

Light

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PRICE TWOPENCE

SORCERY AND THE CHURCHES

STORY OF ITS USE AND ABUSE THROUGH THE AGES

By H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

SEEING how disturbed some minds have been of late by the Blackness of Magic, this admirable work* on its religious contacts during fifteen hundred years of Christendom makes an appropriate appearance.

Even if Society is not being submerged by a wave of Sorcery, this entanglement of bygone minds with the unpleasantnesses of the unseen should have for us an educative interest, because we are rather apt, from our fortunate experience, to imagine an environment peopled by none but favouring spirits.

The Schoolmen of the Middle Ages took a very different view. True, they believed heartily in the Ministry of Angels, a sort of intermediate beings, very compressible, since scores of them could dance on the point of a needle; but the Angels by no means had it all their own way.

The earlier Saints, Gregory, Isidore of Seville, John of Damascus, and even some of the later, Anselm, Bernard and Peter Lombard, were more concerned with the Source of Evil than with his myrmidons.

But with Thomas Aquinas and on through Monastic history, the demonic birth rate—if there be such a thing—multiplied enormously.

If the 13th century was more objectively aware than is ours of God, it was likewise more sympathetically alert to what He is up against.

Devils to St. Edmond Rich, "rode on the thunderstorm and filled the winter twilight like rooks cawing their way home to roost. Thousands of devils would besiege one tiny Franciscan hermitage: friars would be seen brandishing their sticks in the air and driving them away like flies."

"It is marvellous that any one of us should still be alive," wrote the Abbot Richalm—a very sensitive subject—"were it not for God's grace, no one of us would escape. They ride like motes in the sunbeam: they are scattered everywhere like dust; they come down upon us like rain; their multitude fills the whole world; the whole air, the whole air, I say, is but a thick mass of devils."

The saintly seem to have been as harassed by the spiritual as we by the material microbe.

Possibly they sometimes got the two mixed: for the

* SUPERNATURAL, by Edward Langton, B.D. London. Rider & Co., 1935, 15/-.

good Abbot explains how once, when on All Saints Day they had drunk good wine, "so great was the multitude of intoxicating devils there congregated that I could walk nowhere either in cloister or church . . . Yet on the morrow all were vanished and the cloister was emptied of them . . . Whither then had they fled? . . . They make a man drunken; they make him drunken even without wine . . . Behold I am now troubled with coughing and flatulence; that is their work."

One suspects the devils thus came in useful sometimes. The Abbot was continually worried by one that "cometh and snoreth before my nose; and the brother by my side believeth that it is I who have slept and snoreth." There he had a distinct pull over us.

But this fear was a real thing. Whence then was it bred? Did the oftentimes unwholesome atmosphere of the monastery make an easier entry for the dark things of the air? Being unaware of the Principalities and Powers that beset St. Paul may only mean that we are proved unworthy their attention: and if we do indulge in prayer it is seldom accompanied by fasting. But the dark things are there.

IN THE CHURCH'S EARLY DAYS

In the Church's early days what doubtless restricted the multiplication of devils was the difficulty of explaining their parentage. It worried pious Fathers more than anything. Well, it worries us still.

It was generally agreed that the Devil started well. "When created" declared John of Damascus, "there was in him no trace whatever of evil. He was, therefore, a good being, made for good ends, and not wicked by nature . . . He lost the original harmony of his nature, and became roused against the God who created him."

John left it at that: not much of a solution! Anselm took it very little farther. "God gave both the power and the will to the angel to persevere in the truth, but the angel did not continue to exercise his will in the right direction. What he willed at first, he later ceased to will."

But, as he could only will what was good, he sinned by willing something that was too good; he willed to be better than God! But Anselm was not deeply interested in demons.

Nor was St. Bernard: he was content to state that "they were impelled to evil by no force from without." Peter Lombard considered that "as created, they were able to sin or not to sin." Some did and some didn't.

But his speculations were concerned rather with their function and their future.

It was Thomas Aquinas who went more deeply into the matter. He also believed the Devil to have been one of the pure angels of God, but that he sinned at once after the first instant of his creation. The difficulty of the impulse does not seem to have troubled him, nor why it apparently continued to operate to extend the revolt.

But by the 12th century, interest in the Devil's origin, an insoluble business, had been largely supplanted by discussions as to his legal standing.

The *Processus Belial*, usually ascribed to Hugh St. Victor, is a legalistic dispute between God and the Devil for the soul of man. "God, intending to redeem the world through a man, came into the world and found the Devil ruling over it . . . It was all God's, for He had made it; it was all the Devil's, for he now possessed it."

Followed a long series of arguments to show the Devil's empire over men, owing to God's neglect of His creation, and why he could not be dispossessed by God without a thoroughly legal form of atonement.

It was all a deeply serious business, this plea of the Devil that a threat of force "wasn't cricket." Peter Lombard had put it crudely. "Mankind had fallen into the hands of the Prince of this World, who seduced Adam and enslaved him, and began to possess us as bondsmen; but the Redeemer came and the Deceiver was conquered . . . He set him His own cross as a mousetrap, and laid His own blood there as a bait."

Was it surprising that, with this sense of the Devil's claim, men grew sensitive to the hostile operations of demons, or that anyone with pronounced psychic aptitude should have been proclaimed in league with him?

HEATHEN GODS

The heathen gods, incorporated into the Church's calendar as festal deities, brought in with them an atmosphere of magic and witchcraft which the Church turned to its own use during the amalgamating process.

St. Augustine was enjoined, when a missionary to England, "to convert the pagan temples into churches by sprinkling them with holy water, so that converts might grow accustomed to their new faith by worshipping in the wonted places, while the sacrifices to demons were to be replaced by processions in honour of some saint or martyr, when oxen were to be slaughtered, not to propitiate idols, but in praise of God, to be eaten by the faithful."

The extent to which Paganism thus impregnated Christianity is not clearly realised to-day. It was illustrated by the action of Redwald, king of East Anglia, who on his conversion set up two altars in his temple—one to the true God and the other for sacrifices to demons.

Yet demon worship and the use of magic had other than Christian enemies. It was sternly prohibited in the Rome of Nero and Caracalla, and the Jew, while worshipping all sorts of odd gods, had a steady down on witchcraft.

Yet, as Mr. Langton remarks, "Sometimes the war against magic has appeared to be almost suspended, and the avowed foes have fraternised with each other; at other times it has flamed forth with a passion that has amounted to madness."

In the 7th century the Church was fairly well imbued with pagan practices; and in 745, though Pope Zachary denounced the angelic teachings of Bishop Adalbert to be a worship of demons, St. Boniface pointed out to the Holy Father that what he was trying to suppress in France and Germany was being openly practised in Rome.

And the practices continued for at least two hundred years, and in the 13th century Ennemoser asserts that in Germany and Italy "such numbers of men were seduced to sorcery that the whole earth was overflowed by it, and would have been laid waste by the Devil had

they not in both countries burnt some thirty thousand heretics."

Thereafter came the first Papal bull against the Black Art in 1258, and in a second, of 1317, Pope John XXII declared that some of his courtiers, and even his own physicians, "had given themselves over to the Devil, and had conjured evil spirits into rings, looking glasses and circles in order to influence men both at a distance and also near at hand . . . Yes, that his enemies even had availed themselves of sorcery in order to dispatch him out of the world."

It is interesting that, ten years later, the same Pope described a magic administration of poison like that alleged in a recent public case, which was a source of terror to Mrs. Baker Eddy, and which crops up throughout the history of witchcraft.

WITCH PERSECUTION

The Papal bull of Innocent VIII, in 1484, though it merely gave a fresh impulse to witch-persecution, illustrates the amazing range of the Church's apprehensions.

"It has come to our ears," the edict ran, "that very many persons of both sexes . . . abuse themselves with the demons Incubus and Succubus; and by incantations, charms, conjurations, and other wicked superstitions, by criminal acts and offences have caused the offspring of women and of the lower animals, the fruits of the earth, the grape, and the products of various plants . . . to perish, be oppressed and utterly destroyed . . . that they hinder the proper intercourse of the sexes and the propagation of the human species."

This document was followed, five years later, by the *Malleus Maleficarum*, or "Hammer of Witches," the most famous code for the detection and destruction of witches, which began forthwith and continued till the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Of the millions who thus perished it is abundantly clear that only a mere fraction had any acquaintance with the Black Art.

Father Herbert Thurston thinks that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the allegations rested upon nothing better than pure delusion. "The cruellest torture was applied in a way to defeat all the ends of justice."

Justice, indeed, was of small consideration.

Bodin, one of the ablest men of his day, a learned judge, an eminent political philosopher, who presided at many witch trials, declared: "The trial of this offence must not be conducted like other crimes. Whoever adheres to the ordinary course of justice perverts the spirit of the law, both divine and human. He who is accused of sorcery should *never* be acquitted unless the malice of the prosecutor be clearer than the sun; for it is so difficult to bring full proof of this secret crime that out of a million of witches *not one would be convicted if the usual course were followed.*"

So it went.

INNOCENT SENSITIVES

Reports of the trials afford ample proof that many of these poor women were innocent sensitives; some gave illustrations of travelling clairvoyance before their judges, and were burnt for their pains.

