangered his reputation as a scientist. Even to-day, in some of the appreciations I have seen, there is a hint that Sir Oliver was credulous on this point, but on no other. That, of course, is the result of the inability of scientists to see any viewpoint but their own. Modern science is to a very large extent a water-tight compartment confined to an analysis of matter. While Sir Oliver Lodge never proclaimed himself a Spiritualist, he was at all times ready to help and encourage those who felt free to proclaim the whole truth.

### Personal Notes

It was both a pleasure and privilege to know Sir Oliver and call him friend. Our meeting came about in a strange way. Sir Oliver had read some of my articles in *The Two Worlds*, and had heard reports of some of my public meetings. He expressed to my friend, Mr. J. Arthur Hill, his desire to meet me, and a little later, armed with an

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<sup>13</sup> Oaten was editor of the: *The Two Worlds* 1919-1945

<sup>14</sup> *SNU yearbook 2010*: SNU president, 1915-1920 and 1922-1923.

<sup>15</sup> *The Two Worlds* Friday August 30, 1940 page 292.



introduction from Mr. Hill, I had the pleasure of visiting him at Lake.<sup>16</sup> I shall not forget the sincerity and urbanity of my welcome. I related some of my experiences to him. He cross-examined me very closely, and even asked me to repeat several incidents. We discussed the how and why of psychic phenomena. “How does mind contact and direct matter?” “How are physical effects produced by a mental impulse?” and similar problems. Then he showed me through his library and study. I recall his pleasant enthusiasm as he pointed to photographs and busts of some of his scientific friends. Sir James Thompson<sup>17</sup> especially. How with pride he showed me some of his books, and outlined some of the problems which even then were agitating his mind.

Later at the lunch table he asked me to repeat some of the psychic incidents which had come within the orbit of my experience, and I knew full well that he was comparing my later with my former statements. A keen and critical mind was Lodge. We took a short walk up a country lane. Approaching an old oak tree, he tapped the bole and said: “You have been here longer than I, and will be here when I have left.” He saw life as a whole!

In the early months of 1934 I was invited to broadcast from the London studio on Spiritualism. A good deal, of negotiation had been going on as to who should do the broadcast.<sup>18</sup> The National Union, the London District Council, and others were consulted, but, strangely enough, before I received the invitation to broadcast I had a letter from Lodge congratulating me on being selected. I have always felt that he had something to do with it. Immediately after the broadcast he wrote me: “Bravo, Oaten! You did extremely well on the wireless. Very definite, very clear, and very sensible. You were fortunate in your first psychic experiences and I am afraid many people may be disappointed by not getting anything so good at first. There was nothing that you said that I definitely disagree with, and I thought the evening very successful.”

When I gave evidence before the Archbishop’s Committee,<sup>19</sup> Sir Oliver got to hear about it and wrote me: “I have read with admiration your evidence before the Archbishops’ Committee, and I want to order copies for occasional distribution.”

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<sup>16</sup> After his retirement in 1920, Sir Oliver and Lady Lodge settled in Normanton House, near Lake in Wiltshire, just a few miles from Stonehenge. Lodge and his wife are buried at St. Michael’s Church, Wilsford (Lake), Wiltshire

<sup>17</sup> It may appear that Oaten is referring to the physicist Sir Joseph John Thomson, see:—  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J.\\_J.\\_Thomson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._J._Thomson)

<sup>18</sup> B.B.C. broadcast see: *Psypioneer* Vol. 2, No.3 pages 59-68:— *What I Believe - Ernest Walter Oaten*: <http://woodlandway.org/PDF/2.3%20PSYPIONEERFoundedbyLesliePrice.pdf> The actual recording is available on CD, see Books for Sale:—Mrs Miller’s Gift CD: Written and produced by Gerald O’Hara B.Sc. @ £9.99 +Pp £2.00. Details:—*Psypioneer* Vol. 5, No.4 pages 106-107:—*Listen to a piece of history: - Mrs Miller’s Gift CD*: <http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.4April09..pdf>

<sup>19</sup> *Psypioneer* Vol. 2, No.4 pages 81-88:— *Spiritualism and the Church - Ernest W. Oaten*: <http://woodlandway.org/PDF/2.4%20PSYPIONEERFoundedbyLesliePrice.pdf>

Writing to me in June of last year, in response to birthday greetings, he said: "I appreciate the good wishes you convey to me. As I have said before, when I look back over my long life I feel thankful for my experiences; and if I can be used by higher powers to bear testimony to truth, then that is all I ask, and I await the future with joyous expectation."

The last letter I received from him was only six weeks ago, when in congratulating me upon another article he said: "It is a good plan to reaffirm one's belief in the reality of a spiritual world just now, when we are passing through such dark days. I retain my faith that good will ultimately prevail, and that man will not be allowed to drift into slavery; but it is possible that we do not depend sufficiently upon the help of higher powers.—Yours sincerely."

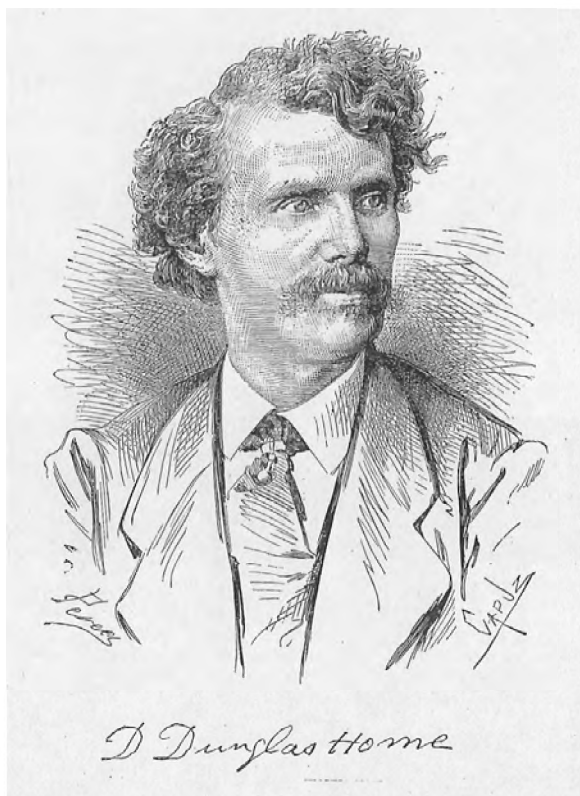
And now he has passed into a world where he will reap the rich reward of a life well spent in the service and instruction of humanity. He will find more scientific problems there than earth can show. His new environment will afford a wide field for the use of his wonderful powers.

We have no reason to deplore his passing. He has served long and faithfully, and is entitled to his promotion.

But what joy there would be on Thursday last in the larger household of the Father's kingdom when Lady Lodge, Raymond, Myers, Barrett, Gurney, and many others to whom he had endeared himself, would welcome him into the higher university of eternal life. His friendship was sweet, his memory is a cherished possession, the certainty of meeting him again a continual stimulus.

