



Inspire

The Magazine of Bournemouth Spiritualist Church

June 2020



Welcome to the first edition of our magazine aimed to educate, inform and Inspire. The magazine was initiated sometime ago by Medium and committee member Mr Paul Tandy. Following a period of 'resting' we have given it a makeover. This is a means of communicating with our congregation and the wider public, which is much needed during this current 'lockdown' period which has resulted in the temporary closure of the Church due to the Coronavirus.

Inspire will be available on our website the last weekend of each month; once the Church has re-opened, a printed version (containing the majority of articles) will be available for those who prefer a physical copy - for a small charge to cover printing costs. Following the Church re-opening the magazine will reduce from monthly to, perhaps, quarterly given the significant time needed to produce something we can be proud of.

We are fortunate to be able to draw on a range of expertise including those who have studied mediumship in its various forms, psychic phenomena, healing, complementary therapies, philosophy and spirituality.

For this, our launch, we have received permission from the Spiritualist National Union to reproduce an extract from the 'Pioneer Journal' which includes a detailed article about the healing work at Bournemouth Church. It is hoped that in the future we may be able to draw on other articles from Pioneer and similar quality sources. We have also been granted permission to reproduce material from a well known spiritual teacher – Steven Noble – including a downloadable taster e-book, which is now available. We also have an article on the history of herbalism by a qualified Medical Herbalist*.

If you believe YOU have an article to submit for consideration please send it to the following email address: **bnsuc@outlook.com** with the subject heading '**Inspire**'. We are considering a Q&A page, so if you have any questions of a general Spiritualist nature drop us a line. We cannot guarantee that everything will be published but thank you for your efforts in assisting this venture.

Over time **Inspire** will naturally evolve, and hopefully grow. But of course its success depends on your continued support given the significant time and effort which goes into its production.

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We sincerely hope you enjoy the content and it leaves you Inspired. *Pat Machin, Church President*

*This will now appear next month.

FACT OR FICTION?

Al Potts. ©

Over a number of years, many crimes have gone undetected and the use of a medium or psychic has been utilised. Many of the people who have contacted mediums have themselves been sceptics, but when no evidence has been forthcoming, have reluctantly accepted their help.

In Brighton, two girls went missing and the mother of one sought the service of medium Dennis McKenzie to try to solve the disappearance of the girls. He described a man and woman with northern accents and later two people were arrested who matched exactly his description. Many others too have helped in the search for answers to crimes, including Diane Lazarus a Sutton Coldfield medium, telling police that a missing man had committed suicide in his car; where his body was later found.

There are countless names I could count for helping in these crimes, but one in particular was about a crime committed in Bournemouth in 1921. Thirty one year old Irene Wilkins from Streatham, in London, placed an advert in the Morning Post, which was answered very speedily. She was invited to take up a post as a cook in Boscombe and would be collected at the Bournemouth railway station by a man and taken by car to her work address. Arriving at the house at 7-00pm and sitting in the square entrance hall, she was approached by the man, the chauffeur, Thomas Henry Allaway and inappropriate suggestions were made to Irene. She said that she was not 'that kind of girl' and when she got up to leave, she was attacked by Allaway, hit around the head and dragged out to the car and put in the boot of the vehicle. The police tried for some time to find the mysterious murderer without success. An old Spiritualist from the Midlands, then residing in Boscombe, Mr William Tyler, who employed psychical methods to help find criminals, knew of a local medium who may be able to help. A circle was being run by clairvoyant and psychometrist Mrs Charlotte Starkey in Boscombe and Mr Tyler approached Mrs Starkey to see if she could make contact with Irene. During this time a remarkable amount of evidence came through Mrs Starkey including details of the murderer, his place of work in Chessell Avenue, the road he lived in and many other pieces of information gleaned from Irene Wilkins from spirit. The police became involved with Mrs Starkey when no other evidence was forthcoming. Eventually Thomas Henry Allaway was convicted of Irene's murder and confessed to it in prison.

Too many times offers of help from gifted mediums have been laughed at and scorned by the police, but when the evidence from spirit is so undeniable, the search for justice is eventually found. Fact or fiction? The fact being that when we understand that life is indeed eternal and that every soul at physical death simply moves to the next level of consciousness to continue the development of the soul, then we know that the love experienced whilst in the physical is maintained in the next level of consciousness. Why then do these people in whom we put our trust to solve these crimes, not realise how much easier it would be to use this means of communicating instead of pushing it away? These most gifted people don't ask for payment for their services in this field, and are only too pleased to be able to help. This is not fiction, but truly fact and when done in the right conditions is unlimited in its scope. There are no hiding places in Spiritualism, only for those who are unable to accept the help of these very special people. When a documentary of Irene Wilkins' story was produced by a T.V. company, they borrowed the book, "The voice of Irene" by William Tyler from Bournemouth church, but on completion of the documentary, no mention of the evidence by Charlotte Starkey was given. Some of it was filmed at the Bournemouth Spiritualist Church and the building was made to look dark and spooky and not at all what the church looks like, which is very beautiful. I urge the police and producers of these companies to give these wonderful mediums/psychics the recognition they deserve, and give credence to the many injustices in the name of Spiritualism. This way, many more crimes may be solved. Fact, certainly not fiction.

Mindfulness Meditation.