Nor was it only rabid Catholics, nor crazy Protestants, like Luther and Calvin, who were so obsessed by magic; men like Francis Bacon, Sir Edward Coke, and Sir Thomas Brown, believed in its powers.

Mr. Langton deals admirably with the various potencies with which it was accredited.

Doubtless much of the so-called "witch-riding" was clairvoyant; but the flights of Habakkuk and the Apostle Philip were instanced as proof that corporeal transportation was possible; and Bodin quoted Augustine, Basil and Origen, as well as Aristotle, Plato, Plotinus, Iamblicus, Proclus and Apuleius in support of the belief; and there is no reason why

levitations indulged in by Saints were beyond the reach of other Sensitives.

These flights to the "Sabbat" were credited with unspeakable orgies. Bodin quotes Augustine's statement that at them "copulation of the Devil with witches is so certain that it would be impudent to deny it," a conviction supported by Sprenger, Paul Grilland, St. Bernard, and Thomas Aquinas; indeed, the Germans had a special name for the offspring of such unions. Even in 1608 Francesco Naria Guazzo, one of the most authoritative Catholic writers, maintained that on these occasions the Devil, or his representative, assumed a body of flesh; and it seems likely that materialisations on a considerable scale may have taken place at these assemblies of psychic force.

There was much spilling of blood at them, for the Familiars—the equivalent of our Controls—were said to delight in its odour; a spirit appetite accredited to them by the Greeks and some of the Early Christian Fathers, and frequently to Jehovah by the Jewish Prophets.

FOUL WELTER OF CRUELTY

In all this foul welter of cruelty, there were a few sane voices. More, a friend of Glanvil, opined, as we all know to-day, that "there are as great fools in the other world as there are in this"; others spoke of "ludicrous and frolicsome devils," and believed that there was a kind of middle state between angels and devils, communion with which should not be a capital offense.

The vampire never reached in this country the vogue it had in Central Europe. Dom Augustin Calmet, Abbé de Senones, leading authority on vampirism in the 18th century, and an exceptionally clear-headed thinker, while attributing many of the cases he reviews to a disordered imagination, recites others too circumstantially attested to be ignored, where the corpses have been found in perfect preservation years after death.

Lycanthropy, also, found more fruitful soil, and, probably, more appropriate beasts at its disposal, in Central Europe. Theologians, lawyers, judges, all believed in it. Dr. Camus, the king's counsellor of Dôle, and the great Bodin had no doubts whatever. Well, you may meet men to-day who, in Haiti and Africa, have witnessed the transformation.

Yet, however good the grounds for belief in witchcraft, Mr. Langton is right in describing it as "one of the most monstrous demonological conceptions that has ever tyrannised over the minds of men."

It is hard to say why it almost suddenly evaporated. Possibly from the danger to which almost everyone was exposed; no man's life was safe from a charge of witchcraft. Even persons of importance began to feel themselves in danger.

Nineteenth century materialism blew the last vapours of it away and left the tenement empty, swept and garnished for a more reasonable conception of psychic influence, though not as yet informed with much knowledge to boast about.

It would be very unfair to describe this mere slice out of Mr. Langton's learned volume as a review of it. This leaves the best of it untold.

A CHELMSFORD MEETING

Speaking at a mass meeting organised by Chelmsford Spiritualist Society, Mrs. Champion de Crespigny said the question was often asked: "Why are our problems not solved by the communicators from the 'other side'?" The answer was: "Because we are placed here to find the answers to our riddles ourselves." It was by the settling of problems that man had developed his intellect, and he must go on doing so. The message of Spiritualism was the message Christ came to give—that there was another world and a future life.

Mr. Shaw Desmond also spoke, and clairvoyance was given by Mrs. Grace Cooke.

MAN WHO DIED AND CAME BACK

WHAT HE SAW ON THE "OTHER SIDE"

MR. JOHN PUCKERING, a market gardener, 58 years of age, of Arley, Worcestershire, was dead for 4½ minutes. During that time he saw his wife, who had died a year ago, and other dead villagers whom he recognised. He was undergoing an operation, when his heart and lungs stopped. The surgeon massaged his heart and it started again. In an interview, published in the *Sunday Dispatch* (January 27th), Mr. Puckering said he found himself in a big room, which was illuminated by a soft, comforting sort of light. There were many people—all grown up—and they wore clothes like ordinary people.

"All their faces looked fresh," he said. "They were like the faces of very healthy people who are out of doors most of the time. They all looked so happy. You have never seen people look as happy as they did."

"I felt awkward. I wondered what to do. But that soon passed off, because all the people looked so friendly. They smiled at me."

"I saw my wife among the people. She died—as people say—more than a year ago. But I saw her there as clearly as I have ever seen her. And she looked very happy."

"I saw other people I used to know on earth. But they were all people who had passed away. There was one man who used to be postman in our village. He died five years ago. And there was another man I used to know, too. He passed away seven years ago. But when I looked at him, he knew who I was. He smiled at me and nodded."

"Then somehow the light in the room began to change. It was as though daylight was coming. I don't remember any more."

"I shall never again be afraid of death."

Mr. Puckering's daughter, who is a qualified nurse and was present during the operation, told a *Sunday Graphic* representative: "Immediately after the operation my father called me and told me that he had seen my mother, who died 12 months previously. He does not remember clearly to-day the vision, or whatever name one might give to the experience he described to me at the time. The facts he has related are exactly in accordance with the narrative he gave me on his return to consciousness."

It will be noted how closely Mr. Puckering's description agrees with descriptions of arrival on the "other side" received through mediumistic messages.

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PROBLEMS OF AUTOMATIC WRITING

HOW THE CLEOPHAS SCRIPTS WERE RECEIVED

By MISS GERALDINE CUMMINS

FOR two reasons, mental Mediumship—such as automatic writing, trance, and the ouija board—has always seemed to me of greater interest than any other branches of psychic study. Firstly, the results can be obtained in daylight. Secondly, the information thus obtained can afterwards be examined and coldly analysed. If proper precautions are taken there would seem to be little chance of conscious or unconscious fraud.

Convincing proof in the shape of personality, outlook and psychology is, I believe, the crucial test, the most convincing form of evidence. Such proof is analogous in one respect with the evidence furnished in three books, namely, *The Scripts of Cleophas*, *Paul in Athens*, and *The Great Days of Ephesus*. These books were written automatically through me; and expert critics, who have studied them, have been most impressed by the atmosphere of the Scripts, by the accurate vision they present of that ancient time. These critics contend that the minds behind these writings would seem to belong to the first and second centuries by reason of the character of the writing and of its outlook. My mind is very much a twentieth century mentality. It is quite incapable of jumping eighteen hundred years and becoming the mould of mind that existed in the first centuries. But before dealing with this point I must give a brief account of *The Great Days of Ephesus* and the other Cleophas Scripts.

These now consist of at least a million words, and purport to be an historical reproduction of early Christian times. They have been produced in the presence of numerous witnesses. I have not, at any time, endeavoured to obtain such writings alone. I may say at once that it was contrary to my inclination to produce a narrative dealing with the history of the first century. My ignorance is considerable of that period, as it is of most periods. I have only passed one examination in my life, and that was for shorthand. And, by the way, my success in that case was such a shock to me that I never went up for another exam.

I know neither Greek, Hebrew, nor Latin; and my reading is confined to literature of a modern character. But I was led to continue with the writings of these scripts because their contents are so entirely different from conscious writings of my own. They contained, also, a knowledge of the period quite beyond any readings or studies it was possible for me to pursue. However, only experts in New Testament exegesis and history could express an opinion as to their value from the historical and psychical research point of view.

VIEWS OF RECOGNISED SCHOLARS

The manuscripts have been submitted to professors, who are, as Dr. Lamond states in his introduction to the second edition, "recognised scholars, representing the Church and the Universities." These authorities, after a careful examination, write that these Cleophas Scripts "contain much which, on consideration of the life and mentality of the intermediary, Miss Cummins, appear quite inexplicable on the supposition of human authorship." The value of criticism on such matters depends largely on its source. The men who made this statement are life-long students of early Christian history.

The speed of the writing is an interesting point for students of psychical research to consider. It is at all times considerable—2,042 words written in one hour

and fifteen minutes; 2,600 words in two hours; 1,750 words in one hour and five minutes, in good English. Unless for some particular reason I am aroused from the dream or semi-trance state into which I fall, never less than fourteen to fifteen hundred words are written at a time without a break or pause.

It is an interesting fact in connection with these writings that the people present do not seem to influence the material given in the scripts at these sittings. I remember one occasion when there were seven witnesses present, some of them learned men, and a noisy thunderstorm raged outside. Before the opening of this sitting I really feared I would not be able to put myself in the special trance state necessary. But the Messenger who purports to communicate these scripts, on this occasion wrote for an hour and a half at a very considerable speed without a single pause.

The University scholars, who have studied these writings, have stated that "there is a close and interesting resemblance, almost amounting to a family likeness, between the present treatise and the whole body of apocryphal and pseudographical pendants to the Old and New Testaments; that striking parallels may be drawn between them. They refer particularly to the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles and to "The Clementine Recognitions." I have never read a word of the Apocryphal Acts, nor have I read "The Clementine Recognitions." Who amongst you, or even amongst historical scholars, have so intimate, so accurate a knowledge of "The Clementine Recognitions" that I could draw from your sub-conscious mind and produce, not a copy of "The Clementine Recognitions," but a work written in the same manner and style, and, moreover, draw from the contents of this stranger's subconsciousness at the rate of 1,700 words an hour? The supposition of telepathy seems absurd.