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# The Late D. D. Home, Medium



## Introductory note by Psypioneer:

The Scottish medium Daniel Dunglas Home (20 March 1833 – 21, June 1886) needs little introduction. In Psypioneer August 2006 Leslie Price published “*Second thoughts on the first psychic*,” noting the recent biography of Home by Dr Peter Lamont:— “*The First Psychic*.”<sup>20</sup>

Below is Home’s obituary by James Burns, published in his weekly journal (front page) *The Medium and Daybreak*, July 2, 1886:-

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THIS remarkable and justly celebrated Medium, left earth-life, as stated in the *Daily News*, on Monday, June 21, the “longest day,”—the summer solstice—and the body was interred at St. Germainen-Laye, on Wednesday, beside an infant daughter whom he lost 12 years ago. He was

born at the spring equinox, in 1833, near Edinburgh. The following succinct sketch of his career we quote from the opening of his Answer to Mrs. Lyon, printed in his “Incidents in My Life,” second series.

“I was born in Scotland, on the 20th March, 1833, and from my earliest childhood I have been subject to the occasional happening of singular physical phenomena in my presence which are most certainly not produced by me, or by any other person in connection with me; I have no control over them whatever; they occur irregularly, and even when I am asleep. Sometimes I am many months, and once I have been a year without them. They will not happen when I wish, and my will has nothing to do with them. I cannot account for them further than by supposing them to be effected by intelligent beings, or spirits. Similar phenomena occur to many other persons. In the United States of America, I believe about eleven millions of rational people, as well as a very great number in every country in Europe, believe as I do, that spiritual beings of every grade, good and bad, can and do at times manifest their presence to us. I invariably caution people against being misled by any apparent communications from them. These phenomena occurring in my presence have been witnessed by thousands of intelligent and respectable persons, including men of business, science, and literature, under circumstances which would have rendered, even if I desired it, all trickery impossible. They have been witnessed repeated-

²⁰ Psypioneer Vol. 2, No.8 pages 181-183: *Second thoughts on the first psychic* by Leslie Price: — <http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP2.8August06..pdf>

ly, and in their own private apartments, where any contrivance of mine must have been detected by their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of the French, their Majesties the Emperor, Empress, and late Empress Dowager of Russia, their Imperial Highnesses the Grand Duke and Duchesse Constantine of Russia, and the members of their august family, their Majesties the King of Prussia, the late King of Bavaria, the present and late King of Wurtemberg, the Queen of Holland, and the members of the Royal Family of Holland; and many of these august personages have honoured, and I believe still honour me with their esteem and good-will, as I have resided in some their palaces as a gentleman and their guest, not as a paid or professional person. They have had ample opportunities, which they have used, of investigating these phenomena, and of enquiring into my character. I have resided in America, England, France, Italy, Germany and Russia, and in every country I have been received as a guest and friend, by persons in the highest position in society, who were quite competent to discover and expose as they ought to have done, anything like contrivance on my part to produce these phenomena. I do not seek, and never have sought, the acquaintance of any of these exalted personages. They have sought me, and I have thus had a certain notoriety thrust upon me. I do not take money, and never have taken it, although it has been repeatedly offered me for or in respect of these phenomena, or the communications which sometimes appear to be made by them. I am not in the habit of receiving those who are strangers to me, and I never force the subject of Spiritualism on any one's attention."

This summary was written eighteen years ago. Since then the King of Prussia has become Emperor of Germany, and another King of Bavaria has recently passed away.

Mr. Home was adopted by an aunt, and taken to America when nine years old. His health was delicate, and it was thought that he could not be reared. This constitutional state should be borne in mind when it is asserted that mediumship shortened his days at 53: for he testifies that his spirit friends were in the habit of preventing early death. He was a medium from infancy; his cradle was frequently seen to rock by an invisible agency. When four years old, he had the vision of the passing away of a little cousin at Linlithgow, while he was at Portobello; the presence and absence of persons was stated, all of which was afterwards verified. At thirteen he had his first vision, which he could remember. He was in a very nervous, delicate state of health, and absented himself from the sports of the other boys. He had one particular acquaintance, a boy a little older than himself. He and his family moved about 300 miles away from where this boy lived. One moonlight night, on going to bed, this boy appeared to him, and told him of his death three days before. This information was confirmed by a letter received afterwards.

Like many other great mediums, Mr. Home inherited his spiritual gifts from his mother—a Macneil. She had been a seer throughout her life. He says, "In many instances she saw things which were afterwards found to have occurred at a distance, just as she had described them. She also foresaw the passing away of relatives, and, lastly, she foretold her own, four months previously. My mother also told me that her great-uncle, Colin Urquhart, and her uncle, Mr. Mackenzie, were also seers."

When seventeen, his mother lived twelve miles from him. One day he had a strong impulse to see her, and walked all the way. His mother told him of the time and circumstances of her death, her little girl having come to her in vision and foretold it. All was literally fulfilled. On the evening of her death his mother appeared to him, and said, "Dan, twelve o'clock." She had passed away at that hour, although no one expected it, and the boy disbelieved the vision foretelling her death.

Shortly afterwards he heard loud blows on his bed repeatedly. He was subjected to ministerial investigation, and was pronounced a subject of the devil. The tables and chairs began to move about in his presence, at which his relatives were much disconcerted. The Rochester knockings, through the mediumship of the Fox girls, had been in operation then about two years, and though the rumour had reached the district, it was not adduced in explanation of these strange occurrences. At the house of a sympathetic aunt, the following message was received from his mother: "Daniel, fear not, my child, God is with you, and who shall be against you? Seek to do good: be truthful and truth-loving, and you will prosper; my child. Yours is a glorious mission—you will convince the infidel, cure the sick, and console the weeping." Thus, upon the broad ocean of mediumship, the born medium was launched, without "development." Let it be noted that all the great mediums have required no development, but when circumstances favoured it, the power was called into operation by spirit friends. Mediums, like poets, are born, not made.

The neighbours soon began to be interested, and one of them had particulars given of a family whom they had lost sight of for thirty years, by this means they were enabled to open up communication with them "far west." Mr. Home was now eighteen years of age, and his physical state subsequently may be judged of by the following passage:—"Beyond being of a highly nervous organization, there is nothing peculiar about me that I am aware of; but I continue to have delicate health, and I firmly believe that had it not been for these phenomena, I could not have lived till now. In this belief many physicians of high standing have given their testimony to bear me out. Frequently, during the most severe visitations of illness, my pains have been suddenly soothed in a mysterious way, and many times when it would have been impossible to have moved me in bed, for fear of increased hæmorrhage from the lungs, my head has been slowly lifted, and my pillow has been turned by unseen hands. This has been repeatedly witnessed by many persons." This was written in 1863, when he had been a dozen years a medium. As to the continuance of this power, he says: "From the 10th of February, 1856, to the 10th of February, 1857, I had no external token of spirit power, though I on several occasions had visions, one of which was seeing the manner in which a brother passed from earth. He was frozen in the polar seas whilst out bear shooting with the captain and officers of his ship. Falling into a fissure of the ice, he was not found till the following morning. I saw all this in a vision at the time of its occurrence, and informed my family of it five months before the confirmation of the intelligence arrived. On several other occasions, the power has ceased for shorter periods, and generally I have been told beforehand, both of the times of its cessation and return. I could never detect any physical cause for such cessation, nor any difference in my general feelings or health, although the reason given for the withdrawal has commonly been on the ground of health. Upon several occasions, however, the reason given was that it was withdrawn from me as a reproof for having done that which I knew to be wrong." These

extracts give a fair specimen of the candour and confiding openness of Mr. Home's character. He had no duplicity about him, no professional secrets, as all can testify who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. But it is false that his power left him after the lawsuit with Mrs. Lyon. Some of the most remarkable manifestations of his whole career occurred since that period.

