

# **Spititual healing : report of a Clerical and Medical Committee of Inquiry into Spiritual, Faith, and Mental Healing.**

## **Contributors**

Clerical and Medical Committee of Inquiry into Spiritual, Faith, and Mental Healing.

Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

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SPIRITUAL HEALING  
REPORT  
OF A  
CLERICAL AND MEDICAL  
COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO  
SPIRITUAL, FAITH, AND  
MENTAL HEALING








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SPIRITUAL HEALING



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TORONTO



# SPIRITUAL HEALING

REPORT

OF A

CLERICAL AND MEDICAL  
COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO  
SPIRITUAL, FAITH, AND  
MENTAL HEALING

BIBLIOTH  
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# SPIRITUAL HEALING

## CLERICAL AND MEDICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

A CONFERENCE of representatives of the Clerical and Medical Professions was held at the Chapter House, St Paul's, in October 1910 to discuss the asserted results and the rapid development of "Spiritual" and "Faith" healing movements. A Special Committee was nominated to consider and report upon the best methods of closer co-operation between the two professions.

At a second Conference held in October, 1911, certain preliminary conclusions, or findings, of this Committee were unanimously adopted and published and forwarded to the Diocesan Bishops and the Medical Corporations.



An enlarged Committee was also appointed :—

- (a) To continue investigations into the meaning and scope of “Spiritual,” “Faith,” and “Mental” healing ;
- (b) To consider how the dangers connected with such treatment by persons not medically qualified might best be guarded against ; and
- (c) To promote all legitimate co-operation between the two professions.

The following are the Members of this Standing Committee :—

THE RIGHT REV. THE DEAN OF WESTMINSTER,  
C.V.O., D.D. (*Chairman*).

SIR DYCE DUCKWORTH, Bart., LL.D., M.D.,  
F.R.C.P. (*Vice-Chairman*).

THE REV. W. G. CAMERON, M.A.

THE REV. CANON C. V. CHILDE, LL.D. (*Hon.  
Sec.*).

THE VERY REV. THE DEAN OF DURHAM, D.D.

THE VERY REV. THE DEAN OF ST. PAUL’S, D.D.

THE REV. PROF. G. E. NEWSOM, M.A.

THE REV. PREBENDARY THE HON. J. S. NORTH-  
COTE.

THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF STEPNEY,  
D.D.

THE REV. A. W. ROBINSON, D.D.

THE REV. W. M. SINCLAIR, D.D.

STANLEY BOUSFIELD, M.D. (*Hon. Sec. and Treasurer*).

CHARLES BUTTAR, M.D.

W. McADAM ECCLES, M.S., F.R.C.S.

F. DE HAVILLAND HALL, M.D., F.R.C.P.

THEO. B. HYSLOP, M.D., M.R.C.P.E.

H. G. GORDON MACKENZIE, M.D.

J. A. ORMEROD, M.D., F.R.C.P.

SIR R. DOUGLAS POWELL, Bart., K.C.V.O., M.D.,  
F.R.C.P.

HOWARD H. TOOTH, C.M.G., M.D., F.R.C.P.

SIR T. CLIFFORD ALLBUTT, K.C.B., M.D.,  
F.R.C.P. (*Hon. Member*).

The Committee have held nineteen sittings, at many of which evidence was taken. The witnesses were those who had personally practised, or made a study of, the treatment of physical disorders by spiritual or mental influences. Such cases of asserted cure by "spiritual" healing as were submitted for investigation have been carefully examined. (See Appendix B.)

The Committee wish to acknowledge the assistance derived from the evidence of many of the witnesses who had taken great pains



in the preparation of their statements and most kindly allowed themselves to be cross-examined.

In only one case was the invitation to attend to give evidence declined.

The following questions formulated by the Committee were forwarded to each witness invited to attend, and carefully considered answers were in most cases given, while much additional information on the subject was elicited in reply to further general questions asked in the course of the interview.

- (1) What do you understand by  
"Spiritual" healing?
- (2) Do you make any distinction between  
"Spiritual" healing and "Mental"  
healing?
- (3) Do you connect the "Spiritual" healing of the present day with the Gifts of Healing in the Apostolic Church?
- (4) Do you regard moral excellence in either the healer or the healed as an

essential condition for "Spiritual" healing?

- (5) Do you consider that religious faith on the part of the sick person is essential to healing by "Spiritual" means?
- (6) Have you personal knowledge of any cases where any organic disease has been healed by "Spiritual" or "Mental" influences alone?
- (7) Do you consider that "Spiritual" healing should be exercised apart from both medical diagnosis and supervision?

#### ABSTRACT OF ANSWERS.

*Questions 1 and 2.*—The witnesses differed in their definitions of "Spiritual" healing and in their distinctions between "Spiritual" and "Mental" healing. Some regarded the former as involving direct, external, Divine interposition above the ordinary laws of nature. Others seemed to draw no fundamental distinction between "Spiritual healing" and "healing by suggestion," except



that the former was of a religious character and applied through religious rites such as imposition of hands, unction, and prayer.

*Question 3.*—Most of the witnesses connected the “Spiritual healing” of the present day with the “gifts of healing” of the Apostolic Church, regarding these “gifts” as having been long dormant, though never entirely interrupted. Other witnesses could trace no such connexion.

*Questions 4 and 5.*—There was considerable divergence of opinion as to whether moral excellence in the healer, or the healed, was an essential condition for success in “spiritual healing”; some regarding it as being indispensable in the healer, others as being advantageous though not essential.