Geoff Nunn. ©

Meditation is an ancient spiritual practice. Artistic sculptures found in the east provides evidence that the ancients were following meditative practices which could date as far back as 5 000 BCE although written evidence came much later at 1 500 BCE. The Buddha, who is probably the most famous exponent of meditation, created (or possibly re-established) a technique called Vipassana; the oldest Buddhist meditation practice. This method comes directly from a discourse attributed to the Buddha himself (Satipatthana Sutta or foundations of mindfulness); its practice was central to his experience of achieving enlightenment. Over the centuries various forms of meditation have evolved but the different practices are essentially variations on a few themes. Whilst meditative practices have assumed different forms over the millennia, their purpose, according to Buddhist tradition, has remained constant; to end suffering.

Mindfulness although based on ancient meditative traditions, only dates back to the 1970's. Jon Kabat-Zinn, an American molecular biologist working at Harvard University, regularly travelled to the east to learn from meditation masters. During these travels he used his experiences and knowledge to develop mindfulness meditation. Since then, he started a clinic working on a stress reduction programme in the Massachusetts University Hospital. The growth of mindfulness accelerated following a 40 minute television programme which introduced mindfulness and its contemplative ideas to the wider public. The benefits of mindfulness are now well established, so much so that it has developed into secular therapies including the mindfulness based stress-reduction programme (MBSR).

So what is mindfulness?

A student of Zen Buddhism once asked his teacher to write something of great wisdom in a calligraphy brushstroke for him. The teacher took up the brush and wrote 'Attention'. The dismayed student said 'Is that all?' The teacher once more took the brush and wrote 'Attention, Attention'. The student became somewhat irritated and said to his master that there isn't anything profound in that. In silence the teacher wrote, 'Attention, Attention, Attention'. The student quizzed the teacher about the meaning and the teacher simply said 'Attention means Attention'. The American Psychologist, William James later summarised the meaning of this story stating that if the wandering mind is brought back to the 'root of character and judgement' (i.e. bringing the mind's attention back to the point of focus) this would have many benefits, mainly in the field of education.

The most widely quoted definition of mindfulness comes from Jon Kabat-Zinn; '*The awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgementally to the unfolding experience*'. In other words to focus on the present experience at the exclusion of all others.

All three - the Zen teacher, W James, and Jon Kabat-Zinn - are each referring to *focused attention*; the ability to focus the mind on one thing at a time. This is a practice which is at the heart of Buddhism, yoga, and even Native American wisdom etc. So mindfulness is focussing on the present moment-by-moment experience whereas with other forms of meditation the mind can often be directed to create an experience, such as with guided / chanting and movement meditations etc.

Focusing on the present moment doesn't always come naturally to the western mind as it often operates in the opposite way; cluttered with many streams of thoughts at once, such as, eating a meal whilst watching a quiz programme on the TV and simultaneously holding a conversation. As a result everything becomes diluted. Like anything else, the ability to focus the mind on one thing at a time can be achieved with practice.

To be mindful, we don't have to sit in a meditative pose in a special room reciting incantations; it can be practised during the day. Whilst eating a meal, for instance, we can focus our attention on the experience of the food – its taste, colour and texture. But introducing another 'attention grabber' such as watching TV introduces a distraction and reduces our ability to become fully focused.

Whilst being 'mindful' distractions will come due to the wandering nature of our minds, but when this happens, we acknowledge the thought and gently bring our attention back to the thing we were focusing on. Even meditation masters have bad days - times when the practice doesn't seem to be working well. But experience brings acceptance and an understanding that the good days will be even better as our practice strengthens and distractions weaken. The key is not to be thwarted by the less positive experiences; even Mozart spent hours as a child practising the scales before he was able to write a symphony.

The Benefits.

Serious scientific research into mindfulness has happened relatively recently - since Kabat-Zinn introduced mindfulness in the 1970's. The results of the various areas of research is clear – with regular practice, if only for ten minutes a day, improves brain function, reduces stress, blood pressure, burnout, anxiety and various other modern day ailments. Research shows the more time spent in meditation and mindfulness the greater the benefits. Thoughts change our reality!

To a Spiritualist both meditation and mindfulness create a better connection between mind, body and spirit which brings benefits to each portion and to the whole. The teacher-guide known as Silver Birch expressed the value of meditation when someone asked about joining a circle, and was advised first to 'give the inner faculties a chance of expression' through meditation. The practice of meditation provides the groundwork for spiritual experiences. Many varieties of religious and spiritual methods have a form of meditation at its heart.

Try a simple mindfulness meditation

Begin with the breath. (10 minutes).

Controlling the breath helps to regulate the rhythms of the body and quietens the mind, reducing stress creating a sense of peace.

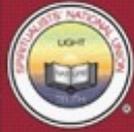
Sit so you are comfortable. Feel the sensations of your body, the feet touching the floor, the body in contact with the chair.....

Focus on the breath as you breath in, then out, in, then out.....

Bring your attention to the chest (be aware of the rise and fall of the chest with every breath). You may notice the pauses between the in/out breaths.....

Keep your focus on the rise and fall of the chest with every breath. If your mind wanders, gently acknowledge this then bring it back to the breathing once more.

Continue for ten minutes then slowly bring yourself back to normal awareness feeling refreshed.



PIONEER

Reproduced with kind permission of the S.N.U.

This article produced in the Pioneer is taken from the *Two Worlds* given over three issues April 14th, 21st, and 28th 1939 on the early healing work at Bournemouth National Church written by former SNU President, John McIndoe. The methods described have changed since then but show the practices of the day.