As far back as 1851, when eighteen years of age, Mr. Home was a public character. The spirits would frequently send him long distances to perform various beneficent acts one he mentions, a remarkable case of healing; but such cases were frequent. He was continually being sought after, and fresh fields of usefulness were opened up to him. Delicate health interfered with his work. In New York, he met Dr. Bush, professor of Hebrew and Oriental languages, and student of Swedenborg. Afterwards one of the professors of Harvard University submitted the phenomena to rigid examination, and a "manifesto" was published with names signed. Professor Brittan, Dr. Hallock, Mr. Partridge, Professors Hare and Mapes, Judge Edmonds, and other well-known names are spoken of in connection with this early work.

Speaking of the levitations to which he was subject early in his career, Mr. Home says: "During these elevations, or levitations, I usually experience in my body no particular sensations than what I can only describe as an electrical fulness about the feet. I feel no hands supporting me, and since the first time, above described, I have never felt fear, though should I have fallen from the ceiling of some rooms in which I have been raised, I could not have escaped serious injury. I am generally lifted up perpendicularly; my arms frequently become rigid and drawn above my head, as if I were grasping the unseen power which slowly raises me from the floor. At times when I reach the ceiling, my feet are brought on a level with my face, and I am as it were in a reclining position. I have frequently been kept so suspended four or five minutes. I have been lifted in the light of day upon only one occasion, and that was in America. I have been lifted in a room in Sloane Street, London, with four gas-lights brightly burning, with five gentlemen present, who are willing to testify to what they saw, if need be, beyond the many testimonies which I shall hereafter adduce. On some occasions the rigidity of my arms relaxes, and I have with a pencil made letters and signs on the ceiling, some of which now exist in London."

The truthfulness of this summary is abundantly borne out by instances given, and which space compels us to pass over: also a remarkable case of being carried in spirit. In addition to those physical and psychical results remarkable musical phenomena began to occur, and all in the light. One report says: "While we thus sat, the guitar, at a distance of five or six feet from the party, was played upon exquisitely, and for several minutes, by some power other than that of any one bodily present." Many places in America were visited. The report last given of a seance in America thus concludes, the writer being one of the sitters: "The hand afterwards came and shook hands with each one present. I felt it minutely. It was tolerably well and symmetrically made, though not perfect; and it was soft and slightly warm. It ended at the wrist." It had also been seen writing by the whole company.

Mr. Home sailed from Boston for England, on the 31st of March, 1855, the seventh anniversary of Modern Spiritualism. Having arrived at Cox's Hotel, Jermyn Street, London, Lord Brougham was one of his earliest sitters, accompanied by Sir David Brewster, whose tergiversations on the subject have not been quite creditable to him. At Ealing, at the house of Mr. Rymer, soon afterwards he met Lord Lytton; Mr. B. Coleman was shortly introduced on the scene, and Mr. and Mrs. Trollope. An excellent report of manifestations appeared in the *Morning Advertiser*, from the philosophic pen of Dr. J. J. G. Wilkinson.

The necessity for a change of climate caused him to visit Italy in the autumn. In Florence he created much sensation. His experiences in a haunted house, and of the attempt to stab him by an assassin, are thrilling. In February, 1857, he visited the Emperor and Empress at the Tuileries, and after residing in Paris a short time, he returned to America. All sorts of extravagant falsehoods appeared in the newspapers, then as now. Mr. Home regarded these statements as "jokes." The *Springfield Republican* was, perhaps, more matter of fact. It recorded: "Home, the distinguished spiritual medium, who has recently been raising spirits in the presence of the Emperor Napoleon, is in Springfield on a brief visit. He will return to France shortly, where his services are in great request among the *savans*." A whole chapter is occupied with newspaper fabrications.

In May, 1857, Mr. Home was again in Paris. He travelled in France, Holland, Italy and Russia, and on July 30, 1858, he was married to a Russian lady, his first seance with the late Emperor having occurred a few days previously. He first met her at supper at her sister's, the Countess de Koucheleff, to whom he had just been casually introduced while out driving, and she invited him to supper. These experiences will entertain lady readers:—

"I went about ten in the evening, and found a large party assembled. At twelve as we entered the supper-room she introduced to me a young lady, whom I then observed for the first time, as her sister. A strange impression came over me at once, and I knew she was to be my wife. When we were seated at table the young lady turned to me and laughingly said, 'Mr. Home, you will be married before the year is ended.' I asked her why she said so, and she replied that there was such a superstition in Russia when a person was at table between two sisters. I made no reply. It was true. In twelve days we were partially engaged, and waiting only the consent of her mother. The evening of the day of our engagement a small party had assembled, and were dancing. I was seated on a sofa by my *fiancée* when she turned to me and abruptly said, 'Do tell me all about spirit-rapping, for you know I don't believe in it.' I said to her, 'Mademoiselle, I trust you will ever bear in mind that I have a mission entrusted to me. It is a great and holy one. I cannot speak with you about a thing which you have not seen, and therefore cannot understand. I can only say that it is a great truth.' The tears came welling into her eyes, and laying her hand in mine she said, 'If your mission can bring comfort to those less happy than ourselves, or be in any way a consolation to mankind, you will ever find me ready and willing to do all I can to aid you in it' She was true to this noble sentiment to the last moment of her short life, and she is still my great comfort and sustainer since we have separated in this earthly sphere."

The power was intermittent, and only occasionally does Mr. Home seem to have been used as a medium for some considerable time. He was in London in November, 1859, and gave seances for some months. Mr. J. G. Crawford testifies to what occurred on one occasion when Mr. Home held the accordion under the table with one hand, and it played “Home, sweet Home!” in a most finished style.

Seeing deaths at a distance has been a frequent experience with Mr. Home. The act of touching another person’s hand or other object has strangely contributed to the exhibition of the power. In this way he saw a sister’s death when in America, as he was taking the hand of a lady who was about to step from a carriage. In London, in 1860, he visited the brewery of Barclay and Perkins with a friend who tasted the porter. It was also offered to Mr. Home. “I put out my hand to take it, and as my fingers came in contact with the metal a deep shudder convulsed my frame, and I suddenly knew that my dear mother-in-law, who had been for many years a patient sufferer, had been released from her earthly troubles. I refused the porter, and requested my friend to accompany me home.” On Thursday a letter was received conveying the information that the lady died at the time of the incident in the brewery, which took place on the previous Monday. These experiences are food for thought on the psychical influences of certain persons and substances.