Most of the witnesses were agreed that while moral excellence was not requisite on the part of the patient, yet faith or at least expectation of benefit, was an important contributory factor.

*Question 6.*—Many of the witnesses gave convincing evidence of beneficial results in

cases of functional or nervous disorders, obsessions, alcoholism, drug habits, vicious propensities, etc., through treatment by "Spiritual" or mental influences. No satisfactorily certified case was adduced of any organic disease, competently diagnosed as such, which had been cured through these means alone. The value of religious and mental influences as contributory to recovery was not questioned.

*Question 7.*—A few of the witnesses thought there was no objection to the exercise of "gifts of healing" by persons possessing no medical qualifications; but the greater number were keenly alive to the risk and danger of any independent treatment of disease by persons not medically qualified; and all felt there was room for a closer legitimate co-operation between the Clergy and Medical Profession.

With the consent of some of the witnesses, summaries of their evidence will be found in Appendix C. These have been in each case revised by the witnesses themselves.



## CONCLUSIONS.

After much careful consideration and examination of the matters involved, the Committee have adopted the following as a statement of the conclusions at which they have so far arrived, and as indicating the points to which they think that their attention should now be directed.

The Committee fully recognise the gravity of the opinions which they have formed and are embodying in this Report. They entertain a sincere respect for the convictions of the many thoughtful and spiritually-minded persons who have kindly submitted themselves to examination, and they have weighed the evidence adduced with careful deliberation.

They would say at the outset that they can conceive of no limitation to the exercise of the power of God in stirring the inborn spirit of man to higher and fuller life; and in inspiring courage and hope to resist morbid conditions of the body.

They fully recognise that the operation of the Divine Power can be limited only by the

Divine Will, and desire to express their belief in the efficacy of prayer.

They reverently believe, however, that the Divine Power is exercised in conformity with, and through the operation of natural laws. With the advancing knowledge of these laws increasing benefits are being secured for mankind through human instrumentality. Especially is this the case in regard to the healing of disorders of body and mind.

They consider that spiritual ministration should be recognised equally with medical ministration as carrying God's blessing to the sick, and as His duly appointed means for the furtherance of their highest interests. Too often it has been forgotten that health, bodily and mental, is capable of being influenced for good by spiritual means.

The Committee are of opinion that the physical results of what is called "Faith" or "Spiritual" healing do not prove on investigation to be different from those of Mental healing or healing by "Suggestion." The term Suggestion is used in this Report in a wide sense, as meaning the application of



any natural mental process to the purposes of treatment (see Appendix A).

They recognise that Suggestion is more effectively exercised by some persons than by others, and this fact seems to explain the "gifts" of a special character claimed by various "Healers." It is undoubtedly due to the striking benefits which sometimes result from Suggestion that the belief in such claims has been fostered.

The Committee believe that while the reinforcement of the faith, hope, courage, and strength of the sick by religious influences does not essentially differ in process of operation from that derived from non-religious appeals to the mind, yet that the former may often be the most potent form of Suggestion.

They are aware that no sharply defined fundamental distinction can be drawn between "organic" and "functional" ailments.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A distinction is commonly made between diseases which are accompanied by obvious structural changes in the body, and those which present various features unaccompanied by such changes. The former are often termed organic diseases, and the latter have long been described as functional diseases.

They are forced, however, to the conclusion, after the most careful inquiry, that "Faith" or "Spiritual" healing, like all treatment by suggestion, can be expected to be permanently effective only in cases of what are generally termed "functional" disorders. The alleged exceptions are so disputable that they cannot be taken into account.

The Committee would emphasise this point, in order to warn those who resort to "Healers" in the hope of receiving a permanent cure that they may thereby be postponing until too late the medical treatment which might serve to arrest organic disease.

While making this statement they thankfully recognise that persons suffering from organic disease are greatly comforted and relieved, and even physically benefited, by spiritual ministrations. Such ministrations by appealing to the spiritual nature, and reinforcing the spiritual powers, may contribute greatly to the success of the physical treatment by the medical practitioner.

It is on this account that they desire to see an increased importance attached to spiritual



ministrations as contributory means to recovery. They, however, strongly deprecate the independent treatment of disease by irresponsible and unqualified persons.

The Committee while thus stating the conclusions to which they have been led, as the result of their investigations, are aware that their treatment of so wide and complex a subject has been far from exhaustive. Many practical questions still remain for careful consideration, and they therefore propose to continue their sessions, and to act as a Central Committee for investigation, information, and instruction.

The following are some of the more important points to which the Committee now propose to direct their attention :—

- (1) To formulate a basis upon which some more clearly defined relationship and co-operation may be secured between Ministers of Religion and members of the Medical Profession in the treatment of disease.
- (2) To inquire carefully into the evidence for cases of asserted cure by

“Spiritual ” or “ Mental ” healing of organic or other serious disorders submitted for their investigation.

- (3) To investigate the degree of success resulting from the medical practice of the various methods of treatment by Suggestion.
- (4) To deliver lectures, to publish articles or occasional papers giving information to those who may seek it ; and to warn the public of the serious dangers incident to the many irregular and often ignorant efforts to heal the sick.
- (5) To promote the formation of Joint Committees of Clergy and Doctors similar to their own, in various centres, as a means of advancing knowledge and forming a sound public opinion.

HERBERT E. RYLE.

DYCE DUCKWORTH.

T. CLIFFORD ALLBUTT.



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THE DEANERY, WESTMINSTER.