HEALING

BY F. T. BLAKE

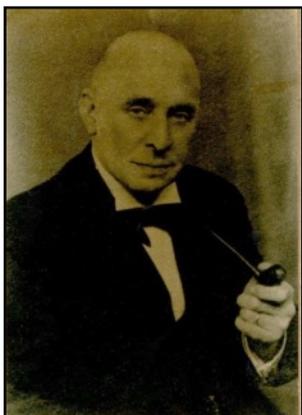
Few of our churches appear to be aware of the serious attempt being made by the Union to regularize and officially record the healing work being done throughout the British Isles under the auspices of its affiliated bodies. That a record of this important work should be compiled and kept for present and future reference will be at once apparent to all who recognise the growing national importance of our movement. It would not only be an incentive to those at present engaged in the art of healing but would be a most valuable and instructive guide for future development.

It must be remembered that, as in all other branches of psychic activity, no person or group possesses all the knowledge necessary for the continuing usefulness of the service offered. Whatever may be the attainments of the individual or group, this may be added to when all acquired knowledge is pooled and disseminated. It is hoped that through the machinery set up by the Union this collecting and disseminating of data pertaining to healing may be accomplished.

Where healing treatments are given under the auspices of a church it should form part of the church activity under the direction of its officers and council. A record should be kept of the patients attending, stating disease or infirmity, the number of treatments given and by whom, also the progress made by the patient towards recovery. A case book for this purpose may be obtained at small cost from the S.N.U. office.

It is also desired to compile a national register of our healers. An appeal is made to church councils to recommend their qualified healers for the national certificate and in his way help the Union to make an historical record of the healing work done by the movement as a whole.

Full particulars and all necessary information may be obtained from Mrs. Eleanor Paling, "Lucknow," Muriel Road, Beeston, Notts.



In November 1931 the *National Spiritualist* reprints a paper read to the healing section of the International Spiritualist Federation Congress titled "Healing by Magnetism," by Frank T. Blake of Bournemouth. Blake confined his paper to the work done, and the methods employed by the Healing Guild in connection with the National Spiritualist Church, Bournemouth. He explains the work is done under the direction of a control who is known as the "Doctor," who is assisted by a number of his fellow discarnate companions. He explains the different methods of the healing used at the Guild, and how it runs under their own strict rules. At the 30th SNU Annual General Meeting, held in Glasgow in July 1932, the Exponents Committee recommended Blake for the Healing Diploma.

What Blake did not mention in his paper to the ISF Congress was that he himself was the trance medium for the control known as the “Doctor.” Blake gave many years of dedicated service to the Union, he was President of the SNU’s Southern District Council (SDC) for many years. He was one of the founder members of Bournemouth National Spiritualist Church, he was a vice-President of the Union and President 1938-1941 and sadly died while in office.

The Work of the Bournemouth Church

THE Spiritualists’ National Church, Bath Road, Bournemouth, was founded in 1906. Mr. John Walker, Glasgow man, who had migrated south, and who possessed strongly developed and varied gifts as a medium, was one of its four founders. Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace was one of its first



Honorary Presidents.²⁴ His letter accepting the position, and an autographed photograph of the great naturalist, are among Mr. Blake’s treasured possessions.²⁵

Healing work early became a prominent feature in the activities of the church. One of its first Presidents, Mr. Lonsdale, had been a cripple. He had been cured through the mediumship of George Spriggs,²⁶ the materialising medium, who made the Circle of Light, Cardiff, famous in the late ‘seventies of last century. Spriggs had gone to Australia, where his powers as a materialising medium had been replaced by the gifts of healing and diagnosing.²⁷

.24—“Exactly a century after his death, a statue of Alfred Russel Wallace was unveiled on 7 November 2013 at the Natural History Museum, London. There was a large crowd at the Darwin Centre, and among the guests was Richard Wallace, the grandson of Wallace. During the speeches, however, there was no mention of Wallace’s role as a psychic pioneer. Across the road is the College of Psychic Studies, whose Memorandum of Association (under its old name, the London Spiritualists’ Alliance,) included Wallace among its signators.” Leslie Price *Psypioneer* November 2013. Sir David Attenborough unveils Wallace statue:—<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/about-us/news/2013/november/sir-david-attenborough-unveils-wallace-statue125452.html>

.25—Photograph – Frank Blake is seated on the front row.

.26—Hannan Swaffer wrote in *Psychic News* March 31st 1934:—“Ernest Oaten’s conviction about Spiritualism was largely based on his long sittings with George Spriggs, the famous materialising medium who lived at Cardiff. When a young man, Oaten sat with him for years, and during that time saw physical phenomena of a quality which has not been equalled since, at least in this country.”

.27—See *Psypioneer* Volume 3, No 9; September 2007:—*Experiences of Mr. George Spriggs*

In 1900 he came to London, and was mainly responsible for the formation of the Psycho-Therapeutic Society.²⁸ Lonsdale, having been cured, developed his own healing powers under Spriggs' tuition. Vincent Turvey was another of the early Presidents of the church.²⁹ He was the author of *The Beginnings of Seership*, and had remarkable powers as a clairvoyant, which he placed freely at the service of the church.

S.N.U. ACTIVITIES

From the first, the church has been one of the most successful churches affiliated to the Spiritualists' National Union. Four mission churches founded and fostered by the Bath Road church are approaching independent status. For years Mr. Blake has been President of the Southern District Council, and its representative on the Council of the National Union, of which he is now President.

THE HEALERS

Miss Wadlow, the President of the Bath Road church, is now the Southern District representative. Thus it is evident that the church has borne its full share of the work of the Movement, nationally as well as locally, while at all times its financial support of the Union has been most generous.