The article which appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1860, did much to bring the subject before the literary world. It was one of the many rich fruits proceeding from Mr. Home’s mediumship, which seemed to be exercised continually in the presence of the most distinguished and influential observers. And these manifestations sometimes occurred in the most unexpected manner: as when he was pulled by spirit power from under the immense limb of a tree; which suddenly fell, and would otherwise have crushed him. Reports of seances in London are given by Mr. W. M. Wilkinson,²¹ Mr. W. Howitt, and others, the names in all cases not being given; on which Mr. Home observes:—“No sooner is the name of some honest and courageous person given in obedience to the call for testimony, than it becomes a target for all the ridicule, jests and abuse of the unscrupulous, the sceptical, the orthodox, and the scientific; in fact of all who are not wise enough to think, and observe, and weigh, and judge, before they decide.”

Mr. Home’s wife died, at the age of twenty-two, on July 3rd, 1862. After her association with her husband she became a remarkable spirit-seer. The phenomena attending her transition were described in sympathetic memoirs by Mrs. Howitt and Mrs. S. C. Hall. A

²¹ William Martin Wilkinson was a solicitor and a close friend of D.D. Home. Wilkinson was to act for Home in the 1867/68 court case involving Jane Lyon v Daniel Dunglass (Lyon) Home. (it should be noted that Wilkinson’s brother James John Garth Wilkinson (June 3, 1812 - October 18, 1899) a British orthodox doctor, Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, who converted to homeopathy was an early guest of Homes’ seances, his name is noted in this article and should not be confused with his brother.) W. M. Wilkinson: It is said by some writers, he also ghost wrote the bulk of Daniel Douglas Home’s memoirs, *Incidents in My Life*, published in 1863. The introduction and final chapter of the first edition was written anonymously by Robert Chambers. It is also said that William Wilkinson wrote the preface to the second edition, published the following year. W. M. Wilkinson was the originator and proprietor of the *Spiritual Magazine* (1860-1877) his co-editor was Mr. Thomas Shorter, who was best known at the time by his pseudonym of Thomas Brevior.

year afterwards, "Incidents in My Life," first series, appeared, and the second volume nine years later, which contains a valuable introduction by the late Dr. Robert Chambers, of Edinburgh.

In 1864, Mr. Home visited Rome for the sake of his health and to study art, but he was expelled because of his fame as a medium. In the same year he was subjected to the horrid drivel of Robert Browning, the well-known poet. This the *Daily News* regards as a work of "consummate skill!" which opinion no doubt indicates a mind incapable of appreciating that which so many of the best of mankind regard as high and holy truth.

After visiting America and Russia, Mr. Home was giving seances at Mrs. Makdougall Gregory's, and other places in London, early in 1866. He also gave a lecture in Willis's Rooms, and the influential friends of the Cause were rallied together, and established the Spiritual Athenæum, at 22, Sloane Street, Knightsbridge. The *Spiritual Magazine* contained many records of phenomena, and in 1867, Mr. H. D. Jencken (afterwards the husband of Kate Fox), barrister, communicated a series of interesting reports to *Human Nature*. This was during the proceedings in the Lyon v. Home case. We then made his personal acquaintance, and had sittings with him at the house of Mrs. Hennings, Anerley. The moving of objects in the light, perfumes, elongations and the handling of fire were the leading phenomena.

Though our task is quite imperfectly performed, and the space at disposal exhausted, nevertheless we must, in as few words as possible, give a truthful account of the case just alluded to. More particularly as the "pressgang," as Mr. Home used facetiously to designate them, have been loading his name, and that of Spiritualism, with falsehoods and calumnies respecting it.

Mrs. Lyon, an old widow of immense wealth, who had been the illegitimate child of a butcher somewhere in the North,—an old body of uncouth appearance and coarse, vulgar manners,—became interested in Spiritualism. She came to the Progressive Library (then at Camberwell), now the Spiritual Institution, to buy books on the subject. She made at least two visits. On producing a £5 note to pay for her purchases, Mrs. Burns held it up to look at its quality, the personal appearance of her visitor not being such as to lend full confidence to the transaction. Mrs. Lyon observing this, said, "Oh! you need not fear; it's all right." She was in a state of great anxiety to meet Mr. Home, whose life she had read, and it was through the directions then received that she ultimately found him. Though he was then a stranger to her personally, yet she was already quite infatuated about him, and indicated a power of will and determination that was somewhat appalling to witness. This state of mind on her part, gives the clue to the whole transaction. Since the death of his wife Mr. Home had been in anything but good health and spirits, and notwithstanding the great repugnance which he always had to her, he soon fell a victim to her inflexible will power. She thrust herself upon him, and as a most beneficent and sincere friend; first subscribed to the Athenæum, and then proceeded to force upon him a little ready money for his own use, seeing that his health necessitated a change. The transference to him of the large sum of £60,000 was all done from time to time unknown to him, and by her own direct personal act. In the second volume of "Incidents in My Life" are given the Answers of Mr. Home

and Mr. Wilkinson to Mrs. Lyon's Affidavit; and no one can read these documents without perceiving at a glance that the charge made was false, and that Mr. Home's position was unimpeachable.

Mrs. Lyon's charge is repeatedly alluded to in the Answer as a tissue of falsehoods; facts only being cited in such a manner as to misrepresent their purport. She said that she had been induced by the spirit of her husband to make the gifts, and that undue influence had thus been used; all of which was a baseless fabrication. The "influence" had been all on her part; and Mr. Home knew too much of the world, and of the duties of mediumship, and had lived too much amongst wealthy people to resort to the tactics that were attributed to him. The experienced lawyer, who drew up the deeds, also warned her that he could not perform the work if spirits had anything to do with influencing her. Mr. Home tells in his Answer, from which we quote at the beginning of this memoir, that she professed to be a great medium herself, and would dictate spirit messages to him, which as her "adopted son" he dutifully recorded as she directed. She would fabricate matters of this sort to suit her own whims, and all of these things she had to put in evidence against him. On the other hand, Mr. Home could have produced witnesses to bear out all his points; but more than that, Mr. Wilkinson's Answer (the solicitor who did the business for Mrs. Lyon, and whom Mrs. Lyon also charged as in complicity with Mr. Home to obtain money from her) corroborated that of Mr. Home, and both of them contain letters from Mrs. Lyon directing the whole proceedings.

We have not the report of the case before us, nor do we remember the details of the proceedings before the court, but it is evident that Mr. Home got no justice in the matter. His Answer quite upsets her unsupported charges, and had his repelling statements been sifted to the bottom he would most certainly have won. But where did Christian law ever do justice to Spiritualism? To turn the tables on Mr. Home was too good a chance to be overlooked, in order to give Spiritualism a forcible blow. The judge was not satisfied with dealing with the "facts" of the case, but he went quite out of his way to blacken Spiritualism as altogether a method of defrauding the unwary for the personal aggrandizement of tricksters called mediums. Of course all who know anything of the facts of Spiritualism are aware how utterly false and scandalous this opinion was; but it suited ignorant public opinion exactly, and it was applauded to the echo, whereas justice might have been impossible in the state of public ignorance and prejudice. Partisanship on the part of a judge is a scandal to justice!