*April, 1914.*

All communications for the Committee should be addressed to one or other of the Hon. Secretaries :—

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## APPENDIX A

### “SUGGESTION”

*A Note by SIR R. DOUGLAS POWELL, Bart., M.D.,  
inserted by desire of the Committee.*

ANY definition of “Suggestion” for universal acceptance is very difficult, and yet it is a word so extensively in use amongst those who are connected with all kinds of “faith healing” that it is impossible to be clear in any discussion of the matter without a precise definition of the word.

Perhaps one of the definitions in the Century Dictionary may best be adopted, viz. : that suggestion is the “action of any idea in bringing another idea to mind, either through the power of association or by virtue of the natural connection of the ideas.”

A vast number of our daily actions and habits become, so to speak, automatically



registered in our subconsciousness in centres or springs of activity which reproduce the actions automatically without arousing our attention. A certain number of these automatic centres—and those the strongest—are born with us (evolutional inheritance), such as centres of physiological function, reflex actions, &c. Others are early acquired, as the use of the limbs in walking ; others are more laboriously learned, such as the more complex of educated movements, piano-playing and the like.

The blood supply to organs and tissues, and the initiation and control of growth, repair, and secretions are regulated by certain nerve centres, and are in the main beyond our control. But we know that a disturbance in the higher centres may interfere with or interrupt functions so far removed from the will as those of the heart, the respiration and the functions of secretion and nutrition.

From these considerations we may perceive in how many ways "suggestion," within the limitations of the above definition, may influence healthy and morbid functions.

(1) If by suggestion we can allay the unrest of a disturbing consciousness, we permit the unconscious or subconscious functions a freer play.

(2) If by suggestion we can divert attention from a stuttering function—be it of speech or a spasmodic action of muscles, as in stammering or some cases of spasmodic wryneck, the smooth action of the unhampered automatic centres may be restored.

(3) If by suggestion we concentrate the mind upon a much desired end to be obtained—a healing result—we may at the same time more powerfully direct subconscious effort in co-operation.

We can, however, expect no results in those cases in which there is actual lesion of the nerve centres upon the integrity of which certain automatic and conscious action depends; nor when there is destruction of any organ or tissue can we expect any automatic action to restore it. For example, if muscles, tendons or nerves are divided by injury or disease, the automatic stimuli to



action or to nutrition cannot be expected to restore their function.

But in the numerous cases of organ or tissue congestions or effusions which tend to recovery, the healing process may through the influence of suggestion be considerably assisted by nerve force concentrated by will power, or freed from the conscious interference of anxiety, fear, apathy, despondency.

When, further, as in some forms of insanity, control or co-ordinating centres are damaged or inhibited in any particular portions, exaggerated responses to suggestion may be obtained within the region of their control.

There is no doubt that a large number of *mental* processes are, *i.e.*, have become by heredity or education, automatic and so subconscious ; and they can be excited by the stimulus of suggestion upon the centres which govern them in the same manner as other function processes ; or they can be promoted to greater activity by the temporary removal of disturbing currents of conscious thought. Again, such thought



currents can be directed by an effort of will in aid of automatic effort. Thus reading is, with educated people, an automatic process. Concentration may be entirely diverted by outside disturbances, suggesting thoughts quite foreign to the subject matter of the book, but an effort of the will restores the attention of the reader.

## APPENDIX B

### INVESTIGATION OF CASES

THE Committee have had a considerable number of cases brought to their notice, and the alleged diseases which had been treated by "Spiritual healing" included :—

Cancer ; Cirrhosis of liver, Enlargement of thyroid gland ; Arthritis, Hip disease ; Raynaud's disease, Angina pectoris, Secondary hæmorrhage, "Swelling of legs" ; Pneumonia, Toxæmia, Abscess of liver, Erysipelas, Dysentery, Conjunctivitis ; Dipsomania and other vicious habits ; Epilepsy, Blindness, Deafness, "Muscular paralysis," Neuritis, Disseminated Sclerosis, Tetanus, "Brain fever," "Paralysis of bowel," Asthma, Neurasthenia and other nervous conditions.

In the greater number of cases no medical evidence was obtainable. The only confirmation available as to the nature of the disease

and the result of the treatment was offered by the "Healers" or their friends. In some cases statements were received from patients that they had been cured or benefited by the treatment.

The Committee have particularly aimed at investigating any cases in which recovery would not be generally expected, *i.e.*, so-called "incurable" illnesses, whether treated by Clergymen or laymen; but in no instance was medical evidence forthcoming to confirm any cure by "Spiritual" or Mental healing of such disease. For example, in the cases of Cancer, Raynaud's disease and Disseminated Sclerosis mentioned above, it did not appear that the course of the actual disease was in any way retarded.

In the following cases, however, it was possible to obtain medical evidence both before and after the treatment.

*Case I.*—Secondary hæmorrhage after excision of tonsils.

Bleeding from the throat commenced on third day after removal of a tonsil. From



loss of blood the patient became very weak. She received Holy Unction and shortly afterwards the hæmorrhage ceased. The patient and her mother attributed this result to the Anointing, but the doctor in attendance ascribed it to a natural "cessation of the bleeding from the faintness allowing the blood to coagulate and form a clot."

*Case 2.*—Malignant tumour of thyroid gland.

Spiritual healing was not the only treatment used, as radium was applied twice for periods of five days ; and there was marked reduction in the size of the superficial growth each time. But the patient died of the disease in a few weeks, notwithstanding the temporary diminution in the external signs.

*Case 3.* Partial paralysis of muscles of arm.