[HISTORICAL EXACTITUDE

An instance of historical exactitude is given in the term "Archon" which appears in the scripts as the title of the head of a Jewish community. Before A.D. 11 the head of this Jewish community was called "Ethnarch." The critics write: "It would have been a pardonable error if the Messenger had used the word "Ethnarch," but he gave the correct term—"Archon."

There is a certain type of scientific investigator who will not accept the statements of any man or woman. He will not believe that a single George Washington exists. He takes the same view of mankind as that of the income tax collector. That is to say, he is guilty until proved innocent.

Let us endeavour in a measure to assume the attitude of this cynical investigator. Let us assume that you do not accept my statements and those of Miss Gibbes, and others as regards my life, my interests, and my lack of knowledge of the first century of Christian history. Let us assume that I am a student deeply versed in gnostic epistles in ancient chronicles. Even if I were such a scholar, I still claim that this theory would not wholly account for the normal production of these three books, which contain the published portions of the Cleophas Scripts.

For even if I had been versed in the history of that early period I could not, in the presence of witnesses, consciously compose and write day after day as fast as my hand can shape the letters long detailed narratives, making a continuous history, the facts of which have been carefully checked by experts. Knowledge in such a case would be a hindrance, not a help. I have been told that critics of that early Christian period frequently disagree. If I had been acquainted with their theories I should have been faced with a hundred different

roads. I should not have known where to turn. I should never have got started on my journey at all.

Finally, the experts, when comparing these Scripts with apocryphal writings, state, "in tone, in general atmosphere, there is much which cannot be explained simply by reproduction or dependance." I feel, therefore, that not even the cynical scientist can prove that these books are produced by my intelligence.

Now, if they are communicated by a discarnate intelligence, we are faced with the argument that they would have been written in either Greek, Latin, or Aramaic, the languages of that period. It is suggested that the narrative is communicated by means of images or thoughts; a thought is communicated through the vehicle of the words stored in the memory centres of the writer's brain. I think we can find illustrations of this method of communication among many cases of psychometry, and in evidence purporting to come from those who have recently passed over.

A REMARKABLE CASE

I will quote one remarkable case in this connection recorded in *Psychic Science* by a Parsee who went to Mrs. Dowden for a sitting. This gentleman brought Mrs. Dowden a silk thread and asked her to obtain a statement about it in automatic writing. There came what purported to be a message from a Parsee lady who had been dead some little time. Amongst other things she asked that her grandmother should be reminded that she had placed a silver ring on her grand-daughter's finger when she was six years old, and had told her always to remember her by this ring. Now this was a definite statement of fact, and from the point of view of sentiment was an important memory. The Parsee, who had brought the silk thread to Mrs. Dowden, did not know the grandmother. However, it was subsequently ascertained that this tale of the silver ring was perfectly correct. Mrs. Dowden had never seen the grandmother, who lived in India, and did not know a word of the language spoken by her.

It would seem, therefore, that either Mrs. Dowden had received this evidence from a discarnate intelligence who in life did not know English, or had, through telepathy with an unknown foreigner, who lived hundreds of miles away, elicited this information. Whatever be the explanation, she ought surely to have obtained this and other evidence, correct in every particular, in the language of the Parsees. It was written in English. Obviously, therefore, the memory was not conveyed to Mrs. Dowden in words, but by thoughts or images.

It is conceivable that these Cleophas writings were conveyed to me in the same manner. I might mention other cases in which correct information was given in English when the actual communicator was a foreigner. But I think this illustration is sufficiently arresting to convey the point I wish to make, namely, that there is a universal language of thought, and that communications are often made by means of thoughts and not words.

Writing in the *London Forum*, Miss Edith Harper presents an interesting explanation of the manner in which this first century history has been conveyed to me. "It may be that these communicators speak through a chain of intermediaries, coming down the centuries, duly 'tuned in,' each one being a little nearer to our own time, and their messages relayed (may one say?) from one station to another. So, it has been ingeniously suggested, time has thus been foreshortened, in the same way that space has been diminished by aeroplane and distance has been obliterated by wireless. 'Far is near, near is far,' was the cryptic explanation once given to a puzzled enquirer by an invisible sage." Such is Miss Harper's fascinating speculation.

[The foregoing is a portion of the *Survival League* lecture delivered by Miss Cummins at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Friday evening last week, January 25th].

WHITE LADY OF THE HOHENZOLLERNS

HOW King Carol of Rumania, during the days of his exile in Paris, received a visit from the White Lady of the Hohenzollerns, who, true to the traditions of the royal family, came to portend the impending death of his father, King Ferdinand, is told in *The People* (January 20th), by Mr. Barbu Jonesco, King Carol's London host and confidant, as it was related to him by Mme. Lupescu in the following words:

"I was sound asleep before twelve. I woke up suddenly, wide awake. I knew someone was in the room.

"Then I saw something by the window. I couldn't make it out at first, but gradually I saw the outline of a woman's figure. She was dressed in white. The face was turned from me. I was not afraid. I was struck with wonder. When the figure turned round and looked at me direct, I was entranced by her beauty. She had a grave, oval face, with large, sorrowful blue eyes.

"She moved slowly towards the bed in which Carol lay. For a few seconds she bent over him. Then she turned again and went towards the window. As she moved away from me, I suddenly felt sleepy. I seemed to be waking from sleep normally. The unnatural alertness had gone. I clutched at full consciousness now, whereas before I seemed to be super-conscious.

"I cried out, and awoke Carol. He sat up, startled.

"'What is it, Dudaia?' he asked.

"'Look! There's someone in the room. A woman.'

"Carol jumped out of bed, apparently seeing nothing.

"I cried: 'See, she is there by the window!'

Carol could see nothing; and by that time Mme. Lupescu herself was sitting up, wide awake, looking with bewilderment at the open casement. But the vision had vanished. Carol asked her to describe the figure, and as she added detail to detail, his face grew grave. But he said merely: "You must have been dreaming. There was nobody in the room when I was awake."

They returned to bed, silent. Helene Lupescu was profoundly disturbed by the experience, and she knew that Carol, in spite of his easy assurance, was also inwardly troubled. So she said: "Perhaps it was just fancy."

But Carol did not sleep. He lay filled with forebodings. For there could be no mistaking the ghostly visitor from Helene Lupescu's description.

It was the White Lady of the Hohenzollerns. A day after the visitation, King Ferdinand died.

LEICESTER S.P.R.'s PROGRESS

Leicester Society for Psychical Research is making good progress. Although founded only a few months ago, there is already a membership of over fifty, and a prospect of that number being doubled very quickly. At present, the Society meets at the Waterloo Hall; but we are informed that a friend and an officer of the Society have purchased a twelve-roomed house, and propose to give it in trust for use as headquarters. This will involve spending a sum of about £600 for necessary alterations, but interest in Leicester is so keen that no difficulty is expected in finding the money.

The new session of the Society was opened on Wednesday evening last week (January 23rd), by the President, Mr. Shaw Desmond, who took as his subject: "What Psychical Research Means To You." Last night (January 30th), Mrs. Hewat McKenzie lectured on "Mediums I have Investigated"; and next Wednesday (February 6th), the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas is to deliver his lantern lecture on "An Amazing Experiment."

MAGIC OF AFRICAN NATIVES

MATERIALISATIONS, LYCANTHROPY AND THE FIRE-WALK

Dr. G. B. Kirkland, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., late Government Medical Officer in South Rhodesia, lectured on "Savage Magic" at the International Institute for Psychological Research, South Kensington, on January 18th. In last week's issue of LIGHT (January 24th) we published the first part of the lecture, in which Dr. Kirkland dealt with the mysterious transmission of news by African natives, medicine magic, and murder by witchcraft. To-day we publish the second half, which is even more interesting than the first.

By Dr. C. B. KIRKLAND, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

WHAT we call materialisations or manifestations of the dead are very common in Africa. They reach their peak, as it were, in the far away island of Bali, where the family ancestors return to the seat of friendship, and converse with and advise their progeny with the greatest kindliness and familiarity. However, we are in Africa now, and apart from the fact that unknown dead—the spirits—walk in innumerable hosts after sundown, these manifestations are largely of the type of those horrible wakes alleged among the nomadic Arab tribes. The earth-bound spirits of dead chiefs return to propitiation ceremonies, make their last depositions, name their successors, and indulge in one glorious beer drink before setting out on the long journey of the soul.

It is told of a Barotse king that he rose from his bier, strangled his murderer, ate with an excellent appetite, and drank with a better. Then quietly returned to his last bed and enjoyed his burial with the utmost goodwill, but that is, of course, traditional. It is a common tale at such Barotse wakes to-day.

Fortune telling is as rife in Africa as it is in the civilised world. The Nanga uses fibula bones which he flings on the ground, and which according to the fate of the inquirer rise before his eyes. There is the lion bone, the leopard bone and so on, but the crocodile bone spells death.

GENUINE PSYCHIC LEVITATION

It is no trick this bone throwing, but a genuine psychic levitation; how true the predictions may or may not be is another matter. In my own case the dreaded crocodile bone shook, and rose to stand a second and then fall, and a very close brush with the dark angel was predicted, which duly happened.