Only those closely associated with the church are in a position to appreciate the extent to which it benefits by Mr. Blake's personal qualities, his organising ability, and his mediumistic gifts. He has been its Secretary, its President, and for some years now its resident minister. For over thirty years he has been active in its service, and during most of this time he has been the centre round which most of its activities have focused.

SPIRIT GUIDANCE

Mr. Blake's mediumistic powers have on occasion been of great value in guiding the Council of the church in the transaction of its business. For example, in 1919 the church faced a crisis; it had to find new premises quickly. A church schoolroom, which was in the market, though by no means ideal for the church purposes, seemed to be the only premises available, and negotiations for the purchase were in progress. But one evening Mr. Blake's control advised the church Council not to purchase any property just then, but to carry on as best they could in rented halls. In a few years, he asserted, certain property would come on the market which they would secure through the intervention of a widow who would come amongst them. He said there would be a view of the sea from the site.

²⁸—The Psycho-Therapeutic Society was founded in London on April 1st 1901; George Spriggs was its first president and was for some years a healing medium at the society. A preliminary meeting was held at the house of Dr. George Wyld on Sunday 10th February 1901 to consider the advisability of establishing in London a society for the systematic study and investigation of Animal Magnetism, Mesmerism, Hypnotism, Christian Science, Faith Healing, and Higher thought Healing. Between 60-70 interested persons came to this first meeting. Initially the society's headquarters were at Trafalgar Buildings, Northumberland Ave, Charing Cross, London W.C., by 1903 they had moved to 3, Bayley Street, Bedford Square, W.C. In April 1906 the Society took over the whole first floor of 3 Bayley Street, Spriggs was still president and it is reported that the Society had made steady progress in its five years of existence to date. Its organ was 'Psycho-Therapeutic Journal'.

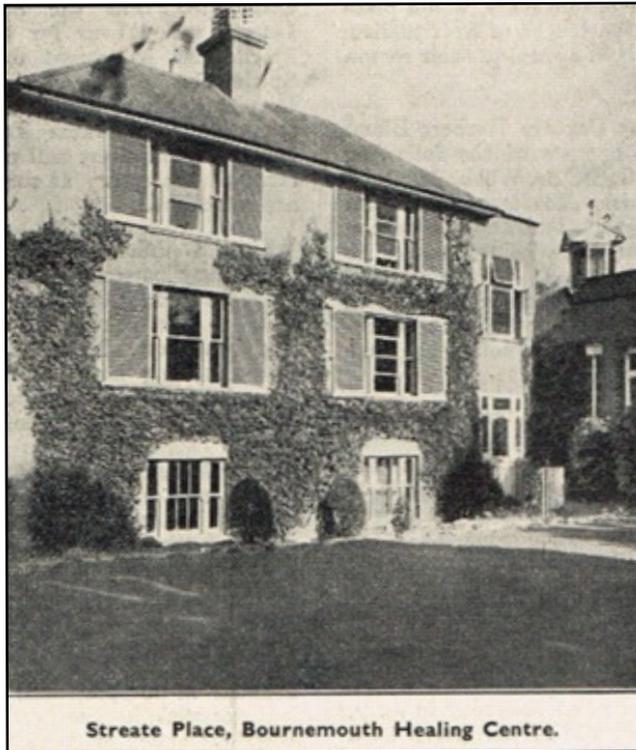
²⁹—In the former SNU President's Eric Hatton's autobiography "Taking up the Challenge," (2010) Eric tells a story of former Presidents Harold Vigurs and Ernest Oaten who were due to take part in a public meeting with Vincent Turvey at Bournemouth see pages 47-50.

PREDICTION FULFILLED

Later, Mrs. Lennox Kay went to reside in Bournemouth and joined the church. She it was who spotted two desirable sites for sale at the corner of Bath Road and St. Peter's Road, and negotiated their purchase for the church. The present church was built on the corner site. Although at the time the sea could not be seen from it, recent demolitions of certain houses have made the prediction come true. The adjoining site was sold, so as to reduce the burden of financing the building of the church. Two years ago it was again acquired by the church, and the house on it, after suitable alterations, became the seat of the activities of the Healing Guild of the church.

SPIRITUAL HEALING CENTRE

As already noted, spiritual healing became, at an early date, an important feature in the work of



Streate Place, Bournemouth Healing Centre.

the church, and during recent years, mainly through and around Mr. Blake's mediumship, it has developed to such an extent that it could not be coped with on the church premises. These had neither the space nor the equipment for giving treatment privately to a large number of patients simultaneously. The premises in Streate Place, St. Peter's Road, which the church had repurchased, adjoin the church buildings, and a short flight of steps inside, near the back of the church, leads from it on to the first floor of the healing centre, which is a three-storey building. A movable partition allows the main portion of the church to be shut off so that the remainder forms a waiting room in which the patients assemble. There is a separate entrance to the top flat of the house, which is let. The ground floor and the first floor each have eight main rooms with central passages which divide them into suites of four. On the first floor are the church vestry, the library, and office, and a kitchen, while on the ground floor there is a room which is set aside for discussions and committee meetings. The remaining twelve rooms are devoted to healing.

THE HEALING GUILD

The church has never encouraged publicity for its healing work, rather the reverse, and consequently little has appeared in print about it. Newspaper reports of cures effected naturally raise the hopes of other sufferers that they, too, may be helped, and result in a shoal of letters and numerous visits, often from people whose cases cannot be undertaken, if only for practical reasons, such as distance, time, etc., but such inquiries absorb time in dealing with them.