The paralysis was due to neuritis of the brachial plexus occurring five years previous to the treatment by spiritual healing. The patient was "ministered to ten times" for an hour each day ; and felt considerably better as regards his "nerve tone," and he thought

there was some increase of power in the hand. When examined some three months after this treatment, the muscles of the arm were still wasted and partially paralysed.

*Case 4.*—Case of severe and prolonged toxæmia.

Although in this case the patient dated her improvement from the time of the Anointing, the doctor in attendance believed that there was “no deviation from the normal and recognised course in the recovery.”

*Case 5.*—Enlargement of thyroid gland.

In this case the patient went “with the doctor’s leave, for the laying-on of hands, and in a few days after the service was well.” The doctor in attendance considered that “the causes of the swelling were of a temporary character,” and that the thyroid gland quieted down and the swelling disappeared, as is frequently the case.

*Case 6.*—Case of self-inflicted sores.

This was a purely hysterical case and the eruption was regarded by the medical attend-



ants as having been caused by the friction of the patient's wet finger. This patient suffered also from hysterical loss of sensation in the throat.

The mental effect of treatment by the Spiritual healer led to a cessation of the self-inflicted wounds and to the disappearance of the other hysterical symptoms. The illness had been reported to the Committee as "a very rare and incurable disease with partial insanity."

The patient had been treated as an out-patient at one of the London hospitals and was shown at two of the Medical Societies. An account of this case of *Dermatitis Artefacta* will be found in the Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine, Dermatological Section, October 19th, 1911, page 10.

The Committee hope in the future to continue to collect evidence, and will be glad to have further cases brought to their notice.

They would point out that for a satisfactory investigation of any case the following evidence is necessary :—



(1) A diagnosis by a medical practitioner, before treatment, with a short history of the signs and symptoms.

(2) An account of the treatment carried out, with dates and other details.

(3) A medical examination, after treatment, by the same doctor if possible, with a detailed account of the changes which have taken place.

## APPENDIX C

### SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF VARIOUS WITNESSES

*The numerals refer to the questions to be found on page 10.*

THE REV. FRANCIS BOYD, M.A.  
(*Vicar of St. Saviour's, Pimlico, S.W., formerly  
Warden of the Guild of Health.*)

In reply to the formulated questions of the Committee, Mr. Boyd stated :—

Question 1.—That he should define “Spiritual Healing” generally as the healing of the body by Spiritual means. He suggested, however, that the phrase should be confined to those methods mentioned in Holy Scripture, viz., imposition of hands with Prayer and Holy Unction.

Question 2.—He distinguished “Spiritual Healing” as being religious ; from “Mental” as non-religious.

Question 3.—He did not connect modern “Spiritual Healing” with the “Gift of Healing” mentioned by St. Paul in 1st Corinthians XII.,

which was one of the "extraordinary" Gifts, but there *might* be examples of that gift at the present day, under extraordinary conditions of psychical activity.

Question 4.—He did not regard moral excellence on either side as essential.

Question 5.—But he did regard religious faith as essential, though he admitted that in some cases spiritual means might operate as mental suggestion.

Question 6.—He did not possess any personal knowledge of cases of organic disease cured by Spiritual or Mental means alone.

Question 7.—The last question he answered emphatically in the negative.

In his replies to general questions from Members of the Committee, Mr. Boyd stated :—

That the cases he had attended were of a functional kind, and his evidence upon these would be of no use to the Committee as they had been under concurrent medical treatment. He had no case-book of results. His treatment was by laying on of hands with prayer, and Holy Unction, but in regard of raising expectation, or delaying any operation, he would take no responsibility, and would do nothing in the nature of healing except with the authority of the medical attendant. He would make no alternative between treatment by a priest and by a doctor. Still he did not think that the healing of the sick should be confined exclu-



sively to the medical profession, but that the clergy should act in a way complementary to the doctor at the patient's request, but with the doctor's approval. He did not think it part of a doctor's business to use religious methods, nor of a clergyman's to use medical methods. The ground of "Spiritual Healing" was the commission given by Jesus Christ to His Church to "heal the sick." Whatever power or authority was implied and bestowed by such commission resided in the Church as a whole, and might, he thought, be properly exercised by any clergyman, though he was not prepared to assert that no layman could possess it.

All he was pleading for was an extended use of the resources of religion in the healing of disease, and by disease he meant anything contrary to health.

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THE REV. W. F. COBB, D.D.

(*Rector of St. Ethelburga, Bishopsgate, E.C.*)

Dr. Cobb stated that he was no authority on the subject though he had studied the matter and come to some definite conclusions thereon.

1.—That he excluded from the term "Spiritual Healing" all magnetic, psychical or spiritualistic treatment of sickness. He regarded it as the direct answer to prayer, though the results of "Spiritual" and Mental Healing might be apparently identical.

2.—Yet the difference was fundamental: in the former Christ was the direct Healer through a

human channel; the Divine Power to heal was present but required some focus through which to act.

3.—He thought the Apostolic “Gifts of Healing” were of a more magnetic or psychic character and on a lower plane. He did not connect modern “Spiritual Healing” with the gifts of the Apostolic Church as described in the New Testament.

4 and 5.—Dr. Cobb stated that to a man with a deep sense of spiritual things, the existence of “moral peculiarities” was not a bar to his being the channel of Spiritual Grace to other lives and bodies. That spiritual excellence was necessary to the healer and “Spiritual Healing” was open to any pious person, clerical or lay, though he deprecated every “spiritually minded” person experimenting to see if possessed of “the Gift”; also he admitted much harm was being done by untrained persons employing this method of treatment. As regards the sick person, he considered religious faith to be nine-tenths of the battle, but not essential.

