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DEATH
WHAT?
THIS PAPER
TELLS YOU**

SPIRITUALISM'S PICTORIAL JOURNAL

TRUTH *The PSYCHIC OBSERVER*

**TRUTH
FOR
AUTHORITY
NOT
AUTHORITY
FOR
TRUTH**

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Present-Day Demonstrations of Physical Mediumship in America Held Superior to Like Phenomena Witnessed in Great Britain

ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS POSSIBLE REASON

Noted London Spiritualist, Journalist, Author and Writer visits
Psychic Observer editor, views American mediumship and
attends seances at Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp.

MATERIALIZATION AND DIRECT-VOICE SEANCES SURPASS SIMILAR DEMONSTRATIONS IN ENGLAND

My Sittings with Harwood, Clark,
Taber and Other Chester-
field Mediums

By

Paul Miller
London, England

(Spiritualist author of a number of books, including "Science in The Seance Room" and "Caucade Of The Spirit." For some years associated with "Psychic News," of London, England.)

A spirit sat by the piano and played, at my request, while another spirit, in answer to my unspoken suggestion stood out in front of the cabinet and sang "Annie Laurie" in a clear, melodious voice.

That, for me, was one of the highlights of an amazing two days spent at Camp Chesterfield, Indiana, where I had sittings with mediums who exhibited the phenomena on which Spiritualism is founded and without which it will decay as surely as any other religion which cannot demonstrate its foundation truths.

Unfortunately, I had not the time to sit with all the mediums on a short visit, but wherever I went, as a stranger, I was met with kindness, and the evidence poured in on me.

"Annie Laurie"

The nature of my visit was known to the spirit guides who provided evidence and gave me encouragement. Mediums said evidential things when they did not know the meaning of what they were saying.

Showing the subtle nature of the intelligence behind the veil, my own spirit people proved themselves in their own way. At a trumpet seance with *Dollie Clark*, attended by my friend *Ralph G. Pressing* and *Mrs. Ida Anderson*, of Duluth, Minnesota, I heard them talk with their spirit people and guides as naturally as though they were in the same plane of life.

Then a quavering voice started to sing "Annie Laurie," and Louise the guide who regulates the sittings there, said it was for me. The name Mary was given, and I said I could not recall it in any connection. Then the sur-

name followed, indistinctly at first but plain enough to be made out by the others and by the guide who repeated it.

The entity insisted that she was a relative, and then it dawned on me that it was an aunt whom I had last seen in Scotland about thirty-five years before.

Relatives Manifest

As soon as I showed recognition the voice became livelier, and the spirit explained that she had always been interested in me. She said that she was sorry she could not sing better, for she had a good voice in her day. As we talked she became more affectionate, talked of her long-continued interest in me, and spoke as though she knew why I had come to America.

There followed my paternal grandfather whom I have not at any time met, my paternal grandmother, and a woman giving the name *Elizabeth*, from the town of Bolton, Lancashire, England where I had worked some years before.

Her surname she could not make clear at first, and the guide explained that it was her first attempt at communication. I tried to recall her name but could not, and she said would make me remember before the seance was over.

She was a keen Theosophist when I knew her, and worked in the syndication department of the newspaper where I was a member of the staff. I could "see" her face, with its lines; and her thick glasses, I could even "hear" her peculiar little nervous laugh, but her surname still escaped me.

Planned Communications

I had to leave the problem while others talked with me through the trumpet, including my mother-in-law, whose evidence was characteristic of her. She was full of love for me, and with news of my family in England. It was the first time she had spoken directly to me though she has talked with my wife and her sister.

There were others, too, but the appearance of relatives "in force," was, for me, a new thing in my psychic experience, for hitherto all those who had appeared were associated with my Spiritualist

Left to right, → top row: *Dollie Clark*, pastor of the Psychic Science Spiritualist Church, 1415 Central Ave., Indianapolis, Indiana; *Fanchion Pennis Harwood*, pastor of the Madison Ave., Spiritualist Church, 13th and Madison Ave., Anderson, Indiana. Bottom Row, left to right: *Mable Riffe*, lecturer, mental and direct-voice medium—Secretary of Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp, Chesterfield, Indiana; *Edith Stilwell*, lecturer, teacher, mental and direct-voice medium . . . one of America's foremost blind-fold billet readers.

writings and were interested in the development of Spiritualist propaganda and in spiritual development.

