

THE HUMAN AURA HAS AT LAST BEEN PHOTOGRAPHED

A FEW months ago it was announced by cable that Dr. W. J. Kilner of Ladbroke Grove, London, had succeeded in photographing the legendary Aura, or atmosphere which surrounds the human body. At once there was high glee among occultists, spiritualists, and other disciples of the supernatural, to say nothing of certain religious devotees who, for 2,000 years, have believed that the halo surrounding the pictures and statues of saints had existence in fact.

But it was the spiritualists who derived most satisfaction from Dr. Kilner's discovery, for here was a scientific man of recognized authority and unquestioned repute actually photographing astral bodies; and it took very little argument on the part of the spiritualists to show by their own photographs that this Aura was not a part of the material body photographed, but a genuine disembodied spirit.

Unfortunately, however, for occultists in general and spiritualists in particular, Dr. Kilner went further, and now, by a very simple apparatus which any one at all acquainted with physics and chemistry can make, he shows without the aid of the camera the extent and density of the Aura that surrounds living human beings and how this Aura differs in sex, age, youth, health, and sickness. The result of his researches will shortly be published for the first time in a volume called "The Human Atmosphere; or, The Aura Made Visible by the Aid of Chemical Screens" (Rebman Company, New York). With the development of "taking auras" it is asserted that a positive diagnosis of disease will be within reach of all physicians.

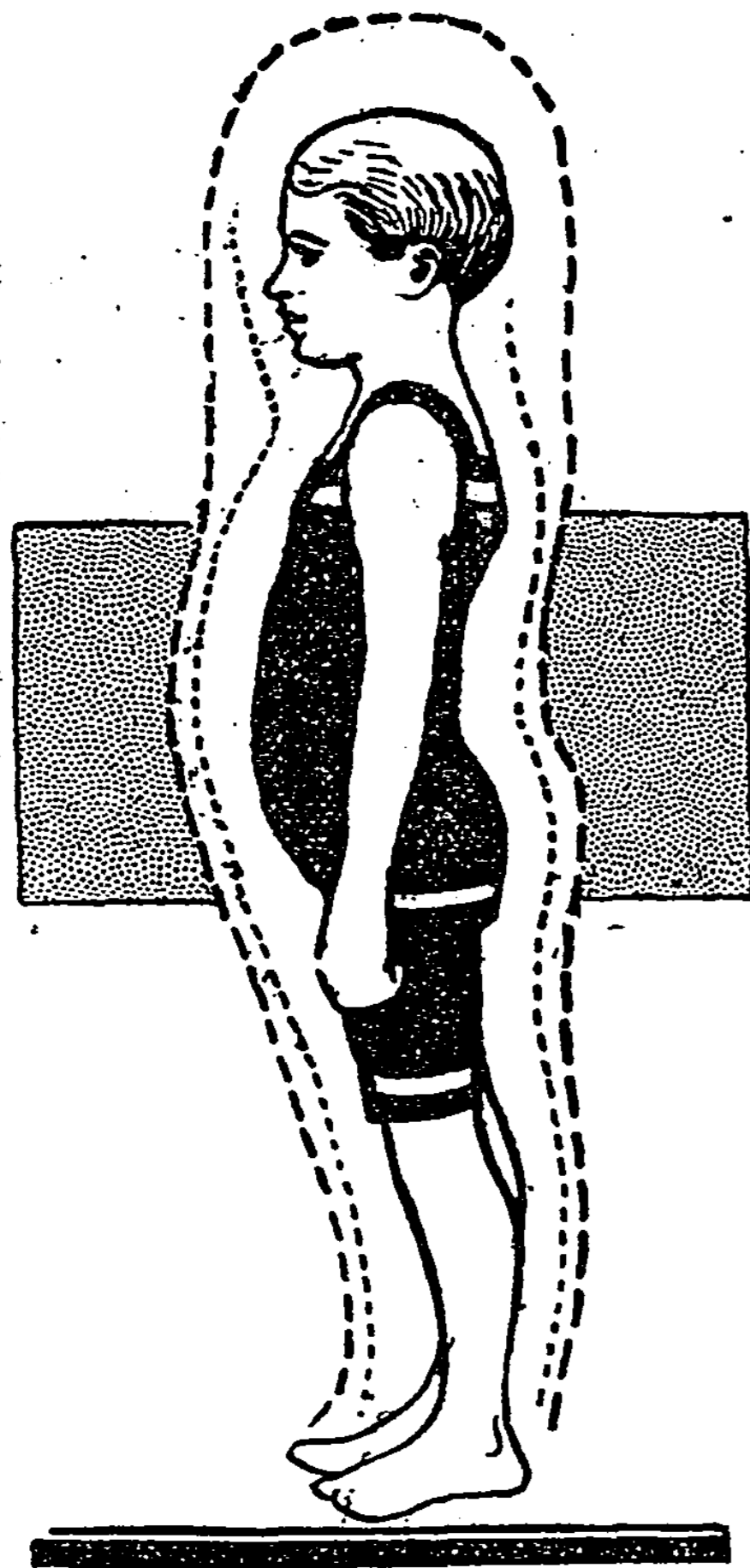
There is an "atmosphere," or Aura, surrounding every human being, which is most noticeable about the head and hands. Of course, it differs under various circumstances. For the purpose of better studying the phenomenon a screen has been discovered which makes the Aura plainly visible. In the course of experiments Dr. Kilner came upon what he has named the "spectaurine," which seemed the best adapted for his purposes. As soon as the chemical had been procured—he mentions in a footnote that the real name of the dye is "dicyanin"—screens of glass coated with collodion, and also cellulose dyed with it, were made. Decomposition, however, set in, which made these screens useless. Finally solutions of the dicyanin in alcohol of different strength in glass cells were employed. Experimenting with friends, he found that, after looking at the subject through the screen for a few minutes, he was able later to see the Aura with the naked eye.