6.—He stated he had no knowledge of any cures of organic disease by spiritual means; nor should he expect them, though he would not be surprised at any occurrence of such cure. He was connected with “prayer groups” in which sick persons were prayed for, in most cases without their knowledge; in several cases cures had resulted but he could furnish no formal proofs of any case of cure. All functional disorders, however, were specially sus-



ceptible to cure by the Divine Spirit. He was also connected with a Home on the lines of the Emmanuel Movement, where medical men diagnosed cases; and where cases of inchoate lunacy and other nervous disorders not always open to hypnotism, nor susceptible to treatment by suggestion, were on a way to cure through the calm of religious influences.

7.—In his sense of the words "Spiritual Healing," doctors could not take note of it; though a wise person praying for a sick person would consult a doctor to know what to pray for. The use of drugs he would limit to the doctor, the imposition of hands he would not; but in the latter something should be known of the case. He would place no limits on benefits of Spiritual Healing. He would not hesitate to pray for cure of a mortal cancer; but would not expect a cure, though the soul would be benefited and the body indirectly through the soul. He regarded the Spiritual power as the direct Gift of God, and therefore neither doctors nor clergy could supervise it.

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THE REV. PERCY DEARMER, D.D.

*(Vicar of St. Mary the Virgin, N.W., Chairman of the Guild of Health).*

1.—Dr. Dearmer was unable to give any brief definition of "Spiritual Healing." He had given his definitions in [his book] "Body and Soul." He regarded it as Spiritual influence which penetrated to the subconscious mind and through that would



affect the body. There was nothing new in it. It depended on what was meant by the Holy Spirit ; the word "Spiritual" meant just so much to him.

2.—Though he differentiated "Spiritual" from "Mental Healing" he did not draw any sharp distinction, and was perfectly content with the word "mental" ; unless the character was touched religiously and not intellectually. Mental gifts were after all among the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit.

3.—He connected the "Spiritual Healing" of the present day with the "Gifts of Healing" of the Apostolic Church. He was prepared to say Christ's miracles were by suggestion, if that word was properly understood.

4.—He did not regard moral excellence either in the healer or the recipient as essential to healing by Spiritual means. Though a good person had a better influence upon a person's character ; yet ordinary dominance of the will might have the same effect as spiritual influences. He would not assert that modern Spiritual healers were on a higher plane than Mesmer or produced better results. He believed Spiritual Healing might operate at a distance, in analogy with telepathy on persons at the time unconscious of the power being exercised in their behalf ; and that therefore religious faith was not essential on the part of the recipient, though of great importance.

5.—He had not undertaken the work of a Spiritual healer himself. But ordinary pastoral ministrations, prayers or a cheering word, with unction or imposition of hands, had ameliorating results.

6.—He had no cases to offer.

7.—He would prefer that "Spiritual Healing" should be subject to prior medical diagnosis and be under medical supervision. But better without it than not at all. It would be better to keep Spiritual and medical healing together; and to be carried on more strenuously than at present.

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THE REV. J. C. FITZGERALD, M.A.  
(*Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield*).

Mr. FitzGerald stated :—

1.—By "Spiritual Healing" he understood the eternal mission given to the Ministry by Our Lord. The healer was simply a passive instrument in the hands of Our Lord. "I am a Minister of the person of Christ. It is the personality of Christ working in the Church and through the Ministry. I wait myself for the Lord to pour His healing power through me. I do not consider that the gift of Spiritual Healing is confined to the ordained clergy, but also belongs to the Charismatic people, laymen and women. It is the extension of the Incarnate Life in the Church."

2.—Spiritual Healing is distinct from Mental



Healing. In the latter the personality of the healer is the great thing. In the former the healer is simply a passive agent of our Lord, "if the Lord will."

3.—Mr. FitzGerald connected the Gifts or Spiritual Healing of the present day with the Gifts of Healing of the Apostolic Church, and looked forward to the restoration of the material basis of healing, *i.e.*, the laying on of hands and Unction, the manual acts with the word of power; and even looked forward to the day when death, physical death, would be swept away from the World.

4.—"I certainly regard moral excellence in the healer as an essential condition for Spiritual Healing, but not necessarily in the person to be healed."

5.—"Yes, an initial faith, *i.e.*, a faith which will bring the patient to the healer is essential, except in cases of obsession."

6.—Mr. FitzGerald did not feel qualified to distinguish between organic and other diseases, but he cited the following cases in which he asserted that he had effected a cure by "Spiritual Healing."

1. A case of Arthritis, diagnosed by a doctor who had given up the case as hopeless. Gradual cure.
2. "Rheumatism of the Optic Nerve" (girl, 22). Quite blind, her doctor had pronounced case



hopeless. Instantaneously cured by imposition of hands. "I have evidence of the diagnosis from her doctor" [not produced].

3. Two cures of Epileptic men.

4. A case of Conical Cornea. No medical evidence.

"Nearly half the cases I have treated in the last ten years have been mental. I have had no absolute failures, but there are a great many cases where the physical has not been healed, but the Spiritual has. I have had three or four cases that died (including two cancer cases), but in each case it was not so much death as a translation, and pain was removed."

7.—"I would always rather work with the medical man, but there are cases which have been given up by the doctor. I have sometimes worked alone, but I think medical aid should be used with the Spiritual. I aim more deliberately at the Spiritual than the bodily healing, but I think there should be combination between clergy and doctors."

Mr. FitzGerald thought that everyone should strive to ascertain by experiment if they possessed this "Gift of Healing." He, himself, felt power going forth from him, and some stated that they had seen rays emanating from his hands as he placed them on patients.