But the persistence of my kin made me realize how carefully these communications are planned. My own guides spoke, one an English scientist whom I know well, and the other a Scots doctor who talked for the first time through a medium in my own home just before I left London.

Over Fifty Materialized

Both the male guides spoke as they did before, but they were "coloured" by the American intonation. I asked them about it, and they explained that they were using American vibrations but that later they would be more themselves as far as speech was concerned.

My friends had evidential communications also, but I want to show how my own experience was made watertight by what followed, so will leave them to tell their own stories—if they care to do so. (In the end I recalled *Elizabeth's* name—it was "Blare." The recollection was peculiar, for I saw it subjectively in large letters, and as I called it out the trumpet rose and tapped my head.)

That evening *Ralph Pressing* and I sat with about ten others at a seance given by *Fanchion Harwood*. At least sixty spirits materialized, not as wraiths, not as momentary appearances, but as living human beings who talked freely to their own people.

Some walked about the room. One young man waltzed with his mother; fathers greeted children, grandparents proved themselves by showing facial characteristics, and one proud man clinched his statements by drawing attention to his bald head.

Ralph Pressing had several of



Chesterfield Mediums

By way of EXPLANATION

Owing to an extremely limited stay in America, *Paul Miller*, author of the article on this page, was obliged to limit his visit to Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp to less than two days. In that time, it was impossible to arrange seances with all of the mediums. Then, too, the current Chesterfield season had ended several days before and many of the mediums had returned to their homes. Even so, he had an opportunity to meet many of the mediums regularly scheduled at the camp during the 1948 summer season.

Mr. Miller also attended a materialization seance conducted by *Lula Taber*. An article about this seance, at which the spirits of master teachers and guides of the sitters manifested, will appear at a later date.

Other mediums, not mentioned in the article, were interviewed by *Mr. Miller*. They were: *Clifford Bias*, *Charles Swann*, *Nellie Curry*, *Loretta Schmidt* and *Maudie Fox*. *Robert Chaney* demonstrated his rare psychic gift of Spirit Photography. The proof of the picture taken, showing four extras, was submitted to *Mr. Miller* before his return to London.

one night, but still they came. As the next figure appeared someone said, "here is the man with the goatee." Immediately I thought he was an American come to welcome me. But he announced himself, in a very distinct English voice as "R. L. S." At first I did not realize he was saying he was *Robert Louis Stevenson*.

"R. L. S. Appears"

I am not flattered by the attentions of the so-called great. I have never thought *Stevenson* was as wonderful as wife thought, or as many literateurs still think, but here was an entity claiming to be *Stevenson*, whose books I enjoyed in my boyhood, and whose house is Heriot Row, Edinburgh always fascinated me, even though I could never have hoped as a boy to walk in the society he did.

We talked of Spiritualism, and he said what is true, that he was a Spiritualist while on earth. But what I recalled most clearly was the pleasure I drew from the "Wrong Box," written by R.L.S. in collaboration with his son-in-law, *Lloyd Osborne*, and one of the funniest things in the English language.

The entity said he used my reaction to his book to impress certain ideas on me, and he volunteered the statement that in some of my writings and his there is a similarity of expression. He claimed to be a guide, an influence; I did not invent it. The medium's literary tastes are unknown to me, but the chances of *Robert Louis Stevenson* turning up at a seance are very remote. He stood stroking his little goatee beard, and promised his cooperation.

Piano Played by Spirit

Then came the incident of the spirit playing the piano while I stood beside her at the invitation

(Continued on Page 4, Col. 3)

PSYCHIC OBSERVER

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THE RISHI'S

at

Coimbatore, India

Although thousands have taken up the task of teaching and demonstrating the truths of Spiritualism in the great country of India, psychic and spiritual phenomena is generally ridiculed and despised.

Modern day Indian philosophers are laboring to show that some form of future life exists.

By

H. S. D. Ayer

Secretary Spiritual Healing Center, Coimbatore

The Centenary day of Spiritualism was celebrated at Coimbatore and a red letter day it was for we had in our midst Mr. V. D. RISHI and Mrs. Rishi, "the apostles of Spiritualism" in India, and under the auspices of the Indian Spiritualist Society, the Spiritual Healing Centre, and the Latent Light Culture, a meeting was arranged in the Y.M.C.A. Hall.