Some may ask: Why did Mr. Home have anything to do with her? Our answer is that his only escape would have been to have turned his back on the Spiritual Athenæum, that the friends of the Cause had established, and, deserting all, gone to a foreign country. She would not take No for an answer, but went on in her course without consulting him, desiring that legal steps of an irrevocable kind should be taken. The £30,000 was actually Mr. Home's; for there is nothing freer than a gift; and it was his certainty of his claim, supported by legal deeds which she had framed without his knowledge, that determined him to go before the court; for to have relinquished all, would have been a confession of guilt, and a reproach to the Cause, which he was determined to avoid.

It was found afterwards that she was a most unscrupulous, capricious woman. She had made some half-dozen wills and revoked them; and she had adopted several persons and afterwards cast them off. She desired to get an introduction into Society, to spite her husband's rich relations who scorned her, and through Mr. Home she saw a means of gratifying a vulgar ambition. She was also in love with him, and subjected him to caresses which he recoiled against, both in private and before visitors. But her sphere no doubt exhausted his vitality; he was much absent on account of his health, which failed whenever he returned to her presence. She therefore began to regret that she was "tied to a dying man," who would not serve her purpose; for aided and advised by others who were interested in securing some of her pelf, she instituted proceedings against him even while she was writing him affectionate letters; and told him she did not believe in spirits, as they had misled her, and all the while she was attending the sittings of various mediums not in sympathy with her "adopted son."

Mr. Home's career is one of the most remarkable personal dramas that history affords. A weak and obscure youth, spirit power raised him to a pinnacle of fame, and association with the highest personages, such as no other contemporary in any walk of life could lay claim to. It is hard to realize how truly beloved Home was by all, high or low, who enjoyed his personal acquaintance. He was a man of easy and agreeable manners, and possessed a fund of entertainment. He was a first-class dramatic reader, and had it not been for his weak constitution he would have gone on the stage. He longed for a useful sphere in life, as he did not make a trade of his mediumship, though he received many rich presents from crowned heads; some of which Mrs. Lyon got into her possession, and at the close of the trial had not returned them, and we much question if Mr. Home ever regained them.

Thus we see an evil power, through this selfish old woman, work out a plan which made a highly-honoured name a word of reproach, and without any evil act on his part. Can there be any clearer demonstration of the good and evil influences that constantly surround us in life?

Mr. Home's volumes are now out of print and very scarce. They should be reprinted, with another volume, giving an account of the illustrious medium since his release from the Lyon's toils: or, as the spirits once facetiously termed it, "Daniel in the Lyon's den," his name being Daniel Dunglas Home. On that occasion, in a seance, the spirits played a piece of music, accompanied by spirit voices, illustrative of their medium's life.

It was after this painful ordeal that Mr. Home did some of his most valuable work as a medium, so that the foul aspersion of the newspapers, that the lawsuit broke down a pretended power, is as false as all their other adverse comments. His sittings with Mr. Crookes are of imperishable value, recorded as they are in that eminent scientist's volume, "Researches in the phenomena of Spiritualism." He also had a long course of sittings with the Earl of Dunraven, a record of which was published in a volume for private circulation. His old friends never deserted him, and with them he had more stupendous manifestations than had been previously recorded. There were materializations in the dim light, floating in light, handling of fire, and that remarkable case of levitation, when he was taken out of one window and in at another, at a great distance from the ground, in the upper story of a high

house in Victoria Street. Gentlemen of eminence testified to the truth of this occurrence, about which there could be no trick.

Mr. Home's phenomena were all of a spontaneous character. He had no set hours or days for seances. He would meet a large and distinguished circle, and nothing would occur, but his conversational powers were so charming that there was no occasion for regret. His method of receiving alphabetical messages was wonderful. His hands once upon the table it throbbed with life and intelligence: he would run the alphabet over, the table moving at the proper letters, as rapidly as they could be written down. No trick could have produced such a result of table motion and expression of intelligence. Long lines of these letters when divided into words would be found to express messages of great importance, and on matters concerning which the medium was ignorant. As a matter of course, his trance messages were given in the unconscious state, and he knew nothing of them, a fact beyond the comprehension of his newspaper critics. On one occasion we saw a bell—with a spring attached at the top in form of a hook, as used for hanging bells in houses—pass under the table from Mr. Home to other sitters, and raise itself up, and then down, as it was hung from his wrist between his knees. But he could not get this manifestation when certain of the company were in the room. This showed how much personal influences affect the manifestations.

Thus we perceive that two diverse spheres of operation affect mediums: spirits and mortals. Mr. Home was quite near to the spirit sphere, was conscious of its proximity; and followed its leading in his mediumship. He never placed himself in mortal hands, such as submitting to so-called "tests"; unless the spirits could voluntarily demonstrate their power, he would permit no mechanical agencies, with the view of helping them. And now that he has gone, be it said, that no charge of trickery stands against him. The newspapers regard him as a "juggler," but withal unconscious that he was imposing on any one—which, if it means anything, signifies that he was a genuine medium,—but not one of them can refer to any "exposure" to which he was at any time subjected; this example should be a lesson to all mediums.

His latest public act in connection with the Movement was the publication of a book²², giving an historical résumé of the phenomena, and then reviewing the status of modern mediumship. It was written under ill health and amidst irritating surroundings. Small matters of gossip were made too much of in his criticism of other mediums, yet the moral he intended to draw is of the utmost value. As a gentlemanly, non-professional medium, who could afford to wait a year, if necessary, for the return of the "power" and suitable conditions, it was to him a great mistake to see mediums endeavouring to force phenomena in dark seances, and amidst altogether unsuitable surroundings; though we know that as genuine manifestations are obtained in the dark as in the light, yet Mr. Home was quite right in his estimate of the superior advantages which his phase of mediumship conferred. Again there is a reaction in favour of light seances, and in the near future a new form of mediumship will come into operation, on the lines so successfully and honourably followed by Mr. Home, the Prince of Mediums.

²² *Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism*, published by G. W. Carleton & Co.: New York, pp. 483. 1877.

Of late years we heard little of him. His last letter in the *MEDIUM* alluded to the friendship manifested towards him by the Emperor of Germany. The last communication we received was written from Nice. His second wife was a Russian lady of high birth. For the closing particulars of his earthly career we must fall back on the Paris letter of the *Daily News*:—"The direct causes of his death were the aggravating effect produced by this wet and cold season on pulmonary consumption, and a long-standing abscess in the leg which turned to gangrene. He was staying when he died in a neglected-looking detached house at Auteuil, standing in a shady garden full of weeds. The only cheering influence was that which was shed on him by his wife's birds. On the grass plot in the garden there was a row of cages filled with starlings, blackbirds, linnets, canaries, and Java sparrows. Whenever there was a glimmer of sunshine, Home was carried out to listen to the little warblers."

In the midst of Nature, in its spontaneous and most beautiful forms, yet close to humanity, he passed away: to the scientific mind there are no "weeds," but "wild flowers."