Rightly or wrongly, religion is often—and in my opinion too often connected with psychic phenomena. And to wind up this long talk I will quote two examples—one of horrible perversion under the thin guise of a sacred rite, and the other the world's supremest test of faith.

The earliest history and tradition associates the two, psychic orgies and perversions, with the worship of the fashionable god of the era.

One of the most secret rites of savage Africa to-day is the ritual of the animal dance. I am one of the odd dozen Europeans who have ever seen one of these. And one moonlight night in a clearing of what home people call "the jungle," I saw the "Nyan na lo Laklass"—the dance of the jackal.

There is a vast amount of literature, mostly medieval, on the subject of lycanthropy, were-wolves, vampires, the great undead, the virgin and goat, and the perversions accompanying such transformations. Mostly we laugh at it, thinking that an age which could try horses and cocks and pigs in courts of law for witchcraft could believe anything. But sometimes, I wonder!

Anyhow, this is what I saw. Men and women stealthily collecting, forming a circle, drinking

furiously—drinking, drinking, drinking. The tom-toms are beating that maddening rhythm so impossible to reproduce, so ventriloquial that it seems to come from inside one's head. The beaters glisten with sweat as their bare hands beat with incredible rapidity upon the stretched skin.

In the circle drunken men and women are dancing each in their place faster and faster as the drums' fierce rhythm seeps into their blood, and the beer inflames them.

Then there is a hush as the witch-doctor, in his beads and teeth and jackal tails, begins his amazing dance. No human, unpossessed, could sustain the terrific strain of that dance. I am certain that from this moment he becomes super-normal. Mediumistic if you prefer. Blood and saliva foam from his lips and nostrils. At last he falls in a deep trance. The scream of a hunted jackal echoes through the trees. The drums cease. A shiver runs through the squatting bodies, a little movement as of wind in standing corn. A woman whimpers—like a jackal bitch. A man growls—like a jackal dog. And then it begins. The details are horrible. I can only say that those men and women imitate the actions of jackals with such uncanny accuracy, that one is compelled to believe that they take on the nature if not the form of the beast.

Now the climax. Exhausted, the jackal men and women crawl back to their circle to growl and lick their wounds.

The witch-doctor comes out of his trance and dances again, and again falls, this time apparently in the deepest coma. And now a boy and a girl leap into the circle to dance. If the imitations of the crowd are uncanny, those of the pair are miraculous. More and more nearly do they resemble the animals they portray until suddenly, before my eyes, two jackals are standing in that ring. One noses the entranced witch-doctor with canine curiosity. Then they leap off and away while I blame my fatigue for a trick of the sight. But was it? I do not know. Perhaps it was a coincidence that I treated a native girl in the district for severe jackal scratches (an unheard of thing). Perhaps! I am not sure.

THE FIRE WALK

The supremest act of faith is, of course, the fire walk, which I have witnessed more than once. It is a curious thing that this test is taken, not by the Christians whose book definitely states that fire will not hurt them, but the Shadrachs, Meshachs and Abednegos of to-day are the followers of all Indian cults. The first recorded performance of charless burning that I can remember was, of course, done by Paul of Tarsus, but the fire could not have been very hot or the snake which jumped on to his arm would have been more concerned with escape than murder. In the case of the fire walk, that fire is very hot indeed. The Nebuchadnezzar priests heat the furnace seven times its wont with a vengeance.

They dig a pit about sixteen to twenty feet long, four or five feet wide, and pretty deep. In this they lay a nice mixture of wood and charcoal which they burn and burn and burn till at the time of the ceremony the whole mass is literally white hot.

I got as near to it as I could, about twelve feet off! Now the designates collect by the fire.

First a priest leisurely strolls about in the fire chanting, then he steps into the water at the far end of the pit, and one notices it sizzle and hiss as his feet touch it. And so all go through, they are very human, some rush it, some show fear in the middle of the fiery pilgrimage, some trembling walk with assumed nonchalance, one woman actually carried a child through. Some wore flowers which did not even wither. But all go through and none are harmed, none have singed hair or skin or robes.

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MY FIRST VOICE SEANCE

By JAMES DOUGHTY

I ATTENDED a seance for Direct Voice, conducted by "Red Cloud" through the Mediumship of Mrs. Estelle Roberts, on Tuesday evening (22nd January).

Being in daily contact with the Spiritualist movement, yet not actually of it, I have been asked by the Editor of LIGHT to give my impressions as an initiate into the mysteries of Direct Voice, which Mr. Shaw Desmond recently described as the most convincing form of phenomena.

I sat with about a hundred others in a large room, at one end of which was a small platform supporting the cabinet in which the Medium sat. On the platform in front of the cabinet was placed a (not very) luminous trumpet.

After a few introductory remarks by Mrs. Treloar, who was in charge of the ceremonies, the light was extinguished and the seance began in complete darkness.

This darkness is one of the objections that many critics have against such seances, but there are explanations of the necessity for it for certain phenomena that I, personally, can accept as rational.

I do not think I have ever before sat in such an utter negation of light, and one effect of it was that I became almost unconscious of my own physical body and of the surrounding bodies. There was just "I," in complete isolation, save for the voices that later came from the inky void.

After the usual hymn, the reason for which I am not clear about, a gramophone record was put on. If I wanted to attempt humour I might say that about a hundred records were played, and Kreisler's "Caprice Viennois" was ninety-nine of them. It was already a familiar tune to me, but I fear I shall never willingly listen to it again.

If this continuous background of music is absolutely necessary at such seances, I would suggest that the whole question of providing suitable music should be given much more serious consideration than appears to be the case.

In a very short time, after the trumpet had performed a noisy dance along the brass rail that bounded the platform, a husky voice ("Red Cloud") greeted us, and requested us not to be too tense.

Then, for an hour or so, followed a series of remarkable conversations; remarkable, not particularly for their content, but for the fact that each one was conducted for the one part by a voice from the audience, and for the other part by a voice from the trumpet, claiming to be that of a discarnate entity.

One of the most striking manifestations was a voice that, after establishing contact with a sitter, and holding a short, personal chat, said: "This is the first time I have ever spoken. *I was deaf and dumb.*" This was confirmed by the person addressed.

Another poignant message was from one who had died by suicide, and this also was confirmed.

For the most part, the conversations were too personal to have any value as evidence to anyone but the sitter concerned, but there was a charming spontaneity about them, and there were numerous points that, to an outsider, had the appearance of being evidential to the recipient.

And what is an inexperienced enquirer to think of all this, and what criticisms can be made?

The first question is, naturally, "Is it true?" "Red Cloud" once said: "It is either true or not true. Have it your own way." I should feel much inclined to say something similar if I, in some remote part of the world, tried in vain to convince someone that it is possible to speak by wireless telephone from London to New York.

I have never done this, but I believe it is possible, and that I could prove it if certain conditions were

favourable (i.e., if I could afford it). Why, then, should it be more difficult to believe that it is possible to converse vocally with discarnate spirits, in the face of all the evidence, and in view of what I heard at this seance? That it is more difficult, I confess; but that may be due to my own ignorance or obtuseness.

The further question arises: "If I did not hear spirit-voices, what *did* I hear?" The alternative seems to involve the question of fraud. In these days of super-fraud-proof investigations, a complete absence of test conditions, coupled with complete darkness, suggests to me not fraud, but a faith and honesty that are indifferent to criticism. For the scientific investigator, strict test conditions are essential; but for the faithful, who seek only communication with their friends no longer on earth, they are out of place.

Supposing that the Medium, with accomplices, had, in that impenetrable darkness, manipulated the trumpet and supplied the voices, how could they carry on such a quick interchange of intimate conversation with the various sitters? If the whole thing were a collective conspiracy, involving the co-operation of all those who took part in the conversations, and assuming that they had considerable powers of acting, what would be the point of it all?

Perhaps the strongest argument, to me, against a suggestion of wholesale conspiracy to deceive, is that the entire performance would then be so utterly futile to all concerned as to be more incredible than what is claimed for it.

As an enquirer, I am bound to ask myself: "Did this seance do anything towards convincing me of the reality of spirit-communication?" In the absence of any personal communication to myself, or anything in the nature of scientific test, or any acquaintance with the recipients of messages, one is left only with an intuitive feeling of either truth or falsehood.

This I can say, that on that night, in that almost "discarnating" darkness, it seemed not improbable, but natural, that one should converse with spirit entities.

Mrs. ESTELLE ROBERTS' CLAIRVOYANCE

THE Editor of LIGHT has asked me to give an account of the evidential clairvoyance given to me by Mrs. Estelle Roberts, after her talk at the London Spiritualist Alliance on 17th January (recorded in LIGHT, 24th January).

In addition to giving me a string of names of relatives on the "other side," including my brother, who passed on when a baby and has grown up in the spirit-world, and Agnes (my mother's name), Mrs. Roberts said: "I feel that I want to start moving my hands about." "I do that all day," I replied. She then asked me if it was manipulation, to which I replied in the affirmative. Mrs. Roberts then described the way I treat cataract cases and referred to a patient I had seen the previous day; that I was not to be depressed about this case, and that it would be successful.

It is interesting to note that on the very day to which Mrs. Roberts had referred, I complained to the patient that I was rather depressed because he did not make a speedier recovery. He replied that *he* did not feel depressed; "after all, he had had the cataract for twenty-five years and could not expect a quick result. He could definitely see better, and was content to continue."