Mr. V. D. traced the history of Spiritualism and gave his experience in a talk lasting for over an hour. Mr. and Mrs. Rishi have represented India in the various International Conferences more than five times in England and other places and he kept the audience spellbound.

We are living in a skeptical—a materialistic age. The scientific man particularly wants evidence. Before believing in a future life he wants evidence of that also, and he says "provide me the evidence and I will believe."

Modus Operandi

Psychic and spiritual phenomena it must be admitted are ridiculed and despised and those who do are persons who have never devoted any attention to the subject. From ancient times, for the last several centuries, philosophers and theologians have labored to show that some form of future life exists and the net result of their endeavours have been scientifically nil.

The practical mind of today wants evidence in support of any belief it may hold and lacking that evidence, refuses to accept it. The only concrete evidence which can

conceivably be forthcoming is the proof of personal identity continuing to exist *post mortem* — the proof that individual human consciousness can and does continue to exist and persists in the absence of a material brain. It is precisely this evidence which psychic and

Her Phase of Mediumship MIRROR WRITING



Psychic Observer
MRS. V. D. RISHI

spiritual phenomena seemingly furnish and so far we can judge it can be obtained in no other manner.

The process of seances and their *modus operandi* can be explained by 1. disabusing the mind of the feeling that a physical body is necessary for thinking, 2. that survival of the personality is the greatest truth that is discovered by all passing over, 3. that the personality survives after the death of the body but goes on working and learning, 4. that the problem of multiple personalities can also be easily explained.

Great Concrete Idea

A simple explanation that is given is that in ordinary seances like auto-writing or ouija board, when spirits take control or are *en rapport* with the mind and brain mechanism of the medium, the personality slips into the medium's sub-conscious mind and they find that their thoughts can be written down just the same as when they had a physical body.

The mental body is sufficiently fluidic to be made to take the shape of all ideas and currents of feeling. Just try to visualize a sea of fluidic mental stuff and you can understand the physical body and brain of each person as a dynamic centre evolving ideas in this ocean. A personality is gradually built up out of this fluidic matter. There is however an inner centre keeping the elements of the personality in great cohesion.

Hence each personality becomes a great concrete idea and survives the mere destruction of the body and the brain—the physical matrix which originally helped to evolve the personality. So it can be easily seen that each personality so released, will continue to work through any bare physical body surrendered for temporary use. So the medium helps spirits with a temporary loan of his mind and brain mechanism — just allowing the telephone to be used for communication.

During their stay at Coimbatore, the Rishis gave about 30 seances

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Psychic Observer
V. D. RISHI

to the public and I should state that "remarkable" were the experiences and as a seeker after truth I am placing what I saw before the readers for what they are worth.

Invariably the Rishis do not know who is coming for seances with them and who is to be invoked. As a first step in the seance the sitter is told what to expect and is asked to think strongly of the entity with whom he wants a communication. A simple invocation and a prayer follow and the seance table tilts. No names or date of death or place or any question is put to the sitter.

Tremendous Response

Like a telephone bell ringing for a time till there is a person to respond the table tilts and then questions are put to the entity and asking him to tilt the table as many times as there are letters in the name of the entity while in the earth world. India is a land of several languages—over a hundred—and the Rishis are careful to ask the entity to tilt the table as many times as there are letters in the particular language to which the entity was accustomed while in the earth world.

I have seen the response come in English, Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati, Malayalam during their sittings and that with accuracy. Then the question follows about the person with whom the entity is concerned, if he would give the message in any particular language and after getting the answers by the tilt of the table — two for affirmation and four for negation, Mr. Rishi takes to auto-writing. The general question follows like "are you happy," "do you want anything to be done for you," "write the name by which you were called here," any pet name or surname, the details of his life here, his mother's name, father's, brothers and children's names, etc.

When it is known that the Rishis

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do not know the language like Tamil, Telugu, etc., it is remarkable to get not only the answers in that very language but that the spirits should be able to give the names correctly though occasionally they say they cannot remember.