In Bournemouth, in spite of the large number constantly being treated, there is almost always a waiting list. Patients who contemplate visiting the healing centre for treatment are very strongly advised—especially those living at a distance—not to do so without previous correspondence with the Secretary of the Healing Guild. It should also be remembered that though instantaneous cures through spirit agency do undoubtedly occur, they are by no means frequent usually a number of treatments is required, extending over weeks, sometimes months. It seemed to me that there is so much of interest in the work, so much of possible value to others in the methods employed, in the manner in which the work is organised, and in the cases dealt with, and so much in the results that should encourage other churches to provide similar facilities, that I sought and obtained permission to write this account.

I describe what I saw for myself on a visit to Bournemouth last spring, and the accounts of the beneficial effects of the treatment are mostly from statements made to me personally by the patients concerned.

SYSTEM AND SPECIALISATION

These are the keynotes of the organisation of the Healing Guild. The rooms in which the healers operate are reserved for that purpose, and, in general, each healer works in his or her own room. Each room is heated by steam radiator, and has hot and cold running water. It is furnished with a small bed, a couple of chairs, and a locker. The lighting is by ordinary electric lamps, with a control switch to vary the amount. The red lamps so much in vogue in some healing circles are not used in the healing rooms. I have never heard any satisfactory explanation of their use during healing. One of the healing rooms, however, is equipped with apparatus to enable radiant heat and other forms of etheric vibration treatment to be administered, to supplement the psychic treatments.

NO HEALING IN PUBLIC

All healing treatment is given privately. The patient and the healer are alone together, though an interested spectator may be allowed. I was one thus privileged, and now recount some of what I saw. But there is no public healing circle, there is no singing, no gramophone music, nothing to distract from the serious business in hand. The healers wear white overalls. Everything is scrupulously clean. Each room has its own colour scheme, dictated by the inclinations of the healer using it, but whatever colour, the tones are soft and restful.

RECEPTION OF PATIENTS

New patients are usually received between 3 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. on Fridays. Particulars of the patient are entered on a card, which is the first in a simple but comprehensive system of card-indexing, which covers all the details of the healing work. Then he is taken to the room where his case is diagnosed by “the doctor.” through Mr. Blake in trance. Who “the doctor” is, is not definitely known; he prefers to remain incognito, but from his own statements he was a man who desired to enter the medical profession while on earth, but was forced by circumstances to take up a career in the army, in which, apparently, he attained high rank. Col. Berry, of Newcastle, Co. Down, who was himself through the South African War, and has several times come in contact with “the doctor” when in control of Mr. Blake, is satisfied that he was intimately associated with the high command during the South African War. After death, his interest in the healing art remained, and he studied, and ultimately finding a congenial instrument through whom to work, he attached himself to Frank Blake.

DIAGNOSIS

EXCEPT in exceptional cases, and in some in which manipulative treatment is required, “the doctor” does not now give healing treatments. He diagnoses each case, not by the statements of the patient as to his symptoms, but by his own observation. Somehow he “perceives” the internal condition of the body and its organs. “Perceives” seems to be the best word to use; “senses” may be to some extent appropriate, but it seems inadequate, and there is no evidence that any physical sense is employed—certainly not the physical sight, since Mr. Blake’s eyes are shut. At any rate, he locates the trouble and decides the treatment to be applied. Then he selects the healer best qualified, and gives him his instructions, indicating the time when he wishes to examine the patient again. Should the healer, however, during the course of treatment think it advisable at any time to consult “the doctor,” he does so.

Every Friday evening there is an interval, during which the healers assemble in the committee room and report progress and discuss their cases with “the doctor.” This is quite distinct from the periodic interviews which “the doctor” has with the patients. Here, too, discussions as to the forces at work in the healing process take place, and experiments are performed in the circle in which the healers are sitting.

I have been privileged to be present on two such occasions. It seemed to me that not only were the healers being instructed, but that “the doctor” was striving to increase his own knowledge. Here, again, in this phase of phenomena, it appeared to me, as it has often appeared in other types of phenomena—and as has sometimes been stated by the controls themselves—we were co-operating with an intelligence who is aware of certain forces, which, if directed through certain channels, will produce certain results, but who is not aware, or only to a very limited extent aware, of the exact nature of these forces and of the laws governing them.

SELECTING THE HEALERS

Selecting the healer seems usually to be a case merely of “the doctor” exercising his judgment as to the known qualities of the healer and the requirements of the patient. But there are instances in which the process seems unsatisfactory, and in such case “the doctor” decides by the influence he feels while the medium is holding the hand of the patient and of various healers one after the other. Just what the determining factors are cannot be put into words, but there is some subtle quality, spoken of as the magnetic relationship, between patient and healer, which must be given due consideration if full benefit is to be received. It might be put in popular language by saying some people have a fine-grained and others a coarse-grained magnetism, and the two do not blend well. A wrong relationship may even produce adverse results. Each healer has undergone a course of training in anatomy, physiology, and hygiene, apart from the special knowledge implied in the term “psychic.” While there is no hard and fast line of demarcation, healers seem to be divisible into groups suitable for treating various ailments. Thus some seem to have qualities which make them specially suitable for lung troubles, asthma, bronchitis, tuberculosis; others, abdominal complaints. Some are specially adapted for treating rheumatism; some, nervous disorders; others, children. But just why these and many other things are facts is a matter for future research to determine.