The last scene is satisfactory; though the press scribbler, expressing the unfeeling and unjust rancour of the ignorant mob, palpably rejoices at what he regards as an obscure death. Still there was a woman's loving consideration in affording the passing invalid surroundings much more congenial to his feeble and sensitive state than any crowds of human beings, however sympathetic, could have been. These feathered ministrants, the denizens of the air—of the earth, and yet above it—are symbolical of that angel band, which did such good work through Mr. Home's instrumentality, and awaited him on his entrance into conditions more glorious than the pomp and generosity of Emperors, Kings and Princes ever bestowed on him.

Home's work has perhaps had a more pronounced effect on modern thought than that of any man of the century. He was neither a writer nor an orator; but through him the angel world demonstrated truths, which the mind of man, unaided by the power of Spirit, is impotent to attain to or solve.

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## IN MEMORIAM

In a later issue Burns published a further obituary by Mrs. Home (second wife married in 1871, née Julie de Gloumeline.)

### MR. D. D. HOME: HIS LAST YEARS, LAST ILLNESS, AND BURIAL.

We have received the following from Mrs. Home:—<sup>23</sup>

Mr. D. D. Home had been for fourteen years suffering almost without intermission from gout and neuralgic pains. These sufferings, more or less severe, were always increased by the events of his life. The falsehood and calumny which he had to endure had but little effect on him, for he was always able to contradict them with irresistible evidence of their falsehood. His was a noble life, which nothing can ever stain. What really distressed him was to see Spiritualism become the subject of raillery and of gross abuse. His lofty soul was as fully sensible of the joy as of the grief of others, and his life was frill of trouble, for numbers of those suffering from affliction came to seek consolation from pain. His kindly feeling and his complete freedom from vanity or interested motives led to his never refusing a seance, and this in itself very much fatigued and exhausted his nervous system. His power as a medium never wholly left him, and even in the last few years he possessed it in the highest degree, but most of the manifestations were closely connected with our private life.

In the winter of 1883 we were in Russia, and he suffered much, but in the spring we left him for a course of the pine baths near Dresden. Afterwards we returned to Paris, to remain there, but, alas! shortly after he again became worse, and he told me one morning in December, 1884 that he was about to have a long and painful illness, but that if no complication set in he should recover, and should be better than ever; but he said we must submit to the will of God. In fact, up to the month of May, he gave evidence of supernatural strength, for he bore his sufferings when the doctor despaired of his life. In May, 1885, I was able to take him to a watering place in the Tyrol, and from this we went on a visit to a very fine estate near Milan, and afterwards returned to Switzerland, when by degrees he recovered a little strength, from the mountain air and from rest, and he arrived in Paris, in November, quite well. He remained in good health for two months, but when the cold weather came on he relapsed.

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<sup>23</sup> *The Medium and Daybreak* July 23, 1886 page 469-470.

In order to withdraw him from the noise of the city, I went with him to a small house in Montmorency Park, near Auteuil, which we occupied alone. This change did him good, and I had again hopes of taking him to the fine air of Switzerland: But when we were about to leave, towards the end of April, the complication which he had predicted set in with fatal effect. An abscess formed on the left leg, and the doctors decided on performing an operation, which he bore with very little loss of strength, but five days later the heat affected him seriously, and inflammation of the lungs carried him off. He was perfectly cognizant of his condition during his whole illness, even while suffering extreme pain, and possessed full consciousness to his last moment. He bore his sufferings with full clearness of mind, glorifying God, smiling on me, and consoling me for his approaching departure; beholding the spirits of his child and of those who are dear to him in the other world. It was a sublime death, peaceful and joyous as that of a martyr. The expression of his countenance, in the midst of his sufferings, was compared by a celebrated artist to the head of Christ.

It is true that his life had been spent in struggle, moral and physical, and it is also true that nothing could change his frank, loyal character—his great heart. When he had moments of trance, his noble expression of countenance and sweet smile returned, and he forgot what he had suffered. In France, he was called the Charmer, so thoroughly did he command sympathy. As to myself, who have been enabled to appreciate him in private life, I had a veneration for his exceptional character, which was concealed in order to do good, and which was enabled to resist the tempest of this stormy sea of life, that he was compelled to traverse so often. However, he has only lived for the truth of Spiritualism, and this truth has elevated his soul as high as that of man can be raised here below.

As he wished to be buried in the vault with his little daughter, his funeral was according to the Greek ritual. No cards of invitation were sent out, that nothing of the nature of a demonstration should disturb the imposing ceremony, about which there was nothing in any sense lugubrious in character. The priests were in festival vestments, and a mass sung by children, with full tone and feeling around the coffin, covered with a profusion of flowers, produced an effect at once imposing and joyous without the least shade of mourning. This was the wish of my husband, and I think nothing could be more sublime and beautiful, and more free from earthly vanity. This ceremony took place in the presence of a few friends only, there being in the church about thirty dear friends, who felt that his departure had left an aching void.

# PORTRAIT OF THE SPIRIT

## “KATIE KING”

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A series of four sittings were held to photograph the *spirit* of “Katie King.”²⁴ The experimental efforts were successful: it is claimed that the engraving:—“... is about as faithful a copy as wood-cutting can give, of one of the photographs obtained on Wednesday night, last week. In the photograph itself the features are more detailed and beautiful, and there is an expression of dignity and ethereality in the face, which is not fully represented in the engraving, which, however, has been executed as nearly as possible with scientific accuracy, by an artist of great professional skill.”

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

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



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

Paul J. Gaunt

²⁴ Also referred to as “Annie Morgan,” usually always known as Katie King

WILLIAM VOLCKMAN

This issue brings us to the concluding report of the Volckman story.²⁵ Most published literature puts Volckman in bad light, but we can now look at Volckman's actions on the night of December 9th 1873, with an informed understanding of the *reason* for his actions. The research has also shown that Volckman was not simply a naïve sceptic, but held at least an open mind in the Victorian séance rooms and organisations he frequented.

The following articles from *The Medium and Daybreak*²⁶ conclude with James Burns' closing remarks.

MY GHOST EXPERIENCES.

BY WILLIAM VOLCKMAN

In the first portion of my experiences, I concentrated attention upon the fighting and struggling achievements of Mr. Cook's family Ghost, as bearing very directly upon the Ghost or no Ghost dispute; and upon the dependent charge of "condition" breaking preferred against me.

Having been invited expressly to see a *bona fide* Spirit, and assuming, for argument sake, that I was under promise not to touch such Spirit when it appeared, I maintain that the appearance of the medium in place of a Ghost was a breach of conditions as against me—a breach of promise releasing me from all allegiance to conditions contemplating a Spirit and a Spirit only. If I had been asked to see "a figure," or only "an appearance of what purported to be a spirit" (as "Katie" now designated by the Ghost party), and if I had been enjoined not to touch such "figure," or "purporting appearance," then my fellow sitters would have had something like a substantial complaint. But the very use by them of terms so dubious is a justification of my procedure, and in some sort a compliment to that observation which I patiently made for forty minutes, *without* violating the conditions alleged to have been imposed, and for which I have had no credit in their Report.