The Aura can only be satisfactorily defined when certain conditions are fulfilled. The light must not be too bright. The requisite amount must be determined at each observation, and depends on whether a screen is being used or not. A rough estimate is that the body can just be seen distinctly after the observer has become accustomed to the dullness. The light ought to be diffused, coming from one direction only, and falling on the patient equally all over. Certainly, the best arrangement is obtained when the observer is standing with his back to a darkened window while the patient faces it. An alternative method, if the room is sufficiently large and open, and the only one that can be employed at a patient's house, is to have a tent similar to the X folding portable dark-room as used for photography.

Healthy bodies show, besides differences in individuality, "corporate dissimilarity." Usually males, independent of age and personal characteristics, show about the same variety of Aura. With females much depends upon the age and health. The "haze" is more pronounced in one part of the body than in another at different periods of a woman's life. When finally the Aura is fully developed, however, age will not change it as disease might; but all changes are more noticeable at the back, where they are more frequent and varied, than at the front of the body.

The most perfect shape of Aura, according to Dr. Kilner, is that which proceeds downward from over the head to the feet without coming near the body. The "standard" Auras are either wide, average, or narrow. The Auras of women are average, on the whole, when they are from eight to ten inches broad by the side of the trunk, in their widest part. The standard dimensions for men may be taken as from three and a half to four

Dr. W. J. Kilner of London Succeeded in Catching on the Sensitized Plate the Halo or Atmosphere That Surrounds the Body.



Aura of a Healthy Boy.

In the case of a crippled person. There are three divisions that make up the Aura:

First, there is a narrow transparent portion appearing as a dark space, which is very often obliterated by the second portion of the Aura. When visible it looks like a dark band, not exceeding a quarter of an inch, surrounding and adjacent to the body, without any alteration in size at any part. This is called the *Etheric Double*. It is, as a rule, from one to three-sixteenths of an inch in width, rarely more, and keeps the same breadth all round the body. It varies in size with different people, and also with the same person under altered conditions. Sometimes it is so conspicuous that it can be seen with the most transitory glance; at other times a very careful examination is necessary for its perception, while not infrequently a special screen is imperative for its detection. In some instances, where there is a difficulty in distinguishing it, the Aura proper apparently reaches right up to the body; but even then close observation will show a difference in structure, and the details can be brought out by the help of colored screens.