SOME STATISTICS

There are twelve healers, eight ladies and four gentlemen, on the active list, and thus, with Mr. Blake and the Matron, there is a staff of fourteen at the healing centre, all giving much of their time and energy to this beneficent work on a purely voluntary basis. There is no charge for treatment, but patients contribute, according to their ability or inclination, to the upkeep of the centre by donations placed in the collecting box. Treatments are given on Fridays from 5 p.m. till 10 p.m. nominally, but often to a later hour, also on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the healing centre. Those too infirm to walk are taken to and from the centre by voluntary workers with their own motor cars; others are treated in their houses. Usually, each healer has about twelve patients on his list at any given time. Some are treated once, others twice a week. Thus each healer gives about seventeen or eighteen treatments per week. At the time of my visit there were about 120 patients on the books. That meant ten per healer, and about 160 treatments per week were being given. This was during one of the quieter periods of the year; at times the number of treatments per week has reached 250. The centre is closed for about four weeks in September each year.

THE HEALING TREATMENTS

To criticise the methods of one medium merely because they differ from of another is never a very fruitful process. In healing mediumship it is pure folly. The results obtained should be the only criteria. I am relating what I saw at Bournemouth, and the results speak for themselves, but it does not follow that different methods employed by other healers should be brought into line. The differences in technique which our physical senses detect may have no more significance from a psychic point of view than the colour of letter paper has in relation to the message written on it.

Some of the treatments may be called “static.” In them there are no passes or movements by the healer. They are literally the “laying on of hands.” I witnessed one such in a serious heart case. The intention seemed to be for the curative agent to pass from the one hand of the healer, through the patient’s heart, to the other hand.

In which direction does it flow from right to left, or vice-versa; does it “flow” at all; who knows? At present we can only speculate, as did the students of electricity for nearly two centuries, till instruments capable of measuring electrical effects were devised.

THE EFFECT ON THE HEALER

Apart from the effects on the patient on such static treatments, there is on occasion a significant effect on the healer. In this particular case he was a young, rigorous man, full of vitality. Yet when he commenced treatment of this case, he experienced such symptoms that he could not continue the treatment for the prescribed period. His mouth became parched, he had a feeling approaching nausea, and an almost irresistible inclination to sleep came over him. It was only after he had persevered with the treatment for several times that these symptoms of fatigue disappeared. There was a Healer two thousand years ago who knew when “virtue had gone out of Him.” One wonders had He such physical sensations. Apparently, in the case we are discussing, some adjustment in the healer’s physical make-up had to be made. Now, the treatment causes him no discomfort.

In many cases, “magnetic” passes are made over the affected parts of the body. Sometimes these passes are of the true “mesmeric” type, that is, there is no physical contact between the hands of the healer and the body of the patient. In cases where contact occurs during the passes, the contact is always very light. There is no pressure such as is employed in massage. Some treatments, I was told, were intended to “cleanse” or “comb out” the patient’s aura, and one can readily understand that in such cases physical contact would not be necessary. In some cases the hands of the healer become distinctly cold while giving treatment. Why, no one seems to know. Nowhere, and at no time, did I see any attempt to use “suggestion” in any way as a curative agent, but doubtless the optimistic atmosphere which pervades the centre has its effect on the patients. The healers I saw at work were “normal.” At least, I saw no suggestion of the trance state while they worked, and I understand that this is usual. Silk, I was told, should not be worn while receiving healing treatment. It seems to impose some hindrance to the free flow of the curative agent. Cotton is said to be the least obstructive textile material.

THE RESULTS

And now, as to the results of all this expenditure of time and thought and energy. It would not go on year after year unless both healers and patients were satisfied that real, lasting good was being done. Most of the patients come to the centre because they have heard of the benefits which others have received. They come from far as well as near. In many cases the records show that the cases were of long standing before coming to the centre, and often apparently beyond the aid of normal medical treatment. It must not be supposed that all are cured. “The doctor” may tell a would-be patient quite frankly that he can do nothing for him, or he may hold out hopes of only partial relief. But the records show, and the patients confirm, that much suffering is relieved, and that remarkable and permanent cures are effected.

Here are one or two cases taken from the records. A child had suffered from asthma from birth, and when ten years old was taken to the centre for treatment. This was given twice a week and in a few weeks there was a complete cure. In another case, a young lady, after suffering from asthma and bronchitis for fourteen years, was cured. A man who had lost his voice had it restored to him. Doubtless, doctors would explain that there was some sort of nervous inhibition at the root of his trouble. But twelve of them had failed to remove it if there was one. The trouble apparently arose from repeated crashes as an airman. An operation to the vocal cords was prescribed, which he refused to undergo, and was therefore refused a pension. After having been treated for about six weeks at the healing centre, he walked out of it one night, and being accosted in the street by a passer-by, he responded in his old natural voice. He has retained his voice ever since, and is now employed as a bus conductor.

Here are samples of the tales that grateful patients tell:—

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

Mr. "X" had attained the rank of master artificer in the army. He had suffered for 27 years, that is, about half his life-time, from rheumatoid arthritis. His army career ended with a spell of four months in hospital, from which he was discharged "unfit for further service." He was a cripple, so lame that, even with two sticks, he could walk only when supported by a friend on each side. Ultimately, he took up his residence in Bournemouth and in due course found his way to the healing centre, to see what they could do for him. Two years' treatment there made a new man of him. When I saw him, he had a barely perceptible limp. His pains had gone. He could throw his arms right up above his head, and swing them down to touch his toes, in the most approved "make Britain fit" fashion. I watched him do it several times. Another case which I was told about concerned a man who had fluid in his knee. He arranged for a doctor to come and remove it. One and a half pints was the quantity expected. Before the day fixed for the operation, he visited the centre, and had one treatment. When the doctor came there was no fluid to remove.