The charge against me is not so much that I "broke the conditions," but that I dared to think and act for myself; and refused to accept a foregone conclusion in face of evidence, to my mind, so damaging to the ghost theory.

²⁵ Part one:—*William Volckman – Paul J. Gaunt* Vol. 6, No.7 pages 185-195:
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.7.July2010..pdf>

Part two: — *My ghost, experiences by William Volckman – Medium & Daybreak* Vol. 6, No.8 pages 216-226:
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.8August2010..pdf>

²⁶ *The Medium and Daybreak* January 23, 1874 pages 51-52.

Not one of the Ghost party has since had the courage to come forward and assert “Katie” as an unmistakable spirit—not one has ventured to assert his or her possession of evidence potent to neutralise the test I deemed it my duty to apply, or sufficient to *prove* beyond question that the “Katie” of this seance was a Ghost and not the medium.

Not only has Mr. Luxmoore publicly stated, in my hearing, the *valuelessness* of knotting and sealing as a test for sceptics, not only has he attempted (as the reader knows) to treat the “struggle” as hypothetical, but he may afterwards be found treating the “Ghost” in the same supposition and contradictory manner:—

“Some imagine,” he says, “that *if ‘Katie’ is a spirit* ²⁷ she should not have required assistance to get out of the grasp of anyone taking hold of her, but they forget that, *even if a spirit*, she is clothed in a natural form, and subject to what I term, for want of a better word, the inconveniences of materialisation.”

And this too is put forward in disregard of the report statement that

“ ‘Katie’ instantly extricated herself,”

and therefore, it would seem, was superfluously assisted.

Amongst the doubters themselves the Ghost partisans demur to my scepticism. Objecting to my attack upon an alleged Ghost as a breaking of conditions, they themselves broke the conditions in a most ruthless manner, introducing into the seance a confusion of which single handed I was incapable, and never for a moment contemplated.

Notwithstanding their own doubting mood they have well-nigh denied to me the right of hearing and vindication, and have committed themselves to statements so far shown to be beneath criticism, and which I am further prepared to show, in their every line, contain not the ghost of an argument in favour of their pet spirit theories and ghostly conditions.

Not content with the published attacks upon me, Mr. Harrison—in the true spirit of persecution—seeks to exclude me in future from opportunities of investigation through other mediums (*Vide Spiritualist*, Jan. 10th); thus endorsing the fashion which, it would appear, pertains in regard to Miss Cook’s circle,—where to trustingly expect a spirit (as a matter of course) is implied by the conditions imposed, while to express a doubt is to incur exclusion and to be deprived of the means of conversion.

“Get the learned writer to set down our *excommunication*.”²⁸

²⁷ The italics in this quotation are mine—W.V.

²⁸ Outrage on the poet admitted.

Following out his self-assumed character of special pleader for the Ghost Mr. Harrison has been at pains to inform the public as follows:—

“Mr. Volckman personally is well aware of the materiality of the forms and hands built up by spirits; he has shaken the powerful muscular hand of ‘John King’ at Mr. William’s seance.”

I have not authorised Mr. Harrison, or anyone else, to state what I am, or am not, “well aware of.” I reserve my experiences to be stated by myself in my own way, and in my own time. None the less I am free to confess, for the comfort of Mr. Harrison, that I have seen the “John King manifestations” and have a personal knowledge of Mr. Williams the medium (who has given seances in my house;)—and I can also state from such observation and knowledge that I found no important points of resemblance whatever between the alleged “John King” and Mr. Williams,—and this I state simply as a matter of fact, and without adventuring any theoretic solution. Whatever, then, this “John King” experience may import, it operates as a justification rather than otherwise for grasping ghosts which are identical with their alleged “mediums.”

So far I have dealt with the matter simply as a charge against myself, and here I am willing to let the subject remain. Had publicity not been sought to my prejudice, I should probably have contented myself with the information the seance had afforded me. Should further attacks induce me to return to the subject, I have a considerable reserve upon which to draw for a *second instalment* of my “Ghost” experiences.

I could say something as to the feeble jokes of the ghost in conversation, and its uncommunicativeness in regard to its spirit home. I could depict the Ghost as a vocalist, and its downward growth as the seance proceeds. I could show that the foggiest night for many a year is no “inconvenience of materialisation” to a well-regulated spirit, —although to my “materialisation” it proved most inconvenient; for to reach the haunted house in time I had to grope my way on foot, for an hour and a half, through four miles of the densest fog it has ever been my misfortune to endure,—hence “my uneasy looks” and “abrupt remarks” which elicited from Mr. Harrison some such natural “comment” as “how tired” I looked, and upon which he has ingeniously founded a theory of “premeditation,”—forgetting that the “conditions” were not favourable to that cheerful and easy demeanour which henceforth I hope will be my ‘usual manner’ in Ghost society. I could say not a little as to the angry threats of assault and the illegal detention to which I was subjected by two of the Ghost champions,—but which of course were no “outrage.” I could detail two other seances of Miss Cook’s at which I was present some months ago—but said to be very inferior ones by the family. I could allude to the many complaints of annoyance inflicted upon my unwilling ear by Mr. and Mrs. Cook, to whom and to the columns of the *Spiritualist* I am indebted for all I knew to the prejudice of the “Ghost manifestation.” I could state that I perpetually represented to Mr. Cook, in answer to these complaints, that I could in no way suffer myself to take up a partisan position in regard to Spiritualism, which I was examining as an independent, unfettered investigator. I could assert without fear of effective contradiction that not only is Mr. Luxmoore, with all his experience, ignorant of “Ghostly conditions” but the “Ghost” itself misapprehends and falsifies its assumed “conditions of

manifestation,”—does not know a harmonious from an inharmonious circle, and draws power indifferently from the one as well as the other. I could show that Miss Cook, if not a *professional* medium, is none the less a *paid* one,²⁹ and that in my offer to that young lady of a piece of jewellery I was but following a “kindly” fashion indulged in by many another visitor, as Mr. Cook had several times previously informed me. I could say something about my invitation as a standing promise for nine months,—a promise most reluctantly fulfilled; and I could state that such invitation followed, at last, quickly upon my present—came, be it understood, direct from the Ghost itself (as Mr. Cook also informed me.)—and was politely unencumbered by any conditions. I could recount certain public statements of Mr. Luxmoore’s in reference to knotting and sealing, showing the unreliability of such tests in the presence of distrust or scepticism, owing to the perverse action of bad or offended spirits under those circumstances,—albeit these statements do not appear in the printed report of his speech.

I could depict, with some force, how many of the foregoing considerations came back upon me in the presence of the pitiful spectacle “purporting” to be a veritable Ghost visitation, and how, naturally, such considerations must have affected the mind and conduct of any truth-seeking investigator.

I could state how for five years I have been examining many phases of the phenomena alleged to be spiritual, dating my first practical acquaintance with the subject from my appointment to the investigating committee of the London Dialectical Society. I could prove that during the whole of this period my conduct towards mediums has been of the most considerate character, and entitles me to the utmost confidence and fairness;—and I could show that all this was well known to many of the “Ghost” party, notwithstanding their polite designation of me and attempt to ignore my identity.