Mrs. Roberts next spoke of a young man whose spine I had treated that day, the injury having been caused by a fall. Unfortunately, I could not place this at the time, but when returning home I realised to whom reference was made, but the age was wrong. The patient, a Col. P., had received many forms of

(Continued at foot of next column).

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EDITOR GEORGE H. LETHEM
ASSISTANT EDITOR DR. NANDOR FODOR

As We See It

ALLIES—NOT ENEMIES

MR. G. K. Chesterton does not like Spiritualism. He has said so on more than one occasion since he astonished many of his friends and critics by joining the Roman Catholic Church. Nevertheless he recognises the value of Spiritualism when he is arguing against the claims of Materialism, and in this respect he sets an example to Catholics and Protestants alike.

In *The Universe* for January 18th, Mr. Chesterton had an article entitled "The Collapse of Materialism," in which he dealt in true Chestertonian style, with an address delivered some time ago by Dr. David Forsyth in the Section of Psychiatry of the Royal Society of Medicine. Commenting on the address, Mr. Chesterton wrote: "It is no news to us that a Materialist can be bigoted, but we do not always come upon so startling an example of his being antiquated."

And in proving that Dr. Forsyth is "antiquated" in his knowledge of evidence, Mr. Chesterton links the Roman Catholic Church and Spiritualism in a manner which will startle his friends the Bishops and cause even Father Thurston to wonder if some kind of protest should not be made. Hitherto, by Roman Catholic speakers and writers, the Church and Spiritualism have been almost always presented as enemies; Mr. Chesterton presents them as allies in the good work of confuting Materialism. Here are his words:—

"The Church throws down the unanswered challenge of Lourdes; the Spiritualists positively claim to prove their new religion by experiments, like a thesis in chemistry or electricity."

Mr. Chesterton is, of course, wrong in saying that Spiritualists prove their religion by their experiments; what they do is to prove the facts on which all religions are based, including that of the Roman Catholic Church; but that slip may be overlooked as his knowledge of Spiritualism is probably not sufficient to cause him to realise the significance of the distinction.

The important point is that Mr. Chesterton, probably the most influential lay exponent and apologist of the Roman Catholic Church in this country, links the Church and Spiritualism together as effective witnesses against Materialism.

Long ago, Bishop Welldon (formerly Dean of Durham) pointed out that "all Christians are Spiritualists" and that it is not Spiritualism but Materialism that is the enemy of Religion. Mr. Chesterton's next step should be to adopt that declaration.

A LAWYER'S TESTIMONY

By THE EDITOR

WHEN Professor McBride lectured recently at the British College of Psychic Science on "Why I am only half convinced of Survival," I ventured (during question time) to draw his attention to evidence vouched for by a London University Lecturer and to suggest that scientists should examine it. His answer was that the examination of evidence was a task for lawyers, not for scientists.

Assuming that the Professor was right, he should be interested in a book entitled *Post-Mortem Talks With Public Men* (Two World's Publishing Co., Manchester, 3/6), recorded by a Barrister-at-Law, who prefers to remain anonymous so far as the public are concerned but whose identity is known to a large circle of readers, who remember his earlier book, *Talks With Spirit Friends—Bench and Bar*. Here the Professor and his scientific friends will find evidence carefully set out, analysed and authenticated, so that its value can be easily assessed.

To-day, I confine myself to the author's Preface and Introduction, both of which are interesting and valuable to the student. First, as to the author's experience and qualifications. He is a Barrister (now retired) with long years of practice in examining evidence and appraising its strength and weakness. His investigations into psychic matters, he tells us, have extended over forty-six years and during that time he has "conversed with more than 200 discarnates, most of whom satisfied him of their identity" beyond any doubt.

Many of the "discarnates" whose messages are recorded were, in their day, men whose names were widely known; and recognising that, even amongst Spiritualists, there is a tendency to discount the use of "great names," he gives reasons why those he mentions should be accepted without serious challenge.

"First," he writes, "those who are great in this world are not necessarily great in the next, in fact, quite the reverse is often the case . . . Secondly, there is implanted in every human soul the innate urge to help the distressed, especially those dear to it . . . The 200 discarnates I have spoken to have, with few exceptions, shown an intense desire to get into touch with their own people." That is, though "great," they have the ordinary human characteristics.

As indicating the author's methods of dealing with "great names" he says—"Generally speaking, discarnates seldom fail to prove their identity if the sitter be a sincere investigator. If, however, the communicators were in their earth life public characters, the evidence would have to be accepted with reserve because a great deal of the private lives even of public men is common knowledge. I had to accept Sir Frank Lockwood on my (deceased) wife's introduction, coupled with his distinctive personality, and on the strength of his presentation I accepted Dr. Johnson, Marlowe and others."

The usual assumption is that communicators give messages for the purpose of convincing or comforting their friends on this side. Another object, however, is mentioned.

"Sir Frank Lockwood," the author writes, "from time to time stressed the fact that he was bringing them with the consent of my wife, for the express purpose of convincing them of the reality of communication between the two worlds and, strange though it may seem, these spirit-workers have, time and again, assured me that such knowledge is an important factor in the progress of the discarnate."

The messages make very interesting reading and introduce many names well-known in Church, Law, Politics, and Literature. They require an article to themselves and that will follow in due course. Many of them are evidential, and every noteworthy point is emphasised by the author's comments and explanations.

LOOKING ROUND THE WORLD

SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS

READERS of the London *Evening News*, numbering many hundreds of thousands, are being regaled each day with stories of spirit-return and spirit-intervention contributed by people who sign their names and give their addresses as guarantees of good faith. Many of the writers declare that they "are not Spiritualists," and yet they relate experiences which can be explained only on the assumption that the basic claims of Spiritualism are well-founded—namely, that human Survival is a fact and spirit-return a proved possibility.

All the experiences described are of the spontaneous kind in which Mediumship, in the ordinary sense, does not intrude; and for this very reason, the effect on the minds of the readers may be all the more convincing. Certain it is that the reading of these "queer stories" (as they are called), must be adding substantially to the number of those interested in the facts which Spiritualism proclaims; and if interest leads to inquiry, it will be found that only Spiritualism can provide the facilities and the guidance which are needed.

FORTUNE-TELLING TRAGEDIES

Tragedies due to reliance on the advice of fortune-tellers have been in evidence lately, and it has been assumed that in some way this is a post-war development. In the *Kentish Times* (January 18th), Claude Grant points out that this assumption is quite unfounded, and that similar tragedies were at least as common before the war as after. The "confessions" of a London fortune-teller, published recently in a Sunday newspaper, gave an indication of the extent to which roguery enters where money-making is the object.

Nevertheless, most psychic students have had personal experiences of the foretelling of future events which place the possibility beyond dispute. It is not the use of the power of prediction, but the abuse that is the cause of trouble.

SCIENCE AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

Psychical Research is making its way steadily into scientific circles. The latest evidence of this is the appearance of a long, illustrated article by Dr. Nandor Fodor, entitled, "Can We Believe in Levitation?" in the February issue of *Armchair Science*, with which Professor A. M. Low is associated. Concluding his article—in which a number of authenticated cases of levitation are described—Dr. Fodor says: "Here is a field of investigation which promises a rich harvest; it is the bounden duty of science to enter and seek."

DR. FODOR IN SCOTLAND

During the week-end, members of the Edinburgh Psychic College and the Glasgow Spiritualist Association had an opportunity to listen to a series of interesting addresses on topical Psychical Research by Dr. Nandor Fodor. On Friday last (January 25th), he spoke at Edinburgh on "Problems of the Direct Voice," and summarised the conclusions at which he had arrived after many years of study. This lecture was repeated at Glasgow on Sunday night (January 27th). On Sunday morning, Dr. Fodor spoke of the relationship between Psychical Research and Spiritualism; and, contrasting the attitude of the Psychical Researcher and Spiritualist, pointed to the need of harmonious co-operation. On Monday night (January 28th), he spoke on recent psychic adventures, in the course of which he dwelt on research experiences gained at the International Institute, of which he is the Research Officer. The lectures were received with great appreciation.

CHURCH AND SPIRITUAL HEALING

IT may be correct to say that St. Stephen's, Brighton, is the first Anglican Church definitely set apart for the ministry of spiritual healing; but it is not by any means the first Anglican Church in which spiritual healing services have been held. Some years ago, great attention was directed to a long series of healing services held in a Church at Frizinghall, Bradford, with the consent and support of the Bishop of the diocese. Great crowds of ailing people attended, and some successes were reported, but, on the whole, the results were disappointing.

The Rev. John Maillard, who has been appointed "priest-in-charge" by the Bishop of Chichester, disclaims any intention of "flirting" with Spiritualism. Nevertheless, if he succeeds, it will be by drawing on the same power that Spiritualist healers use. In this respect, as in others, it is true that "God is no respecter of persons," and that without regard to labels, ecclesiastical or otherwise, "he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him" and used by Him.