He did not, however, think the imposition of hands was essential, as he had to treat many cases at a distance.

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THE REV. SAMUEL McCOMB, D.D.

*(Joint Founder of the Emmanuel Movement in America).*

Dr. McComb supplied the following considered replies to the usual questions :—

1. and 2.—The terms “Spiritual Healing” and “Mental Healing” are used in connection with so many doubtful theories that I prefer to use a word which is free from these associations “Psychotherapy.”

3.—Not in any miraculous way. The Gifts of Healing, like the gift of edifying religious speech, sprang out of the spiritual life of the Church, the new enthusiasm of humanity which came from Christ. The greater the faith of the Church the more powerfully will She teach and heal ; yet both teaching and healing must be psychologically mediated.

4.—Only in the same sense in which it is necessary for the highest prophetic excellence—in the case of the healer. In the case of the healed (e.g., in an immoral habit), the desire of being better is necessary.

5.—It depends on the nature of the case. We know that in many types of semi-nervous, semi-mental trouble that religion has therapeutic value. The weakness of ordinary “scientific” psychotherapy is that it is not scientific enough. It does not recognise the psychological value of religious faith in certain instances.



6.—No. Such evidence as I can find has failed to convince me that a truly organic disease can be cured by mental influence alone.

7.—Most certainly not.

Dr. McComb further stated that the "Emmanuel" effort in Boston, U.S.A., is under strict medical control. It aims at combining the forces of religion with the results of modern medical and psychological science in the cure or alleviation of functional disturbances of the nervous system, where an ethical or spiritual problem is involved.

It differs from irregular healing cults by being based on modern science; it differs from ordinary psychotherapy by its belief in the healing forces of religion and in the value of an ethical discipline of the will. The clergymen who have organised this work keep on their own ground. They are teachers of religion and ethics. They are not doctors of medicine, and are as jealous for the rights and dignity of the medical profession as they are for the reality of religion and the rights of faith. They believe that the discoveries of medical science are as much a revelation of the Divine Will as the Ten Commandments or the Sermon on the Mount. They also think that the true answer to Christian Science and allied movements is practical proof that science and faith joined together can do all that these cults can do, and at the same time preserve mental sanity and spiritual integrity.

In reply to general interrogation by the Committee :—



Dr. McComb said that the work with which his name is identified is psychotherapy with great limitations. It is only concerned with those cases of disorder where there is a moral or spiritual or psychological problem involved.

His theory is that he operates by suggestion upon a spiritual influence in the man, who is thus lifted by an outsider through psychic energies, which he cannot himself arouse. The Divine Spirit is the ultimate cause of the process, but the approximate cause might be called suggestion. The course of spiritual treatment varies with each case, and he does not draw a sharp distinction between religious and non-religious methods. In persons who have no religious faith it is sought to create such faith and to bring the man into a larger and fuller life. Dr. McComb agreed that persons who are not in Orders can successfully use this particular form of psychotherapy if they are teachers of ethics and religion, or Christian men with faith in the restoration of depraved nature. Although every one can make an effort, there are differences in the influence produced, and he believes that behind is the healing energy of God Himself.

Dr. McComb said that in treating cases he would make the general assertion that God is the source of healing power, that He is on the side of peace and health of mind and body, and that He is distinctly opposed to disease and sin. But Dr. McComb would not dogmatically say to any individual case what the ultimate result will be,

even to get the advantage of more powerful suggestion.

All organic diseases are barred and the work is confined to those functional cases where there are some moral or spiritual or psychological problems ; also Dr. McComb has not sufficient evidence to warrant him believing that there is any power over any form of what is called organic disease. He would not take purely mental cases, he would treat functional melancholia but not pathological melancholia. Treatment had been successful with phobias, fixed ideas, hysteria, sexual vice and similar classes of disease. There was a high percentage of improvement in neurasthenia and psychasthenia, but the percentage of success is greatest in cases of alcoholism.

The disorder in which Dr. McComb is specially interested is Alcoholism, and the subject is first sent to a physician for a certain drug treatment. There is nothing secret about this treatment, but as applied it eliminates the alcohol. The subject then returns to Dr. McComb for purely moral or psychological treatment, which may involve half a dozen methods, including suggestion, re-education moral and spiritual, removing social causes, and appealing to whatever is felt will affect the subject.

There is a religious, informal service in the Church every Wednesday evening to which sick persons and their friends come, but no declarations are ever asked for. Only about forty per cent. of the persons who apply for treatment are taken, and



the doctor decides whether each particular case is to be treated or not. It was scarcely correct to speak of doctors sending patients to him for treatment, as he is little better than a kind of assistant or helper. He and [The Rev.] Dr. Worcester had several hundreds of patients in a year, but they received no fees for treatment, and had no special home into which patients are received for treatment as the studies of the Clergy are used.

In other cities in America, for example, in New York, Northampton, Detroit, and San Francisco, there are other Clergy carrying out similar treatment. But Dr. McComb said he knew of no systematised effort in this country by any of the Clergy to carry on his particular line of treatment.

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THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SANDWICH,  
K.C.V.O.

The Earl of Sandwich stated that about five years ago he had occasion to consult Mr. ——— about a sick man who had undergone an operation and who was considered incurable; and Mr. ——— then told him that he possessed the same power or healing as himself. He then realised that he possessed the power and was able to account for many extraordinary events which had previously occurred to him. He had in very many cases since that time exercised the power invariably with success.