In a number of cases the sitters became emotional, some break down with grief and begin to shed tears and the difficulty of Mr. Rishi in talking to the dead and the living can be imagined!

A few instances will be given here not with the object of proving survival but to show how the Dead do not forget us and are deeply concerned with our day to day life. The readers are free to draw their own inferences.

1. A Coorgese gentleman who had come from a very far-off place got in touch with his wife and after advising him on various household matters stated—"Do not think of throwing away the Ramjapa books of mine in the River Cauvery. It will break my heart. Place it in your altar room and carry on daily prayers. That will make me visit you often." This convinced the gentleman that his wife and none else could give the information and he who came as a skeptic sat for prayer.

2. A Guzaratti who lost his wife ten years ago put the question to her "are you happy?" and the answer was "I am very sorry to see that you took such a long time to contact me. You have been suffering patiently all these five years with stomach ache and do you know how I was praying for your relief?" The gentleman corroborated every item of the message as perfectly true after the seance was over.

3. Another sitter who got in touch with his father asked him what he should do for his happiness, peace and contentment for his evolution "and the answer was I only want that you worship a cow daily for a week and think of me. You did not give a cow as present after the death ceremonies and that alone is pulling me down." When it is remembered that the entity passed away seventeen years previously and when the sitter acknowledges the mistake in not giving a cow as Charity as per Hindu Custom, the message coming after a long period is significant.

4. Another case of some interest was that of an advocate who had called in to see the Rishis traveling over 400 miles. One question that he put in the middle of the seance to trap the Rishis was—"Have you seen your Peramma (mother's sister)?" Now this sister was not dead but was actually alive. The answer was, "Why are you asking the question? he is not here. She is in Nagercoil feeling upset over my death. I visit her every Friday but she is not aware of my presence." The gentleman was a lawyer and evidently wanted to test the genuineness of the seance. How could such an answer come in Tamil language unknown to the Rishis and that about a living entity?

5. A musician had lost his mother while he was about five years of age and at two seances she could not be contacted. The reply of the Guide of Rishi was "not traceable at present." The musician was asked to offer prayers to his mother and ask her to communicate with him. Three days later the musician was sitting with a friend of his at a seance for the latter to speak to his father.

In the middle of the seance the entity giving the message to the

SPIRITUALISM IN DAYTONA BEACH

For the past fifteen years, Spiritualism has been represented in the city of Daytona Beach, Florida by Rev. Margaret Springstead. She is pastor of the



Rev. Margaret Springstead

She moved to Florida sixteen years ago and was ordained there in 1934.

She has served the Cassadaga Spiritualist Camp, Brady Lake Spiritualist Camp and churches throughout Ohio, Pennsylvania and Florida.

musician's friend said, "A young lady is here and is eager to talk to Pichay." Who Pichay was, no one knew. Not even the musician! The Ouija Board indicator pointed the musician and he remembered that his father used to call him Pichay in his early ages. The messages were touchy and complete identity was got.

Valiant Workers

To her I put the question how she was able to come that day un-called for and how was it that she was absent when we invoked her. The answer was, "My son could not visualize me and his thoughts never reached me. Today at 3:30 p. m., while leaving his house he was intensely praying for my coming and felt sad that I could not come as did others.

"My Guide drew my attention and told me to go and give a message and so I came. The time is very significant as the time of the musician leaving his house to go to the seance was exactly three thirty.

Before closing I shall request the readers to think if such answers could be got from the sub-conscious mind of the medium, or if it was telepathy. What ever anybody may say, do not the above seances show that the spirits do exist and that they are eager to communicate with us.

It is a pity that in a vast country like India with over 400 millions of people there should be two and only two souls traveling all over India heedless of the troubles and difficulties of traveling, and carrying the torch of Spiritualism with no other motive than to throw the seeds of Spiritualism among humanity for their benefit.

May the Great Intelligences Bless them.

It was Tennyson who once said, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." If in your life, or in the lives of those you love, there is something missing let me help you through the power of prayer.



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(P-247)

They Shall Be Healed!

*He who has health has hope
He who has hope has everything*
—Arabian Proverb

A truly religious person, in times of mental disturbance, turns to God in prayer.