The second constituent is the *Inner Aura*, or *Aura proper*.

It is the densest portion and varies comparatively little, or even not at all, in width, either at the back, front, or sides, and both in the male and the female follows the contour of the body. It arises just outside the *Etheric Double*, but very frequently it looks as if it touched the body itself.

As a rule, this *Inner Aura* follows the contour of the body, having its proximate border in juxtaposition to the *Etheric Double*, or often apparently to the body itself.

The third portion is known as the *Outer Aura*, which begins at the outer edge of the *Inner Aura*. This greatly varies in size. And it is the extreme outer margin of this that has been taken for depicting the outline of the Aura hitherto.

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and a half inches. For children it is between two and a half and three inches.

Temperament being considered an inherited attribute, "it becomes a certainty," Dr. Kilner writes, "that Auras are also inherited to a certain degree."

Auras of quick and intelligent children, however young and untrained, will be more extensive than those of the dull and phlegmatic, although the latter may have the advantage in physique. The former, too, will probably have Auras larger and the latter smaller than the average. With adults much the same thing pertains, as the finest Auras envelop the most intelligent people, and small ones surround persons who are dull, or of a low intellectual type. This is not merely seen around their bodies, but becomes more marked round their heads; and is more noticeable among men than women, as the Auras of the former do not develop to the same extent round their bodies. The Auras encircling women are much more variable; but the finest specimens will invariably be found encircling those who are nat-

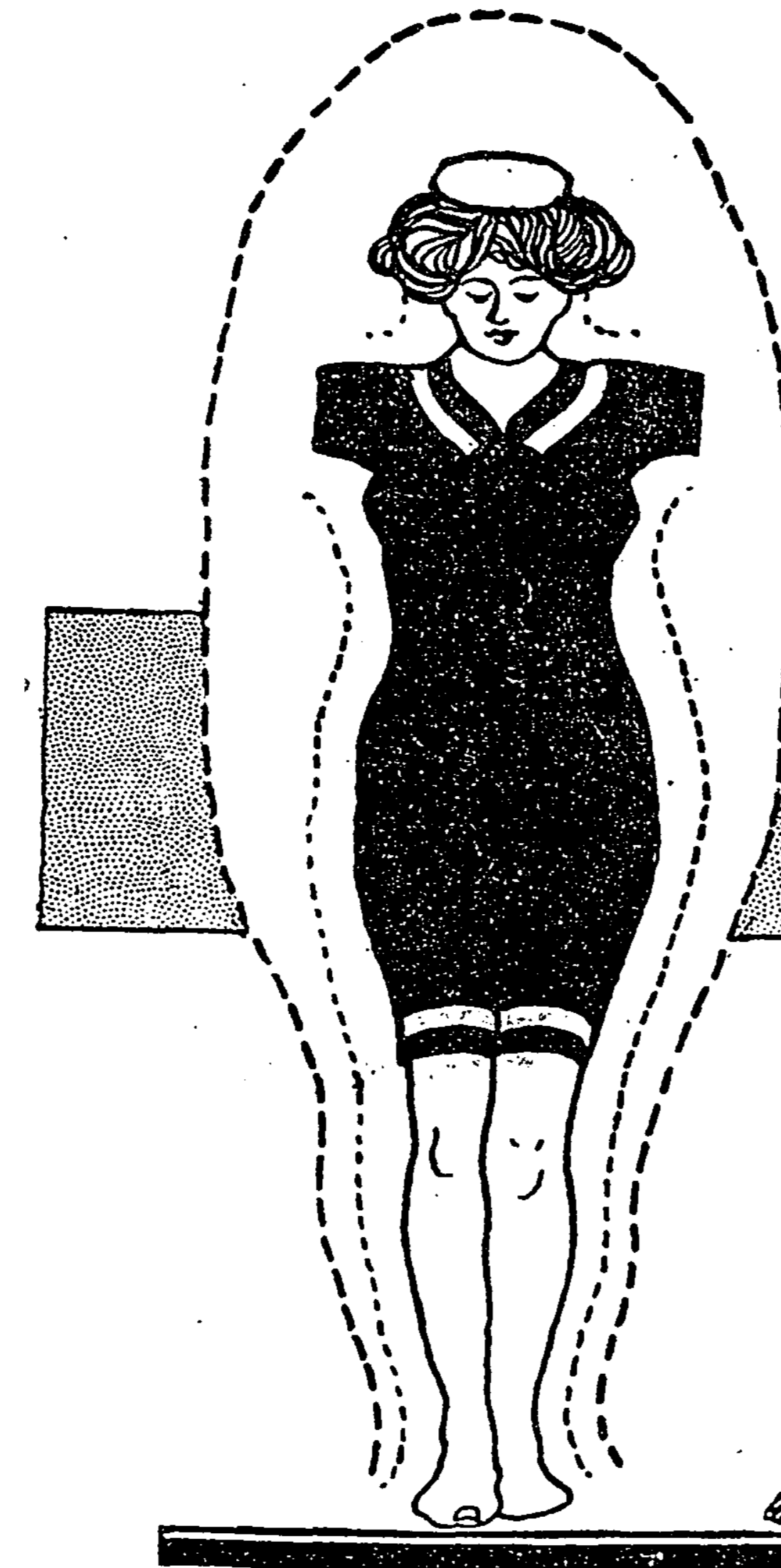
urally intelligent and slightly excitable, but have no tendency to neurotic complaints. It, however, may be interesting to observe that the most extensive Auras we have up to the present time seen, belonged to a healthy woman who was naturally quiet, but by no means phlegmatic. In the above descriptions perfect health is taken for granted; and it is interesting to remember that it is only the *Outer Aura* that shows variations, while the *Inner* remains stationary.