SPIRITUALISM IN GERMANY

The dissolution of the Weissenberg religious sect by the German authorities can scarcely be regarded as an attack on Spiritualism, as some of our daily papers seemed to think. For, although it was claimed that the spirits of Martin Luther and President von Hindenberg communicated at the meetings, it was not on that account that the secret police intervened, but because of the activities of the leader of the sect, Josef Weissenberg, who, it is stated is "frantically revered by his followers," who are said to have numbered a hundred thousand. Spiritualism, as an organised movement, is not strong in Germany; but the various journals from which we are able to quote from time to time, indicate that much patient and useful investigation is being accomplished.

APPART BEFORE THE COURT

Who is the legal owner of apported objects? In the famous case of the Ludwig Uhland MS. (see *Encyclopædia of Psychic Science*, p. 397), the German court decided that the owner is the Medium and not the sitter who "grabbed" it. But greater complications are likely to arise if the original owner is still alive and claims the object as lost property.

A highly interesting case of this type may shortly come up before the court in Budapest, arising out of a sitting with Lajos Pap, the famous Hungarian apport Medium, on December 1st, 1934. Five old documents (a marriage certificate and four birth certificates) floated down from the air. The owners were easily traced. The documents had been submitted, in an adoption case, to the Orphan Board of Budapest in 1930. There they were lost and, because of the loss, a complaint had been made to the Mayor. A copy of this complaint is now in the hands of Dr. Chengery Pap, in whose laboratory the sitting with Lajos Pap (no relation) took place.

The owners demanded the return of the documents. Dr. Chengery Pap refused, saying he wants to be sued. He has seven witnesses to prove how the documents came into his possession. He hopes that the court proceedings will make it a *cas célèbre*.

R.C. CHURCH AND SPIRITUALISM

In a paper entitled *Palestra del Clero*, published at Rovigo, Father A. Mancini admits that "the Church permits the study of Spiritualism, with the greatest caution, and by those who cannot receive harm from it." *Ali del Pensiero*, quoting the above and agreeing as to the "greatest caution" required, remarks that the number of persons who may receive benefit from this study is infinitely greater than that of those who may receive harm.

MY FIRST VOICE SEANCE

By JAMES DOUGHTY

I ATTENDED a seance for Direct Voice, conducted by "Red Cloud" through the Mediumship of Mrs. Estelle Roberts, on Tuesday evening (22nd January).

Being in daily contact with the Spiritualist movement, yet not actually of it, I have been asked by the Editor of *LIGHT* to give my impressions as an initiate into the mysteries of Direct Voice, which Mr. Shaw Desmond recently described as the most convincing form of phenomena.

I sat with about a hundred others in a large room, at one end of which was a small platform supporting the cabinet in which the Medium sat. On the platform in front of the cabinet was placed a (not very) luminous trumpet.

After a few introductory remarks by Mrs. Treloar, who was in charge of the ceremonies, the light was extinguished and the seance began in complete darkness.

This darkness is one of the objections that many critics have against such seances, but there are explanations of the necessity for it for certain phenomena that I, personally, can accept as rational.

I do not think I have ever before sat in such an utter negation of light, and one effect of it was that I became almost unconscious of my own physical body and of the surrounding bodies. There was just "I," in complete isolation, save for the voices that later came from the inky void.

After the usual hymn, the reason for which I am not clear about, a gramophone record was put on. If I wanted to attempt humour I might say that about a hundred records were played, and Kreisler's "Caprice Viennois" was ninety-nine of them. It was already a familiar tune to me, but I fear I shall never willingly listen to it again.

If this continuous background of music is absolutely necessary at such seances, I would suggest that the whole question of providing suitable music should be given much more serious consideration than appears to be the case.

In a very short time, after the trumpet had performed a noisy dance along the brass rail that bounded the platform, a husky voice ("Red Cloud") greeted us, and requested us not to be too tense.

Then, for an hour or so, followed a series of remarkable conversations; remarkable, not particularly for their content, but for the fact that each one was conducted for the one part by a voice from the audience, and for the other part by a voice from the trumpet, claiming to be that of a discarnate entity.

One of the most striking manifestations was a voice that, after establishing contact with a sitter, and holding a short, personal chat, said: "This is the first time I have ever spoken. *I was deaf and dumb.*" This was confirmed by the person addressed.

Another poignant message was from one who had died by suicide, and this also was confirmed.

For the most part, the conversations were too personal to have any value as evidence to anyone but the sitter concerned, but there was a charming spontaneity about them, and there were numerous points that, to an outsider, had the appearance of being evidential to the recipient.

And what is an inexperienced enquirer to think of all this, and what criticisms can be made?

The first question is, naturally, "Is it true?" "Red Cloud" once said: "It is either true or not true. Have it your own way." I should feel much inclined to say something similar if I, in some remote part of the world, tried in vain to convince someone that it is possible to speak by wireless telephone from London to New York.

I have never done this, but I believe it is possible, and that I could prove it if certain conditions were

favourable (i.e., if I could afford it). Why, then, should it be more difficult to believe that it is possible to converse vocally with discarnate spirits, in the face of all the evidence, and in view of what I heard at this seance? That it is more difficult, I confess; but that may be due to my own ignorance or obtuseness.

The further question arises: "If I did not hear spirit-voices, what *did* I hear?" The alternative seems to involve the question of fraud. In these days of super-fraud-proof investigations, a complete absence of test conditions, coupled with complete darkness, suggests to me not fraud, but a faith and honesty that are indifferent to criticism. For the scientific investigator, strict test conditions are essential; but for the faithful, who seek only communication with their friends no longer on earth, they are out of place.

Supposing that the Medium, with accomplices, had, in that impenetrable darkness, manipulated the trumpet and supplied the voices, how could they carry on such a quick interchange of intimate conversation with the various sitters? If the whole thing were a collective conspiracy, involving the co-operation of all those who took part in the conversations, and assuming that they had considerable powers of acting, what would be the point of it all?

Perhaps the strongest argument, to me, against a suggestion of wholesale conspiracy to deceive, is that the entire performance would then be so utterly futile to all concerned as to be more incredible than what is claimed for it.

As an enquirer, I am bound to ask myself: "Did this seance do anything towards convincing me of the reality of spirit-communication?" In the absence of any personal communication to myself, or anything in the nature of scientific test, or any acquaintance with the recipients of messages, one is left only with an intuitive feeling of either truth or falsehood.

This I can say, that on that night, in that almost "discarnating" darkness, it seemed not improbable, but natural, that one should converse with spirit entities.

Mrs. ESTELLE ROBERTS' CLAIRVOYANCE

THE Editor of *LIGHT* has asked me to give an account of the evidential clairvoyance given to me by Mrs. Estelle Roberts, after her talk at the London Spiritualist Alliance on 17th January (recorded in *LIGHT*, 24th January).

In addition to giving me a string of names of relatives on the "other side," including my brother, who passed on when a baby and has grown up in the spirit-world, and Agnes (my mother's name), Mrs. Roberts said: "I feel that I want to start moving my hands about." "I do that all day," I replied. She then asked me if it was manipulation, to which I replied in the affirmative. Mrs. Roberts then described the way I treat cataract cases and referred to a patient I had seen the previous day; that I was not to be depressed about this case, and that it would be successful.

It is interesting to note that on the very day to which Mrs. Roberts had referred, I complained to the patient that I was rather depressed because he did not make a speedier recovery. He replied that *he* did not feel depressed; "after all, he had had the cataract for twenty-five years and could not expect a quick result. He could definitely see better, and was content to continue."

Mrs. Roberts next spoke of a young man whose spine I had treated that day, the injury having been caused by a fall. Unfortunately, I could not place this at the time, but when returning home I realised to whom reference was made, but the age was wrong. The patient, a Col. P., had received many forms of

(Continued at foot of next column).

ITALIAN NOTES

By ISABEL EMERSON

NOT only is interest in psychic matters steadily increasing among all classes in Italy, but there is a friendly interchange of thought with other nations. This is evident from the number of translations of psychic books which are appearing. Among the more recent are: *La Grande Speranza* (Richet), translated by F. Zingaropoli; *La Sopravvivenza dell'Uomo dopo la Morte* (Tweedale), and *Sulla Soglia del Mondo Eterico* (Findlay), translated by Elio Falchi. *La Via dell'Immortalità* (Cummins), translated by Isabel Emerson, will appear shortly. The last three works are presented to the Italian public in excellent prefaces by Signor Bozzano.

Elio Falchi is the author of a helpful and enlightening brochure on *The Principles of Spiritualism* and another on the spiritual aspect of marriage; he is also the translator of John Prévost Hardy's work on *Pre-natal Thought*.

The monthly review, *Ali del Pensiero*, is now appearing simultaneously in Italian and French.

Miss Margaret V. Underhill, author of *Your Infinite Possibilities*, etc., is contributing a series of articles on "Octaves of Mind, Music and Colour" to the French review *L'Astrosophie*.

PROBLEM OF EVIL

The December number of *La Ricerca Psichica* contains an interesting analytical review by Signor Bozzano of Dr. Hegy's *A Witness Through the Centuries*. After quoting at length the spirit communications in the book on the subject of "Evil," and referring to the Oriental aphorism: "Evil is the Good we do not know," the reviewer closes with the following remarks:

"While, on the one hand, the existence of Evil in the form under examination would be converted into Good for the victims of the voracity of others, on the other it would appear to be a literal necessity, so as to render possible on our globe the existence of living beings destined to attain spiritual individuality by passing through all species of animals until they reach the human species, and reincarnate progressively in all the races composing it. I note that this was the belief held by Giuseppe Mazzini.