By
Edward L. Thorne

Prayer is one of the chief elements of a religious life. It is inseparable from religion, and a valuable specific for the mental and spiritual disturbances that underlie all diseases. It is the vehicle, the medium through which spiritual medicine is given. It is a natural instinct of the soul. It is as natural for us, under certain circumstances, to look to some supreme power above us, or within us, for help as it is for birds of passage, at certain seasons of the year, to go South.

And God never impressed an instinctive tendency upon any living things, from the least to the greatest, without furnishing the means of its satisfactory gratification. If, in distress of body or unhappiness of mind, we are drawn by a spiritual instinct to God in prayer, it is because of the Divine Plan that we should thus find relief. I am aware, of course, that it is unusual to class the use of prayer among hygienic agencies; and medical science has not given it a place among their therapeutic devices.

Tyndall Said . . .

Prayer is our conscious recognition of our dependent condition and subjection to powers unseen, but superior to our own. There are certain flowers that, from a vital impulse implanted in them, constantly turn toward the sun to receive its vivifying rays. So a humble consciousness of dependence that causes the soul to look

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to God fits us to receive what we need most.

Thus, there is at the same time a moral and hygienic efficacy in prayer—healing prayer. It is a spiritual and potential influence and force brought to bear upon the hidden spring of disease. It is one of the most potent prophylactic agencies against the inception, and cause of all morbid conditions.

Professor Tyndall proposed some years ago the value of prayer in a scientific test. This somewhat shocked the religious world, and yet it seems in itself a reasonable practise to divide a hospital into two departments, one of which is subjected to prayer-cure, and the other to medication, is a test of therapeutic value of the two methods of cure that no believer in spiritual guidance need fear to accept.

Emotional Excess

The believer, however, in the curative efficacy of prayer would have an advantage in one respect, O that his remedy contained no poison, which cannot be said of some medicines.

It should be borne in mind that it is only one kind of prayer that will save the sick,—the prayer of faith. (James v:15).

The efficacy of prayer upon ourselves can be defended upon philosophical grounds. In certain conditions prayer is as natural as our respiration. A person in distress spontaneously cries for help when he believes it possible that succor is within hailing distance; and the true religious spirit always feels that God is thus near to it.

It is no more natural for a merry heart to play and sing than it is for a troubled soul to pray. All emotional excess of either bliss or pain in the soul must find an outlet, or disease is the result. An over-strained boiler without a safety valve will burst. Prayer is the valve that opens of itself when the painful ebullition of our feelings reaches a certain degree of pressure, and thus life and health are preserved.

Theory of Prayer

In times of strong emotion we instinctively feel that we must do something to relieve ourselves, for such states of mind cannot long continue without creating great disturbance in the physiological functions. There are various modes of relieving the over-excited feelings, and liberating the pent-up suffering within us, such as walking the room, climbing the mountain, or visiting foreign lands; but none of them as efficacious as prayer.

A truly religious person, in times of mental disturbance, turns to God in prayer as instinctively the hungry infant seeks the maternal breast, or the young fowl, in time of danger, runs to the shelter of the protecting wing of its parent. Thus, he finds rest, and health, and peace.

It is manifestly impossible to construct a theory of prayer that would perfectly satisfy the so-called man of science. And what goes under the name of science, much of which is mere knowledge, does not meet the deeper needs of the religious nature of mankind.

The one is as the body, the

other as the soul of things. Much that is pompously called science is to the spiritual nature of man like the husks on which the prodigal son fed, but came near dying of hunger.

The theory of prayer that satisfies the profoundest of thinkers of the religious world is that which views it as a spiritual instinct and a necessity of man's inner nature. "The instinct of prayer is the most manifest of all the religious instincts, and is more nearly self-directive than any other of them; and it is so strong that, at times, it breaks through every philosophical theory of necessity, or pantheism, or atheism itself."

Live Tranquilly

All instincts are given by the Creator for our preservation, our guidance, and our good. Hence, the instinct of prayer, when we follow its promptings, must lead to blessedness. This is the philosophical view of it. Instinct is designed of God to be a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night to go before us, to conduct our march to the realization of our supreme good.