Education, theoretically, has some influence on the Aura, but the changes induced by it are so delicate as to be almost imperceptible. But Dr. Kilner believes the influence of heredity and temperament upon the Aura to be quite the most "fascinating" part of the subject. Intelligence, or the lack of it, or temperament, also influences the "texture" of the Aura. The *Inner Aura*, we are told,

is more distinctly marked and broader in both sexes, when the persons are naturally robust and in good health, but is more faint in weakly subjects, showing that it is mostly the bodily powers, perhaps, rather than the mental, which are the "chief energizers" of this portion of the Aura.

The *Outer Aura* of men has, naturally, a coarser grain than that of women; but, adds the writer, "after allowing for this, fineness and transparency may be considered a higher type than coarseness and dullness." And, the more gray there is in the color of the Aura—which is of a bluish tendency—the more dull or mentally affected is the owner.

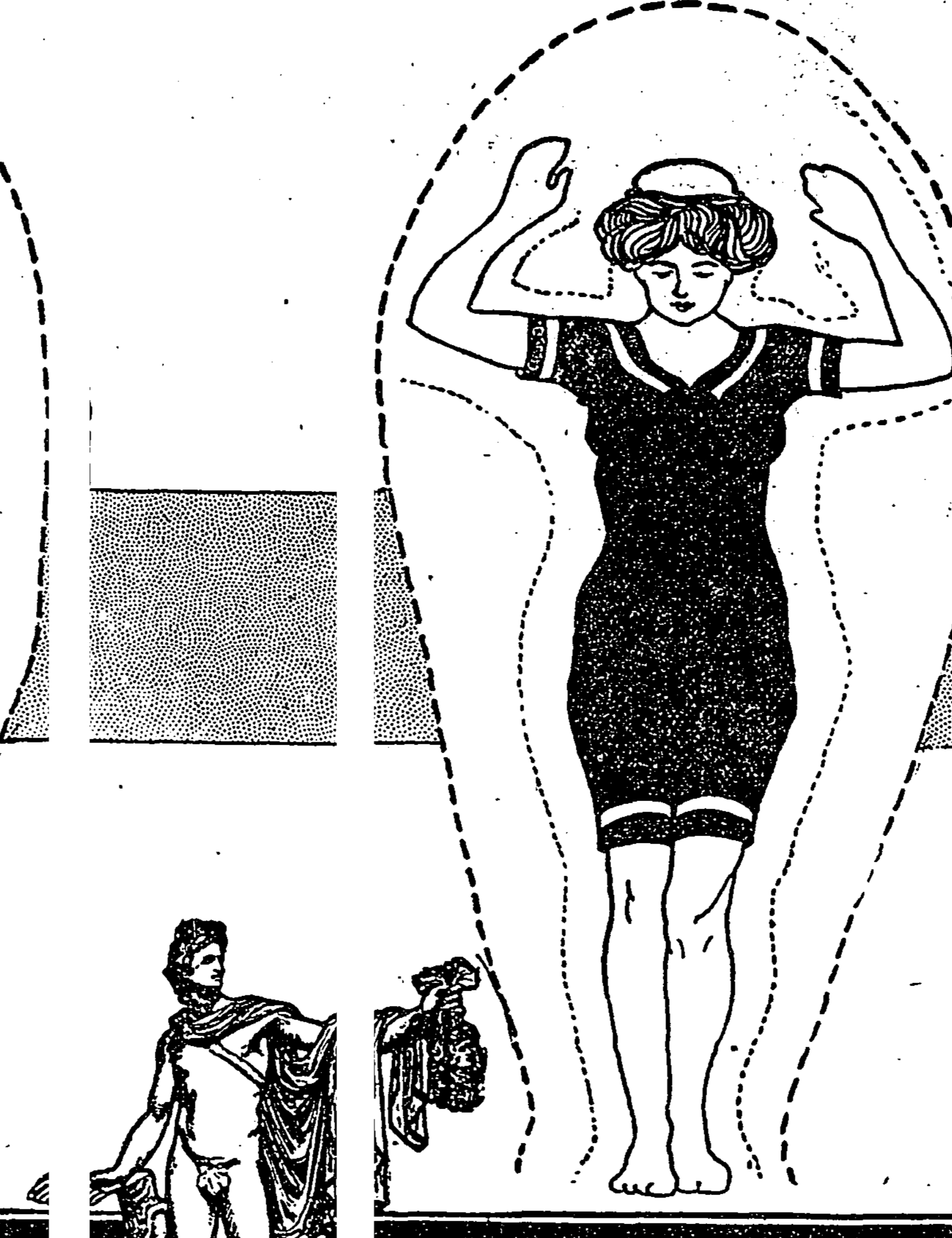
Dr. Kilner describes twelve cases of persons varying in age from infancy to middle life, which altogether throw an interesting sidelight upon his explanations of the texture, color, breadth of the Aura and at the same time are of psy-



Average Aura of a Healthy Woman.

chological interest in the idea one gets of the character of each individual. He also outlines in detail several experiments whereby anybody, with the aid of the screens he mentions, may be able to study the Aura. In order to obtain the best results it is necessary to choose a subject whose *Etheric Double* is well marked.

Experiment 1.—Let the observer inspect the arm and hand of a patient held in front of a black background, through a blue screen. He will see the *Etheric Double* has a dark band without any striation or granules, adjacent



Very Fine Aura of a Healthy Woman.

space, finely granular with a tendency to striation. Even when lined the appearance between it and the *Inner Aura* is very unlike, both in texture and color.

Experiment 7.—When the *Etheric Double* is inspected against a white background through a dark carmine screen, it will retain its dark hue. Through a light carmine screen with a properly adjusted light, it will become rose color, quite distinct from the carmine shade the white background has taken. When carefully examined, it will appear finely lined, and the striae are the colored part.

The use of colored screens, explains Dr. Kilner, is absolutely requisite for the detection of certain constituents, as well as for the elucidation of some of the attributes of the Aura.

In describing the general appearance of the Aura he compares that of the two sexes:

to the body and quite distinct from the Aura proper.