Speaking from memory, I think I could show that Mr. Luxmoore has not done his candour justice when, in relation to this alleged “outrage” he refers readers

“To the severe test Miss Cook has submitted to, even to being tied down by the hair of her head, as recorded in the *Spiritualist*.”

Had he given chapter and verse for this test, it would have been found, I think, that the “Ghost” did not walk on that occasion, but only showed its face through an aperture, in the cabinet,—a “manifestation” of decidedly inferior importance and therefore not to be named in this connection.

All this, and much more of similar purport, could I show were I anxious to take up a vindictive position. This however is no desire of mine, and therefore I confine myself simply to the rebuttal of public attacks, which have forced me to a public statement in self-defence.

²⁹ Miss Cook is known to have been secured from public mediumship through the intervention of a wealthy Spiritualist. [Pyspioneer:—Charles Blackburn]

Mr. Harrison, in anticipation of my present statement, says that I “can do her (Miss Cook) no more harm” than I have done already. It is far from my wish to do any one “harm” in relation to my investigation of the phenomena alleged to be spiritual. In my experience genuine mediums and genuine manifestations are not easily harmed in the long-run, and are amenable to a variety of tests,—tests checking and endorsing each other in many ways.

Had the “Ghost” of this seance been genuine it had everything to gain and nothing to lose by my impromptu test,—and under such testing would have given some more trenchant proofs of its spiritual origin than were forthcoming in its panic, or have since been asserted in its behalf. And let me add that if Spiritualism involves anything of worth, and if it really relies for acceptance upon the genuineness of its alleged phenomena, then “harm” will be done indeed, so long as the “true” cannot be dissociated from the “false.” Phenomena of any kind must first be put on a basis beyond suspicion before the theories, principles, or laws, they are supposed to illustrate can be so much as approached,—and to this end investigators have contributed, and will again contribute, by giving effect to their scepticism.

In conclusion I would advert to the four principal theories held by Spiritualists in regard to this “Ghost”: —

1st. “That the Ghost is a veritable spirit some 300 years old,—as, an entity, totally independent of the medium.”

2nd. “That the Ghost manifestation is merely a theatrical exhibition on the part of the medium.”

3rd. “That the Ghost is the ‘double’ of the medium,—whatever that may imply:”—(notwithstanding, I suppose, its claims to antiquity).

4th. “That the ‘manifestation’ under review is *the medium in a trance state*, controlled by one or more spirits, and who are powerful to get the unconscious medium out of her dress, tapes, and seals,—to invest her, for the time being, with white spirit-made drapery—and to redress, tape, and seal her after her retirement into the cabinet at the close of the seance.”

None of these theories originate with me, but I mention them in order to assert that they are one and all provable or disprovable by several tests other than those of knotting and sealing.

The fact that four such theories are concurrently held by Spiritualists, is proof that the alleged manifestation has not yet been subjected by the “Ghost’s” friends to conclusive and reliable tests,—otherwise such wide differences of opinion could not possibly prevail.

In reference to the 3rd and 4th theories in particular, I would remark that obviously they can only be held by admitting the agency of LYING IMPOSTOR SPIRITS, and if refuge is

to be sought for the “Ghost” in the one or the other of these conjectures I do not see how its case is mended.

“ALAS, POOR GHOST!”

We must be grateful to James Burns for allowing William Volckman to tell his side of the story—which rocked the early Spiritualists—in his weekly journal. It is a wonder why Volckman is still the ‘arch villain’ in modern literature; as more sensational ‘*Struggling Ghost*’ seizures were to take place from the mid 1870’s onwards. It may be that Volckman’s response has not been re-published since.

THE GRASPING A SPIRIT QUESTION

In this number Mr. Volckman concludes his evidence and remarks thereon, a letter appears from a correspondent, and we hope we have done with the matter. Our position has been entirely neutral. As a newspaper the MEDIUM was called upon to inform its readers of the facts respecting that which had become a public event, more particularly as only one side of the affair had been heard. In permitting the other side to speak we do not take either side. We have allowed Mr. Volckman to appear in his own colours without praise or blame. We feel disposed to treat both Miss Cook and Mr. Volckman as fairly and impartially as we did before the seance in question. That malicious outlawry of those who differ from us, or it may be injure us, is a form of barbarism unworthy of “My Kalulu,” and we have been the victim of it so often from professed Spiritualists that we are happy in being able to set a better example. Even in this affair we have been unblushingly traduced in certain quarters, a visitant from which told us that we allowed Mr. Volckman to be heard because we had a prejudice against Miss Cook. All who know us will treat such a mischievous statement with scorn. As we have repeatedly stated, we are as confident of Miss Cook’s mediumship as of any other MEDIUM in existence, as our columns have repeatedly testified. We have seen the manifestation of “Katey” twice through Miss Cook’s mediumship, once at Mrs. Holmes’s, when Serjeant Cox was present, and once, with the same medium, at the Spiritual Institution. We were well satisfied with the results. We ask that a single line be pointed out in the MEDIUM to indicate any prejudice on our part against Miss Cook; and there are a number of Spiritualists in the country who have applied to us privately as to our opinion of Miss Cook, and they may publish our reply if they please. If there is to be scandal and back-biting in this matter let it go back on its originators.

We have received two letters criticising Mr. Volckman, impeaching his “honour,” and making other comments. Without prejudging the matter in any way it may be observed that there is also a demand made upon the “honour” of the exhibitors, spiritual and physical. It

is not at all a settled question whether the object grasped were what it purported to be. Our judicial pleaders seem to have overlooked this, and arrived at an opinion quite independent of evidence. If the figure were not the veritable “Katey” then Mr. Volckman was absolved from all engagements. Could we not suggest a higher code of morals for the spirit-circle than this extorted declaration of conduct “’pon my honour.” It indicates an unworthy suspicion to demand it, and an intolerable jurisdiction on the part of one person over the acts and conscience of another. There is a higher tribunal than the word of honour or even sense of honour before which human conduct cannot do otherwise than lead to the establishment of the truth and the reign of right.

As we have before remarked, it is a pity that intellect instead of passion does not rule in such investigations. We do not feel justified in censuring Miss Cook in this case—indeed, our object in noticing it at all is not upon personal grounds, but to defend the principle of investigation upon which the discovery of truth depends. There are many things in mediumship that are obscure, and they never can be settled, till free investigation is permitted unmarred by the dark shadow of the “great unpaid.” The public mediums who put themselves into the hands of their visitors unreservedly are, with a few exceptions, well treated, and there is no mistake as to the nature of the manifestations obtained in their presence.

To our readers we have a word in conclusion. The cause cannot be damaged by the free discussion of all that takes place in connection therewith. A white-washed Spiritualism won’t wear. The truth is sufficiently strong to withstand all assailants, and contest only emboldens it. That the truth may be revealed in all its aspects, all other considerations must give way, even the pecuniary interests of the MEDIUM, if such a course were necessary.

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Paul J. Gaunt

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