As Bating said: "We have absolutely no instance in the whole world of animated nature of an instinctive *penchant* without a corresponding object to which it tends, and which can satisfy that *penchant*." Thus, the spiritual instinct of prayer leads to an inter-communication of the soul with God, and finds its satisfaction in union with the only life, and the reception of good from that supreme source.

He who would live tranquilly, wisely, and healthfully will find somewhere in his soul the guiding light of his course. To follow anything outside of this, only so far as it meets a response within, is to be led blindly by an *ignis fatuus*, a specious, but bewildering and fallible, guide. It is grasping at a shadow and missing the substance.

Souls Crying Out

The true spirit of prayer cannot be shut up within the limits of any stereotyped formulas, but will find vent in a liturgy of its own creation. By a creative force inherent in its own essence it will find an ultimate expression in forms that it calls into existence at the time. We are speaking of prayer in its reality, and not the semblance of it so common in the outward worship of the religious world.

It is only real prayer—the crying out of the soul unto the living God — that can have any therapeutic value to either mind or body. An ill prayer, as poetess Browning said, God uses as a foolishness, to which He gives no answer. The mere reading or saying a prayer over a sick man or a sinner will not restore to one health or convert the other any

Mediums Wanted!

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ONE OF AMERICA'S OUTSTANDING MEDIUMS (P-242)



Rev. Billy Hill Visits LONDON

According to Rev. J. Bertram Gerling, Vice President of The Federation of Spiritual Churches and Associations, Inc., Rev. Billy Hill, Joplin, Missouri, was chosen to represent their organization at the International Spiritualist Congress, held in London, England recently.



Rev. Billy Hill

Chester, N. Y. last July. His platform clairvoyance is accurate, his delivery rapid and coherent.

Upon his return to the States, an account of his experiences and activities will be published in this journal.

more than repetition of the burial service at the grave will raise the dead to life.

It must be the spontaneous and almost irrepensible out-pouring of the thoughts and feelings of the soul into the listening ear of a present God. It is only a certain degree of mental pressure, or intensity of feeling, that can generate the real spirit of prayer, and give efficacy to it. All else is worthless formalism.

Spiritual Remedies

The longer a man practices medicine, the less confidence has in he in external remedies. Their value is perpetually diminishing, changing, and vanishing, until he ceases to take them himself or administer them to his own family, and to others only from the force of habit, and in the smallest doses.

The more profoundly a man studies the science of medicine, the more he sees the comparative worthlessness of all chemical preparations and combinations, whether taken into the stomach or applied to the external surface of the body, and the more highly he will estimate the value of spiritual remedies, or those that act from within outward, or from the cen-

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REV. THORNE

ter to the circumference of our being.

He will become a convert, in spite of all his medical books, to one of the principles of the system of Hahnemann, — that the smaller the quantity of the drug the higher the potency; and the dilution of trituration that brings the drug down to the dividing line between something and nothing, so that you cannot tell which it is, has the greatest sanative efficiency. This is the nearest approach, on a material plane of thought, to the adoption of a science of spiritual medicine.

Pray and be healed!

WHAT WE BELIEVE

By
Helen L. Sanders
Pierson Court, Bristol, Connecticut

We believe that we live after the change called Death, and that our spiritual friends can send loving thoughts to us and our souls can receive these thoughts.

Leaves are called *dead* when they fall to the earth. When they decay, a form of fertilizer causes another tree to bud. These buds change, blossoms come and die. Fruit appears. It is eaten and so nourishes the body.

These changes are made by the inner or unseen laws which we call spiritual life. It is our aim to examine these laws through which our souls receive thoughts and impulses transmitted by our spirit friends — and attempt to learn from them, truths by which we will be spared many a sorrow and wrong.

Thought transference, at times, has been likened unto the sending of a telegram. A message is given to a telegrapher to transmit to another, who by special training, is able to interpret the signals and deliver to the addressee.

The Spiritualist medium can be likened to the telegrapher — the one who, by special training, is able to decipher the spiritual signals transmitted by our spirit friends and deliver messages to us.

How Souls Communicate

We, as members of a Spiritualist Church, can compare ourselves to *Alexander Graham Bell* who scientifically reasoned that the telegraphic signals could transmit conversation. Today, due to the scientific reasoning and research of Bell, we can pick up a telephone and speak directly with our distant friends.