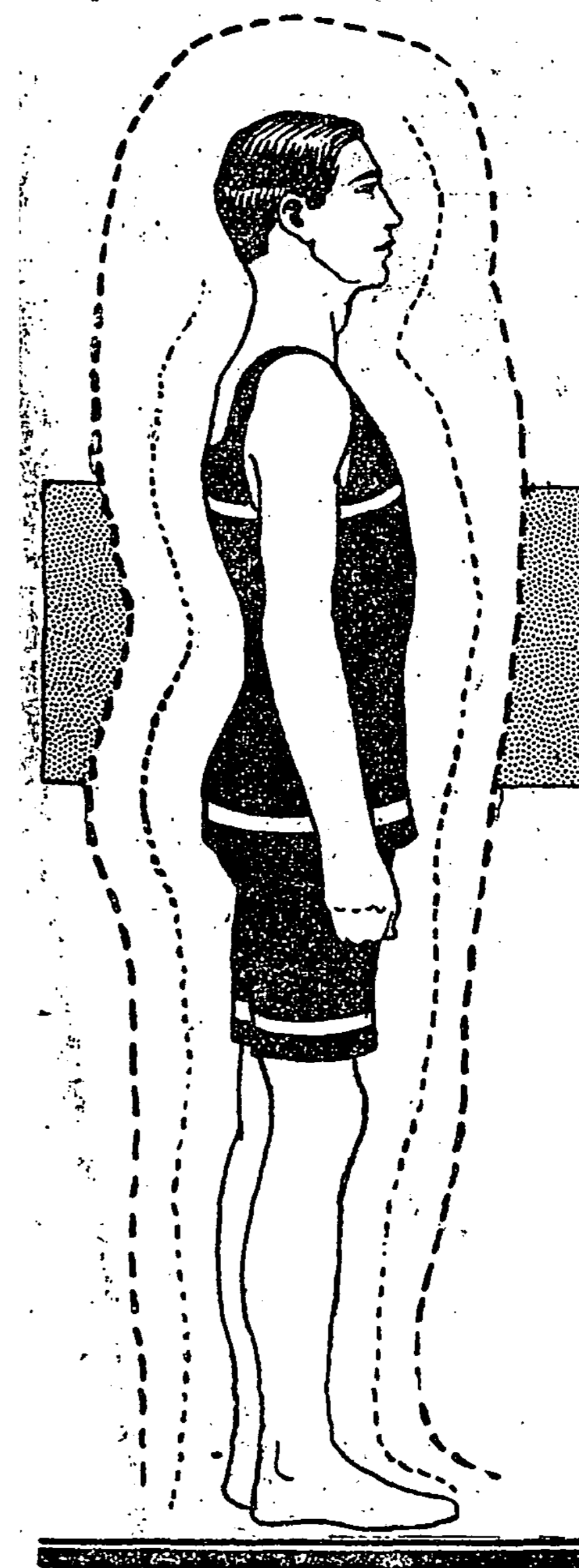
Experiment 2.—Replace the black background by a white one, and regulate the light accurately, when the *Etheric Double* will appear as a dark line.

Experiment 3.—Employ a green instead of a blue screen. Against the black background the *Etheric Double* will be seen as a dark line, but not so clearly as when the blue screen was employed. The Aura is also visible, but not so distinctly.

Experiment 4.—When the same screens are used with the patient's arm before a white background, the *Etheric Double* is dark in a subdued light.

Experiment 5.—If the yellow screen be employed, the *Etheric Double* still remains dark, either against a black or a white background.

Experiment 6.—Frequently, when examined through a dark red screen, the *Etheric Double* will remain as a dark band round the body, similar to, but more marked than when screens of other colors are used. Occasionally it will appear, instead of a dark void



Aura Surrounding a Healthy and Very Strong Man.

Inspection of a man discloses the Aura enveloping the head fairly equally all round, it being about two inches broader than the width of the shoulders. When he stands facing the observer, with his arms raised and his hands at the back of his neck, the Aura will appear by the side of his trunk narrower than round his head, following closely the contour of the body. Here it does not usually exceed more than four or five inches in width, or, roughly speaking, one-fifteenth of his height. As soon as he has turned sideways, it will be seen down his back about as broad as by the sides of the trunk, but barely as wide as in front. In all these cases it is similarly continued down the lower limbs, only sometimes being a little narrower. Around the arms it corresponds with that encircling the legs, but is generally broader around the hands, and very frequently it projects a long distance from the tips of the fingers.