TUBERCULOSIS

A remarkable cure of this disease is that of a young married woman, who told me her own story. She belongs to the Midlands of England, and in 1926, when about nineteen years of age, she was sent to Bournemouth suffering from tuberculosis, hoping the climate would help her. Ultimately, she had to go into a sanatorium, from which she was discharged, unfit for work. Four doctors said she could not recover. She had Spiritualist friends, who took her to the healing centre at Bath Road towards the end of 1929. The whole care of one healer was devoted to her case; for eighteen months she had two treatments per week, and for one year one treatment. Then the doctors said there was no tuberculosis about her, and that the diagnosis which had said there was must have been wrong—so she got married. A remarkable feature of her case was that for several months after the psychic treatment commenced she felt much worse. To-day, anyone seeing her finds it hard to credit that ten years ago she was doomed to an early death from consumption.

ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

Such cases, for example, as partially developed limbs, have been noted by a number of healers as especially amenable to psychic treatment. A number have been successfully treated at Bournemouth. I saw one youth of about eighteen getting treatment. His left shoulder and arm had never grown so quickly as the right. The defect was still quite apparent, though considerably less than when he started having treatment, some months previously. Formerly almost useless, his left arm has grown, and the muscles developed, while the left shoulder has extended outwards. With his left hand he can now raise above his head a weight which formerly he could not have lifted with it. He is employed in a garage, and is now confident that the handicap imposed on him by his defective left arm will very soon be a thing of the past.

OUR CASE IS PROVED

I have related these few cases as illustrations of what may happen, of what is happening every day, and not in Bournemouth alone. It would be easy to fill pages of *The Two Worlds* with well-authenticated accounts of cures by psychic treatment. But to what good? The case for psychic healing, like the case for demonstrated survival, is fully established for all who are prepared to give it unbiased consideration and investigate it for themselves. And those who are not prepared to give it such consideration are not likely to be moved by the mere repetition of accounts of other cures, however varied. As already indicated, the church discourages publicity for its healing work. Also, if one is relating successes, one should refer to failures. Mr. Blake and those associated with him are the first to admit that they have had failures, disappointing failures, and we cannot assign a reason for these. A healer may have marked success in treating several cases, and then fail with what appears to be an exactly similar one. Do the mental reactions between healer and patients account for the different results? Are there psychic "groups," the members of which can help one another, while unable to benefit those in other groups, just as we have groups whose blood is suitable for transfusion only with the blood of other members of the group?

RECOGNITION IS COMING

Some day the medical profession will take psychic healing seriously. Some day it will be the subject of careful research. Then we may hope gradually to acquire some knowledge of the processes at work and the laws underlying them. The day of recognition may be nearer than we think. There are medical men who are paying some attention to psychic healing. New ideas about radiation, etc., are paving the way for a closer approach. Some are watching not unsympathetically, some are quietly investigating. We should give them every facility and welcome their interest. Sooner or later the facts of psychic healing will beat the physicians, just as half a century ago the facts of physical phenomena beat Crookes and other physicists.

BUT—BUT

Not all medical men are open-minded. There are the reactionaries, numerous and powerful. Five years ago they introduced into Parliament their Medical and Surgical Appliances Advertisement Bill. Had it become law it would have very seriously hampered all forms of orthodox healing.³⁰

THE CANCER BILL

It seems clear now that attempts will be made to gain piecemeal nearly all that that Bill was intended to provide.

The Cancer Bill will soon be law. The Diabetes Bill is on the way. Bills for Whooping Cough and Housemaid's Knee may come later.

.30—Unorthodox healing? Editor.

Healing 2020 - an Update

Nigel West

Adapting to the times. As we experience these socially isolating times the healing team continue their work by sending absent healing, not only to those on our lists but out to the world.

Most of you are aware that the church holds an absent healing book. If you wish to add a name to the list please leave a message on the church telephone:01202 551751. Currently absent healing times are at 11.00 on Tuesday and 10.00 on Friday.

There are three types of healing recognised by the Spiritualists National Union, these are contact healing, distant healing and absent healing, all are as effective as each other.

Recently the SNU has developed the training programme for healing mediums and has worked on developing constant methods of practice. Healers are asked to keep movement to a minimum once contact has been made with the patient in order to maintain their attunement with the spirit world. Some people will find some small differences when we are again able to give contact healing.

This is way in the future, and the intermediary step may be that we can first offer distant healing. This is healing where the healing medium and patient sit close but not touching. It is just as viable as the other methods so we hope you will work with us as we come back to our normal ways of working. Help us to help you.

DUNCAN MEDIUMSHIP.

Originally produced in 'Light' Magazine, 22 January 1932.

In our issue of January 1st, there was published a report-prepared by Dr. Margaret Vivian, and supported by the signatures of four other investigators-on a series of seances given at Bournemouth by Mrs. Duncan, of Edinburgh. In that report, it was stated: "All the sitters are convinced that they witnessed genuine materialisations."

In the following article, Mr. Frank T. Blake, resident minister of the Bournemouth Spiritualist Church, and one of the most experienced investigators in the country, expresses similar views.

THE BOURNEMOUTH SEANCES

By FRANK T. BLAKE

During a recent visit of Mrs. Duncan, of Edinburgh, phenomena of an extraordinary character were witnessed at the National Spiritualist Church, Bath Road, Bournemouth. For a month, Mrs. Duncan sat with a carefully selected group of ladies and gentlemen, including members of the medical profession, naval and army officers and prominent members of the Spiritualist Church. Some fourteen seances were held and attended throughout by a selected group of people. Occasional visitors were admitted to some of the seances.