So we feel in Spiritualism: That, through scientific reasoning and exploration, some day we shall each be able to converse with spirit friends of one's own choosing.

Death is only a change. This fact, that the soul remains alive after death, is the basis of all so called Christianity; and other religions not predicated on fatalism.

We admit we do not know exactly what change actually takes place at the physical manifestation called Death, but we do, not only believe, but KNOW, that the soul continues to live.

And we KNOW that the soul can, under proper circumstances, communicate with us on earth; that a proper life in the body on earth fits the spirit for a better station in the unseen life.

Therefore, we should each ask our spirit friends for aid, assistance and guidance in making others happy and thus we can assure ourselves of a duty well done.

**BEATRICE HOUDINI SIGNED IT.
A FACT SHE NEVER DENIED.**
(Published By Special Request)

NEW YORK CITY
JAN. 9TH, 1929

REGARDLESS OF ANY STATEMENTS MADE TO THE CONTRARY, I WISH TO DECLARE THAT THE MESSAGE, IN ITS ENTIRETY, AND IN THE AGREED UPON SEQUENCE, GIVEN TO ME BY ARTHUR FORD, IS THE CORRECT MESSAGE PRE-ARRANGED BETWEEN MR. HOUDINI AND MYSELF.

Beatrice Houdini

WITNESSED;
Harry R. Zander.
Minnie Chester
John W. Stafford

"The Houdini Plague"

(SEE PAGE 9 FOR "ORIGINAL CHALLENGE")

WHY WE BRING THE MATTER UP

By the Editor

It seems that the opponents of Spiritualism in general, and the press in particular, insist upon rehabilitating the Houdini affair. So-called and self-appointed proteges of Houdini continue to earn thousands of dollars by making erroneous claims and charges against spiritualist mediums. They are able to have their silly articles printed at fabulous rates . . . all because certain seeds of false propaganda continue to grow. These seeds were sown by the master-conjuror, HOUDINI, whose job it was to fool the people into believing that spirits could not communicate. He did his job well and his wife, Beatrice also carried the torch of ignorance. Today, others have tried to imitate his unfair tactics. Some have been fairly successful. Others have fallen by the wayside due to their obvious ignorance of the subject. It will ever be thus because the average newspaper will print anything for the thrill. They care not whether less than 5% of their readers are insulted.

The Latest Outbreak

WHAT W. H. BURR DID ABOUT IT

To the Editor New York American Weekly:

In your issue of June 20th, 1948 you have published an article by some one who signs his name JOE LEE under the title "I KNEW HOUDINI."

There are three high spots in this article. The first: Lee refers to Houdini and shows that he was from the beginning a trickster who stole his mother's pies by picking the lock, taking the pies and then locking up the pie box again. There are many such young miscreants in reform schools, jails and places of detention for juvenile delinquents. Young rascals of this character seldom earn the honor of being called "great."

Why should JOE LEE or any one else claim glory for such associates? Houdini extended his operations into other fields until he gained some notoriety because of some stunts that mystified on-lookers and brought money into Houdini's pocket. Aside from this we are not advised that he ever did anything to help any one for any worthy purpose whatsoever. His time and talents were devoted to tricks intended to get money for himself and make others believe that which was not so.

One of Houdini's advertising

stunts was to send his advance agents into cities where he intended to show his tricks, advertise in papers that he would expose Spiritualist mediums. Thus he made business for himself from all who knew no better than to fall into his advertising trap.

Mr. Lee, says: "He (Houdini) was a great friend of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle." Perhaps Lee thinks so but Sir Arthur was not a "great friend of Houdini." Sir Arthur told me that he, "did not like Houdini, did not trust him." Hanging onto some worthy name like a tail hanging onto a kite was

one of the tricks of the magician trade. Houdini had no secret pact with Sir Arthur.

Margery Disgusted

"For ten years after his death, writes Lee, Mrs. Beatrice Houdini tried to contact him on the other side but she never did." There is now in existence a sworn statement made by Mrs. Houdini, signed in the presence of three witnesses that the secret code left by Houdini as a test to Mrs. Houdini has been correctly revealed, transcribed and reported to her. With it, her own sworn statement, she says it is correct. If Lee does not know of this he should inform himself.