"Such, it seems to me, is the best, if not the only solution of the disturbing mystery of the existence of Evil in the pitiless form here considered. . . I am glad that Dr. Reginald Hegy's book has furnished me with the opportunity of expressing opinions formed by me long ago, but which I have not hitherto had the occasion to express publicly."

Another work reviewed exhaustively by Signor

(Continued from previous page).

treatment, with little result. Thanks to help received with diagnosis from the "other side," I found that he had had a severe fall some years ago. He had gradually got worse since then, and when he first visited me had great difficulty in walking. He was unable to tell when he was being touched or pinched from the 7th dorsal vertebrae down to the coccyx. He is now sensitive to the lightest touch down the whole of the spine, his general health has improved, and his friends have remarked that "he looks ten years younger."

Mrs. Roberts also described a spirit giving the name of Dr. MacDonald, saying that he was working with me (he has given his name through two other Mediums in different parts of the country).

When I told my patients that I had received messages from the "other side" about them, they both asked the same question: "Did the spirit say we would get better?"

I am glad to write this short account in grateful thanks to Mrs. Estelle Roberts and her inspirers who have given me great encouragement to go forward with my work.

C. S. COLLEN-SMITH, N.D., F.B.C.P.

Bozzano in *La Ricerca Psichica* is *A Hypnotist's Case Book*, by the late Alexander Erskine.

SIBYLLINE MESSAGES

I. Capozzi, writing in *La Ricerca Psichica* on "The Cult of Images in Italy," relates that at the present time a small statue of the Blessed Virgin is venerated in a private house in Rome, where a circle of believers in its powers meets weekly to inquire as to health or other matters. The answers are given in sibylline style by the owner of the statue, and a large collection of votive offerings in the small sanctuary testifies to the satisfaction given by the oracle. The writer adds that the ecclesiastical authorities disapprove of this private sanctuary, but the civil authorities do not consider it an infringement of the law.

CURIOUS PHENOMENA

At some seances held recently in a private house in the Veneto, many curious phenomena took place, such as the flapping of wings, lights, apports of flowers, direct voice, and direct writing on sheets of paper previously initialled by the sitters. A remarkable fact was that some of these sheets were immediately dematerialised and rematerialised in four different places.—(*La Forza Sconosciuta*).

At the Colonial Exhibition in Naples there is an Arab village where the interesting phenomenon of a fakir in trance may be observed. He lies in a glass case, hermetically sealed, with two pythons for company!—(*Mondo Occulto*).

DR. JASINK'S TALKS

Dr. Jasink, whose talks at the British Institute in Florence on "The Functions of Great Men," "The Buddha," and "The Will," were so much appreciated last year, is continuing them this winter, and has already given a course on "Indian Thought and Religion." He is at present speaking on "Mysticism Throughout the Ages."

EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHO-BIOLOGY

An Italian Institute of Experimental Psycho-Biology has recently been opened in Rome (14 Via Marsala). It owes its existence to the untiring efforts of Signor Ettore Florian Petrausch, who for the last twenty years has devoted himself to the cause of Psychic Research, especially with a view to "using the unknown forces in the service of humanity."

The object of the Institute is to collect and examine scientifically all kinds of supernormal phenomena, endeavouring to discover the laws governing them, so as to make them more generally known. Many well-known scientists are interested in the Rome Institute.

Signor Petrausch has been a convinced Spiritualist for many years. He attended the famous Millesimo seances, and has had many marvellous experiences, spontaneous phenomena of various kinds having taken place at his castle of Belvedere, near Turin. He discovered his own remarkable healing power through the serious illness of his wife, who is also an excellent Medium, and who was to undergo a severe and uncertain operation. The matter being mentioned by a communicator at a seance, Signor Petrausch asked:

"Can nothing be done for her?" and received the reply:

"Yes, you must heal her yourself."

Directions followed, which were carried out with such success that in a short time no trace of the disease was to be found—and this without any operation. Since that time Signor Petrausch has healed numerous sufferers from all kinds of maladies, including tetanus, madness, consumption, Bright's Disease, etc. He has treated more than 12,000 cases and has also written extensively on psycho-therapy.

Having spent his own fortune for the Cause he has at heart, Signor Petrausch took his diploma in massotherapy, and is now visiting various cities, giving treatment in order to raise funds for his Institute, in connection with which a review entitled *Le Forze Sconosciute* is issued. On his recent visit to Florence, he was consulted by many, who greatly benefited by his ministrations and magnetic personality.

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DIARY OF EVENTS

PUBLIC MEETINGS FOR ENQUIRERS

Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m.

February 5th—**Clairvoyance** ... Mrs. Hirst;
Answers to Questions Mr. W. H. Evans.

DEMONSTRATIONS OF CLAIRVOYANCE

Wednesdays at 3 p.m.

February 6th—Mrs. F. Kingstone.

LECTURES

Thursdays at 8.15 p.m. (Fortnightly)

January 31st—"THE HEALING WORKS OF JESUS; ANALYSED"

by Capt. C. S. GILLON,

Chairman: Brig. Gen. Kemp, C.B., C.M.G.

GROUP SEANCES (limited to 10)

Fridays at 7 p.m.

February 1st—Mrs. Livingstone.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Private sittings are arranged daily with approved Mediums, including Mrs. Abbot, Miss Naomi Bacon, Miss Jacqueline, Mrs. Mason, Ruth Vaughan, Mrs. Clifton Allen, Mrs. Brittain, Miss Frances Campbell, Miss Lily Thomas.

Diagnosis and Psychometry: Ruth Vaughan, Monday, Wednesday (morning) and Thursday.

Slate writing in full light: Sittings may be booked with Mr. Claude Bishop. For particulars see Secretary.

Classes and Private Sittings for Psychic Development: Mr. Leigh Hunt.

Spiritual Healing (Voluntary): Brig.-Gen. Kemp, C.B., C.M.G., every day. Miss Ethel Topcott (Trance), Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Devotional Groups for Healing: Sitters invited. Apply Mr. W. H. Evans.

Special Assistance to Enquirers: Tuesdays, 3.30-5.30 p.m., Vice-Admiral Armstrong; Thursdays, 3-6 p.m., Mr. Stanley de Brath; Every day, 6-10, Mr. W. H. Evans.

THE QUEST CLUB MEETING

THE Quest Club meeting at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Monday evening, was a great success. It was well-attended; Lady Carey, as Chairman, gave good reason why those who had not already done so should join the Quest Club; Miss Lind-af-Hageby delivered an eloquent and carefully-reasoned address on "The Place of Spiritualism in Modern Thought"; and Mrs. Helen Hughes gave a most convincing demonstration of clairaudience.

Lady Carey said she was herself a member of the Quest Club and found its rooms most attractive and convenient, whether for meeting friends, getting books from the Library—which was one of the best of its kind in the world—or for consulting the reliable Mediums who could be met there. For lonely people, the Quest Club provided splendid opportunities of meeting interesting people and making friends, and her advice to her own friends was to join at once.

Miss Lind traced the history of Spiritualism in its ancient and modern aspects and said it was a challenge to orthodoxy in science and religion. It had been attacked by theologians, but that was no reason for throwing over Christianity, which, like all the great religions, was based on Spiritualism. Properly understood, Spiritualism did not make for hostility to religion; it provided a meeting-place for science and religion.

In next week's issue of LIGHT, a full report of Miss Lind's address will be given.

Mrs. Helen Hughes' clairaudient demonstration was both dramatic and evidential. Names and relationships of unseen visitors were given unerringly to about a dozen different people. One lady was told that a relation, who was named and described, was showing a fine astrakan coat and saying that a little coat had been made from it for her—a statement which the lady admitted was correct. A man in the gallery was reminded that a woman who manifested had bandaged his hand, long ago, when it was injured, and this also was accepted as correct.

L.S.A. AND QUEST CLUB NOTES

DEVOTIONAL HEALING GROUPS

THE work of these Groups is going ahead in a very pleasing manner. The way in which they grow shows that they meet a definite need, and the reports now coming in indicate that much good is being done. Wide-spread is the help which can be rendered in this way.

Writing to me recently, one of our friends says: "Thank you so much for writing to me. I was so glad to get your letter. All the week I have been thinking about writing to you. I wanted to tell you how things had improved, and troubles lightened in many ways, even to the peace of mind. This has been the happiest Christmas for me spiritually of all my life. I have the wonderful sense of support and confidence in the love and sympathy which I can feel surrounding me like an atmosphere, so close and permeating. In other quarters we have been told that things are improving, and I cannot account for such a sudden change, except in the way of spiritual guidance."

The action of the power upon a receptive person is interesting and valuable. Another report gives evidence that real work is being done. The writer states: "I am pleased to say that my wife is improving, and she feels better. Her sleep has improved, and her general health is likewise better. Considering she has been ill for about two years, we are deeply thankful for the change." This lady has been suffering from sleeplessness, giddiness, and impaired sight.

In yet another letter, the writer says that when they sit, the child is asleep in his mother's arms, and she is conscious of presences with her. It is very cheering.

Again, we are told of one who is being treated unknown to himself, and the writer says how much their friend has improved, and adds: "As he does not know of it, it cannot be put down to suggestion."