In reply to the formulated questions of the Committee Lord Sandwich stated that it was impossible



for any man to answer the questions ; but in reply to them he stated :—

- 1.—That no man could define “Spiritual Healing.”
- 2.—That no man could distinguish between Spiritual and mental healing.
- 3.—That he had no authority to connect his power with the Gifts of the Apostolic Church ; but that St. Paul had taught that to some should be given the Gift of Healing.
- 4.—That he had no knowledge as to whether moral excellence was necessary on either side, and that he should most certainly not constitute himself the judge of any one’s moral excellence.
- 5.—That he had no knowledge on the subject. In his experience the patients had invariably received benefit, it was therefore obvious that they had realised the power.
- 6.—That through this power organic disease had been healed.
- 7.—That in his experience the sick and suffering have invariably been attended by the surgical or medical profession. That he was always willing to work with them, and that doctors had asked him to work with and for them.

That he would treat cases with or without doctors whenever he was requested or directed. That the character of a patient had no relation to his work. That the attendance of a doctor was the

patient's concern not his. That he would never interfere with any doctor.

In answer to general interrogation, Lord Sandwich began by stating that he was perfectly conscious that the Committee could not understand his knowledge or his power, nor could he explain to them what he himself did not understand. That he recognised his power as a Divine gift. That he acted entirely on direction or intuition as to what cases he should treat. That the means he chiefly employed were the laying-on of hands and prayer. That he did not find it a great effort, except in acquiring faith in long and severe cases. In the relief of pain, the effort was obviously less as the relief was so rapidly brought about.

Lord Sandwich mentioned several cases in which he had relieved pain permanently or effected cures in persons suffering from cancer, paralysis, sciatica, neuritis, tic, blindness, mania, &c.

He was unwilling to undertake to furnish the Committee with particulars of his cures. They were indisputable and could be supported by the evidence of very many people, including members of the medical and clerical professions.

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DR. J. MILNE BRAMWELL.

(*Author of "Hypnotism and Treatment by Suggestion,"*  
    &c.)

Dr. Bramwell stated he was not in a position to answer the formulated questions of the Committee categorically. These, therefore, were not (as usual)



put to him from the Chair. In the course of his statement, however, the following were informal replies to those questions :—

1. He thought there was much loose talk and confusion of terms which required more precise definition. He could not differentiate between "Spiritual Healing" and healing by Suggestion.

2. He suggested that "Mental" healing might exclude the religious element and be in fact "Psychical" healing, and that he did not himself introduce any religious element into his treatment by suggestion. He was unaware of any power of suggestion which might be possessed by a clergyman which could not also be possessed by a medical man. He deemed the treatment by a clergyman as unnecessary.

3 and 4. No reply. He laid claim to no occult power of any kind.

5. The element of "Faith" was entirely eliminated in a majority of his cases, as he had the "picked failures" sent by other practitioners; but, on the other hand, "you must have faith or expectation on the part of the patient to produce a cure, in cases of so-called Christian Science, Spiritual Healing, and the like."

6. In organic diseases suggestion was useful in relieving pain, insomnia, &c., but was not directly curative. He did not pretend to cure any organic disease, only functional disorders.

7. A layman (*i.e.* a person not qualified medically) might possess the art of powerful suggestion, but



then he would not know how to use it, or how to treat a case if unable to diagnose the disorder. He would "suppress such a man at once." He had seen cases where religious excitement and emotion far from curing had been productive of nervous functional disorders.

In reply to general questions Dr. Bramwell stated :—

*A.* As to the nature and working of Suggestion as a therapeutic agent.

He attempted to call into action certain forces of his patient's own brain, through the secondary consciousness. He could not explain how suggestion worked ; but he regarded the theory of this "Secondary Consciousness" as a working hypothesis. Nor could he explain why a suggestion to the secondary consciousness should, as it did, often produce a result absolutely different to any appeal to the normal consciousness. The personal element was a strong one, and sympathy an important factor. Any medical man could learn the technique, but all could not exercise it with equal efficiency. He did not regard it as a dangerous power, for he had found it impossible to make an effective suggestion to the secondary consciousness which would be against the moral sense of the normal one. Often the former would appear to be more morally sensitive than the latter. He did not use hypnotism, and found passes or stroking the patient unnecessary. Suggestions could be conveyed by writing or telephone ; though he, himself, did not employ these agencies. He did not find there was an

increased susceptibility to suggestion or the contracting of a "suggestion habit," on the contrary will-power was increased, and patients seldom returned for further treatment.

*B.* In reference to the class of cases most susceptible of treatment by suggestion.

Among the most frequent cases in which he was consulted were those of obsessions, alcoholism, drug and impurity habits. He cited many cases of cure of obsessions, a large proportion of which (short of actual insanity) were curable by suggestion and by no other means. He had not 10 per cent. of failures. In certain types religious influences might produce a powerful suggestion, but cases of religious melancholia were among the most difficult to deal with, as also were those of hysterical trouble.

*C.* As to methods of treatment by suggestion :—

This is not usually commenced at first visit. He studied the mental conditions of his patients, and other circumstances affecting them, before deciding the kind of suggestions to be given. He never told the patient he could cure him but if he had done so in similar cases told him so, and that he should attempt to call into action certain forces of the patient's own brain. His great endeavour was to get the patient as mentally quiet as possible, and while making the suggestions which he uttered in a whisper or low tone, he told the patient he did not wish them listened to. He claimed that he had had frequent results where every other means had failed, and never a death in his twenty-two years of



practice, also his own powers had increased by exercise. Most of the cases of cure, and much of Dr. Bramwell's evidence, will be found in his book.