Before her twelfth year a girl's Aura is very similar to that of a male although the texture is usually finer.

On observing the Aura of an adult woman a characteristic alteration is found. Above the shoulders round the head, down the arms and hands it is very similar to that of the males. If she faces the observer with the hands placed behind the neck, the dissimilarity is at once noticeable. The Aura is much wider by the sides of the trunk than in men, and broadens out until, at the level of the waist, it has reached its full extent. From here downward, it gradually narrows until it reaches a point not higher than the middle of the thigh, where it finally contracts and follows the outline of the legs and feet. However, the point of final contraction may be anywhere between the place just mentioned and

the ankles. As she stands sideways, the Aura will be seen to be much wider at the back than at the front, and the broadest part is at the small of the back, where it frequently bulges out.

The movement of one's body has no effect upon the Aura—it does not change in form. Nor is it affected by heat or cold. Its structure, writes Dr. Kilner, is so very fine that, "comparing it to an ordinary mist would be analogous to the comparison of the finest cambric to the coarsest canvas." What he calls "the correct interpretation of the Aura" he outlines as follows:

"A force emanating from the body which, like all forces, is invisible in itself, but which becomes perceptible by means of its action on the Ether, or Atmosphere."

The force or forces which produce the human Aura "most probably" are generated in the body "in some such way as the nervous force." And there are more forces than one which produce both the Inner and Outer Aura. Dr. Kilner has reached this conclusion because—

Firstly, the Inner Aura has a rudimentary structure, being striated; its borders are fairly well marked, and only the Outer Aura is entirely nebulous, with an ill defined outer edge, the visible proximate margin of which coincides with the distal border of the Inner Aura; and, again, that in no case as yet have rays been observed commencing in this one passing through to the other.

So that there "must be two forces": "No. 1 Auric force" produces the Inner Aura and "acts apparently very intensely within a prescribed area, and is, to a certain extent, under the influence of the will, which can cause a projection of the Aura as visible rays for some perceptible distance, and very likely much further than is perceived"; and "No. 2 Auric force," which produces the Outer Aura, and "is certainly more mobile, and has a wider range of action than I A-F (the Inner Auric force); and, as far as has been determined, is entirely independent of the will power. Different states of health, either general or local, react upon the forces, and indirectly upon the Auras, altering them, but not necessarily in the same manner." Therefore, the "force" producing the Outer Aura depends largely upon the physical condition of a person.

In order to prove that the Auric force producing the Inner Aura is oftentimes a matter of will power, he outlines an experiment:

In all these cases the distance between the patient and the observer should be sufficient to allow one or two inches between their visible Auras. It is also extremely important that the minds of the two persons should be in as passive a state as possible, in order that the will may not affect the Auras. This is a very good point at which to demonstrate that the Aura is influenced by the will power. The observer can do so by holding his finger some further distance from the patient than in the previous experiments; he must then will that a ray should extend from the end of his finger toward the patient. The ray will soon make its appearance, and it will disappear directly he leaves off writing.

In a chapter on "Complementary Colors" Dr. Kilner discusses the effect of the Aura upon the complementary colors. He tells the experimenter to prepare a small strip of colored paper on a black sheet, place it near a bright light, preferably daylight, concentrate his eyesight upon it—or, rather, upon a particular point on the paper—in order to sufficiently "saturate" the color-sensitive nerves with the "primary color." Then he must turn his gaze upon the body of his subject and observe the complementary-colored band, which alters in color according to the "quality" of the Aura. This experiment is especially useful in locating a pain or a disease, and for diagnostic purposes, for by studying the Aura with the aid of the complementary colors its defects become more noticeable.

In the course of his interesting work Dr. Kilner shows, by records of experiments and facts, "which are, in every case, true," that his screens may be used, not only for entertainment, but also for medical research. The physician, by their use, and a study of the form of the Aura at the different parts of the body, could detect the location of a disease, without, at times, even having to feel the pulse or take the temperature of a patient.