We are receiving many letters expressing gratitude for help, and explaining the nature of the illness. Most of these are not suitable for publication, but genuinely-interested people may hear extracts read privately by myself.

It is indeed a privilege to be able to carry out this work, and those friends who come and sit in our Groups are blessed in being able to give such splendid service to their fellows. All who attend are conscious of power and peace when in session. May I ask that any who would like to help in this work should communicate with me. We shall shortly have to form more Groups; in fact, we shall soon be taxed for room to carry on this work. Please come and help the heavy laden and the sick.
W. H. EVANS.

NEW L.S.A. BRANCH

New ground has been broken by the opening on January 17th of a Branch in the Island of Guernsey, to which the secretary, Miss Phillimore, paid a visit. A very promising beginning has been made. The Area Representative is Mrs. M. Crowe, Le Mont Saint, St. Saviour, Guernsey. She will be glad to hear from any resident in Guernsey who is interested.

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AT HOME.

Friday, Feb. 1st, at 3.30 p.m., Mr. Robert King. Subject—"What is Spirit Control." Chairman: Mr. C. W. Harwood.
Friday, Feb. 8th, at 3.30 p.m. Mrs. Alice Bailey.

EVENING MEETINGS.

Tues., Feb. 5th, at 8 p.m. "White Eagle," through Mrs. Grace Cook
Subject—"The Astral Plane."
Tues., Feb. 12th, at 8 p.m. Public Clairvoyance, Mrs. Hirst.
Members 1/-; Associates 1/6.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.

Questions—Advice—Instruction.
Wed., Feb. 6th, at 3 p.m. "White Eagle," through Mrs. Cooke.
Members 2/-; Associates 2/6

CIRCLE FOR CLAIRVOYANCE.

Wed., Feb. 5th, at 3 p.m., Mrs. Attryde.

HEALING.

Mondays, 2.30 to 4.30 p.m. Wednesdays, 5 to 7 p.m.

OPEN CLASSES FOR INSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 3 p.m.
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For particulars of further activities write for Syllabus.

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Clairvoyante: Mrs. STELLA HUGHES

Sun., Feb. 10th. Speaker: Mr. ARTHUR FINDLAY
Clairvoyant: Mr. THOMAS WYATT

For particulars of weekday activities at Headquarters,
Marylebone House, 42 Russell Square, W.C.1.
Apply Secretary: MUSEUM 0676

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SUNDAY, February 3rd.

11 a.m.—Dr. W. J. VANSTONE

6.30 p.m.—Mr. C. GLOVER BOTHAM.

Address and Clairvoyance

WEDNESDAY, February 6th, at 7.30 p.m.

Mr. HORACE LEAF. Clairvoyance.

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Mr. J. HAROLD CARPENTER

10th February—

Mrs. ALICE BAILEY

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3rd, 1935

11 a.m.—Mr. R. Dimsdale Stocker

Clairvoyant: Mr. Thomas Wyatt.

6.30 p.m.—Mr. J. B. McIndoe

Clairvoyant: Mr. R. E. Cockersell.

Sunday, February 10th, at 11 a.m. ... Mrs. St. CLAIR STOBART

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers.

Sunday, February 10th, at 6.30 p.m. ... Mr. HANNEN SWAFFER

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Stella Hughes

Silver Collection on entry.

OPEN MEETINGS

Mondays, 6.30 p.m. Wednesdays, 12.30 p.m.

Organ Recital, Address, Questions Answered and Clairvoyance. Admission Free.

Monday, Feb. 4th—Speaker: Dr. S. C. Damoglou

Clairvoyant: Mr. Thomas Wyatt.

Wednesday, Feb. 6th—Speaker: Miss Petronella Nell

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Stella Hughes.

Monday.**WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES**

2.30—4 p.m. Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.

2.30 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments
write to Mrs. Moysey (Hon. Secretary).

3—4 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart welcomes inquirers.

6.30 p.m.—Open Meeting in the Grotrian Hall.

6 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments
write to Miss Robertson (Hon. Secretary).

8 p.m.—Mr. Hendry and Mrs. Gray; Class for development of
the healing faculty.

Tuesday. Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.

2 p.m.—Mrs. Gray's Private Healing Treatment. For particulars
write to Mrs. Gray.

Wednesday. 12.30—1.30 p.m.—Open Meeting in Grotrian Hall.

3—4 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart welcomes inquirers.

Thursday. Miss Lily Thomas, by appointment.

7 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Mixed Healing Circle. For appointments
write to Miss Michell (Hon. Secretary).

Friday. 3—4 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart welcomes inquirers.

WEDNESDAY CIRCLES (limited to eight sitters)

Members, 3s.; Non-Members, 4s.

Feb. 6th. 2.30. Mrs. Evelyn Thomas. 6.30. Mr. J. Hutchings.

Feb. 13th. 2.30. Mrs. Jacqueline. 6.30. Mr. T. Wyatt.

Private Sittings by Appointment.

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(Visitors, 1/-)

Wednesday, February 6th, at 8.15 p.m. ... Mr. R. DIMSDALE STOCKER
"Psychology, Human Survival and Immortality"

Chairman: Mrs. ELIZABETH FORD

Wednesday, February 13th, at 8.15 p.m. ... Mr. J. DEIGHTON-PATMORE
"Colour-Life and Spiritual Vibrations"

Chairman: Miss N. TOM-GALLON

Wednesday, February 20th, at 8.15 p.m. ... Mrs. HELEN SPIERS
Demonstration of Clairvoyance

Chairman: Mr. S. O. COX

Wednesday, February 27th, at 8.15 p.m. ... Prof. D. F. FRASER-HARRIS, M.D., D.Sc.
"The Intermediate Problems for Psychic Research."

Chairman: Mrs. ASHTON JONSON

GROUP CLAIRVOYANCE

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Friday, February 1st, at 5 p.m.—
Mr. G. de BEAUREPAIRE

Friday, February 15th, at 5 p.m.—
Mrs. LILLIAN DUNCAN

Friday, February 8th, at 5 p.m.—
Mrs. EVELYN THOMAS

Friday, February 22nd, at 5 p.m.—
THE ROHAMAH RHAMAH

DISCUSSION TEA

(Members, 1/-; Visitors, 1/6).

Thursday, February 14th, at 4 p.m. ... "Apports" ... Mr. I. BOND NICHOLL

CONVINCING BOOK TEST

IN a lecture before the British College of Psychic Science on Wednesday last (January 23rd), the Rev. Charles Drayton Thomas told the following story of a very convincing book test:

"My aunt wrote to me of her wish to make me a present of my grandfather's edition of Byron. Before I called for it, I had a sitting with Mrs. Leonard. My father purported to communicate and said that they knew all about the book, that (1) my aunt would give me a second book; (2) that the Byron was on a shelf near the works of Tennyson; (3) that I should look out for a loose leaf.

"When I visited my aunt, I asked permission to see her library—shelves of books behind the door. My aunt pointed to the edition of Byron. By the side of it was a volume of Tennyson. She took down another book, the poems of Whittier, and asked me if I would like to have it.

"I found the loose leaf. It was a sheet of paper stuck between two pages, with notes. I did not read the notes.

"In a subsequent sitting, my grandfather made interesting references to this loose leaf. The notes were historical, referring to Napoleon; and he said: 'Look out, the sheet is stuck in at the wrong place.' I looked and found, indeed, that the notes concerned Byron's poem, 'Escape from Elba,' and that the loose leaf ought to have been stuck in there, a page back. Moreover, on the loose leaf page, I found the number of the correct page, showing that my grandfather realised his mistake."

In the earlier part of his address Mr. Thomas spoke on psychometry. He advanced as his view that psychometry is a form of direct knowledge. The psychometrist knows without knowing why or reasoning about it. It may be that the gift of psychometry is a foretaste of the enlarging awareness which comes to us in the next world.

GEORGE DAISLEY'S STORY

IN the *Pictorial Weekly* (January 26th), George Daisley, one of the latest recruits to the ranks of clairvoyant demonstrators, tells Mr. Roy Brandon, in an interview, "How he became a Medium." It is a story which must surely be without a parallel in the annals of Spiritualism.

George Daisley is a young man, "pale but handsome," says Mr. Brandon, "with clean-cut features and large, thoughtful-looking eyes." A few months ago he was "an unemployed builder's decorator." He went to a Spiritualist meeting, "just for fun," and was astonished to find that he "sensed" the spirits the Medium described and "heard" the messages before she gave them out. He told a Spiritualist friend about this and was taken to a meeting at Leyton. The Medium did not arrive in time, and Daisley was asked to take her place. He was "literally pushed on to the platform," stood up, saw a form which took the shape of a man who spoke to him, and he found he had "the power of direct communication with the dead."

"As I stood there, inwardly quaking," he says, "uncertain of the course I should take, the grim look on the face before me melted; the lips parted in a friendly smile. Then, speaking in perfect English, the form addressed me. To my surprise, the voice sounded just like any human voice. 'You have started a work for God and Humanity. Carry on. I will always be with you.'

"With these words still ringing in my ears, I became conscious of the fact that I could now dimly see the people in the hall. I could see, also, another spirit entity—that of an elderly lady. She was pointing to someone in the audience. 'Tell this lady that I am Sarah Anne Walker, and that I am her aunt,' she said. Before I realised what I was doing, I had passed on the message. The die was cast. I was a Spiritualist Medium."

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