The sittings were held in a good red light, sufficient for those present to witness all that occurred outside the cabinet. Mrs. Duncan was provided with a close-fitting black two-piece dress, into which she charged, in the presence of a qualified nurse, before each seance, and submitted to a severe personal inspection before she entered the seance room. Mrs. Duncan took her seat in the cabinet while the room was flooded with light, and passed into trance in the presence of the sitters before the curtains of the cabinet were drawn and the red light introduced.

The remarkable feature about the phenomena - I am writing as one with nearly thirty years' experience of physical phenomena-is the voluminous exudation of ectoplasm which flows from the Medium's mouth and nose. At some of the seances, it poured forth by the yard and folded itself about the feet of the sitters. Repeatedly it fell in heavy folds down the whole length of the Medium's body, and always it was self luminous, so that when the curtains were withdrawn, the substance-which has the appearance of scalded milk as it boils over the sides of the saucepan and has no resemblance to cheese-cloth with which I am quite familiar - was seen shimmering in the darkness of the cabinet. This substance was used to protect the spirit visitors when they emerged from the dark cabinet into the light of the red lamp in the seance chamber. Repeatedly these forms would stand in front and quite clear, of the curtains, and exhibit an intelligent interest in those with whom they claimed relationship or friend-ship. Sometimes when thus exposed, the bare faces, hands and feet could be clearly discerned, though the spirit visitors were not often able to converse while without the cabinet.

A spirit woman who came asked for a pencil. She was the wife of an army officer who was present. The pencil was handed to her and she returned to the cabinet and wrote her name, Muriel, upon the wall. This writing has been carefully compared with the lady's writing of her name when in the body, and has been found to be exact in all particulars. The signature is peculiarly distinctive and affords indisputable evidence of identity. This signature is being carefully preserved as a memento of a remarkable seance.

At the final sitting, Albert posed for a flash-light photograph, which shows his tall form (he says his height is 6ft. 2 in.) standing at the opening of the curtains-on one occasion, he was seen as a semi-materialised form floating in the air beside the Medium; this was particularly interesting, as he exactly resembled the traditional "ghost." Sometimes, when the power was failing, the forms were seen melting away, as if they were sinking through the floor. Two of the spirit faces were recognised by strangers from their earth photographs, and this is surely a very convincing test.

Besides the phenomena already mentioned, Albert gave a unique exhibition of spirit lights, ranging in colour from pure white to yellow, blue and mauve. These colours could be seen distinctly by all present, and appeared sometimes in the form of a shell.

In the past I have denounced fraudulent Mediums, and have been exposed to, and threatened with, actions for libel. I hold no brief for Mrs. Duncan as Mrs. Duncan. I do not know her personally. But one thing I know that she is the most valuable Medium for physical phenomena in the British Isles, and that her phenomena, as witnessed in Bournemouth, are not only above suspicion but incapable of production by fraudulent means.

Arisen Friends



Ray East

Raymond (Ray) East passed to the world of spirit on 11th March 2020 aged 89. Ray was a musician who played the clarinet and saxophone with some of the best known Big Bands of the sixties and seventies. In later years Ray was a very popular member of our church and will be remembered by many as the steward who greeted them as they entered the church. His funeral service took place on Friday 22nd May conducted by Al Potts.



Joy Ford

Joy Ford passed to the world of spirit on 19th April 2020 aged 81. Joy was delightful and much loved. Having spent some years travelling Joy arrived at our church in 1982 where she made an immediate impact with her willingness to work and her inspired insights into events that would bring people into the church. For many years Joy organised themed evenings, engaging mediums and speakers for meetings so memorable that they are still spoken of today. A great animal lover, Joy worked tirelessly to raise funds for animal charities by the selling of bric-a-brac and books in the church. Her funeral service took place on Friday 1st May conducted by Al Potts. At her request, her ashes will be scattered in the grounds of the local Margaret Green Animal Sanctuary. and a service celebrating her life will be held later in the year.

Personal Transitions

Download an extract from “Personal Transitions”, an e-book by well-known spiritual teacher, Steven Noble, from our website by using the link below:

www.bsnuco.uk/page24.html

Callers in the night.

Eva French

Hallo callers in the night!
You've completely altered my lifestyle,
Instead of shutting down and sleeping,
I'm fumbling on the dial.

I'm burning the candle at both ends,
I'm missing my beauty sleep,
As LBC talks to London town,
Wide awake I keep.

I think I'll listen to just one more,
And then I'll call it a day,
But then I find I'm still agog,
Wondering what the next caller will say.

The next one might light-hearted be,
With Adrian contributing his wit,
And so I go on listening,
Just one more little bit.

I laugh – sometimes I frown,
I'll agree or disagree,
But I have to confess, I squirm at those 'jokes',
They never seem to reach me.

Sometimes there's the little childish voice,
He's crept downstairs to phone,
He thinks he'll tell a little story,
All on his very own.

And so I'm awake one half hour after the other,
But something's burning in my brain,
Where have I heard *that* before,
Oh, it's the News Bulletin again!

Is it the eighth time the same thing has happened?
Or just they said it eight times?
I've heard it every half hour forever,
Those oft-repeated lines.

But carry on London, give us the lowdown,
On what's on in Town tonight,
But I'll have to have a night off soon,
Thanks Adrian, thanks Dennis, thanks Callers in the Night.

We hope you have enjoyed this first edition of “Inspire”. The next edition is due out at the end of July.