Margery Crandon: Mina Crandon was the wife of a Boston surgeon who gave (not sold) her time to the interest of scientific investigation.

Lee writes "His (Houdini's) greatest expose concerned Margery." He then goes on to tell how Houdini knew and explained all of her manifestations and how she became disgusted with Houdini and after sitting in his box for an hour "cried quits" and told Houdini that he would die in 1925. She made a slight mistake of but one year, because he did not die until 1926.

Not a Gentleman

That Mrs. Crandon was a person of remarkable psychic talents who contributed much to scientific investigation is beyond any question. And she gave (not sold) her time and strength in the interest of science and truth.

She was not a cheat and fraud, as Lee would have us believe. The camera does not lie but some magicians spend their lives in lies. We have no evidence of the truth of Lee's assertions except his own statement years after Mrs. Crandon has gone into her grave.

It appears to me that it is not chivalrous nor becoming a gentleman to publish such damaging statements about Mrs. Crandon years after she is no longer here to defend herself. Such were the tactics of Gaston Means who betrayed the trusts of the Harding family after they were all dead.

So it was with the female from the same brood who wrote a book disclosing her own infamy. The worst of which was she betrayed a one time friend, she added to her own purse and gained questionable notoriety. Means died in prison. No one knows or cares about the dame.

Who Knew Houdini?

Mrs. Crandon once lived in the New England town in which this letter is written. She was greatly respected by those who knew her. The article by Lee is now being peddled about from house to house and read by friends who knew and respected her. The good reputation once had by Mrs. Crandon has been seriously harmed where ever this article by Lee is read.

This individual tells us that "I KNEW HOUDINI" and how he hung around like a tail on a kite.

On the outside this appeared to be a worthwhile enterprise. On the inside nothing but advertising. He gained further notoriety by offering \$10,000 for any one who could "convince him" of surviving of life beyond the grave. Here again the hand of the trickster was shown. Who but a fool would try to "convince him" when it would cost him \$10,000 to be "convinced?"

Who would try to "convince him" while it would cost him his most valuable source of free advertising? Some newspapers gave Houdini a lot of free advertising



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because they too, were fooled by his clever manipulations. Even now we hear otherwise intelligent people who ought to know better say: "They could not convince Houdini."

After Houdini died, his wife took up the trail long followed by Houdini. She financed a moving picture film based upon ridicule of what they called Spiritualism.

The master advertiser had gone. The whole thing was a miserable failure. Soon Mrs. Houdini died and so the whole wreck, Houdini, wife and tricks, went down into the junk heap of human mistake and failure. That is the eventual end of all whose span of life is spent in worthless endeavor that helps none but does harm to many.

Great scientists on both sides of the ocean have spent years in careful investigation. Myers, Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge and hundreds of thousands who are not known as scientists have found the truth. But not HOUDINI. It would cost him \$10,000.00 and his valuable advertising "drag" if he should

admit that he too had found the truth. The undertaker came along in 1926 and taught Houdini a severe lesson. His son went down never to rise again.

Mrs. Crandon has been injured in the opinion of everyone who has read the article in question.

Your publication has been used to defame the helpless dead. I submit that it is your duty to undo as far as possible the wrong that has been done.

Respectfully yours,
William H. Burr
June 28, 1948.

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Add your name and address.
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 - I like the small popular Spiritualist book: "ART OF COMMUNION" by O. A. Tildes, M. A. (Same publisher) because . . .
Add your name and address.
(First Prize: \$20.00; Second Prize: \$5.00).
- Enclose original sales slip indicating dealer, book purchased, and date of purchase. Purchases for this contest must be made from October 1st, 1948 to January 15th, 1949.
- Use ink or typewriter and white paper.
- Entries must be postmarked not later than midnight, January 15th, 1949.
- Judging of entries will be based upon simplicity, clarity, originality, and appropriateness of thought.
- Entries will not be returned to owners; all will become the property of the judge, O. A. Tildes.
- Be sure your name and address are written clearly.
- Mail all entries with original sales receipt to Miss Olga A. Tildes, 1429 Wagar Ave., Lakewood (7) Ohio.
- Prize checks will be mailed February 15th, 1949.

Order: "The Silver Cord", price \$5.00 and "The Art of Communion" — \$1.50. From:
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