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DR. C. LLOYD TUCKEY.

(*Author of "Psycho-Therapeutics," &c.*)

(1) Dr. Tuckey thought "Spiritual Healing" was miraculous, Divine help from outside, non-physical and outside the ordinary laws of nature. He should like to think it existed but had no personal experience.

(2) He made a distinct separation between "Spiritual" and "Mental" healing, as by the latter he understood healing by the exercise of normal means and latent powers, such as suggestion—"the power within ourselves but not of ourselves which makes for health."

(3) He connected "Spiritual Healing," but not necessarily Mental Healing, with the Gifts of Healing of the Apostolic Church.

(4) He did not regard moral excellence in either healer or healed as an essential condition for Spiritual Healing, though he deemed that of the healer to be an important factor.

(5) He thought the patient should believe in the moral excellence of the healer though the belief may be ill-placed; *e.g.*, in the case of the late Dr. Dowie who did effect cures (mental).

(6) He had no knowledge of any case of organic



disease healed by Mental or Spiritual influences alone. Many cases at first so diagnosed on subsequent scientific examination proved not to have been organic, and he did not think such disease was likely to be cured by either Spiritual or Mental Healing. He had seen no case in England that he could call miraculous.

(7) He felt very strongly that Spiritual Healing should not be exercised apart from both medical diagnosis and supervision, though he did not see any objection to the clergyman exercising any power he might have, if a medical man was not available. He thought the clergy should be called in by the doctors more often than they were at present. He had himself sent patients to the clergy.

In reply to general questions from various members of the Committee, Dr. Lloyd Tuckey stated that :—

He deemed suggestion to be the basis of all mental healing, and that was the work in which he was specially engaged. It was a matter of appeal to the subliminal consciousness. He appealed to the inner self of the patient. Suggestion controlled not only the imagination but also the functions of the body. He had seen stigmata produced by suggestion, and he cited cases. He regarded mental healing as a grade of hypnotism, and the practice of "Unction" as beneficial to a patient as being encouraging, arousing hope and producing a state of ecstasy. In ecstasy, as in deep hypnotism, organs

and functions are reached which are beyond the action of ordinary will power or consciousness. While in regard to a false conception of life and vicious habits a medical man might be helped in his treatment by the clergy, as both the "Spiritual" and physical sides might be appealed to. Hypnosis was only a vehicle of suggestion, and in his practice and experience he found it useful in treating by suggestion cases of alcoholism, immorality, kleptomania, &c. He did not regard hypnosis as weakening the will-power, though there was a great danger of wrong suggestions being made. It should be regarded as a serious medical treatment and he would not advise any clergyman to use it without training. He had not much faith in treating at a distance, if by that telepathically is implied, though it could be done easily (through the telephone or by letter) in the case of persons who had been frequently hypnotised.

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DR. M. B. WRIGHT.

(*Author of "Suggestion," &c.*)

(1) and (2) No definition of "Spiritual Healing" was given. Dr. Wright stated that it would be extremely difficult to analyse the different kinds of "suggestion." One man might put them into one category, and one into another. "Spiritual Healing" seems to depend on a belief in the intervention of some force from outside which is invoked. In Mental Healing we appeal to forces in the patient's own organism. He did not rule out religious



influences, but said there is no evidence that the results of "Spiritual Healing" are more than replicas of treatment by suggestion. The organism itself has the power to do the work, though religious teaching and traditions may sink into the subconsciousness and again be called forth by "suggestion."

(3) No evidence offered.

(4) As to moral excellence in agent or patient, Dr. Wright in reply to other questions stated that probably a criminal might be influenced by suggestion to commit crimes or immoral acts, but speaking generally a direct suggestion to crime would not be operative. A person using "suggestion" has tremendously privileged and intimate relations with his patient.

(5) The Element of Faith. "You get the same results whatever the belief. It does not depend upon the objective truth of the system or denomination. They occur in Buddhists and devil dancers."

(6) As to results of treatment of disease by "suggestion," Dr. Wright gave copious details. He stated: "I have no experience of definite cure of lesions. I should never attempt a cure in such a case. I should discredit the idea that any form of mental or spiritual treatment would have any curative effect upon a definite lesion. Blushing and flushing and purely functional cases are curable by suggestion, but it would not touch locomotor ataxy. Hysterical contractures, which seem incurable by electricity and deepest hypnotism might be cured by psychical means. I have relieved



writer's and piano cramp by suggestion though I do not understand the process. Stammering is most difficult to cure. Constipation or digestive troubles in many cases are curable, but not generally if of long standing. I have had many cases of good results in phobias and sexual obsessions—where other, even religious, influences have totally failed. Self-suggestion is most difficult to awaken in actual practice, though the suggestion and echo of the voice of another may come up after treatment, automatically. I have had cases of epilepsy where the fits have been lessened in frequency and intensity apart from medical treatment.

Many cases of sexual perversion can be cured, but only where the will is upon the side of a cure, this by appeal rather to the physical than to the moral side, and in a way clergymen could not appeal, though the ethical desire can be quickened from the religious side. I do not rule out the "Spiritual" side except where it has failed.

(7) As to practice of treatment by "suggestion" without medical supervision and diagnosis, Dr. Wright thought there was enormous risk in dealing with any case without medical intervention, even to give relief from pain might be doing harm. Each case should be diagnosed and determined by a medical man. It would be a gross mistake to dispense with it. The danger comes in when a man is dealing with a case without knowledge of the disease underlying the symptoms.

